

# MAPPING AND ALIGNING ICMA COURSES WITH EUROPEAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (EQF)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

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The ICMA (International Capital Market Association) has been offering over 20 professional courses related to the financial sector, and more than 6400 delegates have been trained in the past 4 years. ICMA Education has been setting the standard of training excellence in the capital markets for almost five decades with courses covering everything from market fundamentals to latest developments and more.

Its courses are accredited by CPD® Certification Service and approved by the Securities and Futures Commission of Hong Kong for Continuous Professional Training (CPT). However, although the courses have been accredited, they are not credit bearing and nor have they been aligned with any qualification framework either in the UK or elsewhere.

As a result, ICMA has commissioned this mapping / alignment of the following ICMA courses

- a) Primary Market Certificate (PMC)
- b) Fixed Income Certificate (FIC)
- c) Operations Certificate Programme (OCP)

with the European Qualification Framework (EQF) and the rest of this paper provides a detailed breakdown of the alignment process.

The process has been informed by benchmarking against pertinent guidance frameworks such as *UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Referencing the Qualifications Frameworks of England and Northern Ireland to the European Qualification Frameworks, Mapping National Qualification Frameworks and awards using MapQFTools*, plus review of the courses by two academic and banking professionals.

## 2. ICMA

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The ICMA (International Capital Market Association) originated in 1968 as the Association of International Bond Dealers (AIBD). For over 50 years ICMA and its members have worked together to promote the development of the international capital and securities markets, pioneering the rules, principles and recommendations which have laid the foundations for their successful operation.

In pursuit of its objectives, ICMA brings together members through regional and sectoral committees focusing on a comprehensive range of market practice and regulatory issues, prioritising sustainable finance and three core fixed income market areas: primary, secondary, repo and collateral.

Currently, ICMA has around 600 members active in all segments of international debt capital markets in 64 jurisdictions globally. Among its members are private and public sector issuers, banks and securities dealers, asset and fund managers, insurance companies, law firms, capital market infrastructure providers and central banks. ICMA is a not-for-profit association (Verein) under the Swiss Civil Code (ICMA website).

The next section provides an overview of the various qualification frameworks used in the United Kingdom and Europe and has been used to underpin this alignment exercise.

### 3. THE REFERENCING OF FRAMEWORKS IN THE UK AND IRELAND TO THE EQF

Table 1 illustrates the referencing position of the five frameworks in the UK and Ireland to the EQF and enables the reader to see immediately, the equivalence of levels across England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland and Europe.

As the ICMA courses have been designed in England, the review will first map and align the courses with the FHEQ framework.

The FHEQ had been mapped to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA) in November 2008 as part of the Bologna Process to verify the compatibility between the two frameworks. The FHEQ is linked to the EQF through the self-certification process carried out in 2008.

**TABLE 1**  
**Correspondence of levels established between national qualifications frameworks and the EQF**

Regulated qualifications framework (RQF)	Framework for higher education qualifications (FHEQ)	European Qualifications Framework (EFQ)	Credit and qualifications framework for Wales (CQFW)	Scottish credit qualifications framework (SCQF)	National framework of qualifications for Ireland (NFQ IE)
8	8	8	8	12	10
7	7	7	7	11	9
6	6	6	6	10 9	8 7
5	5	5	5	8	6
4	4	4	4	7	
3		3	3	6	5
2		2	2	5	4
1		1	1	4	3
E3		3	E3	3	2 1
E2			E2	2	
E1			E1	1	

The next section provides a brief overview of the FHEQ, which is the first framework used for the mapping and alignment of the ICMA courses.

#### **4. THE FRAMEWORK for HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS (FHEQ)**

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The fundamental premise of the FHEQ is that qualifications are awarded based on demonstrated achievement of learning outcomes, expressed in terms of knowledge, understanding and abilities, and attainment: it is an outcomes-based approach to qualifications. The framework is also used by professional, statutory and regulatory bodies in defining and using qualifications in the context of their professional recognition and accreditation processes as well as to inform international comparability of academic standards.

The FHEQ levels are based on qualification descriptors, which set out, at each level, the generic outcomes and attributes expected for the award of a particular type of qualification e.g. bachelor's degree with honours. They make clear how each qualification differs from other qualifications, both at that level and at other levels. They provide clear points of reference for each level and cover the great majority of existing qualifications.

Short programmes are often offered as continuing professional development opportunities. The qualification descriptors provide points of reference that help course designers / awarding bodies determine which level of the relevant UK framework should be assigned to any qualification resulting from these programmes.

##### **Qualification descriptors are in two parts:**

The first part is a statement of outcomes, achievement of which is assessed and which a student should be able to demonstrate for the award of the qualification. This is a statement of the national threshold academic standard for the qualification.

The second part of the descriptor is a statement of the wider abilities that a typical student would be expected to have developed. It assists higher education providers during discussions with employers, and others with an interest in the general capabilities of holders of the qualification (See Appendix 1)

The FHEQ has five framework levels, three of which are undergraduate and two are postgraduate. The levels of the FHEQ are numbered 4-8, succeeding levels 1-3 which precede higher education.

**TABLE 2**  
**WITH REGARDS TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE 5 LEVELS, THE HOLDERS OF A**

<b>Level 4</b>	will have a sound knowledge of the basic concepts of a subject and will have learned how to take different approaches to problem solving. They will be able to communicate accurately and will have the qualities needed for employment requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility.
<b>Level 5</b>	will have developed a sound understanding of the principles in their field of study and will have learned to apply those principles more widely. Through this, they will have learned to evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to problem solving. Their studies may well have had a vocational orientation, enabling them to perform effectively in their chosen field. They will have the qualities necessary for employment in situations requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making.
<b>Level 6</b>	will have developed an understanding of a complex body of knowledge, analytical techniques and problem-solving skills that can be applied in many types of employment. They will be able to evaluate evidence, arguments and assumptions, to reach sound judgements and to communicate them effectively. They will possess the qualities needed for employment in situations requiring the exercise of personal responsibility, and decision-making in complex and unpredictable circumstances.
<b>Level 7</b>	will demonstrate originality in the application of knowledge, and they understand how the boundaries of knowledge are advanced through research. They can deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, and they show originality in tackling and solving problems. They have the qualities needed for employment in circumstances requiring sound judgement, personal responsibility and initiative in complex and unpredictable professional environments.
<b>Level 8</b>	can conceptualise, design and implement projects for the generation of significant new knowledge and/or understanding. They have the qualities needed for employment that require both the ability to make informed judgements on complex issues in specialist fields and an innovative approach to tackling and solving problems.

*This entire section has been taken from UK Quality Code for Higher Education – Part A (2014)*

The next section provides a brief overview of the European Qualifications Framework, against which the ICMA courses are aligned.

## 5. EUROPEAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (EQF)

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A qualification framework contains a set of levels, which allow a student to assess the level of his / her programme of study. The European Qualification Framework (EQF) is an overarching qualifications framework, which assists in the understanding and comparison of qualifications awarded across different countries within and beyond Europe. Students studying a UK degree, are eligible to compare their qualification against the EQF levels. There are 8 levels with level 1 being the lowest qualification level and level 8 being the highest qualification level (See Appendix 2).

Each level contains 3 assessment descriptors with learning outcomes in the context of EQF:

**A) Knowledge:** is described as theoretical and / or factual.

**B) Skills:** are described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) and practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments).

**C) Responsibility and Autonomy:** are described as the ability of the learner to apply knowledge and skills autonomously and with responsibility.

The following section details the alignment process.

## 6. ALIGNMENT PROCESS

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The alignment process is articulated in stages.

### Stage 1

A detailed review of the following three courses was undertaken and the findings are depicted below.

### **A. PRIMARY MARKET CERTIFICATE**

#### **Learning Outcomes**

By completing this course a delegate will be able to:

- Understand what is involved with syndication and origination,
- Review pricing decisions and launch requirements,
- Assess current liability management techniques, their applicability and outcome,
- Explore events of default, debt ranking and covenants.

**Content:** Very detailed and comprehensive.

**Assessment:** 75 multiple-choice questions in a 2-hour exam.

## **B. OPERATIONS CERTIFICATE PROGRAMME**

### **Learning Outcomes**

By completing the course, you will be able to:

- Develop a broader knowledge of financial market operations which may be outside the scope of your current job,
- Understand at a deeper level the fundamental nature of key financial products,
- Be fully aware of the processing steps necessary to maintain control and to mitigate internal and external processing risks,
- Understand mandatory external regulation as it relates to the central clearing of OTC derivatives.

**Content:** Detailed and comprehensive.

**Assessment:** 75 multiple-choice questions in a 2-hour exam.

## **C. FIXED INCOME CERTIFICATE**

### **Learning Outcomes**

By completing the programme you will be able to:

- Develop a broad knowledge of fixed income markets and credit products,
- Understand at a deeper level the relationship between cash bond and derivatives markets,
- Be proficient in the basic maths of the fixed income and derivatives market,
- Be able to develop and apply rates trading and hedging techniques,
- Understand structured securities, CDS and Interest Rate Derivatives and their uses,
- Have an up to date working knowledge of current best market practice and regulatory considerations for fixed income and derivative markets.

**Content:** Very detailed and comprehensive.

**Assessment:** 75 multiple-choice questions in a 2-hour exam.

As the ICMA courses were designed in England, the next stage maps and aligns the courses against the FHEQ.

## Stage 2

The ICMA courses were mapped against the FHEQ levels, by 3 professionals / academics with experience of working in the banking sector and / or teaching across UK Higher Education Institutions.

The reviewers concluded that the courses met the requirements of FHEQ level 5 study. The FHEQ level 5 study requires the following:

**TABLE 3**

<b>FHEQ Level 5</b>		
<b>Knowledge Descriptor</b> (will have demonstrated.....)	<b>Skills Descriptor</b> (will have demonstrated.....)	<b>Responsibilities</b> (will have demonstrated.....)
<p>Knowledge and critical understanding of the well-established principles of their area(s) of study, and of the way in which these principles have developed.</p> <p>The ability to apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied, including, where appropriate, the application of those principles in an employment context.</p> <p>Knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in the subject(s) relevant to the named award, and ability to evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems in the field of study.</p> <p>An understanding of the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences analyses and interpretations based on that knowledge.</p>	<p>Use a range of established techniques to initiate and undertake critical analysis of information, and to propose solutions to problems arising from that analysis.</p> <p>Effectively communicate information, arguments and analysis in a variety of forms to specialist and non-specialist audiences and deploy key techniques of the discipline effectively.</p> <p>Undertake further training, develop existing skills and acquire new competences that will enable them to assume significant responsibility within organisations.</p>	<p>The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making.</p>

This review was followed by a detailed assessment of the three descriptors of the EQF (Knowledge, Skills and Responsibility and Autonomy) across the eight levels contained in the Framework, in Stage 3 of the alignment exercise.

The next stage will map the FHEQ level against the appropriate EQF level.

### Stage 3

**TABLE 4**

Framework for higher education qualifications (FHEQ)	European Qualifications Framework (EFQ)
8	8
7	7
6	6
5 4	5
	4
	3
	2
	1

The table above aligns FHEQ levels 4 and 5 with EQF level 5. As a result, all three ICMA courses met the requirements of Level 5 of the EQF.

#### **EQF Level 5 – Learning Outcomes**

Knowledge	Skills	Responsibility and Autonomy
Comprehensive, specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work or study and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge.	A comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills required to develop creative solutions to abstract problems.	Exercise management and supervision in contexts of work or study activities where there is unpredictable change, review and develop performance of self and others.

The final stage aligned each of the courses against the EQF Level 5 and is articulated in the next section.



## Stage 4

**Country** – UK

**Qualification** - ICMA course

**Qualification Framework** – European Qualifications Framework

**TABLE 5**

### **Level 5 – Learning Outcomes**

<b>Knowledge</b>	<b>Skills</b>	<b>Responsibility and Autonomy</b>
<p>Comprehensive, specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work or study and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge.</p>	<p>A comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills required to develop creative solutions to abstract problems.</p>	<p>Exercise management and supervision in contexts of work or study activities where there is unpredictable change; review and develop performance of self and others.</p>
<p><b>A. PRIMARY MARKET CERTIFICATE</b></p> <p><b>Learning Outcomes</b> By completing this course a delegate will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand what is involved with syndication and origination,</li> <li>• Review pricing decisions and launch requirements,</li> <li>• Assess current liability management techniques, their applicability and outcome,</li> <li>• Explore events of default, debt ranking and covenants.</li> </ul> <p><b>Assessment</b> 2-hour exam of 75 multiple-choice questions.</p>	<p>There are several in-class exercises designed to test not only the knowledge, but the practical skills required to complete various calculations. The students use advanced numerical and problem-solving skills to arrive at the answers to various financial markets related issues, such as investment grade markets, capital markets, liability management, capital bonds, DCM deal process and investor protection.</p>	<p>Students studying this course will undertake activities involving change and formulating their responses to such change. Class discussions enable the participants to exchange ideas and assess the viability of solutions being presented by peers.</p>

<p><b>B. OPERATIONS CERTIFICATE PROGRAMME</b></p> <p><b>Learning Outcomes</b> By completing the course, you will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a broader knowledge of financial market operations which may be outside the scope of your current job,</li> <li>• Understand at a deeper level the fundamental nature of key financial products,</li> <li>• Be fully aware of the processing steps necessary to maintain control and to mitigate internal and external processing risks,</li> <li>• Understand mandatory external regulation as it relates to the central clearing of OTC derivatives.</li> </ul> <p><b>Assessment</b> 2-hour exam of 75 multiple-choice questions.</p>	<p>There are several in-class exercises designed to test not only the knowledge, but the practical skills required to complete various calculations related to securities trade and financing, derivative fundamentals, repo, OTC derivatives collateral and central clearing.</p>	<p>Students studying this course will undertake activities involving change and formulating their responses to such change.</p> <p>Dynamic exchanges in the classroom enable the participants to exchange ideas and assess the viability of solutions being presented by peers.</p>
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<p><b>C. FIXED INCOME CERTIFICATE</b></p> <p><b>Learning Outcomes</b> By completing the programme you will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a broad knowledge of fixed income markets and credit products,</li> <li>• Understand at a deeper level the relationship between cash bond and derivatives markets,</li> <li>• Be proficient in the basic maths of the fixed income and derivatives market,</li> <li>• Be able to develop and apply rates trading and hedging techniques,</li> <li>• Understand structured securities, CDS and Interest Rate Derivatives and their uses,</li> <li>• Have an up to date working knowledge of current best market practice and regulatory considerations for fixed income and derivative markets.</li> </ul> <p><b>Assessment</b> 2-hour exam of 75 multiple-choice questions.</p>	<p>There are several in-class exercises designed to test not only the knowledge, but the practical skills required to complete various calculations related to monetary policies, trading, securities, bonds, markets and associated risks.</p>	<p>Students studying this course will undertake activities involving change and formulating their responses to such change.</p> <p>Construction, de-construction and re-construction of solutions presented in the classroom enable the participants to exchange ideas and assess the viability of solutions being presented by peers.</p>
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## 7. CONCLUSION

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As stated in the Referencing Qualifications Framework for England and Northern Ireland to the European Qualifications Framework (2019, pp.80), “*The underlying factual and theoretical knowledge of the area of study link FHEQ level 5 and EQF level 5 and this link is strongly reinforced by the awareness of the limits of the area of knowledge.*”

*In terms of the FHEQ level 5 skills descriptor, the map to the EQF is evident at level 4 and level 5 but is not clear at EQF level 6. The EQF level 5 requirement for creative solutions to abstract problems is not explicit in the FHEQ level 5 descriptor.*

*The FHEQ level 5 responsibility component and the element of the skills descriptor which demands that they have skills and acquire new competences that will enable them to assume significant responsibility within organisations support a link to EQF level 5.*

**Best fit outcome:** *there is a good match between RQF level 5, FHEQ level 5 and EQF level 5.”*

**As a result the following 3 ICMA courses have been aligned with EQF level 5.**

- a) Primary Market Certificate (PMC)
- b) Fixed Income Certificate (FIC)
- c) Operations Certificate Programme (OCP).

This mapping and alignment exercise has adhered to the requirements of the EQF quality assurance principles by providing a detailed audit trail of the various stages.

## APPENDIX 1

### FHEQ QUALIFICATION DESCRIPTORS

#### Descriptor for a higher education qualification at level 4 on the FHEQ: Certificate of Higher Education

The descriptor provided for this level is for any Certificate of Higher Education, which should meet the descriptor in full. This qualification descriptor can also be used as a reference point for other qualifications aligned with level 4 of the FHEQ.

**Certificates of Higher Education are awarded to students who have demonstrated:**

- Knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with their area(s) of study, and an ability to evaluate and interpret these within the context of that area of study,
- An ability to present, evaluate and interpret qualitative and quantitative data, to develop lines of argument and make sound judgements in accordance with basic theories and concepts of their subject(s) of study.

**Typically, holders of this qualification will be able to:**

- Evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems related to their area(s) of study and/or work
- Communicate the results of their study/work accurately and reliably, and with structured and coherent arguments
- Undertake further training and develop new skills within a structured and managed environment.

**And holders will have:**

- The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility.

## Descriptor for a higher education qualification at level 5 on the FHEQ: Foundation Degree

The descriptor provided for this level of the FHEQ is for any foundation degree which should meet the descriptor in full. This qualification descriptor can also be used as a reference point for other qualifications aligned with level 5 of the FHEQ.

### **Foundation degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:**

- Knowledge and critical understanding of the well-established principles of their area(s) of study, and of the way in which those principles have developed.
- Ability to apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied, including, where appropriate, the application of those principles in an employment context.
- Knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in the subject(s) relevant to the named award, and ability to evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems in the field of study.
- An understanding of the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences analyses and interpretations based on that knowledge.

### **Typically, holders of this qualification will be able to:**

- Use a range of established techniques to initiate and undertake critical analysis of information, and to propose solutions to problems arising from that analysis.
- Effectively communicate information, arguments and analysis in a variety of forms to specialist and non-specialist audiences and deploy key techniques of the discipline effectively.
- Undertake further training, develop existing skills and acquire new competences that will enable them to assume significant responsibility within organisations.

### **And holders will have:**

- The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making.

## Descriptor for a higher education qualification at level 6 on the FHEQ: Bachelor's Degree with Honours

The descriptor provided for this level of the FHEQ is for any bachelor's degree with honours which should meet the descriptor in full. This qualification descriptor can also be used as a reference point for other qualifications aligned with level 6 of the FHEQ.

### **Bachelor's degrees with honours are awarded to students who have demonstrated:**

- A systematic understanding of key aspects of their field of study, including acquisition of coherent and detailed knowledge, at least some of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of defined aspects of a discipline.
- An ability to deploy accurately established techniques of analysis and enquiry within a discipline.
- Conceptual understanding that enables the student:
  - To devise and sustain arguments, and/or to solve problems, using ideas and techniques, some of which are at the forefront of a discipline
  - To describe and comment upon aspects of current research, or equivalent advanced scholarship, in the discipline
- An appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of knowledge.
- The ability to manage their own learning, and to make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources (for example, refereed research articles and/or original materials appropriate to the discipline).

### **Typically, holders of this qualification will be able to:**

- Apply the methods and techniques that they have learned to review, consolidate, extend and apply their knowledge and understanding, and to initiate and carry out projects
- Critically evaluate arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts and data (that may be incomplete), to make judgements, and to frame appropriate questions to achieve a solution – or identify a range of solutions – to a problem.
- Communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences.

### **And holders will have:**

- The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
  - The exercise of initiative and personal responsibility
  - Decision-making in complex and unpredictable contexts
  - The learning ability needed to undertake appropriate further training of a professional or equivalent nature.

## Descriptor for a higher education qualification at level 7 on the FHEQ: Master's Degree

The descriptor provided for this level of the framework is for any master's degree which should meet the descriptor in full. This qualification descriptor can also be used as a reference point for other qualifications aligned with level 7 of the FHEQ.

### **Master's degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:**

- A systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice.
- A comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship.
- Originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline.
- Conceptual understanding that enables the student:
  - To evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline.
  - To evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.

### **Typically, holders of this qualification will be able to:**

- Deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences.
- Demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level.
- Continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level.

### **And holders will have:**

- The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
  - The exercise of initiative and personal responsibility
  - Decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations
  - The independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.



## Descriptor for a higher education qualification at level 8 on the FHEQ: Doctoral Degree

The descriptor provided for this level of the framework is for any doctoral degree which should meet the descriptor in full. This qualification descriptor can also be used as a reference point for other qualifications aligned with level 8 of the FHEQ.

### Doctoral degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- The creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline, and merit publication.
- A systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice.
- The general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems.
- A detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced enquiry.

### Typically, holders of this qualification will be able to:

- Make informed judgements on complex issues in specialist fields, often in the absence of complete data, and be able to communicate their ideas and conclusions, clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences.
- Continue to undertake pure and/or applied research and development at an advanced level, contributing substantially to the development of new techniques, ideas or approaches.

### And holders will have:

- The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations, in professional or equivalent environments.

*Taken from the UK Quality Code for Higher Education – Part A (October 2014).*

## APPENDIX 2

### EQF QUALIFICATION DESCRIPTORS

#### Level 1 – Learning Outcomes

Knowledge	Skills	Responsibility and Autonomy
Basic general knowledge.	Basic skills required to carry out simple tasks.	Work or study under direct supervision in a structured context.

## Level 2 – Learning Outcomes

Knowledge	Skills	Responsibility and Autonomy
Basic factual knowledge of a field of work or study.	Basic cognitive and practical skills required to use relevant information to carry out tasks and to solve routine problems using simple rules and tools.	Work or study under supervision with some autonomy.

## Level 3 – Learning Outcomes

Knowledge	Skills	Responsibility and Autonomy
Knowledge of facts, principles, processes and general concepts, in a field of work or study.	A range of cognitive and practical skills required to accomplish tasks and solve problems by selecting basic methods, tools, materials and information.	Take responsibility for completion of tasks in work or study; adapt own behaviour to circumstances in solving problems.

## Level 4 – Learning Outcomes

Knowledge	Skills	Responsibility and Autonomy
Factual and theoretical knowledge in broad contexts within a field of work or study.	A range of cognitive and practical skills required to generate solutions to specific problems in a field of work or study.	Exercise self-management within the guidelines of work or study contexts that are usually predictable but are subject to change: supervise the routine work of others, taking some responsibility for the evaluation and improvement of work or study activities.

## Level 5 – Learning Outcomes

Knowledge	Skills	Responsibility and Autonomy
Comprehensive, specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work or study and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge.	A comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills required to develop creative solutions to abstract problems.	Exercise management and supervision in contexts of work or study activities where there is unpredictable change; review and develop performance of self and others.

### Level 6 – Learning Outcomes

Knowledge	Skills	Responsibility and Autonomy
Advanced knowledge of a field of work or study, involving a critical understanding of theories and principles.	Advanced skills demonstrating mastery and innovation, required to solve complex and unpredictable problems in a specialised field of work or study.	Manage complex technical or professional activities or projects, taking responsibility for decision-making in unpredictable work or study contexts; take responsibility for managing professional development of individuals and groups.

### Level 7 – Learning Outcomes

Knowledge	Skills	Responsibility and Autonomy
Highly specialised knowledge, some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work or study, as the basis for original thinking and / or research. Critical awareness of knowledge issues in a field and at the interface between different fields.	Specialised problem-solving skills required in research and / or innovation to develop new knowledge and procedures and to integrate knowledge from different fields.	Manage and transform work or study contexts that are complex, unpredictable and require new and strategic approaches; take responsibility for contributing to professional knowledge and practice and / or for reviewing the strategic performance of teams.

### Level 8 – Learning Outcomes

Knowledge	Skills	Responsibility and Autonomy
Knowledge at the most advanced frontier of a field of work or study and at the interface between fields.	The most advanced and specialised skills and techniques, including synthesis and evaluation, required to solve critical problems in research and / or innovation and to extend and redefine existing knowledge or professional practice.	Demonstrate substantial authority, innovation, autonomy, scholarly and professional integrity and sustained commitment to the development of new ideas or processes at the forefront of work or study contexts, including research.

*Taken from Referencing the qualifications Frameworks of England and Northern Ireland to the European Qualification Framework (October 2019).*

## References

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