



**Oman Academic Accreditation Authority**  
*Oman Qualifications Framework*

**Master Glossary**

**March 2020**

## Glossary of Terms

| Term  | Definition  |
|---|---|
| Accreditation   | A formal, periodic, external quality assurance process, undertaken by a national or international body with a formal remit to undertake assessment of educational institutions and/or programmes, which determines whether or not a defined set of standards has been met. The assessment body is external to - and independent from - the institution. Accredited status is conferred by this body for a defined period of time <sup>1</sup> . |
| Aims  | Broad statements that set out the intention and purpose of the unit/module/course or programme.   |
| Alignment [of a qualification to the Oman Qualifications Framework] | The process of comparing and evaluating a Foreign or International qualification to determine its position in relation to the Oman Qualifications Framework Level Descriptors.  |
| Articulation  | A process, which grants the holder of a qualification access to a programme, leading to a - typically higher level - qualification <sup>2</sup> .   |
| Assessment  | The process of judging performance against specified targets/reference points <sup>3</sup> .  |
| Award   | A document, which recognises learning, regardless of whether the learning is in a formal or non-formal context.   |
| Awarding Body   | An organisation that issues education or training awards following formal assessment. For example, Academic Higher Education Institutions and their Affiliates, Technological and Vocational Education and Training Providers and Professional Bodies <sup>4</sup> .  |
| Band  | Cluster of levels on the Oman Qualifications Framework.   |
| Benchmark   | A reference against which comparison can be made <sup>5</sup> .   |
| Characteristic  | An attribute of the OQF Level Descriptors. There are six characteristics: Knowledge; Skills; Communication, Numeracy, Information and Communication Technology  |

<sup>1</sup>OAAA (2016). Term. In OAAA Online Glossary. Retrieved on 07.10.2017. from [www.oaaa.gov.om/Training.aspx#Glossary](http://www.oaaa.gov.om/Training.aspx#Glossary)

<sup>2</sup> OAAA (2016). Term. In OAAA Online Glossary. Retrieved on 26.6.2018. from [www.oaaa.gov.om/Training.aspx#Glossary](http://www.oaaa.gov.om/Training.aspx#Glossary)

<sup>3</sup> OAAA (2016). Term. In OAAA Online Glossary. Retrieved on 12/09/2018, from [www.oaaa.gov.om/Training.aspx#Glossary](http://www.oaaa.gov.om/Training.aspx#Glossary)

<sup>4</sup> Adapted from <http://qualityresearchinternational.com/glossary/#a>.

<sup>5</sup> OAAA (2016). Term. In OAAA Online Glossary. Retrieved on 12/09/2018, from [www.oaaa.gov.om/Training.aspx#Glossary](http://www.oaaa.gov.om/Training.aspx#Glossary)

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|   | Skills; Autonomy and Responsibility; Employability and Values; and Learning to Learn. These six characteristics combine to form the OQF Level Descriptors.   |
| Comprehensive Framework                               | A framework, which encapsulates qualifications from all sectors and levels of education.   |
| Credit Accumulation                                   | The gradual increase in the number of OQF Credits awarded by an institution through successful achievement of the units/modules/courses evidenced by assessment.   |
| Credit System   | The methodology for calculating the numeric Credit Value of units/modules/courses and qualifications.  |
| Credit Transfer                                       | The process of using the credit gained for completed stand-alone units/modules/courses of a programme/qualification in the pursuit of another programme/qualification <sup>6</sup> .   |
| Evaluation  | The process of judging the appropriateness of systems, processes and procedures and their effectiveness in achieving the desired outcomes <sup>7</sup> .   |
| Foreign and International Qualifications              | Foreign Qualifications relate to qualifications awarded in a country other than Oman (e.g. a United Kingdom Awarding Body).<br>International Qualifications relate to qualifications awarded by an International Awarding Body (e.g. Cisco and Microsoft).   |
| Formal Learning                                       | A structured programme of learning that leads to the full or partial achievement of a qualification.   |
| Formative Assessment                                  | An on-going process, which informs teachers/lecturers and/or instructors on improvements or modifications, which need to be made to lectures/lessons in order to aid learners' progress. The results of formative assessment do not contribute to the learner's final mark or grade. They are used to provide feedback and determine the direction of teaching and learning. |
| Governance [of the Oman Qualifications Framework]     | The overall responsibility for the Oman Qualifications Framework; the setting of the overarching policies and regulations for the framework <sup>8</sup> .   |
| Implementation [of the Oman Qualifications Framework] | Involves two processes:<br>1. Accepting Listing/Alignment Applications, evaluating Listing/Alignment Applications, making judgement on the   |

<sup>6</sup> Adapted from OAAA (2016). Term. In OAAA *Online Glossary*. Retrieved on 12/09/2018, from [www.oaaa.gov.om/Training.aspx#Glossary](http://www.oaaa.gov.om/Training.aspx#Glossary)

<sup>7</sup> OAAA (2016). Term. In OAAA *Online Glossary*. Retrieved on 17/09/2018, from [www.oaaa.gov.om/Training.aspx#Glossary](http://www.oaaa.gov.om/Training.aspx#Glossary)

<sup>8</sup> Oman Academic Accreditation Authority (OAAA) / Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA). (2016), *Governance, Management and Implementation of the OQF: creating an enabling legal and regulatory environment*, Joint Discussion Paper.

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|  | Listing/ Alignment and informing the OQF Managing Body of the Listing/ Alignment Recommendation.<br>2. Carrying out the periodic validation of Listing or Alignment <sup>9</sup> .  |
| Informal Learning  | Learning that is not organised or structured. It is experiential learning, which takes place through life and work experiences. Typical examples are learning that is gained through work, social, family, hobby or leisure activities and experiences. |
| Institution  | Education and/or training provider for schools, academic, professional, vocational and technological qualifications.  |
| Institutional Standards  | The national Institutional Standards for accreditation against which the performance of an HEI is assessed <sup>10</sup> .  |
| Knowledge  | The acquisition and comprehension of facts, principles, theories and practices related to an area of work or learning.  |
| Learner with Special Needs   | A learner who requires additional educational, pastoral, and/or physical support.   |
| Learning Outcome   | What a learner is expected to know (knowledge), do (skills) or apply (competencies), as a result of his/her undertaking a unit/module/course or a programme leading to a qualification <sup>11</sup> .  |
| Legacy Qualifications  | Awards that have either been superseded, or discontinued by the Awarding Body, but are still relevant to the holders of the award and the current labour market needs of the country.   |
| Legal and Regulatory Framework [for the Oman Qualifications Framework] | Laws and regulations that support the implementation of the Oman Qualifications Framework.  |
| Level [of the Oman Qualifications Framework]                           | An indicator of relative demand, complexity, depth of study and learner autonomy as described in the OQF Level Descriptors <sup>12</sup> .  |
| Level Descriptors [of the Oman Qualifications Framework]               | A set of progressive statements, which describe the expected outcomes at each level of the Oman Qualifications Framework.   |
| Licensing  | An evaluative process leading to formal approval from the relevant Omani government body for institutions and their   |

<sup>9</sup> Oman Academic Accreditation Authority (OAAA) / Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA). (2016), *Governance, Management and Implementation of the OQF: creating an enabling legal and regulatory environment*, Joint Discussion Paper (amended).

<sup>10</sup> OAAA (2016). Term. In OAAA Online Glossary. Retrieved on 30/09/2018, from [www.oaaa.gov.om/Training.aspx#Glossary](http://www.oaaa.gov.om/Training.aspx#Glossary)

<sup>11</sup> OAAA (2016). Term. In OAAA Online Glossary. Retrieved on 12/09/2018, from [www.oaaa.gov.om/Training.aspx#Glossary](http://www.oaaa.gov.om/Training.aspx#Glossary)

<sup>12</sup> Adapted from Gosling, D. and Moon, J. (2001), *How to Use Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria*. Southern England Consortium for Credit Accumulation and Transfer, SEEC Office, London.

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|  | programmes. Institutions include organisations such as schools, universities, vocational Education and Training Providers.   |
| Lifelong Learning  | All learning activity undertaken throughout life whether formal, non-formal or informal.   |
| Listing [a qualification on the Oman Qualifications Framework] | The evaluation of all the units/modules/courses of a programme, leading to a qualification to reach the agreed OQF Level and OQF Credit Value  |
| Listing Body   | An organisation, designated by the Education Council, to undertake the evaluation of qualifications with the purpose of making recommendation on the Listing to the OQF Managing Body.   |
| Management [of the Oman Qualifications Framework]              | <p>A process of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• monitoring the implementation of the OQF;</li> <li>• updating and maintaining the OQF;</li> <li>• verifying the Listing recommendations</li> <li>• maintaining the National Register of Qualifications<sup>13</sup>.</li> </ul>  |
| Mandatory Qualifications Framework                             | A National Qualifications Framework that must be implemented by all Awarding Bodies and Education/Training Providers.  |
| Moderation   | The quality assurance process that confirms an education or training provider's assessments are valid, reliable and consistent.  |
| National Register of Qualifications                            | An online database, managed by the Oman Academic Accreditation Authority (OAAA), which contains the qualifications that are Listed on, or Aligned to, the OQF. It is a public record of the OQF Level and, where relevant, the Credit Value of these qualifications, which is arrived at through a robust evaluation in accordance with the OQF Criteria for Listing, or the Alignment, of Qualifications. |
| Non-Formal Learning  | Planned, structured learning activities, but not explicitly designated as learning towards the achievement of a qualification or part-qualification. It can be assessed, but does not lead to a formal qualification.  |
| Notional Learning Hours  | The average time deemed to be required by a typical learner at a specified level to achieve the assessed Learning Outcomes.  |

<sup>13</sup> Oman Academic Accreditation Authority (OAAA) / Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA). (2016). *Governance. Management and Implementation of the OQF: creating an enabling legal and regulatory environment*. Joint Discussion Paper.

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| Objectives  | Description of what the teacher/lecturer will be teaching in the unit/module/course or programme.   |
| Oman Qualifications Framework   | An instrument for describing, comparing and classifying all qualifications, delivered and awarded in Oman, from all education and training sectors. Based on one set of generic Level Descriptors, which describe the expected outcomes at each of its ten Levels, the OQF provides a reference point for the comparison of qualifications in Oman, Foreign and International qualifications and for the Recognition of Prior Learning. |
| OQF Credit  | An indicator of the relative volume of learning, awarded for the achievement of a unit/module/course and/or qualification, expressed in either OQF Credit Points or OQF Credit Hours.   |
| OQF Credit Hour   | A unit of measurement, which describes the volume of learning required by a typical learner to achieve the Learning Outcomes of the units/modules/courses, which lead to a qualification. An OQF Credit Hour is three hours per week for one semester (minimum 14 weeks), which equates to a minimum of 42 notional learning hours <sup>14</sup> .  |
| OQF Credit Value  | The number of OQF Credit Points or OQF Credit Hours, which are allocated to units/modules/courses and qualifications for learning that is verified through reliable and valid assessment.   |
| OQF Credit Point  | A unit of measurement, which describes the volume of learning required by a typical learner to achieve the Learning Outcomes of the units/modules/courses, which lead to a qualification. One OQF Credit Point equates to ten notional learning hours.  |
| Pathway [of the Oman Qualifications Framework]                            | The defined purpose of a qualification in relation to its orientation: Professional; Academic; Technological; and/or Vocational.  |
| Placement [of a qualification on the National Register of Qualifications] | The inclusion of a qualification on the National Register of Qualifications following the Listing Process, which involves a proposal, recommendation and verification of the OQF Level and Credit Value.  |
| Private Vocational Training Centre  | The premises inside an establishment, or a series of establishments, set for the training of employees through certain training courses or programmes.  |

<sup>14</sup> Each OQF Credit Hour comprises a combination of activities that are required to achieve the Learning Outcomes, such as class/lecture contact time, laboratory work, workshops, self-study, research, homework, fieldwork, assignments, preparation for assessment and assessment.

| <b>Term</b>                   | <b>Definition</b>  |
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| Professional Judgement        | Applying relevant training, knowledge, skills and experience to make informed decisions.   |
| Professional Qualification    | Awards, which meet the requirements, set by a Professional Body or other institution to enable the holder to work, or progress their career, in one of the professions.  |
| Programme                     | The units/modules/courses, which lead to a qualification.  |
| Progression                   | A learning pathway taken by learners as they develop their expertise in a discipline and achieve qualifications at higher levels on the Oman Qualifications Framework.   |
| Qualification                 | An award issued by an Awarding Body when, following established standards, the Awarding Body determines that the learner has achieved the Learning Outcomes of all the units/modules/courses of the programme.   |
| Qualifications System         | All activities related to the recognition of learning, which includes the Oman Qualifications Framework and institutional arrangements for the development, delivery, quality assurance, assessment and award of qualifications.   |
| Quality                       | The extent to which an educational institution's systems, processes and structures result in outcomes for the institution and/or its programmes, which meet stakeholder needs through the attainment of relevant standards/benchmarks <sup>15</sup> .  |
| Quality Assurance             | The implementation of planned and systematic processes and systems, either internal or external and independent to an educational institution, that assess the institution's programmes, services and activities as well as the processes that support these, in relation to the Oman Qualifications Framework <sup>16</sup> . |
| Recognition of Prior Learning | The process of identifying, assessing and recognising a learners' previously acquired knowledge and skills in relation to the units/modules/courses or qualification they intend to undertake. The prior knowledge or skills may have been obtained through formal, non-formal or informal learning.                           |
| Stakeholder                   | Any party that has an interest in the activities of the Oman Qualifications Framework <sup>17</sup> .  |
| Summative Assessment          | An evaluative process, which measures a learner's ability to demonstrate knowledge and/or skills against   |

<sup>15</sup> OAAA (2016). Term. In OAAA *Online Glossary*. Retrieved on 29/08/2019 , from [www.oaaa.gov.om/Training.aspx#Glossary](http://www.oaaa.gov.om/Training.aspx#Glossary)

<sup>16</sup> Adapted from the OAAA (2016). Term. In OAAA *Online Glossary*. Retrieved on 17/09/2018, from [www.oaaa.gov.om/Training.aspx#Glossary](http://www.oaaa.gov.om/Training.aspx#Glossary)

<sup>17</sup> Adapted from the OAAA (2016). Term. In OAAA *Online Glossary*. Retrieved on 13/09/2018, from [www.oaaa.gov.om/Training.aspx#Glossary](http://www.oaaa.gov.om/Training.aspx#Glossary)

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|   | assessment/performance criteria. The results are recorded and contribute to the learner's overall mark and/or grade.   |
| Validation of Listing [for the Oman Qualifications Framework] | <p>A review process which takes place after a cohort of learners has completed a qualification to ensure that the qualification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• has not changed;</li> <li>• continues to meet the OQF Criteria for Listing; and</li> <li>• remains at the same verified OQF Level and OQF Credit Value.</li> </ul>   |
| Verification [of Listing or Alignment]                        | <p>An objective moderation of a Listing or Alignment Application and its associated Listing/Alignment Evaluation Report to check that the Listing/Alignment Process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• was carried out in the proper manner</li> <li>• is consistent across different Listing Bodies and Reviewers</li> </ul> <p>Thus, ensuring the qualification meets the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OQF Criteria for Listing or Alignment</li> <li>• Outcome of the relevant OQF Level Descriptor.</li> </ul> |