

Background

The Bangladesh National Qualifications Framework (BNQF) is championed by Her Excellency Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina who on several occasions have enthused the significance of a unified national qualifications framework. The BNQF is built on the National Technical and Vocational Qualification Framework (NTVQF) which the government adopted in 2012.

Introduction

The BNQF is an internationally benchmarked instrument for the development, classification and recognition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes along a continuum of agreed levels.

The BNQF integrates and coordinates the three qualification sub-sectors - general, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and skills, and Madrasah. The BNQF provides pathways for improved access to and comparability, progression and quality of qualifications in order to assist people to move easily and readily between the education and the training sub-sectors and the job market.

Objectives of BNQF

- ▶ Provide a consistent national definition of qualifications in the Schools and Madrasahs, TVET and Skills and HE sectors. It reflects the content and profile of qualifications, that is, what the holder of a certificate or diploma is expected to demonstrate in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes.
- ▶ Uphold lifelong learning and increase the employability of graduates through open and flexible qualification pathways, RPL and credit transfer
- ▶ Promote horizontal and vertical mobility of workers within and between the institutions, sectors and countries
- ▶ Promote quality learning process and culture to produce quality graduates and ensure research and innovations
- ▶ Promote national and international recognition, equivalence, comparability and consistency of qualifications and mobility of graduates
- ▶ Define clear and flexible pathways with entry and exit points and progression routes

Longer-Term Measures to Be Taken

- ▶ A system of credit transfer and bridging mechanisms to recognize and validate non-formal and informal learning to be developed and introduced
- ▶ Pre-vocational and vocational qualifications to be integrated into the general and equivalent Madrasah education
- ▶ Conventional competency standards/curriculum to be upgraded in alignment with the BNQF quality assurance standards that address critical and emerging skills
- ▶ Technical checks to be conducted on the existing qualifications and the competency elements to be adjusted to ensure adequate linkages between competencies and BNQF's levels and level descriptors

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Bangladesh National Qualifications Framework (BNQF)



International
Labour
Organization



BNQF key features

- ▶ The BNQF structure consists of a total of ten (10) levels.
- ▶ The first six levels (1-6) cover TVET and the skills sub-sector, and the subsequent four levels (7-10) cover higher education sub-sector.
- ▶ The school sub-sector and madrasah sub-sectors are included in the BNQF.
- ▶ All the subsectors are connected by horizontal and vertical pathways.
- ▶ Lifelong learning cuts across all levels.

BNQF update as of now

- ▶ A National Steering committee (NSC) was established and is chaired by the honourable Minister of Education.
- ▶ Over 90 consultation workshops and meetings took place with the members of 7 technical working groups (TWGs) to develop the BNQF.
- ▶ The BNQF structure, pathways and level descriptors approved by NSC .
- ▶ A BNQF report summarizing the BNQF structure, contents, roles of individual stakeholders etc. was published by Ministry of Education (MoE).
- ▶ Consultation meetings were held by the TWGs for finalisation of the National Quality Assurance System (NQAS) for the BNQF for Higher Education.

Next Steps

- ▶ Government Order to be issued by MoE after the launch of the BNQF
- ▶ The BNQF governance/management mechanism for all sectors of education to be elaborated and finalized
- ▶ BNQF framework legislation or amendments to relevant law to be developed and passed
- ▶ National Quality Assurance System (NQAS) manuals (qualifications, training delivery, assessment and certification) for the BNQF to be developed
- ▶ BNQF Implementation plan to be developed
- ▶ Advocacy and capacity development programme for stakeholders (implementers) to be developed



How BNQF Works - Examples

▶ Credit Transfer

Abdul completes the first two years of a four-year Information Technology degree in University A. He wishes to complete the remaining years in University C because his father was assigned to another division. Is this possible for Abdul?

Abdul's Option: Through the BNQF, credits already earned within the two years are now transferable to the University of his choice. The credits earned by Abdul are portable so he can make use of it instead of starting over.

▶ Recognition of Prior Learning

Mariam has ten years of experience as a tailor but has no formal qualifications. Instead she received informal trainings from her mother who is a tailor. Mina, a newly hired worker joins Mariam in a tailoring shop in Savar. Their tasks are the same, but Mina receives a higher salary because she has a tailoring certification from the Bangladesh Technical Education Board. What advice can you give Mariam?

Mariam's Option: Through the BNQF, Mariam can sit for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) where she is assessed for competencies acquired through non-formal and informal means, aside from formal means.

▶ Lifelong Learning

Makbul dropped out from Polytechnic studies when he was in his last year of Diploma in Construction Technology because his father died in a vehicular accident, and Makbul an assistant to works in masonry carpentry and other construction areas, because he had acquired some technical skills in construction. He performed well in the company and was always eager to improve his technical skills. After five years of experience, Makbul now feels that he has acquired

higher-order construction skills. He is motivated to learn from his peers and supervisors and he has also subscribed to self-study training programme on social media. Makbul would furthermore like reassume and complete his aborted Polytechnic studies. Will Makbul's experience and self-study programme be counted towards a Polytechnic degree?

Makbul's Option: Through the BNQF, Makbul can present himself and his certificates earned through informal and non-formal means for validation. Makbul needs to prove himself competent in all units of the Polytechnic study programme before he will be awarded the diploma.

Bangladesh National Qualifications Framework (BNQF) Pathways

