

**European Qualification Framework
Statement from ICMCI for the EQF Consultation Process
The International Council of Management Consulting Institutes**



December, 25th, 2005

1. Introduction

ICMCI, the International Council of Management Consulting Institutes is a worldwide recognized organization. We are an international membership organization and a network of the management advisory and consultancy associations and institutes worldwide who have a common purpose and shared values and goals. We were founded in 1987 to promote a closer working relationship between all management consulting institutes or organizations primarily dedicated to the registration or certification of individual management consultants. The purpose of this closer working relationship is to accelerate the achievement of mutual goals of the national institutes, particularly to assist them in raising the standards of the profession of management consulting and to create worldwide recognition and acceptance of the CMC (Certified Management Consultant) mark. Currently, ICMCI has 44 association members worldwide.

The international **CMC® quality standard** was established by ICMCI (The International Council of Management Consulting Institutes), because feedback from clients indicated that they regard competency-based certification of management consultants as important.

The CMC® draws on a set of core standards for management consultants which define the role, are recognised internationally and can be applied globally facilitating reciprocity between member institutes and associations of ICMCI. CMC® encourages continuous professional development by striving for high standards, rather than 'controlling' or 'constraining' individual consultants. It recognises the validity of national differences, and the continuing evolution of management consultancy practice.

Today the CMC® is actively accepted and used by 44 ICMCI member countries as an international standard to signify experienced management consultants. More than 10.000 management consultants worldwide have agreed to accept the international competency qualification and minimum standard. The development and promotion of the CMC® mark and its international protection against misuse are fundamental to the future of the whole consulting industry. Thus, CMC® is about increasing access to learning and continuing professional development.

2. The ICMCI CMC Competency Model

International Council of Management Consulting Institutes (ICMCI)
Professional standards
CMC Competencies and definitions ©

Major	Sub set	High level components	Core component of assessability - definition
Values and Behaviours	Ethics and Professionalism	Values, ethics & professionalism	Adheres to code of conduct and ethical guidelines. Demonstrates professional integrity, consistency, transparency, accountability, responsibility and reliability.
	Analytical Skills	Observations & analysis	Recommendations are supported by objective facts and research.
		Conceptualization & problem solving	Employs structured approaches to generate ideas, evaluate and select options.
	Personal Interaction	Complexity, change & diversity	Understands complexity of operating environment and impact of selected course of actions on others.
		Communication & presentation	Uses a range of techniques and approaches to convey thoughts and ideas in a range of situations
		Responsibility & accountability	Responsible for own actions, demonstrating resilience, drive and commitment to results.
		Influencing	Presents ideas convincingly to produce specific outcomes
	Personal Development	Focus and time management	Delivers timely solutions, balancing priorities and managing time effectively
		Self development	Proven track record of self development and personal growth. Proven ability to learn from past assignments and apply knowledge

Technical Competence	Functional Specialization	Knowledge and skill	Recognized as an expert in own discipline, applying expertise in one or more industry sectors
	Consulting Skills	Client focus	Scopes client requirements, presenting clear comprehensive proposals. Identifies and articulates project drivers, strategic fit and commercial benefits with client in respect of one or more individual projects. Understand client cultures, addresses client satisfaction; understand client motivation impacts
		Project management	Manages client projects effectively- setting objectives, deadlines and budgets, using appropriate project management tools and methodologies and ensuring seamless withdrawal process.
		Consultative process	Uses a range of techniques, including facilitation, to deliver solutions of mutual benefit.
		Knowledge	Captures, shares and applies knowledge in a structured way, relevant to the engagement needs
		Partnering and networking	Leverages network effectively to engage expertise of others, developing others as appropriate
		Tools and methodologies	Selects and uses an appropriate range of tools and methodologies
		Risk and quality management	Defines quality standards, ensuring quality of delivery and client satisfaction. Defines risk criteria, identifying, mitigating and managing risks and outcomes.

Business Insight	Consulting Business Knowledge	Consultancy business knowledge	Understands the nature of the management consultancy market, competitors and capabilities.
		Commercial aspects of assignments	Demonstrates understanding of commercial aspects of project including scope, risk, terms and conditions and pricing.
	Breadth of Knowledge	External awareness	Demonstrates understanding of political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental factors (PESTLE) impacting on area of work
		Business knowledge	Understands business structures, processes, management and disciplines and impact on own area of work
		Understanding the client	Has researched and understood client business operations and agenda

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3. ICMCI Statement to the European Qualification Framework

The EQF has been developed as a meta-model increasing transparency, thus facilitating the transfer and recognition of the qualification of individual citizens. It consists of a set of common reference points, referring to learning outcomes, supported by a range of tools and techniques.

ICMCI supports the development and implementation of a European Qualification Framework in connection with other tools and instruments such as Europass, Ploteus Database, etc. An increase in the transparency of qualifications strengthens lifelong learning and facilitates the mobility within and between different countries. Consequently, the framework can only be developed and implemented on the basis of an extensive consultation process. ICMCI aims at contributing to that consultation process as follows.

- Qualification in the sense of the EQF can only consist of formal and informal learning outcomes in combination with professional practice. It is of high importance that **academic qualification and professional practice** are considered as equivalent in the EQF.
- Therefore we suggest the **descriptors** to be **reformulated** in such a way that they are relevant for **sector-specific professions** outside of academic professions. In this regard each reference level should be achievable independent of length and kind of education / learning in each sector. This proposal arises from our core adherence to a competency model which is the presented competency of and the key criterion for the individual candidate to achieve a CMC designation – and not the route that the competency was obtained. The route to obtaining this required level of competency will subsequently vary considerably in the 44 countries worldwide.
- Even if each member country can specify the stages of its national qualification framework independently, we suggest **maintaining the 8 reference levels**. We expect **level 7 and 8** as the relevant levels for management consultants to obtain the ICMCI CMC designation.
- Moreover, the **descriptors in level 7 “Skills”** should be re-formulated as follows in order to be more neutral. We suggest the following reformulation: “Create a diagnosis to problems by integrating theoretical and practical knowledge ...”.
- The ICMCI CMC qualification requires an independent assessment which includes also **feedback from clients**. This aspect we would encourage for any qualification framework covering the service sector.
- The draft refers to a need for **external validation** of the awarding process and we note that ICMCI has defined a quality assurance process with a detailed review every three years of the awarding bodies, i.e. the National Institutes or Associations of Management Consultants.



- Reference is made to ethical standards and behaviours. We note that ICMCI has a mandatory code of professional practice (which is regularly reviewed and updated) for all CMC's: both understanding and adherence to this code are assessed within the awarding process. We strongly endorse the proposals to include the **ethical dimension** in the EQF.
- We note that the draft states: "We can increasingly observe, however, that **institutions and associations outside the context of national qualification policies** claim the right to authorise learning outcomes" and the draft expresses the need for the EQF to take this into account – but the emphasis still is the learning outcomes to assessment to qualification model sponsored by a national qualification authority. We consider that the published draft does not fully explore these issues. This is particularly relevant to the ICMCI CMC which is an international qualification, and we would not expect it to be "owned" by a single national agency.
- The EQF is to be implemented in each Member State by the Ministry responsible for Education. We strongly believe that the EQF should emphasize that this is to be undertaken in conjunction with the relevant **Ministries for the sector(s)** (e.g. Industry, Health) with the needs for the qualification. Without the ultimate customer having a proper input to the standards of the qualification, there is a strong possibility that the qualification may not be acceptable as the final arbiter of ability to be able to fulfil certain roles.

4. Conclusion

ICMCI strongly endorses the intention and general direction of the proposals as presented and would encourage the maintenance of the openness of the framework to be able to include qualifications that are internationally based, and those qualifications which concentrate on the attainment of assessed degrees of competence. Individuals benefit from obtaining qualifications, but so do also those employing those individuals and the involvement of the Ministries representing those employers (through specifying the competency standards and the assessment methods) is to be encouraged.

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