

Appendix A: Level Descriptors for Levels 1–4

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GOVERNMENT NOTICE

Notice 1348 of 2003

South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)

South African Qualifications Authority Act 58 of 1995

Regulations relating to Level Descriptors for Levels 1 to 4 of the National Qualifications Framework

The South African Qualifications Authority has, under section 14 of the South African Qualifications Authority Act, 1995 (Act No. 58 of 1995), with the approval of the Minister of Education and in consultation with the Minister of Labour, made the regulations in the Schedule.

Schedule

Definitions

1. In these regulations any word or expression to which a meaning has been assigned in the Act shall have such meaning and, unless the context indicates otherwise -

“applied competence” means the ability to put into practice in the relevant context the learning outcomes acquired in obtaining a qualification;

“autonomy of learning” means the capacity of a learner for lifelong learning and includes the extent to which a learner can undertake action for learning independently, the extent to which a learner takes responsibility for his or her own learning and the extent to which a learner is self-reflexive about and can evaluate the quality of his or her learning and eventually that of others;

“field” means a particular area of learning used as an organising mechanism for the NQF;

“level descriptor” means that statement describing learning achievement at a particular level of the NQF;

“National Qualifications Framework “NQF” means the National Qualifications Framework as already in the Act;

“operational literacy” means an ability to use basic procedures and operations to complete complex tasks;

“unit standard” means registered statements of desired education and training outcomes and their associated assessment criteria together with administrative and other information as specified in the National Standards Bodies Regulations, 1998.

Purpose

2. Level descriptors for levels 1 to 4 of the NQF shall ensure coherence across fields of learning in the allocation of qualifications and standards to particular levels, and shall facilitate the assessment of the international comparability of standards and qualifications.

Level descriptors, NQF level 1

3. A learning programme leading to the award of a qualification or unit standards at NQF level 1 shall develop learners who demonstrate with regard to:
 - a. applied competence -
 - i. a general knowledge of one or more areas or fields of study, in addition to the fundamental areas of study;
 - ii. an understanding of the context within which the learner operates;

- iii. an ability to use key common tools and instruments;
 - iv. sound listening, speaking, reading and writing skills;
 - v. basic numeracy skills including an understanding of the symbolic systems;
 - vi. an ability to recognise and solve problems within a familiar, well-defined context;
 - vii. an ability to recall, collect and organise given information clearly and accurately; and
 - viii. an ability to report information clearly and accurately in spoken and written form;
- b. autonomy of learning -
- i. a capacity to apply themselves to a well-defined task under direct supervision;
 - ii. an ability to sequence and schedule learning tasks;
 - iii. an ability to access and use a range of learning resources; and
 - iv. an ability to work as part of a group.

Level descriptors, NQF level 2

4. A learning programme leading to the award of a qualification or unit standards at NQF level 2 shall develop learners who demonstrate with regard to:
- a. applied competence -
- i. a basic operational knowledge of one or more areas or fields of study, in addition to the fundamental areas of study;
 - ii. an understanding of the environment within which the learner operates in a wider context;
 - iii. an ability to use a variety of common tools and instruments;
 - iv. the ability to apply literacy and numeracy skills to a range of different but familiar contexts;
 - v. an ability to use their knowledge to select and apply known solutions to well-defined routine problems;
 - vi. a basic ability to collect, organise and report information clearly and accurately; and
 - vii. an ability to express an opinion on given information clearly in spoken and written form;
- b. autonomy of learning -
- i. a capacity to work and learn in a disciplined manner in a well-structured and supervised environment;
 - ii. an ability to manage their time effectively; and
 - iii. an ability to develop sound working relationships and an ability to work effectively as part of a group.

Level descriptors, NQF level 3

5. A learning programme leading to the award of a qualification or unit standards at NQF level 3 shall develop learners who demonstrate with regard to:
- a. applied competence -
- i. a basic understanding of one or more fields' or disciplines' key concepts and knowledge, in addition to the fundamental areas of study;
 - ii. an understanding of the organisation or operating environment as a system;
 - iii. application of skills in measuring the environment using key instruments and equipment;
 - iv. operational literacy;

- v. an ability to use their knowledge to select appropriate procedures to solve problems within given parameters;
 - vi. a basic ability to summarise and interpret information relevant to the context from a range of sources;
 - vii. an ability to take a position on available information, discuss the issues and reach a resolution; and
 - viii. produce a coherent presentation and report, providing explanations for positions taken;
- b. autonomy of learning -
- i. a capacity to operate within clearly defined contexts;
 - ii. an ability to work and learn within a managed environment; and
 - iii. capacity to actively contribute to team effectiveness.

Level descriptors, NQF level 4

6. A learning programme leading to the award of a qualification or unit standards at NQF level 4 shall develop learners who demonstrate with regard to:
- a. applied competence -
- i. a fundamental knowledge base of the most important areas of one or more fields or disciplines, in addition to the fundamental areas of study;
 - ii. an informed understanding of the key terms, rules, concepts, established principles and theories in one or more fields or disciplines;
 - iii. an understanding of the organisation or operating environment as a system within a wider context;
 - iv. an ability to apply essential methods, procedures and techniques of the field or discipline;
 - v. an ability to apply and carry out actions by interpreting information from text and operational symbols or representations;
 - vi. an ability to use their knowledge to solve common problems within a familiar context;
 - vii. an ability to adjust an application of a common solution within relevant parameters to meet the needs of small changes in the problem or operating context;
 - viii. an ability to motivate the change using relevant evidence;
 - ix. a basic ability in gathering relevant information, analysis and evaluation skills; and
 - x. an ability to communicate and present information reliably and accurately in writing and verbally;
- b. autonomy of learning -
- i. a capacity to take responsibility for their own learning within a supervised environment;
 - ii. a capacity to take decisions about and responsibility for actions;
 - iii. a capacity to evaluate their own performance against given criteria; and
 - iv. a capacity to take the initiative to address any shortcomings they find.

Short title

7. These Regulations shall be called the Level Descriptors Regulations (NQF levels 1 to 4), 2003.