Development of an Australian VET Graduation Statement

Consultation Paper
October 2013
**Contents**

1 Executive Summary 3
2 Background 5
3 Rationale 6
4 Design 8
5 Options for Implementation 10
6 Conclusion 12
7 List of Appendices 12
I Executive Summary

Graduation statements are official documents provided to graduates alongside other certification documentation such as testamurs and records of results. A graduation statement provides an explanation of the qualification achieved, the awarding institution, and the education system to which the qualification belongs. It provides graduates with information that enables qualifications to be easily understood and considered by overseas and domestic employers and institutions.

Specific details relevant to each graduate’s qualifications and achievements can be included, such as information about further study and work pathways facilitated by the qualification, and information about the graduate’s training (e.g. practical work placements).

Graduation statements are established internationally, including in European Union countries and New Zealand. In Australia, the Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement (AHEGS) is issued to higher education graduates at all universities and an increasing number of private higher education providers. Currently, though, there is no equivalent for the vocational education and training (VET) sector in Australia, as there is in other countries.

The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Council is undertaking a project to better understand issues for providers which might arise from the introduction of a VET sector graduation statement. This paper aims to stimulate discussion and seek input to identify potential design and implementation issues. Section 4 describes a possible design based on the AHEGS, and Section 5 canvasses some implementation options, including a staged implementation with voluntary issuance.

The proposed VET sector graduation statement is only intended for use where the graduate has completed an AQF qualification. Thus, the issuance of a graduation statement would not be required where only a skills set or units of competency, not amounting to the completion of a qualification, have been completed.

The AQF Council encourages all interested parties to provide views regarding the proposed design and the implementation plan for such a statement. Submissions should be sent via email to aqfc@aqf.edu.au by close of business on 15 November 2013.

Next steps

Following feedback through submissions to this paper and other consultation processes, the AQF Council will consider the next stages of this project. A proposal will be developed for the next steps, which might include detailed quantification of resources required and a pilot with a number of providers.

Focus questions

To provide a focus for stakeholder submissions, the following questions are posed throughout the paper. Submissions need not be limited to these questions.

Q1: How well do you think a VET Graduation Statement, with a design as outlined in Section 4, would meet the aims outlined in Section 3? Are there any modifications which could be made to better achieve those aims?
Q2: If you are a provider, do you use a commercial student management system (SMS), and if so, which? If you are a provider or a vendor of an SMS, could your existing system generate a VET graduation statement? If not, could it be modified to do so?

Q3: Some options for implementation are outlined in Section 5. Are there any other options or implementation issues that you would like considered?

Q4: If you are a provider or an SMS vendor, would you be willing to participate in a pilot?
2 Background

One of the core functions of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Council is to provide policy advice on improving flexible qualification linkages and pathways in education and training within and across all sectors and to the labour market. To this end, the Council undertook the Graduation Pathways Project, which investigated ways of providing information to graduating students about the pathways enabled by their qualification.

The Graduation Pathways Project concluded that tertiary graduation statements could be used as a tool for a national approach to the detailed documentation of pathways for graduates in the long term. Graduation statements enhance the utility of qualifications in the labour market and for further study, but they do not replace existing certification documentation such as a testamur or a record of results.

This consultation is part of a further project to develop a graduation statement which could be used in Australia’s vocational education and training (VET) sector, which will include graduation pathways information. The outcomes of the project will include recommendations on the structure and format of this graduation statement, options for implementation and indicative resourcing required. They also will identify issues which would require further investigation if the implementation of a VET graduation statement were to proceed.

This paper seeks to stimulate public comment on the suggested design and options for implementation. Face-to-face consultations also will be conducted with key stakeholders which, together with responses to this consultation paper, will inform the next stages of the project.
3 Rationale

The overall purpose of this project is to consider and, if appropriate, develop and implement a graduation statement for the vocational education and training sector. The graduation statement, if implemented across the VET sector, would sit alongside and not replace other documentation currently issued to graduates. It would deliver a number of benefits to graduates, whether they intend to move on to further study, enter or continue in the workforce, or to explore further options internationally.

Service to graduates

The broad intention of a graduation statement is to describe a VET qualification in an easily-understandable way. The level and nature of the training undertaken can be explained, as well as the education and training system in which the qualification is accredited. As a result, the statement provides graduates with an official, informative document that can be used for employment purposes or for entry to other institutions, both overseas and domestically.

The provision of pathways information through the graduation statement is particularly important. It is able to provide a way to document for graduates the pathways facilitated by the award of their qualification, including any articulation, credit transfer or advanced standing arrangements the issuing organisation has negotiated with other institutions.

Domestic and international mobility

The explanatory power of the statement is useful in facilitating graduate mobility, both within and outside Australia.

For students moving to further study or work domestically, the benefits of a graduation statement lie primarily in the provision of information about pathways. For employers, the benefits include information about the training undertaken by the student. In addition to information about the program of learning, providers can include information about particular methods of training or assessment and regulatory requirements which the qualification allows the graduate to meet.

For graduates moving internationally for further work or study, the graduation statement has the benefit of providing an explanation of Australia’s education system and quality assurance arrangements, details about the program of learning the graduate has undertaken and the place of the qualification within the system. This information will give readers an understanding of the qualification and that its bona fides are established under government authorised quality assurance processes, as well as confidence that the information about the qualification is officially recognised.

A standardised graduation statement can promote Australia’s world-class VET system and leverage that reputation to the graduate’s advantage. Increasing the portability of qualifications in this way will allow Australia’s VET graduates to better compete in the global labour market.

Graduation statements in Australia and overseas

The Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement (AHEGS) provides information about the graduate, the award/qualification, the issuing organisation, the graduate’s achievements, and the Australian higher education system.
The AHEGS has been issued since 2010. It is valued by graduates and providers and is issued by all universities and a significant number of other higher education providers. The VET graduation statement is intended to be modelled on the AHEGS, providing similar details including information on pathways.

European countries issue a graduation statement entitled the European Diploma Supplement which provided a model for the AHEGS. European countries also issue a Certificate Supplement, an analogous document designed for vocational qualifications.

Both the European Diploma and Certificate Supplements form part of the Europass, a single portfolio of documents with the purpose of communicating and presenting information relating to a person’s qualifications and competencies.

The New Zealand Tertiary Education Qualification Statement (NZ TEQS) was implemented in 2009. This also is modelled on the European Diploma Supplement and is available for issuance throughout the entire tertiary education sector. The guidelines provide for either a stand-alone version, similar to the AHEGS, or as a document which must be read in conjunction with other certification documentation such as the transcript.

Examples of the NZ TEQS and the European Diploma and Certificate Supplements are available on their respective websites, which are listed in Appendix A.

The implementation of a VET graduation statement would bring Australia in line with international practice in documentation provided to graduates and assist Australia in meeting its international obligations.
4 Design

A number of options for the design of the proposed VET graduation statement are available. There are three existing models which should be considered: the Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement (AHEGS), the New Zealand Tertiary Education Qualification Statement (NZ TEQS) and the European Diploma and Certificate Supplements. Each of these sets out the structure of the statement and identifies certain fields which are to be compulsory, such as the student’s name and the name of the issuing organisation, and others which are optional.

There are strong reasons for the adoption of a design based on the AHEGS. Similarity in design promotes understanding amongst existing domestic and international users of the AHEGS, and fosters a unified view of the reputation and quality of AQF qualifications. With all Australian universities and approximately 40 private higher education providers issuing the AHEGS, the design represents a tested model which has enjoyed significant support from stakeholders.

An AHEGS-like design also allows dual-sector providers to issue similar documentation to their VET and higher education graduates. At least one dual-sector university noted this as desirable during the consultation phase of the AHEGS project. It is also likely to minimise implementation issues for those with existing systems which are set up to provide AHEGS documentation.

While there are no current plans to combine the AHEGS and the proposed VET graduation statement to form a single graduation statement for the tertiary education sector, similarity in design will facilitate this if it is later considered to be desirable.

Proposed design

If a VET graduation statement were to be implemented, the AHEGS design could be easily modified for the VET sector. The AHEGS consists of a number of sections, as follows:

- First page information, which includes the logos of the AHEGS and the awarding institution, the purpose of the statement, and certification;
- Information about the graduate;
- Information about the award (including a currently non-compulsory section on pathways to further study);
- Information about the awarding institution;
- Information about the graduate’s academic achievements; and
- A standardised statement explaining Australia’s higher education system.

The Guidelines for the Presentation of the Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement which detail the content of each section are reproduced at Appendix B.

An AHEGS-based design might include the same sections, customised for the VET sector. Modifications might include the following:

- The replacement of the AHEGS logo with any VET graduation statement logo which may be developed, and replacement of the description of the higher education system with a description of the VET system;
- The use of the Unique Student Identifier, if and when implemented, in the graduate information section;
- The pathways field in the description of the award would become a compulsory field, discussed in more detail below;
• The course accreditation field would also become mandatory and would include:
  o as a requirement, information on the endorsement of the training package by the National Skills Standards Council, or the accreditation of the course by the relevant regulator; and
  o as an option, information about satisfying regulatory requirements in the relevant jurisdiction for particular occupations; and
• The section describing the graduate’s academic achievements would include, for example, the units of competency achieved (rather than grades received for units), and awards or prizes received.

Consistent with the AHEGS, providers will be free, within the constraints of the mandatory sections, to design a graduation statement to suit their needs. The requirements within the structure will be that:
• All sections must be included in the specified order;
• All compulsory fields must be included (including some standardised wording for various sections such as the description of the VET system); and
• Certain information must appear on the first page of the statement.

A sample VET graduation statement is provided at Appendix C.

Pathways field

This field provides an opportunity for training organisations to outline their pathways arrangements which are relevant to this graduate. For example, it can describe formal credit or advanced standing arrangements with other education organisations, or identify further study options (both in VET and higher education) which might be suitable. This information can be modified depending on the graduate’s choice of elective units of competency.

Standardised wording would need to be developed which providers can include as part of the compulsory pathways field. Parts of this wording would be made mandatory. For example, the wording would include a statement about the AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy, and also include links to appropriate stable websites such as:
• The page on the provider’s website outlining its pathways policies and arrangements;
• The jurisdiction’s Tertiary Admissions Centre;
• The relevant Industry Skills Council; and
• Databases such as MySkills and MyUniversity.

Examples which might be suitable for inclusion are set out at Appendix D.

Q1: How well do you think a VET Graduation Statement, with a design as outlined above, would meet the aims outlined in Section 3? Are there any modifications which could be made to better achieve those aims?
5 Options for Implementation

Information required

The content in the proposed design outlined in Section 4 relies primarily on material which should be available through providers’ existing student management/information systems (SMSs). Much of the content would be consistent across different graduation statements. For example, providers might need to create a short description of the organisation, if one does not already exist, but this would be the same on all statements issued by that provider. Similarly, descriptions of qualifications could be reused.

There is a small amount of material which providers might need to customise for each graduate. For example, this would include:

- Data on achievements specific to that graduate;
- Information about work experience and industry placements undertaken by the graduate as part of their training; and
- Pathways which are available to a particular student on the basis of electives or industry placements which are specific to that graduate.

Integration with existing systems

Based on the experience in the higher education sector, the function of generating a VET graduation statement may be able to be integrated into providers’ existing SMSs. Where the system automates the production of other documentation such as a testamur or record of results, the functionality of producing a graduation statement could be added.

Providers would still be required to ensure that there are mechanisms in place to reduce fraudulent reproductions and use of the statements, in accordance with the AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy. Providers would also need to retain electronic or paper versions of the statements issued, both for record-keeping purposes and to issue replacement copies if required. These functions should already be part of the systems in place for other certification documentation.

Electronic form

As an alternative, a standard design for the VET graduation statement could be created and made available online. Providers would be able to download the design in a commonly-editable format and insert the relevant text and logos before printing and signing it.

It is unlikely that there would be a facility to save these documents in a central repository, and providers would be expected to retain paper or electronic versions in their own systems.

This option would be useful for providers that do not wish to design their own statements and for which it would be inefficient to integrate the functionality into an existing SMS. This includes providers which do not currently automate the generation of other certification documentation.

Integrity

In order to maintain the integrity of the VET graduation statement, measures would need to be adopted similar to those in place for the AHEGS. This would include:
• A mechanism to review a sample document before the provider is approved to issue the VET graduation statement;
• The protection of the words “Australian VET Graduation Statement” and any logo through a trademark owned by the Commonwealth and/or States and Territories; and
• A licence deed between the owner(s) of the trademark and the approved provider which gives the provider the right to use the trademarked logo and words.

The VET graduation statement is only intended for use where the graduate has completed an AQF qualification. Thus, the issuance of a graduation statement would not be required where only a skills set or units of competency, not amounting to the completion of a qualification, have been completed.

**Timeframe and next steps**

The next steps in this project will be for the AQF Council to take into account the feedback and issues raised by the VET sector and consider the future direction of the project. A proposal for the next stage would be developed with detailed timeframes. This might include a study to quantify the resources needed, and a pilot with a small number of providers.

Experiences in implementing other graduation statements such as the AHEGS have indicated that it is important for providers to be involved in the development of the statement, that pilots will be useful in identifying and resolving implementation issues, and that a staged implementation is likely to be the best approach.

A staged implementation of the VET graduation statement, initially on a voluntary basis, would therefore be proposed. This is consistent with other graduation statement models, including the AHEGS and the NZ TEQS. While some time would be needed for providers to modify their systems, voluntary issuance would allow faster implementation than would otherwise be required.

Additionally, a pilot would be conducted with a small number of providers to refine the design of the statement and identify implementation issues. The providers would be drawn from across the VET sector and include a variety of sizes and structures (e.g. enterprise RTOs, large public providers, small private providers, and so on). The pilot would be overseen by a Reference Group and, while the exact timelines would be identified at the conclusion of this stage of the project, might be conducted during 2014.

Once a design is finalised, workshops and other communication activities would be conducted to encourage uptake in the VET sector. A contact point, such as a central email address, would be created to provide advice and assistance with any implementation issues.

**Q2:** If you are a provider, do you use a commercial student management system (SMS), and if so, which? If you are a provider or a vendor of an SMS, could your existing system generate a VET graduation statement? If not, could it be modified to do so?

**Q3:** Some options for implementation are outlined above. Are there any other options or implementation issues that you would like considered?

**Q4:** If you are a provider or an SMS vendor, would you be willing to participate in a pilot?
6 Conclusion

A graduation statement for Australia’s VET sector would enhance the utility of AQF qualifications as pathways to further study and to work in the domestic and international labour markets. It would also present an opportunity for information to be communicated to graduates about the pathways facilitated by their qualification.

The AQF Council encourages all interested parties to provide views regarding the proposed design and the implementation plan for such a statement. The questions posed throughout the paper may be a useful starting point for stakeholder submissions.

Making a written submission

Stakeholders should indicate if they desire their submission to remain confidential.

Submissions should be sent by close of business on 15 November 2013 via email to:

Di Booker  
Director Policy AQF Council  
Level 9, 63 Pirie Street, Adelaide  
08 8406 4737  
aqfc@aqf.edu.au

7 List of Appendices

A  Further reading and useful links  
B  Guidelines for the Presentation of the Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement  
C  Sample VET Graduation Statement  
D  Examples of content for pathways field
Appendix A – Further Reading and Useful Links

Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement
Includes the Proposal for an Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement - Final Report

Includes the AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy and the AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy
http://www.aqf.edu.au

European Diploma Supplement and European Certificate Supplement
Includes links to examples of the Diploma Supplement and the Certificate Supplement

New Zealand Tertiary Education Qualification Statement
Includes the Guidelines for implementing a Tertiary Education Qualification Statement in New Zealand, background papers to the implementation, and information about a review conducted in 2010

Higher Education Diploma Supplements Among APEC Member Economies
A project conducted in 2010 aiming to raise awareness of, share information about, and identify support required to develop, diploma supplements in the APEC region
Project page: http://hrd.apec.org/index.php/Higher_Education_Diploma_Supplement
Guidelines for the Presentation of the Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement

April 2013
Introduction

The Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement (AHEGS) is the Australian equivalent of the European Diploma Supplement. It takes the form of a document provided to graduates by the awarding institution.

An AHEGS is issued in addition to other documentation, such as testamurs and academic transcripts. Its purpose is to describe a higher education qualification in an easily understandable way, providing greater transparency by including descriptions of the nature, level, context and status of the studies undertaken as well as information about the education system to which the qualification belongs.

The AHEGS is strongly supported by Australian universities, higher education providers and other stakeholders to assist students seeking employment or further studies both in Australia and abroad. It has the potential to make Australian awards better understood internationally and thus enhance the international mobility of graduates and Australia’s competitiveness in the international higher education export market.

Background

In 2007, the Australian Government announced that a consortium of universities had been commissioned to develop a single agreed template for an Australian version of the European Diploma Supplement. The successful consortium was led by Professor Richard James, Director of the Centre for the Study of Higher Education (CSHE) at the University of Melbourne, and Professor Lynn Meek, Director of the Centre for Higher Education Management and Policy at the University of New England. The final report, Proposal for an Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement was released in mid 2008.

Key recommendations from the report were that an Australian Diploma Supplement be named the Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement, that the Statement should be provided without cost to all higher education graduates and that implementation in Australian universities should be on a voluntary basis commencing as soon as practicable in 2008.
General Information

It is recommended that these guidelines be read in conjunction with the report *Proposal for an Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement*. Pages 10-11 of the report outline the Guiding Principles for the AHEGS which should be followed in the development of your AHEGS.

While each issuing higher education provider is expected to follow these guidelines and provide specified information under the five sections, the layout in each case will be determined according to institutional practice, with institutions making their own decisions with respect to optional elements. It is expected that each institution will follow its own style in presenting information and including information from academic transcripts.

Contact Details

For all queries regarding the Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement please contact:

Email: AHEGS@innovation.gov.au

Layout and Details

The AHEGS consists of five sections, with the first four including a number of elements. Details to be provided in these sections are outlined below. It is a requirement that the five sections of the AHEGS be presented in the following order:

- Section 1 – The Graduate
- Section 2 – The Award
- Section 3 – The Awarding Institution
- Section 4 – The Graduate’s Academic Achievements
- Section 5 – Description of the Australian higher education system
First Page Details

The following information should appear on the front page of the AHEGS.

Compulsory Items:

1. **The AHEGS Logo**
   The AHEGS logo must be included on the AHEGS.

   ![AHEGS Logo](image)

   **Notes:**
   - The logo should appear in colour on the first page in the top right hand corner.
   - The width should be exactly 45mm and the background transparent.
   - The logo must contain the ® symbol.
   - As the logo is a registered trademark, it is a legal requirement that ALL institutions be licensed to use it. Please contact the Department to obtain a licence deed ([AHEGS@innovation.gov.au](mailto:AHEGS@innovation.gov.au)).
   - For a copy of the AHEGS logo, please send in your request via the AHEGS inbox ([AHEGS@innovation.gov.au](mailto:AHEGS@innovation.gov.au)).

2. **Statement on the Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement**
   The following statement is compulsory and the content is provided by the Australian Government. All information must be reported in its entirety, without amendments:

   The Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement is provided by Australian higher education institutions to graduating students on completion of the requirements for a particular higher education award. It provides a description of the nature, level, context and status of studies that were pursued by the individual named. Its purpose is to assist in both national and international recognition of Australian qualifications and to promote international mobility and professional recognition of graduates.

   **Notes:**
   - Preferred placement of the above statement is directly underneath the AHEGS logo. Exact placement of this paragraph is at the institution’s discretion, but it must appear on the first page.
3. Certification
The AHEGS must include certification containing the following information:

- Date:
- Signature:
- Capacity:

Notes:
- Exact placement of the certification is at the institution’s discretion, but it must appear on the first page.

4. Institutional Logo
Your institutional logo should appear on the first page of the AHEGS.

Notes:
- In the case of jointly-badged qualifications, institutions may choose to include both/all institutions’ logos.
- Exact placement of the institutional logo is at the institution’s discretion, but it must appear on the first page.

Section One – The Graduate
Section one shows basic details of the student.

Compulsory Items:

- Family name
- Given name(s)
- Student Number

Optional Items:

- Date of birth

Notes:
- Date of birth can be with or without verification based on citing birth certificate.
Section Two – The Award

Section two shows details of the award. The focus is on the award, as named, and not on the specific academic pathway or achievements of the individual graduate.

Compulsory Items:

1. **Name of the Award**
   Full name of the award and the field or fields of specialisation, where appropriate.

2. **Detail**
   Summary details of the award, including admission requirements, normal duration of study, language of instruction and Australian Qualifications Framework level. This may be provided by a generic statement or with reference to a website. For example:

   The Bachelor of Arts is an undergraduate qualification consisting of 24 units, taught in English, which normally takes three years of full-time study or part-time equivalent. The program structure requires successful completion of two arts majors of seven units each and elective courses. The Bachelor of Arts is located at Level 7 of the Australian Qualifications Framework. Most students are admitted on the basis of XXXX.

   The Graduate Diploma (Languages) is a specialist postgraduate qualification consisting of eight units, taught in English, which normally takes three years of study and is available on a part-time basis only. The program structure requires the successful completion of one language unit in each of two semesters in the first and second years followed by the successful completion of two units in each of two semesters in the third year. The Graduate Diploma (Languages) is located at Level 8 of the Australian Qualifications Framework. Most students are admitted on the basis of XXXX.

   The Master of Pharmacy is a specialist postgraduate qualification, taught in English, open to students who are suitable, successful graduates of human biology or biomedical sciences. Student must have successfully completed subjects of human biology, chemistry, biochemistry, microbiology and, anatomy and physiology. The program consists of two-years of full-time study. Once a pre-registration year is completed within Australia, and local board exams are passed, the graduates are licensed to practise as Registered Pharmacists in Australia. The Master of Pharmacy is located at Level 9 of the Australian Qualifications Framework. Most students are admitted on the basis of XXXX.
Notes:

- Institutions may choose the level of detail they wish to provide for this section.
- It is acceptable not to go into details of majors/specialisations in this section.
- Admission requirements should be relevant to the time of entry to the course, where possible.

Optional Items:

**Features**
Institutions may include a brief description of distinguishing features of the course, such as professional placements, industry-based learning or overseas study.

If work integrated learning is a key part of the award, it is advisable that details are provided in this section.

**Pathway to further study**
Institutions may include summary details on further or advanced higher education awards for which this award typically serves as preparation. Links to websites for detailed or additional information may be included.

**Course Accreditation**
Institutions may include a statement regarding relevant accreditation of the course by external organisations, for example, professional accreditation associations, detailing the agency and the date of most recent accreditation. If the qualification confers on the graduate rights to practice within particular jurisdiction, relevant information should be provided.

Section Three – The Awarding Institution

Section three shows details of the awarding institution. The text in this section will be the same for all graduates from the particular institution, with some exceptions (for example, jointly-badged awards and Open Universities Australia Awards).

Compulsory Items:

1. **Awarding Institution**
Include a brief description (preferably one or two sentences) of the institution including provider category, date of founding and legislation of establishment. All institutions should provide information on their inclusion on the Tertiary Education Quality and Standard Agency’s National Register of Higher Education Providers. Institutions listed on the Commonwealth Register of
Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) should include their registration number in this section.

For example, for Australian Universities:

   The University of X is a public university recognised for excellence in teaching and learning. The University was established by an Act of the South Australian Parliament in 1984 and is listed as an Australian University on the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency’s National Register of Higher Education Providers. The University’s Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students number is 12345X.

   Additional information can be found at www.uniX.edu.au.

For example, for Higher Education Providers:

   The Institute of X is a private higher education provider recognised for excellence in teaching and learning. The Institute was founded in Adelaide in 1984 and is listed as a Higher Education Provider on the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency’s National Register of Higher Education Providers. The Institute’s Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students number is 12345X.

   Additional information can be found at www.instituteX.edu.au.
Notes:
- Links to institutional websites may be provided for additional information.
- Where the course is a jointly-badged award with another institution, or is delivered by another institution, including overseas institutions, details of the arrangement should be provided.
- If the course was completed by Open Universities Australia, details of the arrangement should be provided in this section.

Section Four – The Graduate’s Academic Achievements

Section Four shows details of the graduate’s academic achievements. This section is therefore unique to individual graduates.

Compulsory Items:

1. Course Details
This section should contain relevant information pertaining to units of study undertaken toward this award, whether or not these were successfully completed. Included should be the unit name, institutional unit code, credit point value and grade.

Notes:
- All units of study contributing to the award should be included.
- Details of credit or advanced standing given for previous study or study at other institutions should be provided.
- Fail grades must be included.
- For higher research qualifications, the thesis title and a 100-word abstract should be included.

2. Key to grading
Provide details of the institutional system for grading units and, where appropriate, for grading the award. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Marking Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Distinction (HD)</td>
<td>A mark between 85 and 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinction (D)</td>
<td>A mark between 75 and 84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit (C)</td>
<td>A mark between 65 and 74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass (P)</td>
<td>A mark between 50 and 64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>A mark between 1 and 49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fail No Submission</td>
<td>No work submitted for assessment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Explanations of honours grades should be included as appropriate.

Notes:
- If appropriate, details may be provided of examination processes for research higher degrees. Names of examiners should not be included.
• For higher degree research awards with no coursework component at all, only the thesis title and abstract are required.
• If a Grade Point Average (GPA) is included in the AHEGS, details should be provided, explaining how the GPA was calculated.
• It is not acceptable to provide a link to the individual institution’s ‘Key to Grading’ web page, nor is it acceptable to provide the key as an attachment to the AHEGS.

Optional Items:

Additional course details
Specific details of particular course related achievements of the graduate may be included, such as: workplace learning; institutional organised study abroad or independent overseas study credited to the award; major practicum or professional training placements; and assessed competencies or graduate employability skills.

Special achievements, recognition and prizes
Academically related individual achievements may be included, such as: prizes; institution or faculty medals; special distinctions; and internally or externally-funded scholarships based on academic merit. Only information that can be authenticated by the institution should be included. Ideally, achievements shown should relate directly to the award.

Section Five – Description of the Australian Higher Education System

The following section is compulsory and the content is provided by the Australian Government. All information must be reported in its entirety, without amendments:

Description of the Australian Higher Education System

Introduction
The Australian higher education system consists of self-governing public and private universities and higher education institutions that award higher education qualifications.

The Australian Qualifications Framework
The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) is a single national, comprehensive system of qualifications offered by higher education institutions (including universities), vocational education and training institutions and secondary schools.
The AQF has 10 levels, each with defined criteria based on a taxonomy of learning outcomes. Higher education qualifications are placed between level 5 (the Diploma) and level 10 (the Doctoral Degree). The Bachelor Degree is at level 7. Each AQF qualification has a set of descriptors which define the type and complexity of knowledge, skills and application of the knowledge and skills that a graduate who has been awarded that qualification has attained, and the typical volume of learning associated with that qualification type. The full set of levels criteria and qualification type descriptors can be found by visiting www.aqf.edu.au.

The main AQF qualifications awarded by higher education institutions are Bachelor Degrees, Masters Degrees and Doctoral Degrees. There are also three qualifications at the sub-degree level: the Diploma, the Advanced Diploma and the Associate Degree. At the graduate level but below the Masters Degree are the Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Summary</th>
<th>Qualification Type</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>Graduates at this level will have knowledge and skills for initial work, community involvement and/or further learning</td>
<td>Certificate I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>Graduates at this level will have knowledge and skills for work in a defined context and/or further learning</td>
<td>Certificate II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>Graduates at this level will have theoretical and practical knowledge and skills for work and/or further learning</td>
<td>Certificate III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 4</td>
<td>Graduates at this level will have theoretical and practical knowledge and skills for specialised and/or skilled work and/or further learning</td>
<td>Certificate IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 5</td>
<td>Graduates at this level will have specialised knowledge and skills for skilled and/or paraprofessional work and/or further learning</td>
<td>Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 6</td>
<td>Graduates at this level will have broad knowledge and skills for paraprofessional and/or highly skilled work and/or further learning</td>
<td>Advanced Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 7</td>
<td>Graduates at this level will have broad and coherent knowledge and skills for professional work and/or further learning</td>
<td>Bachelor Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 8</td>
<td>Graduates at this level will have advanced knowledge and skills for professional highly skilled work and/or further learning</td>
<td>Bachelor Honours Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 9</td>
<td>Graduates at this level will have specialised knowledge and skills for research, and/or professional practice and/or further learning</td>
<td>Masters Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 10</td>
<td>Graduates at this level will have systematic and critical understanding of a complex field of learning and specialised research skills for the advancement of learning and/or for professional practice</td>
<td>Doctoral Degree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Admission**

Requirements for admission to particular awards are set by higher education institutions and provide a range of routes for entry and only admit those students considered to have potential to complete an award successfully. Admission of school leavers to undergraduate awards is typically on the basis of the level of achievement in Year 12 secondary education, although some institutions and awards also use interviews, portfolios or demonstrated interest or aptitude. Most institutions also provide alternative entry provisions via bridging or foundation programs for mature age students or other special provisions, such as recognition of prior learning from previous study. Admission to postgraduate awards is generally based on the level of achievement in previous higher education studies and in most cases, admission to PhD awards is based on high achievement in a research Masters Degree or in a Bachelor Degree with first class honours or second class honours division A.

**Quality**

Quality assurance and stringent approval requirements for higher education institutions ensure that Australia has an international reputation for high quality education.

The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) was established on 30 July 2011 as a new national regulator and quality assurance agency for higher education. TEQSA is an independent body with the powers
to regulate university and non-university higher education providers and monitor quality against standards.

From 29 January 2012 TEQSA assumed responsibility for registering and re-registering providers and accrediting and re-accrediting awards for higher education providers that do not have authority to accredit their own awards. At the time of registration, re-registration, accreditation and/or re-accreditation, TEQSA evaluates the performance of a higher education provider against the Higher Education Standards Framework. The Standards Framework comprises: Provider Registration, Category and Course Accreditation Standards and Qualification Standards (based on the AQF). The Higher Education Standards Panel, which is independent from TEQSA, is responsible for developing and monitoring the Standards Framework.

TEQSA also undertakes quality assessments of individual providers or reviews issues within the sector across a cohort (thematic reviews). These reviews help to identify sectoral good practice, guide sectoral quality enhancement and inform policy and research.

TEQSA’s primary aim is to ensure that students receive a high quality education at any of Australia’s higher education institutions.

All higher education institutions receiving Australian Government financial support must meet quality and accountability requirements that are set out in the Higher Education Support Act 2003. The Australian Government also uses a range of tools to measure and monitor the quality of outcomes, while the interests of international students are protected by the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 and the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS), providing tuition assurance and ensuring that institutions listed on CRICOS meet defined minimum standards.

Notes:
- The above text, table and AQF logo should be included unaltered and in its entirety on the AHEGS.
- The AQF table must appear in full on the same page.
- The full text has been approved by the Department and the Office of the AQF Council.
- The above Section Five was revised in 2011 to reflect changes to quality assurance arrangements in higher education and again in January 2013 to reflect changes to the AQF.
- The updated Section Five should be included on all AHEGS by 31 December 2013. If this deadline is not possible, then the ultimate deadline becomes 31 December 2014. Please inform the Department through the AHEGS@innovation.gov.au inbox if this applies for your institution.
Issues to Note

Web links
Web links can be used on the AHEGS at the institution’s discretion. If using web links, it is recommended that they are at a basic level (for example: www.uniX.edu.au) to prevent out-dated links. It is not compulsory, but you may find it useful to create an AHEGS dedicated page on your institution’s website to communicate more easily with students and employers.

AHEGS paper
There is no requirement to use secure paper for the AHEGS but many institutions are choosing to use the same paper as the testamur/academic transcript which may include watermarks and/or holograms.

Jointly-badged qualifications
Jointly-badged qualifications are those that involve more than one institution, where the partner institution may be domestic or overseas. Regardless of the nature of the arrangement, the AHEGS should acknowledge that the qualification was delivered by two (or more) institutions.

If the partnership is with an overseas institution, the Australian institution will be the only provider issuing an AHEGS.

If the partnership is with a domestic institution, the institutions may either agree on which one will provide the AHEGS or they may both provide AHEGS, as long as the arrangement is acknowledged on the AHEGS.

Nested Degrees
For nested degrees, such as where students first complete a Graduate Certificate, followed by a Graduate Diploma and/or followed by a Masters, institutions should follow the same practices that they use for issuing awards. For example, if an institution grants a testamur at each stage, it should issue an AHEGS at each stage but if the institution only grants the award at the end of the studies, it should issue an AHEGS at that point only.

Double/combined Degrees
A double degree is an award where a student receives two separate awards, i.e. two testamurs. A separate AHEGS should be provided for each qualification. For example: Bachelor of Business/Bachelor of Arts in International Studies.

A combined degree is an award for which a student receives a single testamur. Only one AHEGS should be provided for a combined degree. For example: Bachelor of Arts/Asian Studies.
Reissuing of an AHEGS
Ideally, a reissued AHEGS should be provided in identical form to the original version. If this is not possible due to out of date stock paper, it is acceptable to reproduce the AHEGS on different paper, but the information contained in the AHEGS should remain as originally issued.

Institutions must provide one copy of the AHEGS free of charge but may charge for the reissuing if it is standard procedure to do so for testamurs and academic transcripts.

Storage of the AHEGS
The Department does not have a policy on the storage of the AHEGS and institutions should select a method of storage to suit available resources.

Other frequently asked questions
An extended list of frequently asked questions is available from the Department's website, visit www.innovation.gov.au/AHEGS.
1. THE GRADUATE

Family Name: Student
Given Names: A
USI/Student Number: 1729

2. THE QUALIFICATION

Name of qualification: Certificate IV in Commercial Cookery

Summary: This qualification reflects the role of commercial cooks who have a supervisory or team leading role in the kitchen. They operate independently or with limited guidance from others and use discretion to solve non-routine problems.
2. **THE QUALIFICATION** (continued)

*Training Package*
The SIT40412 Certificate IV in Commercial Cookery is part of the Tourism, Travel and Hospitality Training Package. It was endorsed by the National Skills Standards Council on...

*Entry requirements*
To enrol in this qualification, a student must meet the following prerequisites...

*Licensing and regulatory information*
Holding this qualification partially fulfils the regulatory requirements for the job of … in New South Wales and South Australia.

*Pathways*
Under an agreement between the College and XYZ College, a graduate enrolling in [qualification] at XYZ College is entitled to be granted credit towards the following units:

…

Information on further study and work pathways available to the graduate are available on the College’s website at...

Further information can also be found at…

3. **AWARDING INSTITUTION**

The College is a private vocational education and training provider specialising in commercial cookery and related qualifications. It was founded in Adelaide in 2000 and is a registered training organisation (#123456) listed on the Australian Skills Quality Authority’s National Register and the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students.

Further information on the College can be found at…

4. **GRADUATE’S ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS**

The units of competency undertaken by the graduate in achieving this qualification are:

- Compulsory units
  - 
- Elective units
  -

The graduate has also undertaken work placements with… and received prizes for …
5. DESCRIPTION OF THE AUSTRALIAN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM

Mandated section – standardised text to be developed which must be included as-is.
### Appendix D– Examples of Content in Pathways Fields

A number of options are available for populating the pathways field in a VET graduation statement. Some examples, by no means exhaustive, are set out below. Multiple options could be included in a graduation statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option:</th>
<th>Development by:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mandated statement on pathways</td>
<td>AQF Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This would be a generic statement with standardised wording, outlining the AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy and providing a link to the AQF website. An example is given below this table.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provider developed statements about pathways</td>
<td>Providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This section should include information about entry to the qualification, credit that may be awarded and examples of pathways to which the qualification may lead. Examples are provided below.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link to the provider’s website</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The provider could create a page on its website which sets out its policies and arrangements regarding pathways. In a number of cases, providers have indicated that they already provide pathways information to students through other means, such as brochures, and these could also be included on the website.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link to or statement about national searchable databases</td>
<td>Host of any national register of articulation and credit transfer arrangements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If a national database of articulation and credit transfer arrangements were to be developed, a link to it would be highly suitable for inclusion in this field.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link to other useful, stable websites, including:</td>
<td>Various</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The jurisdiction’s Tertiary Admissions Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The relevant ISC website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• MySkills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The 3D Articulation Project website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provider-to-provider arrangements</td>
<td>Providers, where applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relevant articulation and credit transfer arrangements developed by the provider could be detailed in the graduation statement itself. It would be necessary to make it clear that those pathways were available at the time the statement was issued and arrangements may have changed since then.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example of mandated statement on pathways:

The AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy builds into the AQF the capacity to genuinely support students’ lifelong learning. It is Australia’s national policy on qualification pathways. The policy is underpinned by the principles that pathways:

- Are clear and transparent to students;
- Are systemic and systematic;
- Enable flexible qualification pathways;
• May be horizontal across AQF qualifications at the same level as well as vertical between qualifications at different levels;
• Can facilitate credit for entry into, as well as credit towards, AQF qualifications; and
• Eliminate unfair or unnecessary barriers for student access to AQF qualifications.

The AQF Qualification Pathways Policy outlines the responsibilities of providers, accrediting authorities and qualification developers in developing, providing, documenting and monitoring pathways policy and practice in the Australian education system.

For more information visit www.aqf.edu.au.

Examples of statements generated by providers:

**Job roles**

This qualification provides a pathway for the graduate to work in various kitchen settings, such as restaurants, hotels, clubs, pubs, cafes, cafeterias and coffee shops.

This graduate has completed elective units relating to finance as detailed in Section 4, and is suitable for positions which involve assisting with the financial record-keeping of the organisation.

**Further study**

After achieving this qualification, the graduate could progress to SIT50313 Diploma of Hospitality.

Under an agreement with the College of ABC, this graduate is entitled to enrolment in the FNS40211 Certificate IV in Bookkeeping by virtue of the electives completed in relation to finance. Completion of this qualification would enable the graduate to take on the bookkeeping tasks for a range of organisations.

The following units completed as part of this qualification also form part of the FNS40211 Certificate IV in Bookkeeping:

- BSBFIA401A Prepare financial reports (core)
- BSBITU306A Design and produce business documents (core)
- BSBWRT401A Write complex documents (elective – fulfils BSBWRT301A Write simple documents)

**Useful links**

Further pathways information can be found at the following sites:

- College of XYZ: http://collegeofxyz...
- MySkills: http://myskills.gov.au