

Addendum to AQF First Edition July 2011

Amended Qualification Types:
Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma



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Amended AQF qualification types

Graduate and Vocational Graduate Certificates and Diplomas

The AQF Council, under its delegated authority from the Standing Council on Tertiary Education Skills and Employment, in August 2012 approved the removal of the Vocational Graduate Certificate and Vocational Graduate Diploma from the AQF and minor amendments to the specifications for the Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma.

The amended Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma AQF level 8 qualification types are available for accreditation and regulation in both the higher education and vocational education and training sectors and may be delivered and issued by appropriately authorised issuing organisations in both sectors.

Implementation arrangements

The removal of the Vocational Graduate Certificate and Vocational Graduate Diploma qualification types from the AQF is effective from 1 January 2013.

The amended Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma qualification types are available for use from 1 January 2013.

The implementation arrangements for the *Australian Qualifications Framework First Edition July 2011* apply, that is:

- all requirements for the qualification types will be met from 1 January 2015
- from 1 January 2015 all new enrolments will be in qualifications that meet the requirements of the AQF specifications for all qualification types.

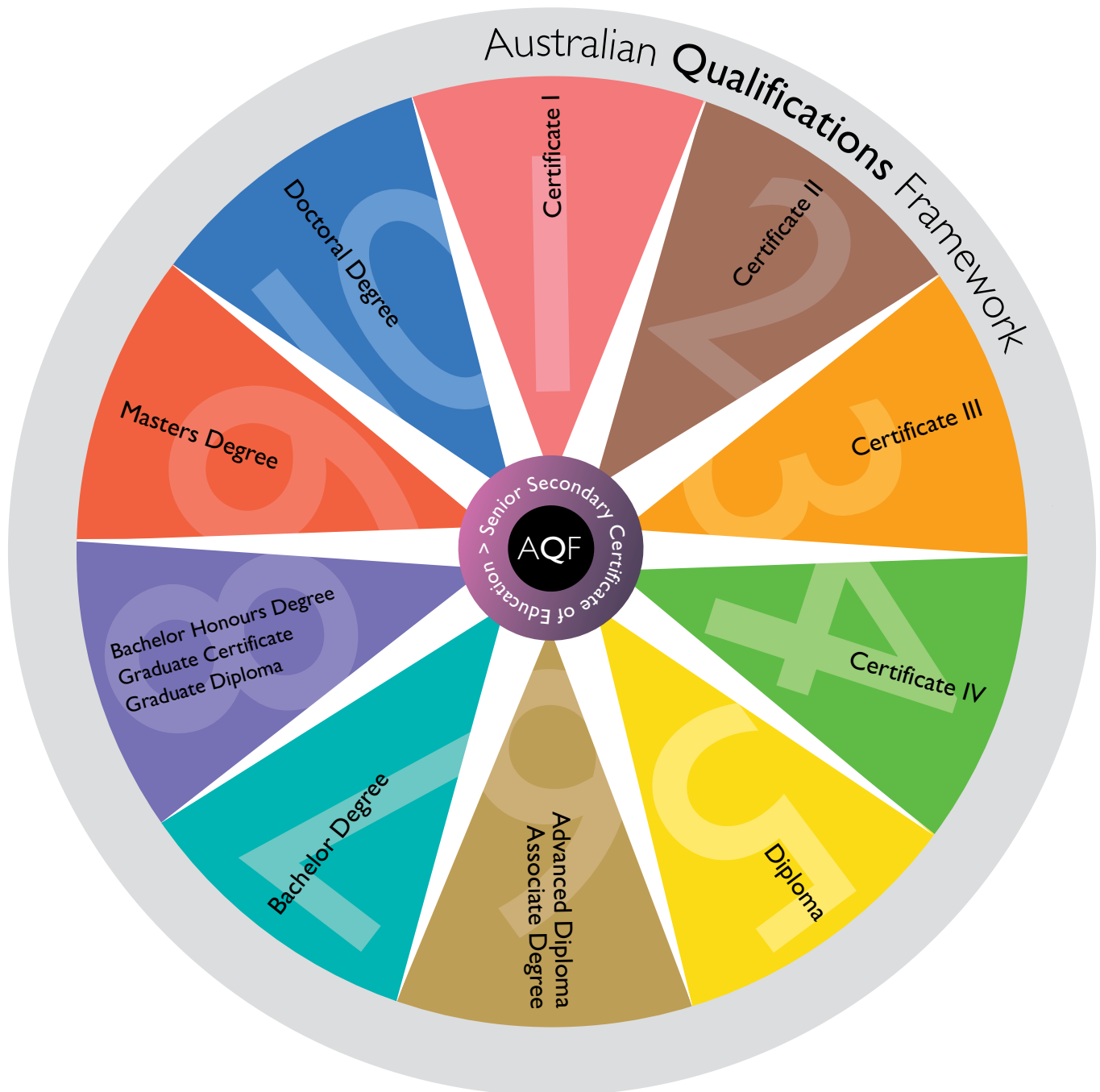
The regulatory authorities may require the use of the amended specifications for the Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma to commence from 1 January 2013 for the accreditation of new qualifications.

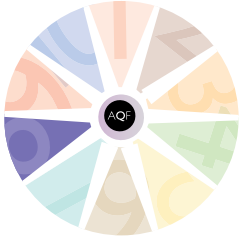
Transition arrangements

Holders of Vocational Graduate Certificates and Vocational Graduate Diplomas are considered to hold, respectively, Graduate Certificates or Graduate Diplomas.

The *AQF Qualification Type Specifications* for the Vocational Graduate Certificate and Vocational Graduate Diploma are available in the *Australian Qualifications Framework First Edition July 2011*.

Location of AQF qualification types in the levels structure





AQF specification for the Graduate Certificate¹

This *Specification* informs the design and accreditation of Graduate Certificate qualifications.

The principal users of the *AQF Qualification Type Specifications* are the accrediting authorities in each education and training sector which are responsible for the accreditation of AQF qualifications and the developers of AQF qualifications in each education and training sector.

The other users of the *Specifications* are the authorised issuing organisations, industry and professional bodies, licensing and regulatory bodies, students, graduates and employers.

The purpose of the Graduate Certificate qualification type is to qualify individuals who apply a body of knowledge in a range of contexts to undertake professional or highly skilled work and as a pathway to further learning.

Graduate Certificate qualifications are located at level 8 of the Australian Qualifications Framework.

Graduate Certificate qualifications must be designed and accredited to enable graduates to demonstrate the learning outcomes expressed as knowledge, skills and the application of knowledge and skills specified in the level 8 criteria and the Graduate Certificate descriptor.

Graduate Certificate qualifications are available for accreditation and issuance in both higher education and vocational education and training.

AQF level 8 criteria	
Summary	Graduates at this level will have advanced knowledge and skills for professional or highly skilled work and/or further learning
Knowledge	Graduates at this level will have advanced theoretical and technical knowledge in one or more disciplines or areas of practice
Skills	<p>Graduates at this level will have advanced cognitive, technical and communication skills to select and apply methods and technologies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyse critically, evaluate and transform information to complete a range of activities • analyse, generate and transmit solutions to complex problems • transmit knowledge, skills and ideas to others
Application of knowledge and skills	Graduates at this level will apply knowledge and skills to demonstrate autonomy, well-developed judgement, adaptability and responsibility as a practitioner or learner

¹ The Vocational Graduate Certificate qualification type is removed from the AQF and replaced by the Graduate Certificate as of 1 January 2013. The AQF specification for the Vocational Graduate Certificate is in the *Australian Qualifications Framework First Edition July 2011*.

AQF specification for the Graduate Certificate

Graduate Certificate qualification type descriptor	
Purpose	The Graduate Certificate qualifies individuals who apply a body of knowledge in a range of contexts to undertake professional or highly skilled work and as a pathway for further learning
Knowledge	Graduates of a Graduate Certificate will have specialised knowledge within a systematic and coherent body of knowledge that may include the acquisition and application of knowledge and skills in a new or existing discipline or professional area
Skills	Graduates of a Graduate Certificate will have: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• cognitive skills to review, analyse, consolidate and synthesise knowledge and identify and provide solutions to complex problems• cognitive skills to think critically and to generate and evaluate complex ideas• specialised technical and creative skills in a field of highly skilled and/or professional practice• communication skills to demonstrate an understanding of theoretical concepts• communication skills to transfer complex knowledge and ideas to a variety of audiences
Application of knowledge and skills	Graduates of a Graduate Certificate will demonstrate the application of knowledge and skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• to make high level, independent judgements in a range of technical or management functions in varied specialised contexts• to initiate, plan, implement and evaluate broad functions within varied specialised technical and/or creative contexts• with responsibility and accountability for personal outputs and all aspects of the work or function of others within broad parameters
Volume of learning	The volume of learning of the Graduate Certificate is typically 0.5 – 1 year

Qualification nomenclature

The title used for a Graduate Certificate must be consistent with the *AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy*.

Pathways

Each qualification accredited as a Graduate Certificate will include documented pathways consistent with the *AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy*.

Issuing organisations offering a Graduate Certificate qualification must meet the requirements of the *AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy*.

AQF specification for the Graduate Certificate

Responsibility for accreditation and development

Accrediting authorities and those developing qualifications for accreditation must adhere to the AQF specification for this qualification type and any government accreditation standards for higher education or for vocational education and training when accrediting a Graduate Certificate qualification.

Accrediting authorities are responsible for monitoring the quality of issuing organisations against any government regulatory and quality assurance arrangements.

When accrediting AQF Graduate Certificate qualifications accrediting authorities must ensure that:

- Graduates of a Graduate Certificate qualification will achieve learning outcomes at level 8.
- All the learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and the application of knowledge and skills) of the Graduate Certificate qualification type are evident in each qualification accredited as this type. Some may have more emphasis than others in different Graduate Certificate qualifications depending on their purpose. A Graduate Certificate may be designed to provide a program of learning for either deepening of knowledge and skills in the same discipline or profession or for broadening of knowledge and skills in a different discipline or profession.
- Generic learning outcomes are explicitly identified in the qualification and align with the level of the qualification type, the purpose of the qualification and the discipline. Generic learning outcomes fall into four broad categories: fundamental skills; people skills; thinking skills; and personal skills. In the vocational education and training sector they are expressed as employability skills as defined by the National Quality Council (2008). In the higher education sector they are generally known as graduate attributes and are defined by each higher education institution.
- The relationship between the learning outcomes in the level 8 criteria, the qualification type descriptor, and the discipline is clear.
- The design of the components of the qualification will provide coherent learning outcomes for the level and qualification type and will enable graduates to demonstrate them.
- The volume of learning is sufficient for graduates to achieve the learning outcomes for a qualification of this level and type. The volume of learning must take into account the level of the previous qualification and/or experience required for entry and whether the purpose is for deepening or broadening of knowledge and skills.

Once a qualification is accredited it must be placed on the AQF Register in a form consistent with the *AQF Qualifications Register Policy*.

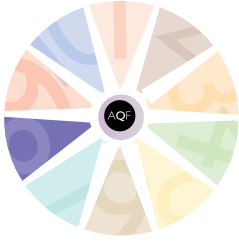
Authority to issue the qualification

A Graduate Certificate qualification may only be issued by an organisation that is authorised by an accrediting authority to do so, and meets any government standards for the sector.

Assessment leading to the award of the qualification lies with the issuing organisation. The issuing organisation is responsible for ensuring the quality of the learning outcomes and that the graduate has satisfactorily completed any requirements for the awarding of the qualification.

Issuing organisations must issue qualifications consistent with the *AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy*.

Issuing organisations will maintain a register of the AQF qualifications they have issued consistent with the *AQF Qualifications Register Policy*.



AQF specification for the Graduate Diploma²

This *Specification* informs the design and accreditation of Graduate Diploma qualifications.

The principal users of the *AQF Qualification Type Specifications* are the accrediting authorities in each education and training sector which are responsible for the accreditation of AQF qualifications and the developers of AQF qualifications in each education and training sector.

The other users of the *Specifications* are the authorised issuing organisations, industry and professional bodies, licensing and regulatory bodies, students, graduates and employers.

The purpose of the Graduate Diploma qualification type is to qualify individuals who apply a body of knowledge in a range of contexts to undertake professional or highly skilled work and as a pathway for further learning.

Graduate Diploma qualifications are located at level 8 of the Australian Qualifications Framework.

Graduate Diploma qualifications must be designed and accredited to enable graduates to demonstrate the learning outcomes expressed as knowledge, skills and the application of knowledge and skills specified in the level 8 criteria and the Graduate Diploma descriptor.

Graduate Diploma qualifications are available for accreditation and issuance in both higher education and vocational education and training.

AQF level 8 criteria	
Summary	Graduates at this level will have advanced knowledge and skills for professional or highly skilled work and/or further learning
Knowledge	Graduates at this level will have advanced theoretical and technical knowledge in one or more disciplines or areas of practice
Skills	<p>Graduates at this level will have advanced cognitive, technical and communication skills to select and apply methods and technologies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> analyse critically, evaluate and transform information to complete a range of activities analyse, generate and transmit solutions to complex problems transmit knowledge, skills and ideas to others
Application of knowledge and skills	Graduates at this level will apply knowledge and skills to demonstrate autonomy, well-developed judgement, adaptability and responsibility as a practitioner or learner

² The Vocational Graduate Diploma qualification type is removed from the AQF and replaced by the Graduate Diploma as of 1 January 2013. The AQF specification for the Vocational Graduate Diploma is in the *Australian Qualifications Framework First Edition July 2011*.

AQF specification for the Graduate Diploma

Graduate Diploma qualification type descriptor	
Purpose	The Graduate Diploma qualifies individuals who apply a body of knowledge in a range of contexts to undertake professional or highly skilled work and as a pathway for further learning
Knowledge	Graduates of a Graduate Diploma will have advanced knowledge within a systematic and coherent body of knowledge that may include the acquisition and application of knowledge and skills in a new or existing discipline or professional area
Skills	Graduates of a Graduate Diploma will have: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• cognitive skills to review, analyse, consolidate and synthesise knowledge and identify and provide solutions to complex problems• cognitive skills to think critically and to generate and evaluate complex ideas• specialised technical and creative skills in a field of highly skilled and/or professional practice• communication skills to demonstrate an understanding of theoretical concepts• communication skills to transfer complex knowledge and ideas to a variety of audiences
Application of knowledge and skills	Graduates of a Graduate Diploma will demonstrate the application of knowledge and skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• to make high level, independent judgements in a range of technical or management functions in varied specialised contexts• to initiate, plan, implement and evaluate broad functions within varied specialised technical and/or creative contexts• with responsibility and accountability for personal outputs and all aspects of the work or function of others within broad parameters
Volume of learning	The volume of learning for the Graduate Diploma is typically 1 – 2 years

Qualification nomenclature

The title used for a Graduate Diploma must be consistent with the *AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy*.

Pathways

Each qualification accredited as a Graduate Diploma will include documented pathways consistent with the *AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy*.

Issuing organisations offering a Graduate Diploma qualification must meet the requirements of the *AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy*.

AQF specification for the Graduate Diploma

Responsibility for accreditation and development

Accrediting authorities and those developing qualifications for accreditation must adhere to the AQF specification for this qualification type and any government accreditation standards for higher education or for vocational education and training when accrediting a Graduate Diploma qualification.

Accrediting authorities are responsible for monitoring the quality of issuing organisations against any government regulatory and quality assurance arrangements.

When accrediting AQF Graduate Diploma qualifications accrediting authorities must ensure that:

- Graduates of a Graduate Diploma qualification will achieve learning outcomes at level 8.
- All the learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and the application of knowledge and skills) of the Graduate Diploma qualification type are evident in each qualification accredited as this type. Some may have more emphasis than others in different Graduate Diploma qualifications depending on their purpose. A Graduate Diploma may be designed to provide a program of learning for either deepening of knowledge and skills in the same discipline or profession or for broadening of knowledge and skills in a different discipline or profession.
- Generic learning outcomes are explicitly identified in the qualification and align with the level of the qualification type, the purpose of the qualification and the discipline. Generic learning outcomes fall into four broad categories: fundamental skills; people skills; thinking skills; and personal skills. In the vocational education and training sector they are expressed as employability skills as defined by the National Quality Council (2008). In the higher education sector they are generally known as graduate attributes and are defined by each higher education institution.
- The relationship between the learning outcomes in the level 8 criteria, the qualification type descriptor, and the discipline is clear.
- The design of the components of the qualification will provide coherent learning outcomes for the level and qualification type and will enable graduates to demonstrate them.
- The volume of learning is sufficient for graduates to achieve the learning outcomes for a qualification of this level and type. The volume of learning must take into account the level of the previous qualification and/or experience required for entry and whether the purpose is for deepening or broadening of knowledge and skills.

Once a qualification is accredited it must be placed on the AQF Register in a form consistent with the *AQF Qualifications Register Policy*.

Authority to issue the qualification

A Graduate Diploma qualification may only be issued by an organisation that is authorised by an accrediting authority to do so, and meets any government standards for the sector.

Assessment leading to the award of the qualification lies with the issuing organisation. The issuing organisation is responsible for ensuring the quality of the learning outcomes and that the graduate has satisfactorily completed any requirements for the awarding of the qualification.

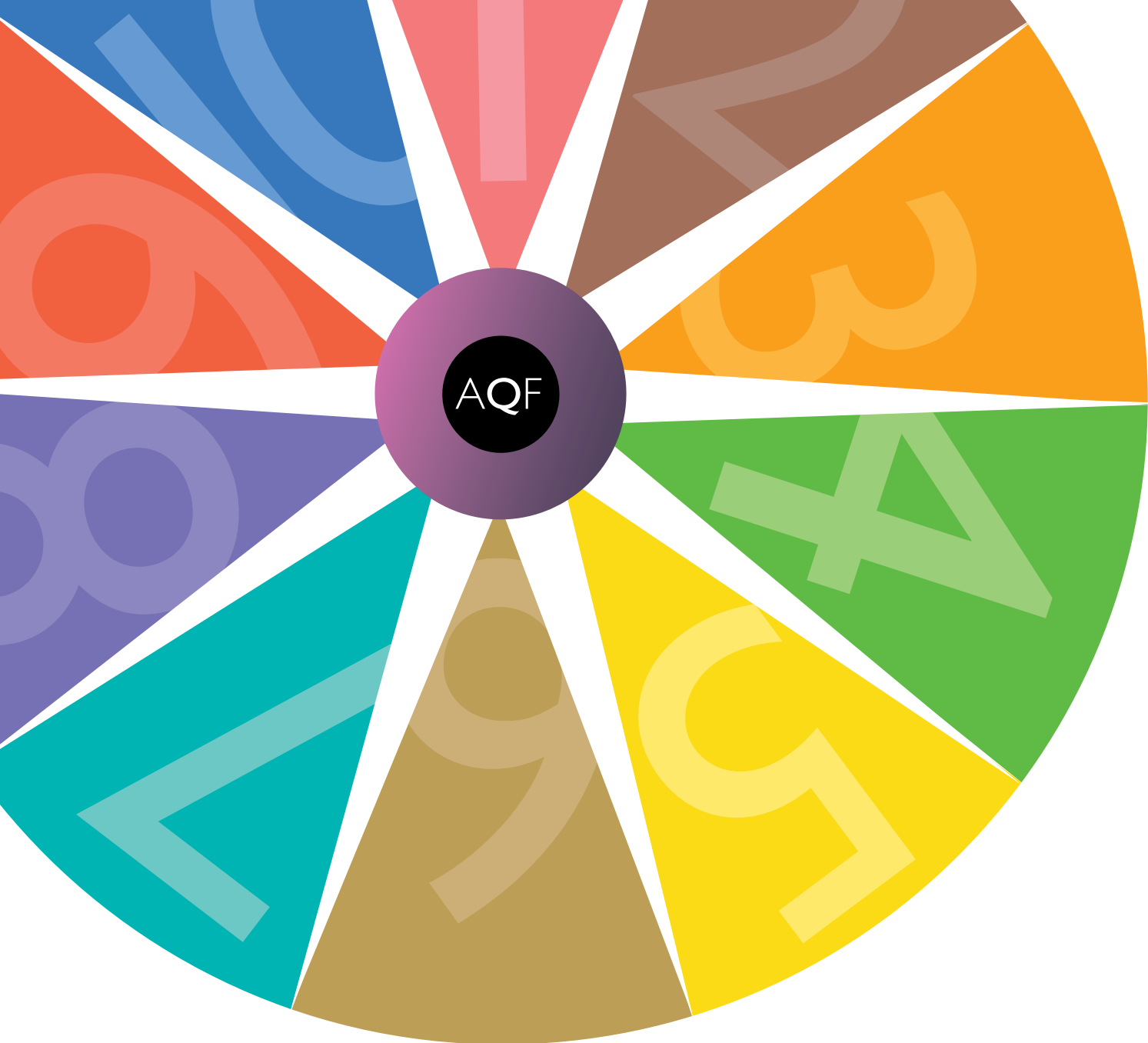
Issuing organisations must issue qualifications consistent with the *AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy*.

Issuing organisations will maintain a register of the AQF qualifications they have issued consistent with the *AQF Qualifications Register Policy*.

AQF qualification titles

The AQF qualification titles Vocational Graduate Certificate and Vocational Graduate Diploma have been removed from the AQF. All other titles remain as listed in the *AQF First Edition July 2011, AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy* section 2.3.

AQF level	Qualification Type	Qualification Title
	Senior Secondary Certificate of Education	Titles will vary across jurisdictions; the use of the titles will be accompanied by the statement: '(Certificate Title) is a Senior Secondary Certificate of Education within the Australian Qualifications Framework.'
1	Certificate I	Certificate I (Field of study/discipline)
2	Certificate II	Certificate II (Field of study/discipline)
3	Certificate III	Certificate III (Field of study/discipline)
4	Certificate IV	Certificate IV (Field of study/discipline)
5	Diploma	Diploma (Field of study/discipline)
6	Advanced Diploma	Advanced Diploma (Field of study/discipline)
6	Associate Degree	Associate Degree (Field of study/discipline)
7	Bachelor Degree	Bachelor (Field of study/discipline)
8	Bachelor Honours Degree	Bachelor (Field of study/discipline) (Honours)
8	Graduate Certificate	Graduate Certificate (Field of study/discipline)
8	Graduate Diploma	Graduate Diploma (Field of study/discipline)
9	Masters Degree (Research)	Master (Field of study/discipline)
9	Masters Degree (Coursework)	Master (Field of study/discipline)
9	Masters Degree (Extended)	Master (Field of study/discipline)
10	Doctoral Degree	Doctor (Field of study/discipline)
10	Higher Doctoral Degree	Doctor (Field of study/discipline)



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