

The "hidden" potential of a Qualification Framework

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Qualification in EHEA

- **Multi-dimensional entity – it is not possible to isolate its particular dimensions**
 - Level of the qualification (Bachelor, Master, doctoral)
 - Profile
 - Learning outcomes + Student assessment
 - Workload–ECTS credits – credits are allocated to learning outcomes (not vice-versa)
 - Quality assurance
- **There might be different (flexible) learning paths to reach the qualification**
- **Tools in European Higher Education Area (EHEA) - Diploma Supplement, ECTS credits, Quality Assurance, Learning outcomes, assessment of students**
- **Mutually interlinked**

National Qualification Framework (NQF)

- NQF is a place where all tools and a qualification (degree programme) meet
- Purpose:
 - common language for description of expected knowledge, skills and competences the students gained in a respective degree programme and cycle;
 - a base for a degree programme (basic parameters known in advance);
- Diversity of learning paths is respected;

Why NQF?

- Using NQF as a common tool for description of knowledge, skills and competences should enable
 - Transparency among and in the qualifications;
 - Permeability of studies;
 - Tool for easier comparability and consequently recognition of degrees gained outside the respective HEI;
 - Systemic tool for internal as well as external evaluation
 - Added value: in mobility, employability of graduates

Czech NQF for HE (project called Q-Ram)

- **3 levels of descriptors**
- **National descriptors**
 - considered *minimum level*
- **Descriptors for fields of studies**
 - considered *a benchmark* for HEIs
- **Degree programme descriptors - at HEI's level**
 - Systemic tool for design of new degree programmes and for evaluation and possible innovation of degree programmes;

At national level

1. National descriptors – 3 levels

- Derived from the Dublin descriptors and descriptors for EQF (Bachelor, Master, doctoral)
- Approved by the Ministry of education in November 2010

2. Descriptors for fields of studies

- 39 fields of study defined by the project
- For accreditation process (shift from programme accreditation towards field of study accreditation)

At institutional level

3. Degree programme descriptors

- **Concentration on content**, not only on formal criteria (e.g. for accreditation);
- Support of **internal mechanisms of quality assurance** when designing, evaluating degree programmes
- An opportunity to **systemic stocktaking, resp. innovation** of degree programmes
- **Interconnection** of courses, subjects, modules

Pilot implementation – Whera are we?

Fields of studies	26%	10 out of 39
HEIs	17%	12 out of 71
Academics	5%/0,5%	992/100 out of 20.000
Degree programmes	<1%	69 out of 9.100

Observations

- Based on the replies of the participants of the training seminars
- What shall we use NQF for?
 - **Design and realisation of degree programmes**
 - **Design and realisation of courses (subjects)**
 - **Institutional QA system**
 - **Communication with applicants and employers**
 - **Recognition**
- Complex
- Influences all activities characteristic for the HEI (interconnection, possibly exclusion of dupli(multipli)cities)

What should still be done to benefit from hidden potentials?

- To complement the learning outcomes with respective methods of education/learning and assessment
- Interconnection of fields of studies and accreditation
- Key principles:
 - Mental change (see learning from the student's perspective)
 - **Long term process – step by step**
 - Communication (top-down as well as bottom-up; with and among different stakeholders)
 - Implementation of NQF needs support (incl. financial)
 - **If NQF should be done only in administrative way do not do it!**

What should still be done to benefit from hidden potentials?

- E.M.Rogers: “Diffusion of Innovations“ (1995)

Innovators (2,5%) + early adopters (13,5%)	Late majority (34%)
Early majority (34%)	Laggards (16%)

- **Not to implement NQF everywhere immediately but to proceed step by step**
 - **Start with new institutions, new fields of studies, new programmes**
 - **Use experts and support the existing expert network**

- Keep „**soft nature**“ (methodological **tool**) of NQF – **cannot substitute a missing vision**
- Start working with the **potential which has not been used**
 - **Institutional QA system**
 - **Communication with applicants and employers**
 - **Recognition of prior learning (Foreign qualification; informal non-formal)**

Thank you for your attention

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