



**REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA MINISTRY OF  
EDUCATION AND SCIENCE**

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**LAW  
ON NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK**

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# LAW ON THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

## I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

### Subject

#### Article 1

This law regulates the National Qualifications Framework, the levels and sub-levels of qualifications, the types of qualifications, the volume of qualifications, the competent authorities for proposing, adopting and classifying of qualifications, the competent institutions to act in accordance with this law, as well as referencing the National Qualifications Framework with the European Qualifications Framework and the Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area.

### Definitions

#### Article 2

The specific terms used in this Law shall have the following meanings:

1. *National Qualifications Framework (NQF)* is an instrument for establishing a system of qualifications acquired in a particular country, which provides a basis for the acquisition, progression and quality of qualifications.

2. *Macedonian Qualifications Framework (MQF)* is an obligatory national standard that regulates the acquisition and use of qualifications in the Republic of Macedonia and an instrument for establishing a system of qualifications acquired in the Republic of Macedonia that provide the bases for the transparency, access, progression, acquisition and quality of qualifications.

3. *European Qualifications Framework (EQF)* represents a common reference framework which links the qualifications systems in different countries and is an instrument for the recognition and understanding of qualifications.

4. *Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA)* is an instrument for establishing the levels of qualifications in the higher education system for the purpose of recognition and understanding of qualifications among the different national qualifications frameworks of the European Higher Education Area.

5. *Skill* is the ability to apply knowledge, perform tasks and solve problems. Skills are described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, creative and intuitive thinking) and practical (manual work and the use of methods, instruments, tools and materials).

6. *Knowledge and understanding* is a set of acquired and systematised information, i.e. a set of theoretical and factual information.

7. *Lifelong learning* is the activity of formal, non-formal or informal learning throughout the whole life, aimed at improving knowledge, skills and competences for personal, professional or social needs.

8. *Institution* is an entity or another body that is verified/accredited to educate, train and assess participants who acquire qualifications. Institutions offer formal and non-formal programmes that lead to qualifications and issue public documents for them.

9. *Qualification* is a formal result of the evaluation and confirmation process that is acquired when the responsible institution confirms that an individual has achieved the learning outcomes in accordance with established standards.

10. *Competences* are a set of acquired knowledge and skills, i.e. the proven ability to use the knowledge and skills in situations of learning or work.

11. *Key competences* are a set of competences to a certain level, required to satisfy the personal, social or professional needs of the individual in the process of lifelong learning. There are eight key competences: communication in one's mother tongue, communication in a foreign language, mathematical, technical and scientific competence, civic awareness, information technology, entrepreneurship, learning to learn and cultural expression.

12. *Credit system* is a system of accumulation and transfer of credits based on the transparency of the learning outcomes and the learning processes.

13. *Credit* is a quantitative measure for expressing the volume of learning, based on the volume of work that is required of the participants, so that they can achieve the expected outcomes of the learning process at a given level.

14. *Credit transfer* is the process through which the value of the learning outcomes, achieved in a system or institution, can be determined in another system or institution.

15. *Module* is an independent unit of learning that is complete or a part of an educational programme.

16. *Levels in the framework* is a series of successive steps of learning, expressed in terms of a series of general outcomes, structured according to a set of level descriptors.

17. *Descriptions of qualifications* are measurable indicators of learning outcomes relating to acquired knowledge, skills and competences.

18. *Assessment* is the process of the evaluation of knowledge, skills and competences according to predefined criteria and learning outcomes, which includes written, oral and practical tests, exams, projects and a portfolio.

19. *Learning outcomes* are statements about what the participant knows, understands and is able to do, as a result of the formal, non-formal or informal learning process. Learning outcomes are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competences (autonomy and responsibility).

20. *Programme (educational/ study)* is a set of educational components, based on learning outcomes, which are recognised for the award of a specific qualification.

21. *Formal learning* is an activity provided by an educational institution or a training facility that is conducted in accordance with certain approved programmes, in order to advance knowledge, skills and competences, wherefore a public document shall be issued.

22. *Non-formal learning* signifies organised learning activities in order to improve knowledge, skills and competences for personal, social or professional needs and most frequently does not lead to the issuing of a public document.

23. *Informal learning* is learning resulting from daily life activities related to work, family or leisure time. It is not structured in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support.

## **Principles**

### Article 3

The National Qualifications Framework (hereinafter referred to as: NQF) shall be based on the following principles

- Learning outcomes are expressed through knowledge, skills and competences;
- Classification of qualifications at levels and sub-levels;
- Transferability of credits;

- Comparability with the European Qualifications Framework (hereinafter referred to as: EQF);
- Quality assurance in the process of acquisition and development of qualifications;
- Providing conditions for equal access to education throughout the whole life for the acquisition and recognition of qualifications;
- Strengthening the competitiveness of the Macedonian economy that is based on human potentials;
- Establishing a coordinated system of quality assurance of existing and new qualifications and
- Building a system for validation of non-formal and informal learning.

## **Goals**

### Article 4

The NQF has the following goals:

- To clearly define learning outcomes,
- To establish a system for validation of different qualifications within the overall system of qualifications,
- To encourage and promote learning throughout the whole life (lifelong learning),
- To demonstrate the clear links between different parts of the education system,
- To indicate the progression (horizontal and vertical) through and within all types of education and training (formal, non-formal and informal),
- To enable international comparability of qualifications,
- To promote the importance of key and vocational competences,
- To ensure the mobility of participants in the process of education and training, and inclusion in the labour market at the national and international level,
- To create a single system for quality management,
- To balance the quality of service providers,
- To ensure the cooperation of all stakeholders,

- To ensure harmonisation with socio-economic and cultural needs of the country and
- To be part of the system correlated with the development of the activities of the European Qualifications Framework.

## **II. MACEDONIAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK**

### **Macedonian Qualifications Framework**

#### Article 5

The Macedonian Qualifications Framework is a mandatory unique internationally recognisable description that describes all interconnected qualifications and learning outcomes and determines the relationships between qualifications.

### **Standard of qualifications**

#### Article 6

The qualification standard referred to in Article 5 of this Law shall comprise the following:

- Title of the qualification,
- Type of the qualification,
- Level or sub-level of the qualification,
- Code of the qualification,
- Credit value of the qualification,
- Description of the qualification and
- Contents of the qualification (entry requirements, number of mandatory and elective subjects, i.e. modules, assessment and assessment criteria of learning outcomes).

## Structure of the Macedonian Qualifications Framework

### Article 7

(1) The Macedonian Qualifications Framework shall comprise the following:

- Levels or sub-levels of qualifications,
- Descriptions of learning levels and outcomes for each level of qualification,
- Types of qualifications and documents serving as evidence for the acquired qualification and
- Volume/ Volume of the qualification.

(2) The descriptions of learning outcomes referred to in paragraph (1), indent 2 of this Article shall be, as follows:

Level I	Knowledge and understanding	Skills	Competences
<b>VIII</b>	<p>Demonstrates a systematic understanding of the field of research and perfect knowledge of research methods and skills within this field in accordance with the highest international standards;</p> <p>Possesses knowledge gained with their own research or work, thus significantly contributing to the professional and scientific field of research, but also in the related fields.</p>	<p>Displays the ability to interpret, design, apply and adapt the essential subject of the research with scientific integrity;</p> <p>Uses their knowledge as a basis for original ideas and researches that exceed the current boundaries of knowledge, developing new knowledge, valued on the level of national and international peer-reviewed publications;</p> <p>Ability for critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas, necessary for solving complex problems in the field of research;</p> <p>Ability for independent initiation and participation in national and international research networks and events with scientific integrity;</p> <p>Ability for independent initiation of research and development projects, through which new knowledge will be</p>	<p>Takes maximum responsibility for the outcomes of their own work, but also for the work of the others in the group;</p> <p>Takes responsibility for managing complex processes, while simultaneously ensuring the professional development of the individual and the group as a whole;</p>

		<p>generated as well as skills for development in the field of research;</p> <p>Expected to be able of promoting themselves in academic and professional frameworks and in the technological, social or cultural development in a knowledge-based society;</p> <p>Ability to communicate with their colleagues, wider academic community and with society as a whole within their field of expertise;</p>	
<p><b>VII</b></p>	<p>Displays knowledge and understanding of the scientific field of study (or learning) that is built upon the first cycle, by applying methodologies appropriate for resolving complex problems, both in a systematic and creative manner which provides the basis or the possibility for originality in the development and/or application of autonomous ideas in the context of the research;</p> <p>Displays a high level of professional competence in one or more specific scientific fields;</p> <p>Possesses knowledge from one or more subject areas, which in the given scientific fields are based on most renowned scientific researches in that scientific field, as well as the ability to connect wider and deeper knowledge in related professions or fields of science.</p>	<p>Ability for critical, independent and creative problem-solving with certain originality in new or unknown environments and in multi-disciplinary contexts, connected with the field of study;</p> <p>Ability to synthesize and integrate the knowledge and to handle complex issues, in a systematic and creative manner;</p> <p>Ability to evaluate and select scientific theories, methodologies, tools and general skills from the subject areas, and to put forward new analyses and solutions on a scientific basis;</p> <p>Ability to recognize the personal need for further knowledge and ability for independent and autonomous actions when acquiring new knowledge and skills in general terms;</p> <p>Ability to exchange conclusions and proposals by arguing and rationally substantiating thereof, both with experts and non-experts</p>	<p>Displays significant responsibility for own and mutual results, for leading and initiating activities;</p> <p>Ability for solid evaluation even of incomplete and limited information, which includes the personal, social and ethical responsibilities in the application of the acquired knowledge and evaluation thereof;</p> <p>Ability of taking responsibility for further professional development and education, both for themselves and for the group with which they cooperate.</p>



		clearly and unambiguously;	
<b>VI</b>	<p>Displays knowledge and understanding in the scientific field of study that is built upon previous education and training, including the domain of theoretical, practical, conceptual, comparative and critical perspectives in the scientific field according to the relevant methodology;</p> <p>Understanding of a certain area and knowledge of current issues in relation to scientific researches and new sources of knowledge;</p> <p>Displays knowledge and understanding of different theories and methodologies necessary for the wider area of research.</p>	<p>Is able to apply knowledge and understanding in a manner that reflects a professional approach to the work or profession;</p> <p>Displays the ability to identify, analyse and solve problems;</p> <p>Ability to find and support arguments within the profession or the field of study;</p> <p>Ability to collect, analyse, evaluate and present information, ideas and concepts from the relevant data;</p> <p>Ability to assess theoretical and practical issues, provide explanations for the reasons and select an appropriate solution;</p> <p>Takes initiative to identify the requirements for acquiring further knowledge and study with a high degree of independence;</p> <p>Ability to communicate and discuss information, ideas, problems and solutions, when the decision criteria and the volume of the task have been clearly defined, both with experts and the non-expert public;</p>	<p>Takes responsibility for own results and the divided responsibility for collective results;</p> <p>Ability for independent participation, with a professional approach, in specific scientific and interdisciplinary discussions.</p> <p>Makes the relevant judgement by taking into consideration the personal, social, scientific and ethical aspects.</p>
<b>V</b>	<p>Displays knowledge and understanding in the field of study or work that is built upon general secondary education supported with professional literature;</p> <p>Possesses specialist theoretical and professional knowledge and understanding of individual</p>	<p>Applies skills that are based on understanding of theoretical principles and their application in solving problems and in the execution of complex and specific tasks in the field of work and study, with the selection and use of relevant data, methods, procedures, techniques, instruments, devices, tools and materials;</p>	<p>Has a high degree of personal and business responsibility, and ability to evaluate their own work and the work of the group based on criteria in the field of work;</p> <p>Ability to transfer knowledge to others, organize, communicate</p>

	<p>basic theories from the narrow scientific and expertise area; Possesses limited knowledge of contemporary developments in the area of work or study which provides support to the field of work or profession, potential for personal development and basis for further studies to complete the first cycle.</p>	<p>Possesses the skills to study in order to become able to take over further researches with a certain degree of independence;  Possesses the ability to communicate and discuss with target groups from the narrow profession or area of study, with colleagues, superiors and clients.</p>	<p>and control own work and the work of others;  Takes responsibility for own results, but also shares responsibility for the activities, results and work of others in the group.</p>
IV	<p>Knows the concepts, principles and processes from the study subjects and areas;  Possesses systematic, theoretical and professional knowledge within the determined area of work or study that includes analysing and connecting facts and theoretical principles when performing the work, while at the same time enabling further studying.</p>	<p>Possesses various cognitive, practical and creative skills, based on theoretical knowledge and principles, necessary for studying, working and solving problems in changeable conditions in a certain field of work or study;  Trained to collect, analyse, select and use relevant information from various sources, tools, methodologies, techniques and materials in the area of study;  Trained to perform complex procedures and use methods, instruments, tools, installations and materials in the operation;  Communicates and cooperates with the group in changeable conditions.</p>	<p>Independently plans, organizes and runs their own work and conducts supervision of the mutual work; Independently performs complex tasks and solves problems, adjusting their behaviour in accordance with the provided instructions, in changeable conditions; Responsible for own work and the work of the group, for the purpose of evaluating the results of the work and improving the quality, in accordance with predefined standards and criteria.</p>
III	<p>Possesses theoretical and systematic adopted professional knowledge, facts, principles, processes and general concepts for a certain area of work or study, while at the same time enabling further studying.</p>	<p>Possesses practical and creative skills that enable the solving of known (predictable) and less known (unpredictable) situations;  Performs work and tasks of medium complexity, less standardized and relatively clear;  Uses various devices, tools, equipment and materials in the process of production and in</p>	<p>Plans, prepares, organizes and values their own work, based on predetermined authorization, within the volume of their work; Performs work that is not always defined in advance, with a certain degree of autonomy and responsibility.</p>

		the services;  Communicates and cooperates with the group.	
II	Possesses basic theoretical and professional knowledge, necessary for the requirements of the work, which can be applied when performing simple working tasks, while at the same time enabling further studying.	Possesses practical and creative skills for solving simple or less complex and predefined work in known conditions and predictable situations. Uses simple methods, tools, instruments, devices and materials based on detailed instructions;  Communicates and cooperates with certain persons.	Works independently under known conditions and under intermittent supervision and with limited responsibility for performing working tasks; Establishes simple communication and cooperation with some employees in known situations.
I	Possesses basic knowledge of the function of certain objects and occurrences with the possibility to apply them in practice and other disciplines, while at the same time enabling further studying.	Possesses basic skills for performing simple operations;  Uses simple methods, tools and instruments with instructions and under supervision; Possesses general rules of communication.	Performs simple tasks under direct supervision; Takes responsibility for performing working tasks.

### **Volume of the qualifications**

#### Article 8

(1) For each qualification the volume/volume of qualification is determined, as well as the average total time required to acquire a certain qualification. The volume of the qualifications, i.e. their credit value, is determined by the number of credits.

(2) The credit measures the workload of the candidate who is studying by taking into consideration the time required to acquire a single qualification, i.e. to accomplish the learning outcomes.

(3) For each educational programme, module, teaching subject or other unit of studying, a certain number of credits is allocated.

(4) The total average time required to acquire a certain qualification is given in the ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) for credits in higher education, ECVET (European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training) for credits in vocational education and training and the MGECS (Macedonian General

Education Credit System) for credits in primary education, general secondary education and general education subjects in vocational education and training.

(5) For qualifications acquired based on original scientific or artistic research, the average total time spent is expressed by the number of years of research in the position.

(6) A single ECTS credit covers 30 working hours of the duration of 60 minutes each as required to achieve certain learning outcomes from the studying.

(6) A single ECVET credit covers 25 working hours of the duration of 45 minutes each as required to achieve certain learning outcomes from the studying.

(8) A single MGECS credit covers 25 working hours of the duration of 45 minutes each as required to achieve certain learning outcomes from the studying.

(9) The minimum number of credits from paragraphs (4), (5) and (6) of this Article cannot be lower than one credit.

(10) The volume of the qualifications for each level of education is determined with a minimum of 60 credits, which corresponds to one year of school, i.e. one year of study.

### **Levels and sub-levels of qualifications**

#### Article 9

(1) In the Macedonian Qualifications Framework there are eight levels and six sub-levels:

- Level I applies to completed primary education and the participants receive a diploma, while for non-formal education and training it applies to knowledge and skills for functional literacy and numeric skills and the participants receive a certificate.
- Level II applies to vocational training with a duration of two years and the participants receive a *certificate for vocational training*, while for non-formal education and training it applies to trainings to acquire qualifications or part of qualifications (level of complexity 1 and 2 in line with the occupational standards) and the participants receive a certificate.
- Level III applies to vocational education for occupations with a duration of three years and the participants receive a diploma, while in non-formal education and training it applies to trainings to acquire qualifications or part of qualifications (level of complexity 3 in line with the occupational standards) and the participants receive a

certificate. Students with special educational needs for level III are educated for four years and they receive a diploma.

- Level IV applies to general secondary education, technical vocational education or art education with a duration of four years and the participants receive a diploma, while in non-formal education and training it applies to trainings to acquire qualifications or part of qualifications (level of complexity 4 in line with the occupational standards) and the participants receive a certificate. Students with special educational needs for level IV are educated for five years and they receive a diploma.
- Level V, sub-level VB applies to post-secondary school education (specialist education and craftsmanship) and the participants receive a diploma for specialist education and a diploma for Master of crafts.
- Level V, sub-level VA applies to short cycle studies in higher education and the participants receive a certificate.
- Level VI, sub-levels VIB and VIA apply to 3-year and 4-year undergraduate studies and the participants receive a diploma.
- Level VII, sub-levels VIIA and VIIB apply to master and specialist studies and the participants receive a diploma.
- Level VIII applies to doctorate studies and the participants receive a diploma.

**Number of credits acquired from levels and sub-levels in the Macedonian Qualification Framework and comparability with the levels of the European Qualifications Framework**

Article 10

MQF level	Sub-level	General education	Formal vocational education and training	Informal education and training	Higher education	EQF level
VIII					III Study cycle Doctorate studies	8
VII	VII A				II Study cycle Master academic studies (from 60 to 120)	7

					credits)	
	<b>VII B</b>				II Study cycle Specialist studies (60 credits)	
<b>VI</b>	<b>VI A</b>				Study cycle University studies (240 credits) Vocational studies (240 credits)	<b>6</b>
	<b>VI B</b>				Study cycle University studies (180 credits) Vocational studies (180 credits)	
<b>V</b>	<b>V A</b>				Vocational studies (from 60 to 120 credits) Short cycle programmes within the first cycle	<b>5</b>
	<b>V B</b>		Post-secondary school education (specialist education and craftsmanship)	Post-secondary school education (specialist education and craftsmanship)	Post-secondary school education (from 60 to 120 credits)	
<b>IV</b>		Secondary school education (240 credits)	Four-year technical education (240 credits)	Non-formal education for acquiring a qualification or part of a qualification (level of complexity – IV, in accordance with the occupational standards		<b>4</b>
<b>III</b>			Vocational education for occupations (three years) (180 credits)	Non-formal education for acquiring a qualification or part of a qualification (level of complexity – III, in accordance with the occupational standards)		<b>3</b>
<b>II</b>			Vocational training (up to two years) (from 60 to 120 credits)	Non-formal education for acquiring a qualification or part of a qualification (level of complexity – I and II, in		<b>2</b>

			accordance with the occupational standards)		
I	Primary (elementary) education		Functional literacy and numeric skills		1

### **Types of qualifications**

#### Article 11

Types of qualifications are:

- Educational qualifications and;
- Vocational qualifications.

### **Acquiring qualifications**

#### Article 12

(1) Educational qualifications are acquired by completing publicly adopted education programmes and achievements of the learning outcomes thereof, following the assessment prescribed by law. The qualifications, according to the range of general and vocational knowledge and competences, enable personal and professional development, i.e. the possibility to continue education or join the labour market (employment).

(2) The evidence for acquiring an educational qualification is a certificate, certificate for completed appropriate grade and diploma.

(3) Vocational qualifications are acquired for part of the publicly adopted education programmes, modules and courses, or by completing special education programmes, following an assessment performed in accordance with the law. These qualifications represent a formally recognized training to complete tasks within one or more occupations at a certain level of requirement.

(4) Vocational qualifications constitute proof that smaller groups of learning outcomes have been achieved or combinations of learning outcomes that do not meet the requirements for achieving the education level.

(5) Vocational qualifications constitute vocational competences from one or more standards of occupation.

(6) Vocational qualifications acquired in an non-formal manner are evaluated and confirmed by a expert committee formed by the Sectoral Qualification Councils from Article 18 of this law. Assessment and verification means assessment of the evidence and the practical skills and knowledge.

(7) The evidence of an acquired vocational qualification is a certificate.

### **Development of qualifications**

#### Article 13

(1) The following bodies are competent for the development of qualifications from level I to level V-B:

- Vocational Education and Training Centre,
- Adult Education Centre, and
- Bureau for Development of Education.

(2) Higher education institutions are competent for the development of qualifications from level V-A to level VIII.

### **Sectoral qualifications**

#### Article 14

(1) Qualifications are grouped according to the sector to which they belong. (2) The sectors of qualifications contain sub-sectors, areas and sub-areas. (3) Sub-sectors, areas and sub-areas are defined by Sectoral Qualification Councils according to the content of the work, in accordance with the needs of the labour market, economy, society and education, as well as when grouping qualifications that have the same or similar requirements for knowledge and skills, i.e. learning outcomes.

(4) Sectors of qualifications are:

1	Geology, mining and metallurgy
2	Civil engineering and geodesy
3	Graphic industry
4	Economics, law and trade
5	Electrical engineering



6	Healthcare and social protection
7	Agriculture, fishing and veterinary medicine
8	Personal services
9	Mechanical engineering
10	Traffic, transport and storage
11	Textile, leather and similar products
12	Food service industry and tourism
13	Chemistry and technology
14	Forestry and wood processing
15	Sport and recreation
16	Arts

(5) For higher education qualifications, the international Frascati classification applies in scientific disciplines, fields and areas.

(6) Each sector of qualification has its own framework within which the qualifications are distributed according to type and level. The sectoral qualification framework enables comparison between the types and levels of qualifications in the sector, and shows the possibility for mobility and progression within the sector and the acquisition of the same qualification in a different manner (e.g. upon the completion of an education programme, upon assessment of previously acquired knowledge, skills and competences, etc.).

(7) The sectoral qualification framework are prepared based on the analysis of the conditions in the sector, i.e. the area of labour (condition in the labour market, possibility of acquiring qualifications, trends in the development of the occupation, international comparisons, etc.).

(8) The sectoral qualification frameworks represent a developmental concept, and it is possible to supplement them with new qualifications in accordance with the needs and changes in the labour market.

### **III. COMPETENT AUTHORITIES, INSTITUTIONS, BODIES AND COMMITTEES**

#### Article 15

The competent authorities, institutions, bodies and committees for the development, check, adoption, recognition and classification of qualifications in the Macedonian Qualifications Framework are:

- National Board for the Macedonian Qualifications Framework,
- Ministry of Education and Science,
- Ministry of Labour and Social Policy,
- Bureau for Development of Education,
- Vocational Education and Training Centre,
- Adult Education Centre, and
- Sectoral Qualification Councils.

#### **National Board for Macedonian Qualifications Framework**

#### Article 16

(1) For the purpose of improving the system of qualifications, and approval and classification of qualifications in the Macedonian Qualifications Framework, the National Board for the Macedonian Qualifications Framework is formed by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia (hereinafter referred to as: the National Board).

(2) The National Board has a seal with the following text: Republic of Macedonia – National Board for the Macedonian Qualifications Framework – Skopje. In the middle of the seal is the coat of arms of the Republic of Macedonia.

(3) The National Board is comprised of a President and eleven members.

(4) The President of the National Board is one of the members of the National Board and they are elected by the members at the constitutive meeting that is convened by the Minister in charge of education issues. The President of the National Board presents and represents the National Board.

(5) The members of the National Board are comprised of one representative appointed by each of the following:

- Ministry of Labour and Social Policy,
- Bureau for Development of Education,
- Vocational Education and Training Centre,
- Adult Education Centre, and
- National Agency for European Education Programmes and Mobility,
- Higher education institution, which is proposed by the Inter-University conference,
- Economic Chamber of Commerce of the Republic of Macedonia, Macedonian Chambers of Commerce, Chamber of Crafts of the Republic of Macedonia and Economic Chamber of Northwest Macedonia.
- Independent Union for Education, Science and Culture of the Republic of Macedonia
- Organisation of Employers of Macedonia and
- Two representatives from the Ministry of Education and Science.

(6) The President and members of the National Board must meet the following conditions for appointment:

- Completed higher education and
- Minimum five years of working experience in the sector, of which two years in the area of lifelong learning and qualifications.

(7) The President and members of the National Board are appointed for a term of four years, and can serve a maximum of two terms.

(8) The members of the National Board are independent and autonomous in their work and cannot be removed before the expiry of their term, except in the cases where a member of the National Board has his/her status as an employee in the institution they represent on the board terminated on any grounds, he/she is appointed or elected to a function that would render it impossible to remain a member, the National Board concludes that the member has been unable to perform his/her obligations for more than six months, or there is a conflict of interest determined by law.

(9) The National Board shall perform the following obligations:

- perform evaluations of policies on education, employment, lifelong professional

guidance and regional development from the aspect of the development of human potential and their contribution to the increase of the competitiveness of the Republic of Macedonia.

- give recommendations on improvements for linking the education system with the needs of the labour market,
- adopt decisions for the distribution of the qualifications in the Macedonian Qualifications Framework;
- propose the development and improvement of qualifications to the competent institutions;
- adopt decisions for the harmonization of current qualifications with the Macedonian Qualifications Framework;
- monitor the development of the Macedonian Qualifications Framework as a whole;
- develop and adopt methodological documents for classifying qualifications;
- form Sectoral Qualification Councils,
- determine the relevant criteria for the operation of Sectoral Qualification Councils and give directions for their operation;
  - decide on the definition of sub-sectors, areas and sub-areas within the qualification sectors;
  - review and adopt reports adopted by the Sectoral Qualification Councils and
  - give recommendations on the operation of Sectoral Qualification Councils, based on the submitted reports.

(10) The professional and administrative operations of the National Board are performed by the Ministry of Education and Science.

(11) For its operation, the National Board submits a report for adoption to the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, no later than 31 January, for the preceding year.

(12) The President and the members of the National Board are entitled to remuneration for their work on the National Board, with the amount determined by the Government, based on attendance at the meetings of the National Board.

(13) The funding for the operation of the National Board is provided from the Budget of the Republic of Macedonia in a special programme in the budget of the Ministry of Education and Science, as well as from own revenues.

(14) The Minister in charge of educational issues determines with an act the type and amount of the fees payable as compensation for expenses incurred in the procedure

for approval and classification of qualifications in the Macedonian Qualifications Framework, based on the actually incurred costs.

(15) The organization, operation, manner of decision-making, methodology for approval and classification of qualifications in the Macedonian Qualifications Framework, and the standards for approval and classification of qualifications in the Macedonian Qualifications Framework, as well as other issues in relation to the operation of the National Board are more specifically regulated with a rulebook.

(16) The rulebook from paragraph (15) of this Article is adopted by the National Board, upon the prior consent of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia.

### **Competent bodies and authorities for the coordination of the application and development of the Macedonian Qualifications Framework**

#### Article 17

(1) The coordination of the application and development of the Macedonian Qualifications Framework is performed by the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

(2) The Ministry of Education and Science:

- gives directions for the development of qualification standards,
- references the Macedonian Qualifications Framework with the European Qualifications Framework and with the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area,
- monitors the application and development of the national qualifications framework in other countries and
- informs the public on professional issues related to the Macedonian Qualifications Framework.

(3) The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy:

- establishes and develops a system for receiving information on the current and future needs of the labour market and the required competences,
- collects data on changes of the competences necessary for occupations,
- proposes the development of qualification standards and occupational standards according to the labour market,

- participates in the preparation of strategic documents and analyses for the development of the Macedonian Qualifications Framework in order to increase employment and strengthen competitiveness of the Republic of Macedonia,
- develops a methodology for the preparation of occupational standards, and
- monitors the employment of persons with acquired qualifications.

## **Sectoral Qualification Committees**

### Article 18

(1) The National Board, for each qualification sector from Article 14 paragraph (4) of this law, forms a Sectoral Qualification Council.

(2) Each Sectoral Qualification Council has a President and eight members, one member from each of the following: the competent ministry, Ministry of Education and Science, association of employers from the relevant sector, representative union of the employees in the respective sector, universities, Vocational Education and Training Centre, Adult Education Centre, Bureau for Development of Education, and the relevant authorities for regulated professions (bar associations, medical associations, chamber of engineers, etc.).

(3) The university representative is proposed by the Inter-University conference, according to the sub-sectors, areas and sub-areas of operation of Sectoral Qualification Council.

(4) The President and members of Sectoral Qualification Councils have a four-year term, and can serve a maximum of two terms.

(5) Sectoral Qualification Councils adopt rules of procedure for their operation, with the consent of the National Board.

(6) The necessary professional and administrative operations of Sectoral Qualification Councils are performed by the Ministry of Education and Science.

(7) The President and members of Sectoral Qualification Councils are entitled to remuneration for their work on the Sectoral Qualification Council, with the amount determined by the minister competent for education issues, based on attendance at the meetings of the Sectoral Qualification Council.

## **Competences of the Sectoral Qualification Councils**

### Article 19

Sectoral Qualification Councils:

- analyse the condition and trends of the labour market,
- propose qualifications for the sector or sub-sector of qualifications from level I to level V, as well as for the scientific expertise, field and area for the qualifications from level VI to level VIII,
- analyse existing qualifications,
- evaluate existing qualifications,
- identify the needs for all types of qualifications in line with the needs of the labour market and society as a whole,
- review proposals for the introduction of new qualifications,
- propose priorities in the development of new qualifications and supplement/ amend of existing qualifications,
- prepare the basic profile of qualifications,
- give their opinion on the harmonisation of the occupational standards and qualification standards with the examination programmes,
- form a committee for examination and verification of learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and competences) in non-formal education and training,
- promote the qualification sectors and the possibilities for employment in them, and
- submit annual reports of their operation to the National Board.

## **IV. REGISTER OF THE MACEDONIAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK AND QUALITY ASSURANCE IN THE APPLICATION OF THE MACEDONIAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK**

### **Register of the Macedonian Qualifications Framework**

#### Article 20

(1) Qualifications approved by the National Board are recorded in the Register of the Macedonian Qualifications Framework (hereinafter referred to as: the Register).

(2) Each approved qualification is assigned a code according to the type, level, volume, qualification sector and the institution where the qualification is acquired.

(3) The Register consists of four sub-registers:

- Sub-register of higher education qualifications,
- Sub-register of general education qualifications,
- Sub-register of vocational qualifications, and
- Sub-register of qualifications acquired from non-formal education.

(4) The form, content and manner of keeping the register are prescribed by the Ministry of Education and Science.

(5) The register is kept in accordance with the Law on General Administrative Procedure.

(6) The data from the Register are submitted to the State Statistics Office, no later than 31 January for the preceding year.

### **Entering qualifications into the Register and keeping the Register**

#### Article 21

(1) A request for entering a qualification into the Register can be submitted by a legal entity or a natural person.

(2) The National Board rules upon the request from paragraph (1) of this Article, following the prior opinion of the relevant Sectoral Qualification Council.

(3) The Sub-register of higher education qualifications and the Sub-register for general education qualifications are kept by the Ministry of Education and Science.

(4) The Sub-register of vocational qualifications is kept by the Vocational Education and Training Centre.

(5) The Sub-register for qualifications acquired from non-formal education is kept by the Adult Education Centre.

### **Quality Assurance in the application of the Macedonian Qualifications Framework**

#### Article 22

Quality Assurance in the application of the Macedonian Qualifications Framework applies to the quality of qualifications in the Macedonian Qualifications Framework, the



procedures that lead to acquiring qualifications, and the degrees, diplomas and certificates that are awarded to the participants who have acquired the qualification.

### **Procedures for assuring and improving the quality of qualifications**

#### Article 23

(1) Procedures for assuring and improving the quality of the qualifications in the Macedonian Qualifications Framework:

- Assessment of qualifications,
- Accreditation of the institutions that implement educational/ study programmes or special programmes for the education of adults,
- Accreditation of educational/ study programmes or special programmes for education of adults,
- Pedagogical and educational, i.e. higher-education work,
- Assessment of the pupils/ students/ participants in the programmes from paragraph (1), indent 3 of this Article.
- Issuing public documents (degrees, diplomas and certificates),
- Evaluation of programmes and institutions, self-evaluation, external evaluation or external auditing and publishing the results,
- Procedures for the validation and equivalency of degrees and diplomas for primary and secondary school education acquired abroad, and the recognition and equivalency of diplomas for higher education acquired abroad, and
- International participation, cooperation and networking in European and global networks for the recognition of qualifications and quality assurance.

(2) The procedures from paragraph (1) of this Article are in accordance with the laws from the respective fields of primary and secondary schools and higher education, vocational education and training and education of adults.

(3) The assessment and validation of learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and competences) in non-formal education and training is conducted by a committee comprised of one representative from each of the following: the service provider of the education and training, employers and institutions from the area of education.

(4) The committee from paragraph (3) of this Article is formed by the President of the Sectoral Qualification Council.

## V. TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

### Equivalency of the existing qualifications with the Macedonian Qualifications Framework

#### Article 24

The qualifications acquired before this law enters into force are equivalent to the levels and sub-levels in the Macedonian Qualifications Framework:

- Completed primary (elementary) education is equivalent to Level I.
- Completed vocational training of up to two years is equivalent to Level II.
- Completed vocational education for occupations of three years and for participants with special educational needs of four years is equivalent to Level III.
- Completed general secondary school education, technical vocational education and training, art education of four years and for pupils with special educational needs of five years is equivalent to Level IV.
- Completed post-secondary school education (specialist education and craftsmanship) is equivalent to Level V, sub-level VB.
- Completed short cycle study programmes in higher education are equivalent to Level V, sub-level VA.
- Completed three-year and four-year graduate studies are equivalent to Level VI, sub-levels VIB and VIA.
- Completed master and specialist studies are equivalent to Level VII, sub-levels VIIA and VIIB.
- Completed doctoral studies are equivalent to Level VIII.

#### Article 25

The constitutive meeting of the National Board shall be convened by the Minister in charge of educational issues within six months from the day this law applies.

The National Board shall form the Sectoral Qualification Councils within six months of the formation of the National Board.

#### Article 26

The bylaws stipulated in this law shall be adopted within one year from the day this law enters into force.

#### Article 27

This Law shall enter into force on the eighth day of its publishing in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, and shall apply as of 30 September 2015.