APPENDIX 1:

DECREE ON THE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS ("OFFICIAL GAZETTE" NO.154, 30.11.2010)

According to Article 99 paragraph 2 of the Low on Higher Education („Official Gazette of Republic of Macedonia" No. 35/08, 103/08, 26/09, 83/09, 99/09 and 115/10), the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, on its session held on 17.11.2011, adopted

D E C R E E
On the National Framework for Higher Education Qualifications

Article 1

This Decree determine The National Framework for Higher Education Qualifications that closely define the profile, objectives and initial creation of the curricula of the first, second and third cycle of studies and curricula for vocational education shorter than three years.

Article 2

The National Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (hereinafter: the National Framework) is the only internationally recognized description, at the level of national higher education system, which describe all interconnected higher qualifications and learning outcomes and determine relationships between higher education qualifications.

The National Framework is mandatory national standard regulating the methods of acquisition and use of higher qualifications in the Republic of Macedonia.

The National Framework is an instrument for the establishment of higher education qualifications acquired in the Republic of Macedonia which provides the basis for visibility, access, passable, acquisition and quality of qualifications.

Article 3

The objectives of the National Framework are:

- to enable higher education institutions, employers, parents, prospective students and others to understand the achievements and characteristics of acquired title and the way qualifications are interlinked;
- to provide support to higher education institutions, students and others in the elucidation of potential routes for progression and transfer of credits especially in the context of wider participation in lifelong learning;
- to maintain comparability of norms, standards and methodology, especially those accepted in the only space for higher education, to ensure international competitiveness and to facilitate mobility of students and graduates;
- to help higher education institutions in the process of external quality assessment through the adoption of the starting points for the establishment and determination of academic standards.

Article 4

The National Framework has four levels and six sublevels as follows:

Level in the National Framework for Higher Education Qualifications		Higher Education	Level in the European Framework for Higher Education Qualifications
VIII		III cycle Doctoral Studies	8
VII	VIIA	II cycle Academic studies for Master Degree	7
	VIIB	II cycle Specialist Degree	
VI	VIA	I cycle University Studies 240 credits Professional Studies 240 credits	6
	VIB	I cycle University Studies 180 credits Professional Studies 180 credits	
V	VA	Professional Studies from 60 to 120 credits Short cycles within the first cycle	5
	VB	Vocational education associated with the first cycle of studies by 60ECTS	

Article 5

Qualification descriptor in terms of this Decree represents a description i.e. measurable indicator of learning outcomes and achievements for which the student has been assessed and which the student should be able to demonstrate for the qualification that is awarded.

The National Framework has general descriptors of the qualifications of each cycle of studies that reflect the usual skills and accomplishments of the student and relate to the qualifications that indicate completion of a specific cycle of studies.

Specific descriptors of qualifications that determine learning outcomes for individual study program from the corresponding cycle of studies are prepared by the higher education institution.

Data on skills and accomplishments acquired by the student, as well as the use of qualification are disclosed in the Diploma supplement.

Article 6

The description of learning outcomes for a given level of qualification is expressed with the following descriptors of qualifications:

- knowledge and understanding,
- applying knowledge and understanding,
- making judgment,
- communications skills, and
- learning skills.

Article 7

The titles of qualifications are defined in a way that allows their inclusion in the National Framework to be understandable to all stakeholders and they are in accordance with the Classification of scientific-research areas, fields and areas under the International Frascati Classification, which is given in addition to the Decree on the norms and standards for establishment of higher education institutions and for performing higher education activities.

For higher education qualifications in the Republic of Macedonia the Register is kept by the Ministry responsible for Higher Education.

Article 8

Determining the level of existing and new qualifications in the National Framework is based on learning outcomes specified for the given qualification.

A group of different qualifications acquired in different scientific areas of study, can be placed on the same level in the National Framework if they meet the general criteria for learning outcomes for that level.

The curricula can be of different or same scientific field, performed with different subjects, but such to allow the student to acquire the knowledge, skills and competencies specific to a given cycle, which prepare the student to enter the next cycle or provide him/her the opportunity for employment on the certain professional jobs.

The level of qualification is determined by meeting the requirement for the minimum number of credits for the given level, too. For each qualification, the total number of credits is clearly and unambiguously stated in the qualification.

Article 9

The study program for which the qualification is awarded allows comparison with other qualifications, define the target group for which the qualification was designed and determine the learning outcomes in the form of general descriptors of qualification for the whole study program and specific descriptors of qualification for each subject within the study program.

Article 10

The qualifications consist of obligatory courses that define the essential knowledge and skills and elective courses in addition to the specific skills acquired by the obligatory subjects.

Optional items that are deemed necessary for certain jobs are not necessary for the award of the qualification.

For each qualification, the structure of the proportion of courses is clearly stated.

Article 11

Qualifications that signify successful completion of the short cycle (60 – 120 ECTS) are awarded to a person who meets the following descriptors of qualifications:

knowledge and understanding	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding in area that builds upon general secondary education supported by advanced textbooks; Possess knowledge to support the field of work or vocation, opportunity for personal development and extension of additional studies to complete the first cycle.
applying knowledge and understanding	Ability for practical and professional application of knowledge and understanding.
making judgment	Ability to search, identify and use data to formulate responses and solutions to well-defined concrete and abstract problems.
communications skills	Capability to communicate about the specific abstract problems, skills

	and activities, with peers, supervisors and clients.
Learning skills	Have the learning skills to undertake further studies with some autonomy.

Qualifications that signify a successful completion of the first cycle of study (180 – 240 ECTS) are awarded to person who meets the following descriptors of qualifications:

knowledge and understanding	Have demonstrated knowledge and understanding founded upon prior education and training within the main field of study, including knowledge about the range of theoretical, practical, conceptual, comparative and critical perspectives in the field within appropriate methodology; Understanding in a particular area and familiarity with current research issues and new sources of knowledge; Have demonstrated knowledge and understanding of various theories, methodologies.
applying knowledge and understanding	Can apply their knowledge and understanding in a manner that indicates a professional approach to work or vocation; Have demonstrated competences for indentifying, analyzing and solving problems; Be able to devise and sustain arguments within their field of study.
making judgment	Ability to gather, analyze, evaluate, and present information, ideas, concepts from relevant data; Exercise appropriate judgment, taking into account relevant personal, social, scientific or ethical aspects; Ability to evaluate theoretical and practical issues, to explain the reasons and to choose an appropriate solution.
communications skills	Can communicate and discuss information, ideas, problems and solutions on the contexts where criteria for decisions and the scope of the task may be well defined to both specialist and non- specialist audiences; Take shared responsibility for collective results; Ability for independent participation into specific, scientific and interdisciplinary discussions, with a professional approach.
learning skills	Take initiative to identify and address learning needs for further knowledge and ongoing learning, with a high degree of autonomy.

Qualifications that signify a successful completion of the second cycle of study (60– 120 ECTS) is awarded to a person who meets the following descriptors of qualifications:

knowledge and understanding	Have demonstrated knowledge and understanding founded upon Bachelor level within the main field of study, implementing methodologies appropriate for solving complex problems, both systematically and creatively, that provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing and/or applying autonomous ideas in a research context; Ability to use an expanded and deepened knowledge; Have demonstrated high levels of specialist competence in one or

	more specific fields Possess knowledge of one or more subject areas in the given scientific fields, based on the most renowned international scientific research in that field.
applying knowledge and understanding	Ability to critically, independently and creatively solve problems with some originality in new or unfamiliar environments within multidisciplinary context related to their field of study.
making judgment	Ability to synthesize and integrate knowledge; Ability to deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgments even on the basis of incomplete or restricted information, but that include reflecting on the personal, social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and judgments; Ability to assess and make selection of scientific theories, methodologies, tools and general skills in the subject areas, and to establish a new analysis and solutions on a scientific basis.
communications skills	Can communicate their conclusions and recommendations with the argumentation of the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to both specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously; Take over significant responsibility for the collective results; lead and initiate activity.
learning skills	Ability to identify personal need for further knowledge and to operate independently, to acquire new knowledge and skills autonomously within the societal context; Ability to take responsibility for further professional development and improvement.

Qualifications that signify a successful completion of the third cycle of study are awarded to a person who meets the following descriptors of qualifications:

knowledge and understanding	Have demonstrated a systematic understanding of a field of study and mastery of methods and skills of research within that field in accordance with the highest international standards.
applying knowledge and understanding	Have demonstrated the ability to conceive, design, implement and adapt a substantial process of research with scholarly integrity; Have made a contribution through original research that extends the frontier of knowledge by developing a substantial body of work, some of which merits national or international refereed publication.
making judgment	Ability of critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas, having assessment competences; Ability to independently initiate and participate in national and international research networks and events with scientific integrity Ability to independently initiate research and development projects that will generate new knowledge and skills for development in the research field.
communications skills	Can communicate with their peers, the larger academic community and with society in general about the scope of their expertise.

learning skills	Can be expected to be able to promote, within academic and professional contexts, technological, social or cultural advancement in a knowledge based society.

Article 12

Each qualification in the National Framework should be compatible with the related qualification from the European Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

The procedure of verifying the compatibility of the National Framework with the European Framework for Higher Education Qualifications is carried out at least every five years.

Article 13

The degrees of higher education acquired before the entry into force of this Decree, compared with levels in the NF HEQcorrespond to:

Level in the National Framework for Higher Education Qualifications	VIII	VII		VI		V	
		VIIA	VIIB	VIA	VIB	VA	VB
Former degrees	VIII	VII/2		VII/1		VI	

Article 14

Specific descriptors of the qualifications which determine learning outcomes for the individual study program from the corresponding cycle of studies are submitted to the Ministry of Higher Education and are published on the websites of the higher education institutions.

Article 15

The regulation (provision of) from Article 14 of this Decree will be applied six months from the date of enactment of this Decree.

Article 16

This Decree shall enter into force eight days after it is published the „Official Gazette of Republic of Macedonia“.

Nr. 51-6508/1
17.November 2010
Skopje

Vice President of the Government
of Republic of Macedonia
MA Zoran Stavreski, hand-signed

APPENDIX 2:

10 steps in Developing a National Qualifications Framework

(Report by the Bologna Working Party on Qualifications Frameworks, Conference of Ministers of Education of the Bologna Process, London 2007)

The process of developing national qualifications frameworks may be summarized in 10 essential steps.

1. Decision to start: Taken by the national body responsible for higher education (minister?)
2. Setting the agenda: The purpose of our NQF WG-Report nr. 1 (section 2.3)
3. Organizing the process: Identifying stakeholders; setting up a committee/WG
4. Design Profile: Level structure, Level descriptors (learning outcomes), Credit ranges
5. Consultation National discussion and acceptance of design by stakeholders
6. Approval According to national tradition by Minister/Government/legislation
7. Administrative set-up Division of tasks of implementation between HEI, QAA and other bodies
8. Implementation at institutional/programme level; Reformulation of individual study programmes to learning outcome based approach
9. Inclusion of qualifications in the NQF; Accreditation or similar (cfr. Berlin Communiqué)
10. Self-certification of compatibility with the EHEA framework (Alignment to Bologna cycles etc.); WG Report nr. 1; Pilot projects

The sequence of steps need not be identical in all countries.