Referencing report of the the Swedish Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning, SeQF, to the European Qualifications Framework, the EQF
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1 Development of referencing report

In the recommendation of the European qualifications framework, EQF the member states was invited to create a national qualifications framework, NQF, which could be connected to the EQF. This will be achieved by the member states clearly referencing levels in the national qualifications framework to the levels specified in the European framework in Annex II of the Recommendation on the EQF. How levels in the national qualifications framework relate to the EQF should be described in the so-called referencing report that each member state presents to the EQF advisory group. This group was introduced when the Recommendation on the EQF was adopted and is responsible for the overall coordination and coherence, and to promote transparency in the work to link national qualifications frameworks to the EQF. The National Agency for Higher Vocational Education (Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan - MYH), has been assigned by the Government to develop a draft for a Swedish referencing report in accordance with the recommendation and the criteria established by the advisory group on the European qualifications framework.

The development of the reference report has been implemented together with the relevant national authorities, stakeholders from the social partners and education sector, national and international experts. A working group of experts and a secretariat participated in the work on the content and design of the present draft for the referencing report.

The Experts:
- Ingegerd Green - expert, skills in the labour market, Skärteknikcentrum Sweden AB
- Janerik Lundquist - expert, higher education and the Bologna process, Linköping University
- Anders Färdeman - expert upper-secondary schools, consultant
- Torbjörn Matsson - expert, higher vocational education, Jönköping University

The Secretariat consisted of the following persons:
- Sebastian Steele – head secretary, consultant, translator
- Britt-Inger Stoltz - senior administrative officer, the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education
- Stefan Skimutis - project manager, The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education

There have been two international experts attached to the expert group; Kim Faurschou, international expert on several of the European tools such as EQAVET, and Volker Gehmlich, a professor from Osnabrück; expert on qualification systems.

A reference group has also participated in work on the draft of the referencing report. In the reference group, the following organizations and agencies participated.

- Swedish Public Employment Service (Arbetsförmedlingen),
- Swedish National Council of Adult Education (Folkbildningsrådet),
- Swedish Trade Union Confederation (Landsorganisationen i Sverige),
- Swedish National Agency for Education (Statens skolverk),
- Confederation of Swedish Enterprise (Svenskt näringsliv),
- Swedish Confederation of Professional Associations (Sveriges akademikers centralorganisation),
- Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (Sveriges kommuner och landsting),
- Swedish Confederation of Professional Employees (Tjänstemännens centralorganisation),
- Swedish Council for Higher Education (Universitet- och högskolerådet), and
- Swedish Higher Education Authority (Universitetskanslersämbetet).

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1 EUT C 111,6.5.2008
Individual meetings have also been conducted with The Swedish Federation of Business Owners (Företagarna), Swedish Schools Inspectorate (Statens skolinspektion), and The Association of Swedish Higher Education (Sveriges universitets- och högskoleförbund).

The report has been reviewed by the Ministry of Education and Research (Utbildningsdepartementet).
2 Structure of the referencing report

The referencing report begins in chapter 3, by describing lifelong learning in Sweden, which appears as a formal, non-formal and informal learning. Next chapter 4 is a statement of the governance of the formal education system. Chapter 5, an introduction of the Swedish Qualifications Framework, SeQF. Next chapter 6, a more detailed description of SeQF – the law, regulation, the descriptors and the progression in the framework. In the next chapter 7, a statement of the two frameworks in Sweden, SeQF and QF-EHEA. Chapter 8 - assessment of fulfilment of the 10 criteria – how SeQF is linked to EQF. The next chapter 9 is an account of the Swedish model on how qualifications outside the public education system can be placed in SeQF. The report concludes in chapter 10, with a description of how the implementation of the Swedish qualifications framework will be portrayed.

The law and the regulations governing the Swedish referencing framework are reported as appendices at the end of the report. The framework and qualifications levels which are placed in SeQF, the international experts' views and the authorities signed attestation are also reported as annexes.
3 Lifelong learning in Sweden

3.1 Introduction

Historically, Sweden has had the ambition and tradition that the inhabitants, regardless of where they live and their social and economic conditions, shall have access to both basic education and training and the possibility of further education and training throughout their lives. Lifelong learning has been viewed as important both from an individual and societal perspective. The learning takes place on several different levels, in several forms and aims to strengthen the individual’s position in employment and community life, to promote personal development and to cater for the labour market’s need for competence.

The learning that takes place in an organized form is called formal and non-formal learning. Formal learning, with legislative regulations, occurs within the public education system. Learning which does not have legislative learning outcomes but takes place in an organized manner is called non-formal learning. Informal learning, on the other hand, is the learning that is acquired constantly: at work, at home, at leisure, etc. and that is not done in an organized way, but rather unconsciously in daily life.

*Figure 1. The scope of the different forms of learning.*

In Sweden, as in other Nordic countries, there is a long tradition of formal and non-formal learning which occurs both within and outside the public education system. In the latest report on adult learning, published by Statistics Sweden (SCB) in 2014, participation of adults, age 25 to 64, in different forms of learning in the years 2011/12 is reported.

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2. Within the public education system learning outcomes and quality assurances are regulated by statute, regardless of whether the training is conducted by the public or private education.

3. The picture is based on the latest survey on adult participation in education and training. (SCB: Tema: Utbildning 2014:3 Vuxnas deltagande i utbildning 2011/2012). The survey is conducted in all EU countries and a comparable result from the countries is published by Eurostat. The survey is an important source to describe the adult population’s participation in lifelong learning.
The survey shows that 3.5 million people in the above age group participated in some form of education, course or study circle, which represents about 70 percent of the population aged 25 to 64 years old. The largest part of the learning process was conducted in the form of staff training, i.e. outside the public education system.

Informal learning, on the other hand, is very difficult to define and measure, and is therefore not reported in SCB’s survey. Informal learning has been added to the figure above only to illustrate its occurrence but the magnitude is naturally not measurable and comparable with other forms of learning.

3.2 The Swedish education system

As already stated in the introduction, the learning that takes place in an organized form is called formal and non-formal learning. Formal learning, with legislative regulations learning outcomes, occurs within the public education system. Learning which does not have learning outcomes regulated but takes place in an organized manner is called non-formal learning. The Swedish education system encompasses both formal and non-formal learning which means different types of education and training is part of the public education system, but also by other programs which are important components of the entire range of education courses in Sweden. Such education can be provided by both public and private education providers.

The Swedish education system mainly includes:

- Public Education (pre-school – lower and upper-secondary education - adult education)
  The academic year 2014/2015 registered approximately 1.7 million students.
- Post-secondary studies conducted within the university college and university (higher education)
  The academic year of 2013/2014 registered approximately 406,000 students.
- Post-secondary vocational education in Higher Vocational Education
  Year 2014, around 46,000 students were registered
- General course (allmän kurs) in Folk High School (Programs that gives access to upper-secondary and post-secondary education)
  Autumn semester 2014 registered roughly 12,500 students
- Other programs within Folk High School
  Autumn semester 2014, registered some 16,700 students
- The Arts and Culture courses and other programmes
  Year 2014, around 10,000 students were registered.

Training within the public education system is free of charge to nationals of a member state of the EES or Switzerland. The majority of other programs that do not have legislative regulations legislative learning outcomes are also free of charge, with the exception of arts and cultural programs. All programs are eligible for student financial aid.

Figure 2. Overview of the Swedish education system.

4 Sources: The Swedish National Agency for Education, Swedish Higher Education Authority, SCB, The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education.
5 Refers to first and second cycle.
6 Refers to long special courses.
7 The figure refers to participants in supplementary education, K. KU will be phased out and continue to operate under the name of art and culture courses.
8 Refers to supplementary education which is being phased out by Arts and Culture courses in the fall of 2015.
9 EES = European Economic Area. Switzerland is part of EFTA, the European Free Trade Association. Higher education can also be free of charge, because other reasons. See Ordinance (SFS 2010 : 543) on application and tuition fees at universities.
The Swedish education system

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION
- University and college
- Higher Vocational Education
- Arts and Culture courses
- Folk high school
- Training coducted by authorities

UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION
- Qualified graduate from Upper Secondary engineering course
- Upper secondary school
- Individuals with learning disabilities
- Special education for adults
- Municipal adult education training

COMPULSORY EDUCATION
- Youth recreation center
- Compulsory school
- Special School
- Sami School
- Pupils with learning disabilities
- Pre-school and Pre-school class

ELEMENTAL EDUCATION FOR ADULTS
- Folk high school
- Municipal adult education training

DAYCARE SECTOR
- Daycare
- Other disciplinary functions
3.3 Formal learning

3.3.1 The Swedish formal education system

The following section includes all forms of education and training within the public education system, even those that are not assigned to the Swedish qualifications framework.\(^\text{10}\)

Figure 3. The formal education system.

\(^\text{10}\) In the annex to the regulation (SFS 2015:545) on qualifications framework for lifelong learning, it is given what level the statutory qualifications are equivalent to.
The public education system encompasses the following forms of learning:

- Pre-School
- Pre-School class
- Compulsory education
  - Compulsory School
  - Special School
  - Sami School
  - Pupils with learning disabilities
- Upper Secondary School
  - Upper Secondary School
  - Individuals with learning disabilities
- Adult Education and training
  - Municipal Adult Education and training at compulsory and upper secondary level
  - Special education for adults
  - Swedish tuition for immigrants
- Post-secondary education
  - Upper-secondary engineering qualification
  - Higher Education
  - Higher Vocational Education, HVE

3.3.1.1 Compulsory and upper secondary education

Pre-School
Pre-school is a voluntary form of schooling for children from the age of 1 which it is mandatory for municipalities to provide. Children can begin pre-school at different ages and participate for different durations. The pre-school is meant to lay the foundation for lifelong learning. It should be a support for families in their child-rearing responsibilities, development and growth. At the same time, it must be organized so as to make it possible for parents to work or study.

Pre-school class
The pre-school class is a voluntary form of schooling which it is mandatory for municipalities to provide. All children should be offered a place in a pre-school class from the autumn term of the year they turn 6 years and until they begin their primary education. It should stimulate every child's development and learning, and form the basis for continued schooling.
years and until they begin their primary education. It should stimulate every child's development and learning, and form the basis for continued schooling.

**Compulsory school**

Compulsory school is a nine-year mandatory school form free of charge for all children resident in Sweden. A child usually begins compulsory school at 7 years of age and has completed their compulsory education at the age of 16. The education shall be equivalent wherever in the country it is provided. Compulsory school should be the basis of the individual's continued education but the purpose is broader than that. Compulsory school will provide students with the knowledge and values as well as contributing to personal development prepare students for active life choices and provide a good basis for active participation in social life.

Primary school is a nine-year obligatory school form, which means that children have the right to education. Children subject to primary school attendance have, according to the instrument of government (regeringsformen), the right to free basic education in public schools. A child usually begins primary school at 7 years of age and has completed their primary education at the age of 16. The education shall be equivalent wherever in the country it is provided. Primary school should be the basis of the individual's continued education but the purpose is broader than that. Primary school will provide students with the knowledge and values as well as contributing to personal development, prepare students for active life choices and provide a good basis for active participation in social life.

**Special School**

Special school will provide students with developmental disabilities an education that is tailored to each student's condition and, as far as possible, correspond to that given in the primary school. For students with certain disabilities, including visual and hearing impairments, there are special schools. Special school should provide an education that is tailored to each student's conditions and, as far as possible, correspond to the education provided in primary schools. Education in special schools should form the basis for further education.

**Compulsory school for pupils with learning disabilities**

For students with certain disabilities, including deafness, there are special schools. Special school should provide an education that is tailored to each student's condition and, as far as possible, correspond to the education provided in primary schools. Education in special schools should form the basis for further education.

For students with certain disabilities, including deafness, there are special schools. Special school should provide an education that is tailored to each student's condition and, as far as possible, correspond to the education provided in primary schools. Education in special schools should form the basis for further education.

Children with learning disabilities can attend the school for pupils with learning disabilities as an alternative to the compulsory school. School for pupils with learning disabilities will provide the students with an education that is tailored to each student's condition and, as far as possible, correspond to that given in the compulsory school.

For students with certain disabilities, including deafness, there are special schools. Special school should provide an education that is tailored to each student's condition and, as far as possible, correspond to the education provided in primary schools. Education in special schools should form the basis for further education.

**Sami School**

The syllabus of the compulsory school applies to the Sami school but the Sami school also has a syllabus on Sami. The Sami School education consists of grades 1-6. Then, the pupils go on to secondary level within compulsory school. The subject Sami should occur in all grades within Sami school.
Upper Secondary School
It is not mandatory for young people to go to upper-secondary school, but almost everyone does. The municipality is responsible for all qualified young people in the municipality to be offered education on national programs in upper-secondary school, in-house or in collaboration with other municipalities. The offer shall include a comprehensive selection of national programs and specializations. Some courses in the aesthetic field, certain specific programs and sports programs, may have special admission requirements and/or testing. There are 18 national programs: twelve vocational programs and six higher education preparatory programs. All 18 national programs are three years in duration. There are also five introductory programs for students who are not eligible for a national program. Upper-secondary school should provide a solid foundation for professional work, further studies, personal development and an active participation in community life.

After a vocational program, students should be well prepared for the labour market. It should be possible to immediately begin a career after graduation. Within vocational programs, it is possible to choose a apprenticeship track where the student carries out a larger part of the education and training in one or several work places. All students in vocational programs have the right to participate in the courses required for basic eligibility for higher education. The higher education preparatory programs shall prepare students for university studies. A student who successfully completed an upper secondary national program will be awarded a degree from upper secondary education.

In Sweden there is also an organized form of cooperation between the public education system and the labour market, known as colleges. National employer- and workers organizations, in different industries, have come together and offer education on the upper secondary level; a concept that means that the labour market offers experts, organizes study visits, internships and the like. For an education to be able to join and become certified as college, it is required that the education provider can show that it meets certain criteria developed by the national organizations.

Individuals with learning disabilities
All young people in Sweden who have completed compulsory school for pupils with learning disabilities have the right to an upper secondary education. Upper secondary education for individuals with learning disabilities is free of charge and a voluntary form of schooling that young people with a learning disability can choose after completing compulsory special schools or training school.

Municipal adult education and training at compulsory and upper secondary level
The objectives of municipal adult education and training are that adults should be supported and stimulated in their learning. They should be given the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and competence in order to strengthen their position in the working and social life and to further their personal development. Municipalities have an obligation to provide municipal adult education and training. The starting point should be the individual's needs and conditions. The individual who has received the least amount of education shall be prioritized. Municipal adult education and training is on two levels, compulsory school level and upper secondary level.

Special education for adults
The goals of this education form are that adults with developmental disabilities or acquired brain injury should be supported and encouraged in their learning. They should be given the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and competence in order to strengthen their position in the working and social life and to further their personal development. Municipalities have an obligation to provide special education for adults. The starting point should be the individual's needs and conditions.

Swedish tuition for immigrants
Education in Swedish for immigrants is a qualified language training which aims to provide adults with a mother tongue other than Swedish basic knowledge of the Swedish language. In training you learn and develop a functional second language. The starting point for education should be the individual's needs and conditions. The right to education in Swedish for immigrants who reside in the country, from the second half of the calendar year he or she turns 16 years. It is the home municipality which is obliged to
provide training for those who are entitled to participate. This means the municipality in which the person is registered in. From 1 July 2016, Swedish tuition for immigrants forms part of the municipal adult education and training.

3.3.1.2 Post-secondary education in Sweden

Upper-secondary engineering qualification

Pupils with a degree from the national Technology programme, or equivalent, can apply for a fourth year of the Technology programme. The course takes place in collaboration with the school and industry. Pupils shall have the opportunity to develop engineering skills with help from the internationally recognised CDIO model (Conceive, Design, Implement, Operate). A local guidance counsellor is linked to the course to ensure that it is relevant and leads to employability. The course has four profiles; Design and product development, Production engineering, Information technology and Urban planning.

Higher Education

All higher education is offered by public-sector Higher Education Institutions, HEIs, or by independent education providers granted degree-awarding powers by the Government. Third-cycle courses and programmes are offered by universities or university colleges that have been granted entitlement to award third-cycle qualifications.

Higher Education is a collective term for all higher education, regardless of the education provider judicial status. Higher education in Sweden is governed by the Higher Education Act and the Higher Education Ordinance. The Higher Education Act is enacted by the Riksdag and contains regulations about the operations of HEIs. These are often supplemented by the provisions laid down in the Higher Education Ordinance. The Higher Education Act contains basic regulations about the courses and programmes offered by HEIs. For instance, it sets out what should characterise these courses and programmes at the different levels and stipulates freedom of research. It provides a framework for the organisation and governance of the HEIs, and states that every HEI must have a board of governors and a vice-chancellor. Within these parameters, the HEIs are relatively free to decide on their own organisation, allocation of resources and course offerings. The Government lays down the directives for operations at the HEIs in their annual public-service agreements. The Riksdag decides on funding for the HEIs and resources are allocated to the institutions for first and second-cycle courses and programmes on the basis of the number of students enrolled in each cycle, expressed in terms of full time equivalents (FTEs) and the number of credits attained (annual performance equivalents). Every year the Government determines a funding cap for the institutions, which lays down the maximum amount that can be paid to each HEI. There is no nationally planned education volume, rather universities and university colleges have considerable freedom to determine the courses on the basis of on student demand and the labour market and how many students they should admit allocation which in turn is based.

The mission of the HEIs is to offer education based on an academic or artistic footing and proven experience. They must also undertake development work, including research and artistic development. In addition, the HEIs must co-operate with their surrounding communities, provide information about their operations and also act to ensure that benefits are derived from the findings of their research. Swedish higher education has traditionally included, not only the education of young people after completing upper-secondary school, but also the training of professionals.

The Swedish Higher Education Act and Higher Education Ordinance have been amended in accordance with the agreements reached within the framework of the Bologna Process, including the European Qualifications Framework (QF-EHEA). These amendments apply to courses and programmes offered from 1 July 2007 as well as to qualifications awarded after that date. All courses, programmes and qualifications are ascribed to three cycles: first, second and third. All first and second-cycle educational

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offerings consist of courses. These courses can be combined to form programmes. The level division is part of the adjustment to the Bologna process, the so called QF-EHEA, which aims to make higher education more comparable in the 47 states included in the process.

Higher Vocational Education, HVE
Higher Vocational Education was introduced within the formal education system in 2009. This is a flexible form of education where structures and qualification types provided stay permanent over time but the inclusion of providers varies according to labour market needs. The National Agency for HVE administer the framework, perform analysis of future skill needs, produce statistics, promote quality improvement, assess applications from providers and allocate government grants to those approved for inclusion. Providers put in applications in competition with other providers and need to prove that courses have been developed in cooperation with working life and that the content has high labour market relevance. A course can be approved for two start-ups and then need to put in a renewed application to the Agency.

Higher vocational education in Sweden should respond to labour market needs of a qualified workforce at post-secondary vocational level, or contribute to the development or maintenance of qualified professional expertise in narrow fields of occupations that are of importance to the individual and society. The eligibility requirements for the courses are a formal upper secondary-school diploma or equivalent, meaning that the candidates can demonstrate that they qualify otherwise than through formal education.

Higher vocational education courses are conducted both by private education providers, who are in the majority, and public education providers. Courses within vocational education come about by organizers applying to the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education for the right to start a course. The Agency examines the application, rejects or grants the application, and allocates government grants.

The character of the vocational education programs is that they have a strong labour market connection and that both the labour market and education providers jointly design the programs. The majority of the courses contain both learning in a school-based environment and a part that is located at a workplace. The courses are of different lengths and different orientations. The different specializations may vary over time since the training will be in areas where there is an explicit demand for skills. The programs are financed both by public funds and the labour market.

The labour market is part of the management team who are responsible for a specific training course and provides teachers and trainers, equipment and access to learning in workplaces. Courses within Higher vocational education shall allow further training after upper-secondary school, further education of professionals and the possibility of changing the orientation of education or profession.

3.4 Non-formal learning

3.4.1 Folkbildning (Liberal adult education)¹²
Folkbildning consists of 151 folk high schools with students from across the country and 10 educational associations operating in all Swedish municipalities. Folkbildning has a special position in the Swedish education system where independent folk high schools and study associations, in the context of the liberal adult education regulation, has the mandate to develop its business on the basis of diverse profiles and ideological basis. There is often a close cooperation with NGOs and other organizations who are the accountable authorities of folk high schools and members of study associations. Folkbildning has, for decades, had an established role as an educator in Swedish society. The first Folk High schools started back in 1868 and the first study association in 1912.

¹² When the Swedish term folkbildning is used in this text, it refers to the folk high schools and the study associations, i.e. the organisations that constitute the liberal non-formal and voluntary educational system in Sweden. The term 'folkbildning' is difficult to translate into English. It is sometimes translated as liberal or popular adult education. However the specific conceptual foundation of folkbildning extends beyond the term 'adult education', which is why 'folkbildning' is used in this text as-is. (Sw. Folkbildning: Sw. ‘folk’ means ‘people’, Sw. ‘bildning’ means ‘enlightenment’)
Folk high schools offer mostly long courses (1-3 years) for full-time students who receive state student aid. The General course at the folk high school can provide access to upper-secondary education or studies at the university and higher vocational education. A large number of so-called Special courses or profile courses are conducted, some with vocational orientation.

The Study association centre of activity is the study circle, a free and voluntary form of study in a variety of topics based on the participants' wishes. Each year about 275,000 circles are conducted with close to 1.7 million participants (about 640,000 unique individuals).

The activities of folk high schools and study associations are financed in large part through support from the state, counties and municipalities. The state allocation for liberal adult education amounts to nearly 3.5 billion SEK.

The Swedish National Council of Adult Education is responsible, on behalf of the government and the Parliament, of official data on liberal adult education. The Swedish National Council of Adult Education is a non-profit organization with three members, The Interest Organization for Popular Movement Folk High Schools (Rörelsefolkhögskolornas intresseorganisation RIO) representing 108 folk high schools that have popular movements and other organizations as accountable authority, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SKL) represents the county councils and regions that are the accountable authorities of the 43 colleges and Folkbildningsförbundet is the professional organization for the ten study associations.

Folk high schools general courses

Within folk high school certain courses, so called general courses, are based on the regulated learning outcomes corresponding to the courses and syllabuses of primary and secondary education within compulsory school. These courses give access to both higher vocational education and university courses.

Folk high schools special courses

Folk high schools have a large number of long special courses (profile courses) at different levels and with different entry requirements geared toward specialty areas, some with vocational orientation. The number of special courses is more than 1,000 annually. Almost 200 of them are registered as vocational training; the majority of those are at post-secondary level.

Each school decides which courses are provided, sets its own goals and makes a determination of the level of each course. This is done without any connection to the formal public education system. Coordination of training courses in various subject / professional areas is virtually non-existent. Recreational leadership schools, that have organized cooperation, are one of the exceptions.

Liberal adult education autonomy, within this framework, enshrined in Parliament decisions, is a fundamental premise of division of responsibility.

Courses in liberal adult education are quality assured by the board/management for each folk high school and The Swedish National Council of Adult Education, the organization that has a government mandate to allocate government grants and to examine that the conditions for the grants are fulfilled. A systematic quality assurance at school level is a precondition for state grant to be given. The management of the schools must report how the systematic quality work was done and the result of this, annually, to The Swedish National Council of Adult Education.
3.4.2 Work-based learning

Continued work-based learning

Sweden has since the early 1990s, as mentioned above, an upper-secondary school that prepares students for further study in higher education or for the labour market directly; academic programs or vocational programs. A student can, after finishing studies at a vocational program, either continue their education in higher vocational education or higher education, or look for work right after upper-secondary school completion. Students can also, after completing their studies in upper-secondary schools, continue their training in the workplace, in some cases as an apprentice. This means that the ultimate learning in certain occupations takes place outside the public education system.

Several of the large and medium-sized business organizations in the country have their own internal training programs that lead to their own certificates, diplomas or similar which are required for different types of tasks. Some internal training does not lead to a certificate or a diploma, but are necessary for the staff to be up to date in their field. Learning that lead to different types of professional certificates in many industries include training offered by various education providers. Employers can also buy their staff commissioned education from the public education system primarily from higher vocational education providers and universities.

Quality assurance, of education programs given by the labour market organizations, is conducted by the provider which has its own system of quality assurance in the form of goal statements (or that they use national target documents), monitoring and audit visits.

Several industries such as The Swedish Construction Federation, has a system to ensure that the approved education and training providers, which operate within municipal adult vocational education and training and labour market training, has the right conditions to carry out education and training, either in accordance with the The Swedish National Agency for Education curriculum or the The Swedish Construction Federation own descriptors of the current occupation. An education provider will show that the relevant teacher competence and resources are available at their respective training. The individual’s education and training performance is reported to The Swedish Construction Federation The Swedish Construction Federation student- and apprentice records. There are also demands on internal quality assurance of the education provider in the form of follow-up actions and more. The Swedish Construction Federation also conducts quality assurance visits to education and training providers, where warranted, or randomly chosen.

3.4.3 Training conducted by authorities

Sweden has several authorities engaged in basic and further education for various positions in within the area of national authorities. Examples of agencies engaged in such programs are Swedish Customs (Tullverket), Swedish Coast Guard (Kustbevakningen) and the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och bevakning). If these qualifications are to be assigned to the qualifications framework then it will be required that the relevant authorities, ergo the issuers of the qualifications, apply, according to the procedure set out in section 10, for a decision on what level the qualification is equivalent to in the Swedish framework.

3.4.4 Arts and culture courses

Arts and cultural courses is a new post-secondary education form in Sweden. The first courses started in the autumn of 2015.

The courses are in areas such as dance, music, theatre, film, art, and fashion. They are conducted by independent (private) schools, but under state supervision and are granted aid in the form of state grants and/or student financial aid eligibility for students.
Many of the courses prepare for further studies in higher education, in for example art-, music- or theatre university colleges. Other leads directly to a profession, such as dancer, designer or musical artist.

If the stakeholders in such education would like to position their qualification on a level in the Swedish framework, they must apply, according to the procedure set out in section 10, for a decision on what level the qualification is equivalent to in the Swedish framework.

### 3.5 Informal learning

Informal learning is the learning that occurs spontaneously in everyday life and at work. It is usually based on experience and is born from different practices and interests. According to Statistics Sweden (SCB)\(^{13}\), mentioned in the introductory chapter on lifelong learning in Sweden, there are approximately 3.5 million adults in education and training in Sweden every year. A large part of the learning is deemed informal learning. Examples of informal learning are work experience, active participation in non-profit organizations, private business or trade union involvement. The informal learning can be made visible through validation and if the informal learning can be validated against a qualification that is levelled in the Swedish qualifications framework, then informal learning can also receive recognition in the form of a national qualification.

Sweden has endorsed the EU recommendation on Validation from December 2012, where validation is described as identification, documentation, assessment and certification of an individual's non-formal and informal learning. The National Agency for Higher Vocational Education has, on the government's orders, developed criteria and guidelines for the validation of prior learning.

Validation has been, and is, an important issue in Sweden, both within the education system and in employment. Several initiatives were taken by the government to strengthen the validation process, including in the field of education. The government appointed, in December 2015, a validation delegation\(^{14}\).

See the section criteria 3 for more information about validation of non-formal and informal learning.

### 4 Governance

The governance of the formal education system is regulated by the government and Parliament (Riksdag) through defining national objectives and requirements in the laws and regulations of the forms of education that are financed by the public. The Ministry of Education and Research prepares matters related to the government's education and research policy and its area of responsibility includes a number of school- and education authorities, universities and university colleges which should apply the regulations and carry out the activities which the Parliament and the government has decided on. Other ministries may be involved when it comes to certain universities or in connection to mission statements. Steering is done by the government, with an annual public service agreement which provides guidelines to the respective administrative authority or equivalent and higher education institutions. The state allocates resources and specifies tasks.\(^{15}\)

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\(^{14}\) Dir. 2015:120 En samordnad utveckling av validering.

The Swedish National Agency for Education (Statens skolverk) and the Swedish Schools Inspectorate (Statens Skolinspektion) are responsible for the curriculum, syllabuses, or equivalent for education of children, young people and education for adults who do not have a basic or upper-secondary education. In addition, there are also two other school authorities with specific tasks, The National Agency for Special Needs Education and Schools (Specialpedagogiska skolmyndigheten) and the Sami Education Board (Sameskolstyrelsen).

The Swedish National Agency for Education is responsible for the curriculum, syllabuses, or equivalent, and set national targets for learning in terms of learning outcomes. The authority is also responsible for national monitoring and evaluation as well as ways of supporting accountable authorities and promoting the quality of education.

The Swedish Schools Inspectorate supervises and reviews the quality in schools, adult education, extended schools, pre-schools and other educational activities. The authority also assesses applications from independent providers to be accepted as the accountable authority of an independent school.

It is the municipalities and individual accountable authorities that have the primary responsibility in terms of resource allocation, organization and implementation of activities in the school system, based on the national objectives and requirements that the government and Parliament have established. Funding is mainly based on municipal tax revenue, but both the municipalities and individual accountable authorities can also make use of the general indirect government funds given to the municipalities.

The National Agency for Special Needs Education and Schools has the task to primarily provide advice and support to accountable authorities of compulsory-, upper secondary- and adult education when it
comes to special educational needs and also manages special schools for persons with disabilities of sight and hearing.

_The Sami Education Board_ has the task of ensuring that Sami children have access to education under the Education Act and the curriculum for Sami school, preschool class and extended school. The authority is also the accountable authority of the five Sami schools in Sweden. Sami school is a school type equivalent to primary school grades 1 to 6 and is designed and profiled with regard to the Sami language and Sami culture.

_The Swedish National Council of Adult Education_ is an organization that has some authority assignments. The Swedish National Council of Adult Education allocates and monitors the use of public funds for liberal adult education; the folk high schools and study associations. Each folk high school decides on programs of education and learning outcomes and programs are not included in the public education system.

_The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education (MYH)_ is the administrative authority for Higher Vocational Education (HVE). The agency analyses the need for training in higher vocational education, decides which programs to include in the higher vocational education, and distributes government funding to the education providers. The authority also supervises and examines the quality of programs and monitors the results and outcomes. The funding of higher vocational education is done partly with government funding, and funding from the labour market (approximately one third). The authority is also responsible for other forms of training, namely arts and cultural programs as well as interpreter training courses in Folkbildningen. The latter two forms of education do not belong in the public education system.

_The Swedish Higher Education Authority (UKÄ)_ and _The Swedish Council for Higher Education (UHR)_ responsibilities are matters relating to higher education. The main tasks of UKÄ are quality assurance of higher education, appraisal of the degree-awarding powers of public-sector higher education institutions, legal supervision of higher education, Monitoring efficiency, follow-up and horizon scanning as well as responsibility for statistics in the higher education sector. The main tasks of UHR are information about higher education and the Swedish Scholastic Aptitude Test (högskoleprovet), promoting widening participation, admission to Swedish universities and university colleges, recognition of foreign qualifications, The Swedish Council for Higher Education is also the national agency for EU programmes and other international programmes, providing information and support for international exchanges and collaborations across the entire education sector.

See the section, Criterion 5, for a description of the official quality assurance tasks.
5 Introduction to the Swedish Qualifications Framework, SeQF

5.1 Why a Swedish Qualifications Framework?

The number of qualifications within the formal education systems varies across countries. As mentioned earlier (3.2), in Sweden, the organized learning comprise both formal and non-formal learning. Whereas the formal learning is well regulated, the non-formal education market is, to some extent, unregulated and there are many stakeholders providing programs that are not part of the public education system. Non-formal education and training may include labour market training, and liberal adult education, provided by e.g. folk high schools, as well as by privately owned education companies. Non-formal education also includes a collective agreement on education after completion of vocational training in upper-secondary schools in parts of the labour market.

Limiting the national framework to only include qualifications provided within the formal education system would thus mean that only some of the qualifications issued in Sweden would be included in the national framework. From a Swedish perspective, it is important that a national framework is able to show a comprehensive picture of the different qualifications issued in Sweden, both formal and non-formal. By linking the national framework to the European framework, the possibility of comparing qualifications both nationally and internationally, regardless of qualification provider is promoted.

5.2 Starting points for the development of the Swedish Qualifications Framework

The purpose of the EQF is to promote lifelong learning and improve the employability, mobility, and social inclusion of workers and students within the EU. In order to achieve this purpose, the European qualifications framework is designed to include different types of qualifications, from both the formal education, the non-formal learning and from the work life. The recommendation on the EQF makes it clear that Member States should include qualifications from various actors, i.e. public and private education providers. This has been an important starting point for the development and evolution of the Swedish framework.

The Government has given the MYH, which is the country's national coordination (NCP) point for the EQF, several assignments in regards to the design of a national qualifications framework. An important starting point for the tasks has been that qualifications in the public education system as well as other qualifications should be able to be a part of a national qualifications framework. The qualifications issued within the public education system is well known amongst stakeholders in Sweden, but they represent only a fraction of the total number of qualifications awarded, as there are many industries and private companies that also offers qualifications. A prerequisite for the agency’s work has been that the levels should be designed to cover all parts of the public education system while also include qualifications awarded by private stakeholders and industries. Another important starting point has been to involve the relevant stakeholders and authorities in the work of the design of the framework.

5.3 The Referencing Process

MYH’s work to develop proposals for a national qualifications framework has been marked by openness and a dialogue with relevant stakeholders and authorities.
The proposal of the design of a national framework has thus been prepared and rooted with the stakeholders, authorities, education providers, employers and workers’ organizations and NGOs by them being invited early to participate in the process. Proposals have also been sent out on hearing by the government to relevant stakeholders in July 2014\textsuperscript{16}.

During the period from winter 2010 until the government decision in August 2015, the national coordination point (NCP), as part of the reference process, participated in numerous conferences and meetings, both at national and international level which all sought to share experiences and obtain the views to develop the Swedish framework. Some of the conferences were organized by the NCP or in collaboration with other authorities, and in other cases, the NCP was invited to conferences and meetings organized by other stakeholders.

5.4 The technical referencing

The formal qualifications in the public education system in Sweden are regulated; quality assured and has learning outcomes stated in their regulation. These qualifications thus fulfil the requirements of the learning outcomes and quality assurance laid down in the recommendation on the EQF. Because these qualifications are regulated by statutes, the government has set the level of such qualifications in the Swedish framework. The technical referencing of the above qualifications has been carried out in cooperation with the relevant authorities, stakeholders, social partners, and education providers within the public education system. The referencing process of qualifications outside the public education system is described in detail in Chapter 10.

\textsuperscript{16} Remisspromemoria En nationell referensram för kvalifikationer för livslångt lärande, Utbildningsdepartementet.
6 A Swedish Qualifications Framework – SeQF

It has been assessed in Sweden that the EQF classification and structure fits well to describe qualifications issued in Sweden, and that the national framework should be given the same basic structure as the EQF. The national framework has thus been given eight levels with descriptors of learning outcomes expressed in terms of knowledge, skills and competence that are relevant to a qualification on each level.

In order to achieve the purpose of the national qualifications framework; the level descriptors are designed so as to create equal conditions to include qualifications in different areas and from different stakeholders. Level descriptors have been adapted to Swedish conditions for the framework to be able to reflect the aspects deemed important nationally. The referencing of the Swedish National Qualifications Framework to the European framework creates opportunities to compare the Swedish qualifications with qualifications in other member states. It is hoped that the broadly formulated learning outcomes in the Swedish framework can help to build trust between stakeholders, and understanding of that the qualifications of a very different character may correspond to the same level in the national framework.

It should be noted that in the Swedish qualifications framework, it is the level of the qualifications that will be determined. It is not in question to assess or determine the level of individual- or personal learning outcomes or merits and refer these to the national framework. The principle of learning outcomes means that individuals may have acquired the knowledge, skills and competencies required for a certain qualification in different ways.

In order to avoid the misunderstanding that a level of a qualification is equated with a specific formal qualification, Sweden has chosen in the regulations declare the Framework and the qualifications referred in separate annexes.

6.1 Key concepts

Learning outcomes
The concept of learning outcomes is defined as the knowledge an individual possesses, what he/she understands and can do after a learning process. In the framework learning outcomes is the sum of knowledge, skills and competences. The national qualifications framework reflects the qualifications obtained within and outside the public education system as well as learning gained through work experience or in another way.

Qualification
Documented learning outcomes in terms of knowledge, skills and competencies. Examples of a qualification can be a certificate or a diploma.

Descriptor
The descriptors in the national qualifications framework are three in number: knowledge, skills and competencies.

Knowledge
*Knowledge* is the result of the credited information through learning. Knowledge consists of facts,
principles, theories and practices that are related to a specific field of work or study. Knowledge can be based on experience and/or theoretical. They may have been acquired or developed in practical situations in everyday life and in working life or through different study situations.

Skills
Skills are the ability to apply knowledge and proven experience to accomplish tasks and solve problems. The skills are described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking and innovative solutions) or practical (involving manual dexterity and use of methods, materials, tools and instruments).

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Competences
Competence is the ability to use knowledge and skills, to cooperate and take responsibility in work or study situations as well as in professional and personal development. Responsibility and autonomy are key concepts.

Formal learning
Formal learning is the learning that takes place in an organised and structured environment and clearly designed as learning in terms of topics/areas, time and resources. Formal learning is intentional. Formal learning is regulated by laws and regulations and provide, in some cases, a degree or a diploma recognized by the public education system. Supervision, inspection and monitoring is carried out by the authorities.

Non-formal learning
Non-formal learning is reminiscent of the formal learning process but is not regulated by any of the state or authorities’ established laws, ordinances or regulations. This learning goes on in study circles, workplaces, organisations, etc. In many industries recognized certificates or diplomas are issued for a completed non-formal learning. Any supervision, inspection or monitoring is carried out by the industry or by the industry-recognised organizations.

Informal learning
Informal learning is on-going learning in the workplace, at home, in leisure, vacation, etc. This learning is not organised or structured and may be unintentional. Validation will be an important instrument to make informal learning visible.

Full Fit and Best Fit
Full Fit means that the learning outcomes should match completely with the descriptors’ qualifications at a particular level. If Full Fit does not exist, an overall assessment of the descriptors’ qualifications should be conducted to assess what level the full weight of the qualifications is on, meaning Best Fit. Thus, the principle of Best Fit should be seen in relation to the concept of Full Fit.
6.2 The regulation of the Swedish Qualifications Framework

6.2.1 Law (2015:478)
Law (2015:478) with the authority to issue regulations on the fee for the application for the decision relating to the qualifications for lifelong learning (Lag (2015:478) med bemyndigande att meddela föreskrifter om avgift för ansökan om att få beslut som avser kvalifikationer för livslångt lärande).

The law came into force on 1 October 2015. The law gives the government or the authority appointed by the government, the mandate to issue regulations on the obligation to pay a fee for an application for a decision on the level of a qualification of the National Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning. The government has decided that the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education may issue such regulations.

6.2.2 Regulation (2015:545)

The regulation entered into force on 1 October 2015 and contains provisions on the national framework. The regulation defines what constitutes a qualification, the framework with its levels and level descriptors, and a list of the qualifications whose learning outcomes are regulated in two separate enclosures. The regulation contains provisions on how an education provider issuing a qualification, which is not regulated, can apply for a decision on level placement of its qualification in the framework. The regulation also contains provisions on the follow-up and supervision of such qualifications, information and notification obligations of the issuer, how an amendment of a decision shall be managed and the fee for the application. It also contains provisions for MYH to annually report on their levelling decisions for qualifications, and that MYH may issue more detailed regulations on the enforcement of the regulation and on specific issues, and refer which body a decision can be appealed to.

6.2.3 Regulation amending the Regulation (2011:1162)

The regulation will enter into force on 1 January 2016. According to the regulation MYH is given the task of examining issues, and the responsibility to compile data on the level of qualifications according to the Regulation (2015:545) on the qualifications framework for lifelong learning. In addition, an advisory board within the authority shall be established called the Council for the National Qualifications Framework.

6.2.4 Regulation amending the regulation (2007:991)

The regulation will enter into force on 1 January 2016. According to the regulation on the framework, a decision and amendment of a decision on the level of a qualification may be subject to appeal to the Higher Education Appeals Board. In accordance with this, the Appeals Board's tasks have been increased to include this. The regulation amendment means that during the examination of such cases, the number of members of the Board is complemented by two members, for a total of 10 members, and that at least two of them must have particular expertise in education within the private sector or in liberal adult education. For these members, there must be at least one replacement.
6.3 The SeQF level descriptors

Each level's descriptors should be expressed equally in the sense that the concepts are recognizable and that the levels have a clear progression. Each level builds on the previous and encompasses those learning outcomes. Level descriptors are to be read separately but considered as a whole, which together describe the result of learning at each level.

In SeQF, the principle "Best Fit" has been the principle for all referencing of qualifications at all eight levels. "Best Fit" means that the three-level descriptors doesn't need to fully be met in order for a qualification to be placed at that level. It can, for example, mean that a qualification has knowledge at level 4, level 3 skills and competence on level 4, which means that the principle of "Best Fit" positions this qualification on SeQF level 4. It is the centre of gravity of a qualification that determines the level. The principle of "Best Fit" should be seen in relation to the concept of 'Full Fit'. "Full Fit" means that the results of learning, learning outcomes, should be exactly level with the descriptors on a certain level.

6.4 Progression

Figure 6. A Progression in the Swedish qualifications framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Basic general knowledge within a field of work or study,</td>
<td>Follow simple instructions and descriptions in a field of work or study,</td>
<td>Under leadership perform simple tasks,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Broadened knowledge in a field of work or study,</td>
<td>Follow instructions and descriptions within a field of work or study</td>
<td>Perform work or studies with some autonomy and take responsibility for simpler tasks,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Knowledge required to accomplish tasks within a field of work or study,</td>
<td>Communicate experiences and knowledge in their own language</td>
<td>Assess their own and common results,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Depth of knowledge in a field of work or study,</td>
<td>Communicate in at least one foreign language within the current field of work or study</td>
<td>Critically review and and independently assess a choice of sources,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Specialized knowledge in a field of work or study,</td>
<td>Solve abstract problems in a field of work or study,</td>
<td>Independently treat the contents of a field of work or study that leads to further learning and professional development,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Advanced knowledge in the field of work or study’s main area,</td>
<td>Identify, formulate, analyse and solve problems and perform complex tasks,</td>
<td>Apply specialized knowledge for development in a field of work or study,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Very advanced knowledge of a field of work or study,</td>
<td>Analyse, assess and solve sophisticated and complex tasks,</td>
<td>Assess a field of work or study's information, facts and methods with regards to relevant aspects,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The most sophisticated and systematic knowledge in a field of work, study and research,</td>
<td>Analyse, synthesise and critically assess and assess complex phenomena, conceptions and situations,</td>
<td>Evaluate the field of work or study's research or development work, create and select your own research/ innovation / development tasks,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Progression**
The descriptors in the categories of knowledge, skills and competencies shall demonstrate the basic qualities which through *progression* are increasingly deepened. They shall lead both to greater responsibility as well as an increased ability to act with independence and with development responsibility for their own and others’ work and learning.

The qualifications described in levels 1-3 can be summarized by concepts such as basic and elementary knowledge and skills with an increased deepening. And the descriptor competences can be described as having an increasing capacity for autonomy, accountability and assessment of their own and others’ results. Levels 4-6 are characterized by greater depth and specialisation, developed critical thinking and the ability to lead.

The qualifications described in levels 7 and 8 can nearest be summarized with the concept of excellence. Such qualifications are characterized by a very advanced knowledge of a field of work or study, a very highly developed ability to accomplish tasks and solve problems of various kinds and in diverse habitats, and a very highly developed ability to act with responsibility and autonomy, make decisions, communicate and lead.
7 Two Qualifications frameworks

The Recommendation on the EQF states that the European qualifications framework for lifelong learning is consistent with, but does not replace, the European overarching qualifications framework in higher education (QF-EHEA) as developed under the Bologna process. The framework for qualifications in higher education consists of general descriptions of learning outcomes for the three qualification levels within the university, where each level is based on, and requires studies on past levels: undergraduate (first), graduate (second) and doctoral (third) levels. After completing the program at a level the student will not only be able to continue to the next level in their own country but also in any other European country, or reach out to the European labour market.

In Sweden, the levels are imposed partly by the requirements of the Higher Education Act (1992:1434) and in the regulations that connects to the regulation that higher education should be given on the three levels, and through that degrees are completed at a level in accordance with the degree descriptions in the annexes to these regulations (the Higher Education Ordinance [1993:100], Ordinance [1993: 221] for Sveriges Lantbruksuniversitet and the Ordinance (2007:1164) for Försvarshögskolan. The degrees at these levels that the government, with the support of the Higher Education Act, has announced regulations on, can only be issued by the universities and colleges that are authorized to award degrees under the Higher Education Act and the regulations that connects to the law, as well as of the private education providers that are authorized to issue qualifications under the Act (1993:792) in regards to the issuing of certain degrees.

An important step in the 2007 change of Swedish higher education was the establishment of the Bologna Process’ key concepts with learning outcomes as a means to describe both higher education levels and individual courses. The transition was about a departure from a teacher-centred approach in favour of a student-centred and goal-oriented educational approach. The basic principle is that the planning of courses and education must be based on descriptions of the knowledge that the students are expected to have acquired by the end of the course or training. Conversely, there are also the objectives of each course, which will determine the course’s level correspondence.

UHR is the national coordination point for the overarching European common framework for qualifications in higher education and represents Sweden in the network for the framework which has been established by the Council of Europe under the Bologna Process.

Sweden wants to, in this regard, also to stress that SeQF is in no way intended to replace the steering documents available in the public education system. Qualifications that are placed on the same level in the SeQF can be very different in character. A placement of a qualification in SeQF provides information only about the level of knowledge, skills and competences that the qualification represents, not the extent or direction that the qualification has. A placement of a qualification at a certain level does not mean that an individual who has such a qualification automatically meet eligibility requirements for access to higher education.
8 Assessment of fulfilment of the 10 criteria

It is stated below how the Swedish Qualifications Framework, SeQF, meets the requirements for referencing to the EQF, based on the European Commission’s “Criteria and Procedures for referencing national qualifications levels to the EQF”.

8.1 Criteria 1

| The responsibilities and/or legal competence of all relevant national bodies involved in the referencing process, including the National Coordination Point, are clearly determined and published by the competent public authorities. |

| **Assessment:** In accordance with the description below, it is assessed that criteria 1 has been fulfilled. |

8.1.1 Different stakeholders’ participation in the referencing process

In working with the government commissions in developing the proposal for a national qualifications framework as well as with the referencing report, MYH, which is appointed by the Government as the country’s National Coordination Point (NCP) for the EQF, has interacted with many different stakeholders: the affected authorities, working life organizations, student organizations, public and private education providers and other stakeholders. The work has been characterized by dialogue and openness.

Several working groups consisting of experts, specialists, industry representatives, authorities and interest groups etc. have been formed.

- Secretariat/ Expert group with the NCP as the project manager, including international experts
- Advisory working group
- Reference group
- Authorities group
- Ministry group

8.1.2 Secretariat

A secretariat was created consisting of four experts who had the task of developing proposals for a national qualifications framework. The experts have been experts in higher education, the public school system, the working life and vocational education and training. The international experts have met the Secretariat three times during the reference in process.

8.1.3 Advisory working group and Reference group

MYH created an advisory group, on the government’s request, which worked with the development of the Swedish Qualifications Framework. The advisory group consisted of the following authorities and organizations: The Swedish National Agency for Education, Swedish National Agency for Higher Education, The Confederation of Swedish Enterprise, Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SKL), Swedish confederation of professional associations (SACO), The Swedish Confederation of Professional Employees (TCO), The Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO), Swedish Public Employment Service (AF), and The Swedish Federation of Business Owners. The Swedish Schools Inspectorate has, according to the government remit, been regularly informed of the working group’s progress.

A reference group of organizations and authorities involved in the public education sector, or closely related to education, was also formed. Reference group members:

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17 Annex 6.
18 After 2013, Högkoleverket, Internationella Programkontoret and Verket för Högskoleservice were transformed into two new agencies – UKÄ and UHR.
8.1.4 Authorities group
The government remit states that MYH shall provide suggestions on how degrees and diplomas provided by national authorities for various positions in government activity can be linked to the SeQF. To get a basis for how these degrees and diplomas may be linked to the SeQF, MYH formed an authorities group where Swedish Customs, Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, The Swedish Coast Guard, Swedish National Police Academy, The Swedish Prison and Probation Service, CAA (Lufffartsverket), The Swedish Maritime Administration, The Swedish Transport Administration, The railway training centre and Vehicle Inspection were invited to participate. The authorities that eventually participated in the work were: Swedish Customs, Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, Swedish Coast Guard, Swedish National Policy Academy, The Swedish Prison and Probation Service, The Swedish Transport Administration and The railway training centre.

8.1.5 The Ministry of Education and Research’s reference group
The Ministry of Education and Research appointed a reference group at the Swedish Government Offices which has continuously been informed about the work with the government remit.

8.1.6 Conferences
Four national conferences were held in 2010 and 2013. The aim of the conferences was to promote the idea behind EQF/SeQF and to provide the possibilities of being involved in the development as well as submitting feedback on the Swedish framework. From 2011 until the fall of 2015, NCP continuously participated in numerous meetings and conferences organized by various stakeholders where the issue of the Swedish framework, SeQF, was discussed.

8.1.7 Website: www.seqf.se
The site contains information on the EQF/SeQF and was created in 2010 with the purpose of discussion of different proposals and providing feedback on the development of a Swedish framework. The site is developed continuously, and is since April 15, 2011, a common site for the EQF/SeQF in Sweden and for Sweden’s work with the Bologna process.

8.1.8 Newsletters
A newsletter for SeQF was created early on. The newsletter’s aim was to inform on the development of SeQF in Sweden and to make subscribers pay attention to government mandates and proposals developed. The newsletter’s main purpose in the current situation is to inform about SeQF and should be seen as one of the tools for the implementation of the Swedish qualifications framework.
8.2 Criteria 2

There is a clear and demonstrable link between the qualifications levels in the national qualifications framework or system and the level descriptors of the European Qualifications Framework. 

Assessment: In accordance with the comparative description below of the SeQF and EQF it is assessed that criteria 2 has been fulfilled.

8.2.1 Introduction
The EQF’s division and the structure have been deemed to fit well to describe qualifications issued in Sweden. The EQF has therefor been the starting point for the design of the Swedish framework, being assigned the same basic structure. An important starting point for the Swedish framework has been that the level descriptors are designed to create conditions to include qualifications from various fields and from different stakeholders on equal terms, that is to say qualifications issued within the formal education system as well as by other providers. There are therefore concepts and definitions in the SEQF which is consistent with the educational system- and working life qualifications. The comparison presented here applies to the structure of the framework and content analysis of the level descriptors.

8.2.2 Structure
The Swedish national framework has been given the same structure as the European i.e. eight levels and consists of level descriptors of knowledge, skills and competences.

Figure 7 The relationship between the SeQF and the EQF.

8.2.3 Comparison between the level descriptors of the SeQF and the EQF
In the SeQF, level descriptors take the EQF as the starting point and have then been adapted in order to reflect aspects assessed to be specifically important nationally, both within the public education system and by other actors issuing qualifications.

Knowledge
Knowledge can be obtained and developed either within the public education systems, or outside (theoretical) or in employment (experience based).
Skills
Skills is about using the acquired knowledge to perform tasks and solve problems. This means practical, theoretical, abstract tasks and problems that can be solved in many different ways and with many different methods.

Competence
In the competence descriptor characteristics for the Swedish educational system and working life are emphasized, i.e., accountability, the ability to assess, independence and to work in groups or teams.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SeQF</th>
<th>Knowledge (Experience and/or theoretical.)</th>
<th>Skills (To perform tasks and solve problems.)</th>
<th>Competence (Ability to take responsibility, to assess, to act independently and to cooperate.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EQF</td>
<td>Knowledge In the context of EQF, knowledge is described as theoretical and/or factual.</td>
<td>Skills In the context of EQF, 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)</td>
<td>Competence In the context of EQF, competence is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.2.4 Comparison between SeQF level 1 and EQF level 1

Knowledge
In level 1 there is an agreement between the EQF and SeQF in the statement “basic general knowledge”. “Within a field of work or study” is added in the SeQF. With this addition, the SeQF acknowledge - that learning outcomes at this level also can be achieved outside of formal learning. In the SeQF there is an additional section which specifies that knowledge grants “an understanding of the essential in simple instructions and descriptions within a field of work and study.”

Skills
The statement “Basic skills” in the EQF is in accordance with the statement “routine tasks” in the SeQF. But the SeQF also makes the addition in the skills field of “a work or study area” emphasizing that the skill also can be achieved outside of formal learning. The SeQF also includes a clarification which states the skill to “follow simple instructions and descriptions within a field of work or study.”
**Competence**

The EQF chooses the statement “Work or study under direct supervision in a structured context”. The SeQF replaces this statement with “Under leadership perform simple tasks,”. The quality level is the same but the SeQF stresses the importance of the process and participation. This view is highlighted in the statement “collaborate with others under supervision.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SeQF level 1</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Can demonstrate:</td>
<td>Can:</td>
<td>Can:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Basic general knowledge within a field of work or study,</td>
<td>Carry out routine tasks within a field of work or study,</td>
<td>Under leadership perform simple tasks,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>an understanding of the essential in simple instructions and descriptions within a field of work or study.</td>
<td>follow simple instructions and descriptions within a field of work or study.</td>
<td>collaborate with others under supervision.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EQF level 1</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Basic general knowledge</td>
<td>Basic skills required to carry out simple tasks</td>
<td>Work or study under direct supervision in a structured context</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**8.2.5 Comparison between SeQF level 2 and EQF level 2**

**Knowledge**

There is progression in the EQF in the statement “Basic factual knowledge of a field of work or study”. This progression is highlighted in the SeQF in the statement “Broadened knowledge” and “how facts can be gathered, compiled and reported”. The SeQF thereby includes knowledge about facts as well as the information that the knowledge can be obtained both within a field work-or study.

**Skills**

In the EQF, the level is described as “Basic cognitive and practical skills required to use relevant information in order to carry out tasks and to solve routine problems using simple rules and tools”. The SeQF is more specified through the statement “Apply… follow instructions… search and process… in several fields of work or study”.

**Competence**

In the EQF the statement which is used is “Work or study under supervision”. In the SeQF a statement reoccurs which highlights a quality to “take responsibility for simpler tasks… cooperate under leadership and contribute to… assess how their own tasks have been performed”. In the SeQF there is a strong emphasis on terms which reflect leadership, responsibility, participation, assessment and cooperation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SeQF Level 2</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Can demonstrate:</td>
<td>Can:</td>
<td>Can:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Broadened knowledge in a field of work or study,</td>
<td>Apply the specified rules, methods and tools to perform assigned tasks,</td>
<td>Perform work or studies with some autonomy and take responsibility for simpler tasks,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>knowledge of how facts can be gathered, compiled and reported.</td>
<td>follow instructions and descriptions within a field of work or study</td>
<td>cooperate under leadership and contribute to common results,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>search and process facts in several fields of work or study.</td>
<td>assess how their own tasks have been performed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EQF Level 2</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Basic factual knowledge of a field of work or study</td>
<td>Basic cognitive and practical skills required to use relevant information in order to carry out tasks and to solve routine problems using simple rules and tools</td>
<td>Work or study under supervision with some autonomy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.2.6 Comparison between SeQF level 3 with EQF level 3

Knowledge
The description of the EQF and the SeQF on this level are compatible; with further clarification in the SeQF with the statement "knowledge of different methods used for gathering, methodizing and accounting for information."

Skills
In the EQF and SeQF expressions such as "to accomplish tasks, select and apply" are used. The SeQF makes a further precision in the expressions "accomplish tasks both on their own and in groups within given timeframes" and "on their own search and process information, communicate experiences and knowledge in their own language". The additional descriptors indicate the importance of personal responsibility, communication, etc.

Competence
Responsibility for the completion of tasks is expressed equally in the EQF and SeQF. The SeQF descriptor also include "assess their own and common result, assess information from different sources".
Can demonstrate: knowledge required to accomplish tasks within a field of work or study, knowledge of different methods of work used for gathering, methodizing and accounting for information.

Can:
Select and apply information with the help of the designated methods, tools and materials, accomplish tasks both on their own and in groups within given time frames, on their own search and process information, communicate experiences and knowledge in their own language.

Can:
Take responsibility for their learning and for completion of assigned tasks, assess their own and common result, assess information from different sources.

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 and applying basic methods, tools, materials and information
Take responsibility for completion of tasks in work or study; adapt own behaviour to circumstances in solving problems

8.2.7 Comparison between SeQF level 4 and EQF level 4

Knowledge
The EQF and SeQF are comparable in the description of “Factual and theoretical knowledge”. The EQF states “in broad contexts within a field of work or study” whilst the SeQF states “Depth of knowledge in a field of work or study”. The SeQF also adds the statement: “knowledge of models and methods” to clarify that the quality is about facts and method.

Skills
The EQF has a general description in the statement: “A range of cognitive and practical skills required to generate solutions to specific problems” in comparison to the SeQF where the descriptor is more detailed: “Select and apply relevant concepts, theories, models, materials, tools and methods... follow instructions and perform defined practical and theoretical tasks within given time frames... communicate in at least one foreign language”. In comparison with the EQF, the SeQF more explicitly highlights responsibility, independence, initiative, leadership etc.

Competence
The statement in the EQF reads: “Exercise self-management within the guidelines... that are usually predictable... supervise the routine work of others, taking some responsibility for the evaluation and improvement”. In the same level descriptor, the SeQF expresses the competence more detailed in statements such as “Take the initiative, reflect, organize and carry out work and studies independently... critically assess and keep an independent approach to the choice of sources... evaluate and draw conclusions from their own and common results... take responsibility in cooperation with others, and to a limited extent lead and evaluate the work of others”. 
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SeQF Level 4</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can demonstrate:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depth of knowledge in a field of work or study, knowledge of models and methods within a field of work or study.</td>
<td>Can:</td>
<td>Can:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Select and apply relevant concepts, theories, models, materials, tools and methods within a field of work or study, follow instructions and perform defined practical and theoretical tasks within given time frames, communicate in at least one foreign language within the current field of work or study.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Take the initiative, reflect, organize and carry out work and studies independently, independently treat the contents of a field of work or study that can lead to further learning and professional development, critically assess and keep an independent approach to the choice of sources, evaluate and draw conclusions from their own and common results, take responsibility in cooperation with others, and to a limited extent lead and evaluate the work of others.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EQF Level 4</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Factual and theoretical knowledge in broad contexts within a field of work or study</td>
<td>A range of cognitive and practical skills required to generate solutions to specific problems in a field of work or study</td>
<td>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</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.2.8 Comparison between SeQF level 5 and EQF level 5

Knowledge
There is a clear connection between the two frameworks. Both the SeQF and EQF uses the term specialized knowledge within a field of work or study. Knowledge in the SeQF is described to be gained through education (theoretical knowledge) or through working life experience (experience based knowledge). The EQF stresses the same through the statements factual- or theoretical knowledge. The formulation in SeQF: “knowledge and overview of the areas adjacent to their own field of work or study area can be compared to the EQF formulation “an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge”.

Skills
The EQF describes skills as “A comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills." The SeQF states skills in a more detailed manner: “Plan, execute and identify resources needed to perform specialized tasks... solve complex problems in a field of work or study”.

Competence
The SeQF emphasizes what is a characteristic of Sweden in education and employment i.e. the ability to take responsibility, to assess and to act independently and to cooperate. Both of the frameworks highlight these aspects but in somewhat different ways: SeQF: independently treat the contents of a field of work or study that leads to further learning and professional development, supervise the work or study.
activities and complete the prescribed projects. EQF: Exercise management and supervision of work or study activities, review and develop the performance of self and others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SeQF Level 5</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can demonstrate:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized knowledge within a field of work or study,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knowledge and overview of the areas adjacent to their own field of work or study area,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knowledge of work processes and the quality criteria within a field of work or study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Can:</td>
<td>Can:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plan, execute and identify resources needed to perform specialized tasks,</td>
<td>Independently treat the contents of a field of work or study that leads to further learning and professional development,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>solve complex problems within a field of work or study,</td>
<td>supervise work or study activities and complete the prescribed projects.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>communicate commitments and solutions within a field of work or study at least one foreign language.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EQF Level 5</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive, specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work or study and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge</td>
<td>A comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills required to develop creative solutions to abstract problems</td>
<td>Exercise management and supervision in contexts of work or study activities where there is unpredictable change; review and develop performance of self and others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.2.9 Levels 6, 7 and 8
In referencing the levels 6, 7 and 8, both frameworks SeQF and NQF-EHEA have been handled. More on this in Chapter 8.

The Bologna framework (NQF-EHEA) was developed (2008) exclusively to describe the higher education qualifications in terms of learning outcomes. This means that it’s most concrete correspondence is available in the Higher Education Ordinance; annex 2 - Qualifications (Utbildningsväsendets statute books in 2010/11, part 3).

The Swedish qualifications that are linked to the NQF-EHEA are inserted and placed in SeQF by a government decision, see Annex 3.

8.2.10 Comparison between SeQF level 6 with EQF level 6
Knowledge
Both frameworks define knowledge on this level as advanced knowledge in the field of work or study. In the SeQF “critical understanding of theories and principles” has been refined to “insight into the area's established methods for knowledge… profound knowledge of some part of the field and orientation of the area's current research and development issues.”
Skills
“Advanced skills, demonstrating mastery and innovation, required to solve complex and unpredictable problems in a specialised field of work or study” in the EQF is expressed as “identify, formulate, analyse and solve problems and perform complex tasks” in the SeQF.

Competence
There is some difference in the two frameworks. In SeQF, it is stated "Evaluate information and methods ... apply specialized knowledge." While in the EQF it is stated "Managing complex ... taking responsibility for decision-making in unpredictable... contexts ". When it comes to leadership skills” the "development work" is cited in SeQF while in the EQF reference is made to "professional development".

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SeQF Level 6</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can demonstrate:</td>
<td>Advanced knowledge in a field of work or study</td>
<td>Identify, formulate, analyse and solve problems and perform complex tasks, communicate commitments and solutions in the field of work or study in both national and international contexts</td>
<td>Evaluate information and methods in a field of work or study area with respect to relevant social, ethical and scientific aspects, apply specialized knowledge for development in a field of work or study, take responsibility for managing professional development of individuals’ and groups’ work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>insight into the area’s established methods for knowledge,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>profound knowledge of some part of the field and orientation of the area’s current research and development issues.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EQF Level 6</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advanced knowledge of a field of work or study, involving a critical understanding of theories and principles</td>
<td>Advanced skills, demonstrating mastery and innovation, required to solve complex and unpredictable problems in a specialised field of work or study</td>
<td>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</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.2.11 Comparison between SeQF level 7 and EQF level 7

Knowledge
The SeQF’s descriptor of knowledge on this level is described as “highly advanced knowledge... profound knowledge into the area’s research and development methods”. The EQF descriptor “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” has been assessed as equivalent.

Skills
To “Participate in research or development work, identify and formulate issues, analyse, evaluate and solve sophisticated and complex tasks (SeQF)” is equivalent to “Specialised problem-solving skills required in research and/or innovation in order to develop new knowledge and procedures and to integrate knowledge from different fields (EQF)”.

### Competence

The EQF: “Manage and transform work or study contexts that are complex, unpredictable and require new strategic approaches.” The SeQF: “Evaluate a field of work or study’s information, facts and methods with regards to relevant aspects... identify the needs for further knowledge... evaluate an area's potentials and limitations.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SeQF Level 7</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can demonstrate:</td>
<td>Can:</td>
<td>Can:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly advanced knowledge within a field of work or study,</td>
<td>Participate in research or development work,</td>
<td>Evaluate a field of work or study’s information, facts and methods with regards to relevant aspects...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>profound knowledge into the area’s research and development methods;</td>
<td>identify and formulate issues,</td>
<td>identify the needs for further knowledge...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>profound insight into the area's current research and development.</td>
<td>analyse, evaluate and solve sophisticated and complex tasks,</td>
<td>assess an area's potentials and limitations,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>communicate the research or the areas knowledge base and findings in both national and international contexts</td>
<td>take responsibility for and manage their own area of work or study,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>take responsibility for the results of their own research or development work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EQF Level 7</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>Specialised problem-solving skills required in research and/or innovation in order to develop new knowledge and procedures and to integrate knowledge from different fields</td>
<td>Manage and transform work or study contexts that are complex, unpredictable and require new strategic approaches; take responsibility for contributing to professional knowledge and practice and/or for reviewing the strategic performance of teams</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical awareness of knowledge issues in a field and at the interface between different fields</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 8.2.12 Comparison between SeQF level 8 and EQF level 8

**Knowledge**

**EQF** - “Knowledge at the most advanced frontier of a field of work or study and at the interface between fields”. **SeQF** - “The most sophisticated and systematic knowledge in a field of work, study and research, current specialist knowledge in a well-defined sub-area and an overview of adjacent areas.”

**Skills**

**EQF** - “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.” **SeQF** - “Analyse, synthesise and critically review and assess
complex phenomena, questions at issue and situations; plan and implement development or research work and other qualified tasks."

**Competence**

**EQF** - “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.” **SeQF** - “create and select your own research, innovation or development tasks, evaluate the qualified development work or the scientific possibilities and limitations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SeQF Level 8</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Can demonstrate:</td>
<td>Can:</td>
<td>Can:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The most sophisticated and systematic knowledge within a field of work, study and research, current specialist knowledge within a well-defined sub-area and an overview of adjacent areas, mastering the methods of knowledge development in general and to the specific field of work, study or research in particular.</td>
<td>Analyse, synthesise and critically review and assess complex phenomena, questions at issue and situations; plan and implement development or research work and other qualified tasks, communicate results of development and research in both national and international contexts</td>
<td>Evaluate the field of work or study’s research or development work, create and select your own research, innovation or development tasks, evaluate the qualified development work or the scientific possibilities and limitations, take responsibility for how the results of development or research are used, take responsibility for or lead the development of the profession and area of operation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EQF Level 8</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knowledge at the most advanced frontier of a field of work or study and at the interface between fields</td>
<td>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</td>
<td>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</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8.3 Criteria 3

The national qualifications framework or system and its qualifications are based on the principle and objective of learning outcomes and linked to arrangements for validation of non-formal and informal learning and, where these exist, to credit systems.

Assessment: In accordance with the description below, it is assessed that criteria 3 has been fulfilled.

8.3.1 Assessment

Sweden has a long tradition of working with learning outcomes within the public education system and the principle of learning outcomes is well established. It is an accepted view that it is the result of learning that is important and not the length of the education or training. The learning outcomes are defined as what a learner knows understands and can do at the end of a learning period. The public education system’s steering documents in Sweden, which has been reformed in recent years, are all based on the principle of learning outcomes, which are described below.

The reforms that have been implemented in compulsory school and upper secondary schools aimed to clarify the objectives of the steering documents. The reform process was completed before Sweden endorsed the recommendation of the EQF. Nevertheless, the new objectives in the steering documents correspond to what is now called learning outcomes. Higher education has, through the Dublin descriptors, which are also defined by law, explicit learning outcomes. Chapter 10 presents the requirements on learning outcomes set for the qualifications that are outside the public education system and can be levelled in the Swedish framework after application.

8.3.2 Learning outcomes in SeQF

8.3.2.1 Compulsory School

In 1994, a goal oriented compulsory school was implemented in Sweden. This meant that the compulsory school had clear goals in all subjects and each subject was coupled to a grade criteria starting from year 8. After each school year, the teacher would first assess whether the student had attained the goals of the subject and then judge by the quality of with which the student reached the goals. The compulsory school has since been reformed, in year 2000 and year 2011. Both reforms were aimed at tightening the targets and creating clearer knowledge requirements. The new compulsory school, introduced in the autumn of 2011, has a clear focus on student learning outcomes, on follow up by national tests in several subjects, and to strengthen the school inspection. The new curriculum has clear goals that align well with the learning outcomes set out in the national framework.

Some examples of the compulsory school curriculum:

- The school will be responsible for that all pupils who have completed compulsory school:
  - Can use the Swedish language, orally and written, in a rich and nuanced manner,
  - Can communicate in English, orally and written, as well as been given the possibility to communicate in one additional foreign language in a functional manner,
  - Can use a mathematical thinking for further studies and in the everyday life,
  - Can use the obtained knowledge in the areas of scientific, technical, social, humanistic and aesthetic studies for further study, in society and everyday life,
  - Can solve problems and translate ideas into action in a creative way,
  - Can learn, explore and work both independently and together with others and feel confident in their own ability,
  - Can use critical thinking and independently formulate viewpoints based on knowledge and ethical considerations.

The syllabus for the subjects in compulsory school has, since the reform in 2011, core content and clear knowledge requirements starting from year 6.
8.3.2.2 Upper Secondary School

The upper secondary school has gone through the same reforms as the compulsory school, namely in 1994, 2000 and 2011 when it comes to clearer goals and knowledge requirements. The new upper secondary school also has a strong focus on learning outcomes. The reform in 2011 meant that the former preparatory vocational programmes were restructured to more clear-cut vocational programs. The ambition of the new vocational programmes for the students was to be employable immediately after upper secondary school. The reforms implemented in upper secondary school have always been carried out in consultation with working life organizations so that the learning outcomes are as closely related as possible to the professional skills demands of the labour market. The new vocational programmes are connected to a national council for each program with a representation of experts from the professional fields that the program intends to educate for. The Council’s tasks are to verify that the programmes lead to learning outcomes of the demands of the respective field of work. Here is an example of parts of a learning outcome from one of the vocational programmes, the industrial engineering programme:

"In the field of industrial technology, the education should provide knowledge about the contexts of production steps and production equipment operation, use and maintenance, and on how the production and technology affects people and the environment. In the area of industrial technical production, education should provide knowledge about the organization of work, production economics, resource use and systematic work."

"The training will lead to students gaining insights into how their and their businesses’ choice of materials, methods and techniques will affect the consumption of raw materials and energy."

In the syllabus it is stated, since 2011, a central content and clear knowledge requirements of each course.

8.3.2.3 Higher Vocational Education (HVE)

Each course within the HVE should have a curriculum that shows the education learning outcomes in terms of knowledge, skills and competences. Examples of parts of goals in a curriculum plan from a HVE, Application Programmer 300 YHP:

After completing the program, students should have knowledge of
- programming in C++, Java and Objective C
- applications for smartphones
- web and database applications

After completing the program, students should have the skills for
- application programming / development
- needs analysis; To identify the technical as well as commercial market opportunities

After completing the program, students should have the competence to
- develop applications and create commercial applications for smartphones and social media,
- create web tools and web design for effective marketing

The ordinance for Higher Vocational Education has been altered and course leading to a Diploma in Higher Education or a Diploma in Advanced Higher Education needs to fulfil learning outcomes equivalent to the learning descriptors for SeQF at level 5 and 6 respectively.

8.3.2.4 Higher Education

The Swedish higher education is consistent with "The framework of qualifications for the European Higher Education Area, thus satisfying the demands of the learning outcomes set by the EQF"\(^\text{19}\).

\(^{19}\) Certification of Sweden’s national qualification framework, Report 2012:12 R
8.3.3 Validation

8.3.3.1 Validation of prior learning
In Sweden, as in other Nordic countries, validation includes formal, non-formal and informal learning, and therefore the term is validation of prior learning. MYH, as mentioned above, is the authority in Sweden that has the task of coordinating and supporting a national structure for validation. MYH has developed criteria and guidelines for validation of prior learning.

8.3.4.2 Validation in municipal adult education
The ability to validate both basic adult education (corresponding to compulsory school) and adult upper-secondary education is regulated by the Education Act and the ordinance on adult education. Validation can be implemented within the framework of all courses, including introductory courses. In adult education, there is a distinction between the concepts of validation and examination through testing (recognition/certification). Grades should be put on all completed (also validated) courses and on courses graded by examination.

Municipalities have an obligation to offer municipal adult education up to the basic qualification level of higher education for individuals who lack the equivalent knowledge and competence, but other individuals can only be accommodated if resources allow.

8.3.4.3 Validation in Higher Vocational Education
Admission to specific training in HVE can be obtained if the individual can demonstrate that it has the potential to benefit from the education and thereafter practice the profession that the education prepares the individual for. Eligibility rules are generous and give a great scope for the use of validation of prior learning. The right of students to receive credits for previous training and experience that are similar to courses in vocational education is regulated and even here there is a great scope to utilize validation of prior learning.

Each specific education provider within higher vocational education decides how to work with validation of prior learning. No more than 20 percent of the yearly places in education must be set aside for such applicants.

8.3.4.4 Validation in Higher Education
Within higher education, the students’ right to to have prior learning assessed is regulated by statute. The higher education institution shall assess whether credits can be awarded for the prior course or study programme or corresponding knowledge and skills acquired in a vocational or professional capacity. It is up to the individual institution to decide how to utilize validation of prior learning in relation to eligibility and credit transfers. The degree, to how different institutions apply the validation of prior learning, varies.

8.3.4.5 Validation in Folkbildning
Folkbildning has a long tradition of use of formative validation of prior learning to individually design education. In more formal sense however, validation is not as prevalent. Folk high schools have a large degree of freedom to design their admissions requirements and training. Cooperation with the Swedish Public Employment Service through various missions has increased, which means that validation can become a more frequent element if the needs increase.

8.3.4.6 Validation in the Swedish Public Employment Service
The Employment Services mission is to match employers with employees, with a special focus on the groups that are usually far away from the labour market. At its disposal it has a number of tools, which are often nationally procured services, including validation. There are more formative services such as the Qualifications portfolio that is used to identify the individual's competence, in order to determine what other actions that may be needed before a match with an employer can be made. Secondly, there is
procured validation models which are based on national industry models where validation can result in a certification.

The Employment Services has since 2013 had more pronounced assignments for validation, often focusing on immigrants.

8.3.4.7 Validation in industries and sectors
Industries and sectors have developed specific professional competence criteria and models to validate prior learning. To support this purpose, it has been seeking government funding at different times during the past ten years.

The industry models that have national legitimacy are used by the Employment Service through the procurement of validation services. The recent increase of immigrants has meant that the demands on language support within the industry validation have increased as well as the need to assess more general professional competences. This is an ongoing development.

8.4 Criteria 4
The procedures for inclusion of qualifications in the national qualifications framework or for describing the place of qualifications in the national qualification system are transparent.

Assessment: In accordance with the description below, it is assessed that criteria 4 has been fulfilled

8.4.1 The process for the development of a national framework and mapping of the public education system’s degrees
The proposal of a national framework has been prepared and anchored by the stakeholders deemed concerned; authorities, education providers, employers and workers’ organizations, and NGOs were invited early to participate in the process. The proposal have been referred by the government through a ministry memorandum that the government published in July 2014 and sent to relevant stakeholders. More on the reference process is described in Chapter 5.3.

MYH has been commissioned by the Government to propose how the public education system’s qualifications can be connected to SeQF. The task was carried out in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, including the authorities responsible for the public education programs. These authorities were instructed to place their qualifications in the framework. The principle that the authorities used during the placement was “Best Fit”.

The government has, in ordinance (SFS 2015:545) on the basis of MYH’s proposals, levelled qualifications that are quality-assured and whose learning outcomes are regulated by statute.

Below are how and which aspects form the basis for placement of the public education qualifications in the SeQF. It also describes how qualifications outside the public education system may be linked to the framework.

The procedure on how qualifications outside the public education system can be connected to the framework is described in Chapter 9.

8.4.2 School for pupils with learning disabilities on primary and upper-secondary level
The Swedish National Agency for Education, which is the responsible authority for school for pupils with learning disabilities and its curriculum, subject syllabus and for its steering documents, highlights the value of placing these qualifications I in the SeQF. It can have an added value to be participatory in an

20 Remisspromemoria En nationell referensram för kvalifikationer för livslångt lärande, Utbildningsdepartementet
EU-related system, for some students whom are active on the labour market. Although the student group is heterogeneous, its SeQF level placement can be justified by its aim and ambition, as they are working towards level one - and that many students reach it.

The steering documents, such as the curriculum for compulsory education for pupils with learning disabilities and goals of the education, have clear learning outcomes. Example below:

Parts of the curricula for the compulsory school for pupils with learning disabilities:
“*The School shall be responsible that every student, after completed education:*
  • can use the Swedish language, orally and written, in a nuanced manner,
  • can communicate in English
  • can use mathematical thinking for further studies and in the everyday life.*

Parts of the programme objectives for Vehicle Care and Cargo Management, within the upper secondary education for pupils with learning disabilities
“After completing the program, students should have knowledge of working with, for example, vehicle care, warehousing and handling of cargo.”
“*The education shall development the students’ knowledge about vehicles, logistics and service. Furthermore, the education shall teach the students ability to choose and use the right tools, materials and methods for the assigned tasks with regards to quality, safety, environment and economics. “*

The placement of the qualifications from education for pupils with learning disabilities in the SeQF is on level 1 and 2. The basis for placement has been the learning outcomes of the steering documents.

**8.4.3 Compulsory School**

The compulsory school has, as mentioned above, reformed and has since autumn 2011 new steering documents, which contains a new curriculum and new syllabus. The National Agency for Education, as the responsible authority for the compulsory school, considers that this qualification is best suited for the framework’s second level. The Confederation of Swedish Enterprise, The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, and The National Union of Teachers in Sweden argue that the compulsory school should be placed on level 3. The Government’s assessment is, however, that qualification from compulsory school as well as from Adult Education on compulsory level should be placed on level 2.

The curricula for the compulsory school shows a clear result of learning which is equivalent to the demands set on SeQF level 2. Below are a few examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge SeQF level 2</th>
<th>Knowledge requirements set forth in the compulsory school’s curricula</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can demonstrate:</td>
<td><em>The school will be responsible for that all pupils who have completed compulsory school:</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadened knowledge in a field of work or study,</td>
<td>• can use the Swedish language, orally and written, in a rich and nuanced manner,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knowledge of how facts can be gathered, compiled and reported.</td>
<td>• can communicate in English, orally and written, as well as been given the possibility to communicate in one additional foreign language in a functional manner,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• can use a mathematical thinking for further studies and in the everyday life,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• can use the obtained knowledge in the areas of scientific, technical, social, humanistic and aesthetic studies for further studies, in society and everyday life,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competence SeQF level 2</th>
<th>Knowledge requirements from the compulsory school’s curricula</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
8.4.4 Upper secondary school

There is a consensus when it comes to the level placement of upper secondary school and upper secondary diploma. The Government, authorities and interested parties that have been involved in the development of the Swedish framework, all consider that the correct qualification level is level 4. The upper secondary school has two types of programmes: vocational programme and the higher education preparatory programme. Both programmes are placed on level 4 in the framework.

The quotes below are from several programme’s degree objectives and descriptors from level 4 which shows how the degree objectives correlate to level 4 in the SeQF.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SeQF level 4 Knowledge</th>
<th>Degree objectives from various upper secondary school programmes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can demonstrate:</td>
<td>The programme shall provide opportunities for students to develop the foundations of a scientific approach, as well as be trained to search, sift, analyse and evaluate information based on economic, business and judicial issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depth of knowledge in a field of work or study, knowledge of models and methods within a field of work or study.</td>
<td>Central to technological advancement is to analyse, model, simulate, plausibility assess, develop, make connections, draw conclusions and argue from results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It shall also give the students knowledge in control engineering and energy optimization of installations, as well as develop their knowledge in systems theory.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SeQF level 4 Skills</th>
<th>Degree objectives from various upper secondary school programmes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can:</td>
<td>Students should be able to choose, use and care for materials, tools and machinery with regard to safety, the environment, quality and economy, both in terms of production- and life cycle costs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select and apply relevant concepts, theories, models, materials, tools and methods within a field of work or study, follow instructions and perform defined practical and theoretical tasks within given time frames,</td>
<td>After graduating, from the programme, the students shall have the skills needed to work in the hotel-, conference- and tourism business. It shall also develop students' skills in communication, marketing, sales and entrepreneurship. Students should be able to plan and carry out tasks and assess job performance in terms of quality, efficiency and the environment, and develop practical skills linked to understanding and reflection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program shall provide students with knowledge and skills in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
communicate in at least one foreign language within the current field of work or study. | English in a technical context, so that they can develop their communication skills and thereby take advantage of technology and technological development.

- Many industries have international contacts with manuals and descriptions written in English. English is also, in many cases, the corporate language. The education shall therefore give students the opportunity for in-depth studies in English
- The program shall give students tools to analyse and interpret different types of texts and spoken language in Swedish and English in the various programme areas of knowledge.

### 8.4.5 Qualified graduate from upper secondary engineering courses

Qualified graduate is based on the upper secondary school technology programs and its purpose if for the student to deepen and specialize in their choice of technology orientation. A fourth year means an increase in the qualification level in relation to a three year upper-secondary school diploma. Qualified graduate is open to anyone who has an approved upper-secondary school diploma from the technology programme, or have equivalent knowledge. A student who has completed a full training will be issued a degree from qualified graduate from upper secondary engineering course.

The quotes below the are from the degree objectives of the Qualified graduate and descriptors from level 5 which shows how the degree objectives correlate to level 5 in the SeQF.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SeQF level 5 Knowledge</th>
<th>Degree objectives from Qualification graduate from upper secondary engineering courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can demonstrate:</td>
<td>The education shall deepen students' knowledge of technology within the selected profile. It shall also deepen students' understanding of technology's role in the interaction between humans and nature. In addition, the education should make clear how the development of products and services locally and globally can take place in an ecologically, economically and socially sustainable manner. This education shall be based on an ethical and responsible approach to technology and a critical, creative and constructive thinking shall be encouraged.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized knowledge within a field of work or study,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knowledge and overview of the areas adjacent to their own field of work or study area,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knowledge of work processes and the quality criteria within a field of work or study</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SeQF level 5 Skills</th>
<th>Degree objectives from Qualification graduate from upper secondary engineering courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can:</td>
<td>The program shall give students the opportunity to develop engineering skills, which means the ability to define and analyse problems, develop solutions, design and produce products and services, and reflect on the work process. Students shall also be given the opportunity to develop knowledge about entrepreneurship and enterprise, and how work is carried out in technology-intensive workplaces. Working methods and techniques from the working life shall be included.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan, execute and identify resources needed to perform specialized tasks,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>solve complex problems within a field of work or study,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
communicate commitments and solutions within a field of work or study at least one foreign language.

It shall also help students deepen their ability to present and communicate technologies and technical solutions, even in English.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SeQF Level 5</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Can demonstrate:</td>
<td>Can:</td>
<td>Can:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Specialized knowledge within a field of work or study, knowledge and overview of the areas adjacent to their own field of work or study area, knowledge of work processes and the quality criteria within a field of work or study</td>
<td>Plan, execute and identify resources needed to perform specialized tasks, solve complex problems within a field of work or study, communicate commitments and solutions in a field of work or study at least one foreign language.</td>
<td>Independently treat the contents of a field of work or study that leads to further learning and professional development, supervise work or study activities and complete the prescribed projects.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.4.6 Higher Vocational Education (HVE)

Below are a few examples of how HVE can be placed on SeQF level 5 and 6 and its relation to SeQF.
### Applications programmer (SeQF level 5) - Diploma in HVE - 300 YHP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The student shall, after finished study, have knowledge of:</th>
<th>The student shall, after finished study, have skills in</th>
<th>The student shall, after finished study, have the competence in:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• programming in C++, Java and Objective-C,</td>
<td>• application programming/development</td>
<td>• developing applications and creating commercial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• application development for smartphones</td>
<td>• needs analysis; identifying technical as well as</td>
<td>applications for smartphones and social media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• web and database programming (HTML, Java, PHP, Facebook).</td>
<td>• commercial market opportunities</td>
<td>• creating web tools and web design for effective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• tools for administration, accounting, integration and</td>
<td>• basic product and service design.</td>
<td>marketing communications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>communication between businesses, organisations and</td>
<td>• project management, planning</td>
<td>• adopting professional roles and working individually or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>customers</td>
<td>• social marketing/social media</td>
<td>in teams at a company in the industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• how to identify business opportunities and develop</td>
<td></td>
<td>• starting and operating their own business within the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>applications that take advantage of these opportunities</td>
<td></td>
<td>field of mobile applications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• how to create and successfully implement communications</td>
<td></td>
<td>• managing projects within the field of mobile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and marketing strategies in the field.</td>
<td></td>
<td>applications.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SeQF Level 6</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can demonstrate: Advanced knowledge in a field of work or study, insight into the area's established methods for knowledge, profound knowledge of some part of the field and orientation of the area's current research and development issues.</td>
<td>Can: Identify, formulate, analyse and solve problems and perform complex tasks, communicate commitments and solutions in the field of work or study in both national and international contexts</td>
<td>Can: Evaluate information and methods in a field of work or study area with respect to relevant social, ethical and scientific aspects, apply specialized knowledge for development in a field of work or study, take responsibility for managing individual and team performance at work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Qualified automation engineer (SeQF Level 6) - Advanced Diploma in HVE - 400 YHP**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The student shall, after finished study, have knowledge of:</th>
<th>The student shall, after finished study, have skills in</th>
<th>The student shall, after finished study, have the competence in:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• and understanding of the human aspect in a computerized and highly technological environment</td>
<td>• installations, troubleshooting and service of automated production systems</td>
<td>• embracing future technological advancement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the development and construction of flexible, innovative and user friendly products, machines and systems.</td>
<td>• solving qualified production problems</td>
<td>• working independently at the company’s clients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• work routines in a modern work organisation</td>
<td>• using IT as a tool in qualified applications</td>
<td>• managing and being responsible for qualified tasks within the area of automation and industrial IT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the need for competence development for the self, colleagues and the company’s employees and clients</td>
<td>• the ability to communicate, orally and in written form, as well as planning and implementing projects with regards to quality- and environmental aspects, economy and ergonomics</td>
<td>• participating in the work of steering, adjusting, modernising and developing present and future production systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• working with automation on an international level</td>
<td>• documenting technological systems for technicians, users and operators</td>
<td>• identifying bottlenecks in the production and fixing these</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• new technological solutions for the improvement of current equipment, or the development of new equipment which increases the company’s competitiveness</td>
<td>• conveying technical solutions, both internally and externally</td>
<td>• handling and programming different manufacturers’ PLC systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the economic consequences for a company undergoing a modernisation of current equipment</td>
<td>• utilizing English documentation</td>
<td>• implementing automation project with help of the five different programming languages according to the IEC-61131 standard:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the environmental demands that the company and society demands from the production</td>
<td>• programming a robot cell in cooperation with a Vision system</td>
<td>• Ladder Diagram, Function Block Diagram, Structured Text, Instruction List and Sequence diagrams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the quality- and security demands that affects an automation project</td>
<td>• analysing the security aspects/risks surrounding a robot cell</td>
<td>• programming and implementing project according to the general CODESYS-standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the demands that the Machine Safety Directive have on an automation project</td>
<td>• to replace obsolete I/O communication with modern IT communication,</td>
<td>• offering a high level of service to clients and colleagues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• controlling and programming the PLC using IPad / IPhone equipment</td>
<td>• participate in training projects for employees and customers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• to guide and supervise modern equipment through modern communication or via the Internet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the new regulation of HVE, the government will determine that the level of qualifications for HVE diploma should be SeQF level 5 and level of qualification for advanced HVE diploma should be SeQF level 6. Thus, learning outcomes will have a major role for a degree within HVE.

8.4.7 Higher Education
All higher education in Sweden is conducted at state-owned universities and university colleges or by separate education providers with the right to grant degrees. Education on postgraduate level is conducted at the universities and the university colleges which have been awarded the right to award degrees for postgraduate level.

There are 14 state-owned universities and 20 state-owned university colleges in Sweden. There are also three separate higher education institutes with an independent education provider with right to award degrees on postgraduate level: Chalmers University of Technology, Stockholm School of Economics and Jönköping University. There are also eleven separate education providers with the right to award degrees on the undergraduate level, and in some cases advanced level, as well as five education providers with the right to award degrees in psychotherapy. It is the Riksdag which decides on which state higher education institutes should operate whilst the government decides on the right to award degrees.

The report, 2011:13R Certification of Sweden's national qualifications framework clearly shows that degrees in universities and university colleges in Sweden meet the requirements that are consistent with the Bologna framework. According to the recommendation between the EQF and QF-EHEA, the higher education three cycles shall be referenced to the SeQF levels 6, 7 and 8, respectively.

Below are examples from the certification report relating to the basic level / First Cycle and the Swedish Bachelor's degree 180 ECTS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Cycle</th>
<th>Bachelor's Degree, 180 ECTS Bachelor of Arts/Science</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in a field of study that builds upon their general secondary education, and is typically at a level that, whilst supported by advanced text-books, includes some aspects that will be informed by knowledge of the forefront of their field of study;</td>
<td>demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the main field of study, including knowledge of the disciplinary foundation of the field, under-standing of applicable methodologies in the field, specialised study in some aspect of the field as well as awareness of current research issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can apply their knowledge and understanding in a manner that indicates a professional approach to their work or vocation, and have competences typically demonstrated through devising and sustaining arguments and solving problems within their field of study;</td>
<td>demonstrate the ability to identify, formulate and solve problems autonomously and to complete tasks within predetermined time frames</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>have the ability to gather and interpret relevant data (usually within their field of study) to inform judgements that include reflection on relevant social, scientific or ethical issues;</td>
<td>demonstrate the skills required to work autonomously in the main field of study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>demonstrate the ability to search for, gather, evaluate and critically interpret the relevant information for a formulated problem and also discuss phenomena, issues and situations critically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>demonstrate the ability to make assessments in the main field of study informed by relevant disciplinary, social and ethical issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>demonstrate insight into the role of knowledge in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used, and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
can communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences;
demonstrate the ability to present and discuss information, problems and solutions in speech and writing and in dialogue with different audiences,

have developed those learning skills that are necessary for them to continue to undertake further study with a high degree of autonomy.
demonstrate the ability to identify the need for further knowledge and ongoing learning.

8.5 Criteria 5

The national quality assurance system(s) for education and training refer(s) to the national qualifications framework or system and are consistent with the relevant European principles and guidelines (as indicated in annex 3 of the Recommendation).

Assessment: In accordance with the description below, it is assessed that criteria 5 has been fulfilled.

8.5.1 Assessment

The Swedish quality assurance system for the public education system is in line with European principles and guidelines, which are described below. For qualifications awarded by other stakeholders to be levelled in the Swedish Qualifications Framework, it is the requirement that the issuer conducts systematic quality work where the quality assurance of the qualification is included. This is regulated by Ordinance (SFS 2015:545) on Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning and will be reviewed by MYH. The requirements of criterion 5 are thus expected to be fully met.

8.5.2 Common principles for Quality Assurance

It is stated, in Common principles for Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Vocational Education and Training (annex III to the recommendation on EQF) that "When implementing the European Qualifications Framework, quality assurance - which is necessary to ensure accountability and the improvement of higher education and vocational education and training - should be carried out in accordance with the follow the principles:

- Quality assurance policies and procedures should underpin all levels of the European Qualifications Framework.
- Quality assurance should be an integral part of the internal management of education and training institutions.
- Quality assurance should include regular evaluation of institutions, their programs or their quality assurance systems by external monitoring bodies or agencies.
- External monitoring bodies or agencies, carrying out quality assurance should be subject to regular review regularly.
- Quality assurance should include context, input, process and output dimensions, while giving emphasis to outputs and learning outcomes.
- Quality assurance systems should include the following elements
  - clear and measurable objectives and standards.
  - guidelines for implementation, including stakeholder involvement.
  - appropriate resources
  - consistent evaluation methods, associating self-assessment and external review.
  - feedback mechanisms and procedures for improvement
  - widely accessible evaluation results
Quality assurance initiatives at international, national and regional level should be coordinated in order to ensure overview, coherence, synergy and system-wide analysis.

Quality assurance should be a cooperative process across education and training levels and, involving all relevant stakeholders, within Member States and across the Community.

Quality assurance orientations at Community level may provide reference points for evaluations and peer learning.

Quality assurance of the qualifications obtained by the public education system

Quality assurance of education within the Swedish public education system is carried out both by national government authorities and the education provider itself. The quality assurance activities are governed by the various authorities' steering documents and the different types of education's regulatory frameworks, which also clarifies the education provider's obligations. Common to all types of education is that the obligations of a responsible education provider, in relation to quality assuring education, is clearly stated in statutes.

The state authorities, in charge of quality assurance for each type of education, are presented below.

8.5.3 Quality assurance of the qualifications provided within the public education system

All government authorities are reviewed; partly by an independent auditor directly linked to the Parliament, partly by an independent staff agency connected to the Government, The Swedish Agency for Public Management.
The authorities responsible for national/state quality assurance of education within the public education system and their tasks are displayed in the following table. The authorities also have other duties as evidenced by their instructions. The information in the table below is restricted to the relevant data on the basis of criterion 5.

- All government authorities are reviewed; partly by an independent auditor directly linked to the Riksdag, partly by a staff agency connected to the Government, The Swedish Agency for Public Management. The figure also includes examples of related education, however which is not included in the public education system and is therefore not been placed in the national qualifications framework.
- **Quality assurance of the qualifications obtained by the public education system**
- Quality assurance of education within the Swedish public education system is carried out both by national government authorities and the education provider itself. The quality assurance activities are governed by the various authorities' steering documents and the different types of education’s regulatory frameworks, which also clarifies the education provider’s obligations. Common to all types of education is that the obligations of a responsible education provider, in relation to quality assuring education, is clearly stated in statutes.
- The authorities responsible for national/state quality assurance of education within the public education system and their tasks, are displayed in the following table. The authorities also have other duties as evidenced by their instructions. This shows the relevant data on the basis of criterion 5.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authorities and types of education</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Agency for Education (The public school system and certain types of education as well as other pedagogical activities which is conducted in place of education within the public school system and other institutions, see more in chapter 3. All (of the above) the types of education are included in the public education system.)</td>
<td>National monitoring and evaluation, support municipalities and other organisers in their education activities, reviewing curricula, syllabuses, grading criteria and knowledge requirements and responsibility for national exams and final exams. The National Agency shall stimulate apprenticeship training at upper secondary level and support relevant actors in quality development for upper secondary vocational education and training. The Agency is responsible for the National Councils, appointed for each of the 12 vocational programs, who play an important part when it comes to quality assurance of vocational education and training at upper secondary level. The National Agency serve as a national reference centre on information about vocational education and training in Sweden and in other EU countries, as well as countries within the EEA, and to be a national reference point for quality assurance in VET which the Member States recommends to be appointed by the European Parliament and Council Recommendation 2009/C of 18 June 2009 on the establishment of a European frame of reference for quality assurance for VET education. The National Agency is responsible for official statistics surrounding public schools and child care.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Swedish Schools Inspectorate (same as above)</td>
<td>Review of organisers and organisations through supervision and quality audit, consider applications from individuals to the posts as the heads of preschool class, compulsory school, compulsory special school, compulsory school for pupils with learning disabilities, upper secondary school, upper secondary special school and leisure-time centres for approval, and the right to grant and withdrawal of authorization and the right to a refund in some cases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education (Higher Vocational Education (HVE)), arts and culture courses and some other educations, some interpretation courses tied to liberal adult education. It is only the HVE which are included in the public education system.</td>
<td>Decide, after the application, if the courses should be included in HVE and rule on government funding for courses in HVE, analyse labour market needs for training in HVE, consider matters relating to support for arts and culture programs and some others, consider issues regarding government support for some interpretation training, supervision and quality assurance as well as promote the development and quality in the above courses. be the national coordination point for the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), coordinating and supporting a national structure for validation, producing statistics in its area of responsibility. From 2016-01-01, it is the responsible authority also to administer applications from issuers of qualifications not levelled by the government and to rule on levelling of such qualifications in the SeQF. The Agency shall also compile data on the level of qualifications which are not obtained in the public education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swedish National Council of Adult Education (education in Folk High Schools, study associations. The course, General Course, is currently under review in regards to if it may be levelled by the government)</td>
<td>Decide which study associations, folk high schools and student organisations within the Folk High will receive government grants, as well as distributes government grants, monitor and evaluate the liberal adult education activity to see if it meets the conditions for a government grant reporting this in accordance with Government guidelines and to withdraw government support in the event that operations are not consistent with the state's aims for government grant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Swedish Higher Education Authority (UKÄ) (Universities and university colleges)</td>
<td>Quality assurance of higher education through evaluation of education in the first, second and third cycle and questions regarding the degree-awarding powers, reviewing university colleges and universities' efficiency, follow-up, supervision. The Authority is responsible for official statistics in the higher education sector.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Currently, a review of the national quality assurance system of higher education, university colleges and university educations is being conducted. In 2014 UKÄ went from being a full member of ENQA to be an associate member, an affiliate. UKÄ became a member of the European Consortium for accreditation in 2015 (ECA). In March 2015, the Government presented a proposal for a new national quality assurance system for higher education. The proposal states that UKÄ should take a greater account of the universities' own quality assurance work and that audits should focus on both control of the results and the quality of higher education. The system is to consist of four components: degree awarding rights, examination of the teaching institutions' quality assurance systems, education evaluation and thematic evaluations.

The former Swedish quality assurance system did, according to ENQA, not measure up to the European principles and guidelines for quality assurance and, therefore, ENQA did not renew the membership of the Swedish Higher Education Authority. This system was however completed in October 2014 and the Swedish University Chancellor was commissioned by the Government to propose a future quality assurance system to evaluate higher education in Sweden. On Tuesday March 2, 2016 The Swedish parliament decided on such a new framework for a quality assurance system for higher education. This new quality assurance system will combine the elements of an enhancement-led approach and a focus on control. The aim is that the new system will be developed and implemented by the quality assurance agency in accordance with international criteria, such as ESG.

The different authorities which are responsible for the quality of the public education system's qualifications linked to the Swedish framework different levels is illustrated below. Quality assurance here, refers to a single concept where both the preparation of the statutory qualifications supervision as well as quality control, monitoring and evaluation of these can be included. In certain cases, the statutory qualifications are determined by the government but it is the authorities in the government which are responsible for quality assurance.

Since the placements of the qualifications are determined by the learning outcome, different types of educations can be placed on the same level of qualification. This means that there are several national actors involved in assuring the quality of education programmes that provide similar qualifications.

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Since the placement of the educations are determined by the outcome of learning, different types of educations can be placed on the same level of qualification. This means that there are several national actors involved in assuring the quality of education programmes that provide similar qualifications.
8.5.4 Overview of the defined qualification levels of qualifications issued by the public education system and the responsible national authority

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Quality assurance agency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SeQF - Level 1</strong></td>
<td>National Agency for Education, Swedish Schools Inspectorate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final grades from Compulsory school for pupils with learning disabilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final grades from Special education for adults at compulsory level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SeQF - Level 2</strong></td>
<td>The National Agency for Education, Swedish Schools Inspectorate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final grades from Compulsory school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final grades from Special school at compulsory level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final grades from Municipal adult education and training at compulsory level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate from Upper secondary education for individuals with learning disabilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate from Special education for adults at upper secondary level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade from Swedish for Immigrants course D, or equivalent awarded by a Folk high school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SeQF - Level 4</strong></td>
<td>The National Agency for Education, Swedish Schools Inspectorate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree from a national programme in Upper secondary education (qualifications title for students starting 2011 onwards)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final grades from a complete national or specially designed programme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree from Municipal adult education and training at upper secondary level (qualifications title for students starting 2011 onwards)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final grades from Municipal adult education and training at upper secondary level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SeQF - Level 5</strong></td>
<td>The National Agency for Education, Swedish Schools Inspectorate, The National Agency for Higher Vocational Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper-secondary engineering degree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma in Higher Vocational Education)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SeQF - Level 6</strong></td>
<td>The Swedish Higher Education Authority, The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degrees, first cycle, Annex 2 to the Higher Education Ordinance (1993: 100)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degrees, first cycle, Annex to the Regulation (1993: 221) Sveriges Lantbruksuniversitet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degrees at first cycle, in the Annex to Regulation (2007: 1164) Försvarshögskolan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced diploma in Higher Vocational Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 7</strong></td>
<td>The Swedish Higher Education Authority, The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degrees, second cycle, Annex 2 to the Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degrees, second cycle, Annex to the Regulation (1993: 221) Sveriges Lantbruksuniversitet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degrees, second cycle, in the Annex to Regulation (2007: 1164) Försvarshögskolan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 8</strong></td>
<td>The Swedish Higher Education Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degrees, third cycle, Annex 2 to the Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degrees, third cycle, Annex to the Regulation (1993: 221) Sveriges Lantbruksuniversitet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Quality assurance of qualifications obtained outside the public education

- The qualifications referred to here are those acquired in courses that are closely related to the public education system; qualifications acquired outside the formal education system - in informal and non-formal structures such as businesses, organizations and learning in other contexts.

8.5.5 Quality assurance of qualifications that are levelled after application

The issuer of a qualification not levelled by the government must apply to have a decision on what level the qualification is equivalent to in the reference framework. A prerequisite for a qualification to be considered equivalent to a level of the SeQF is that the provider conducts a systematic quality work where quality assurance of the qualifications is included. The application is tried by MYH and the decision is valid for ten years.

Qualifications outside the public education system, i.e. within the labour market or liberal adult education are quality assured by the responsible education provider. In cases where providers responsible for such qualifications apply for and their qualifications are levelled in the SeQF, these will also be covered by the quality assurance conducted by MYH.

MYH’s quality assurance consists, among other things, of a review of how the education provider describes its systematic quality work, including quality assurance of the qualification, in the application for inclusion in the SeQF. MYH will, whenever necessary or at least once during the 10 year period that a levelling decision is valid, review that the issuer maintains the level of the qualification set out in the decision and that the requirements for the systematic quality work are met. In the case that MYH receive signals that the issuer, or the qualification, does not meet the requirements which was a prerequisite for the decision on levelling of the qualification, the authority can conduct a review where warranted and make a possible reconsideration of the previous decision.

MYH may issue further regulations, in regards to the systematic quality assurance and enforcement of the regulation on the framework, among other things. This means that MYH will be able to regulate the application- and decision procedure. The design of the application procedure, and requirements for the issuer to get their qualification placed in the framework, has not yet been designed in detail, at the time of writing this report. A proposal has been developed, and this states that qualifications outside the public education system should have a responsible “owner”, an owner which is responsible for quality assurance; content, implementation and monitoring. The quality assurance should include a system for examination as well as internal evaluation.

The government office has, in a memorandum in August 2015, submitted proposals that education run by other governmental authorities than universities shall be able to be part of HVE. If the proposal goes through, such programmes are given the opportunity to be part of Higher Vocational Education and then they will be subject to the rules that regulate education within the HVE.

8.6 Criteria 6

| The referencing process shall include the stated agreement of the relevant quality assurance bodies. |
| Assessment: In accordance with the description below it is assessed that criteria 6 has been fulfilled. |

This reference report has been drafted in consultation with the following relevant authorities:

- The Swedish National Agency for Education
- The Swedish Schools Inspectorate
- The Swedish Higher Education Authority

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21 En stärkt yrkeshögskola – ett lyft för kunskap, Ds 2015:41
The Swedish National Council of Adult Education

The authorities signed attestation can be viewed in annex 7 – 10.

Because the application process is not yet described in detail, it is here reported of examples of how quality assurance of qualifications outside the public education system is presently handled.

(See the sections on Non-formal learning and Informal learning)

The institution issuing a qualification not within the public education system must apply to have a decision on what level the qualification is equivalent to in the reference framework. A prerequisite for a qualification to be considered equivalent to a level of the framework is that the awarding body conducts a systematic quality work where quality assurance of the qualifications is included. The application is tried by MYH and the decision is valid for ten years. The Agency should review the awarding body at least once during this period.

8.7 Criteria 7

(See the sections on Non-formal learning and Informal learning)

The referencing process shall involve international experts.

**Assessment:** In accordance with the description below, it is assessed that criteria 7 has been fulfilled.

Volker Gemlich, professor, Fachhochschule, Osnabrück, Germany, and Kim Faurschou, international expert on the Copenhagen process, Odense, Denmark have been involved in the Swedish referencing report as international experts.

The experts have met on three occasions with the Secretariat and expressed their views on SeQF and the referencing report. Their comments and view has been expressed in the structure of the report and the clarification regarding the Swedish framework’s description of the qualification levels. The international expert’s opinions are presented in Annex 5.

8.8 Criteria 8

The competent national body or bodies shall certify the referencing of the national qualifications framework or system with the EQF. One comprehensive report, setting out the referencing and the evidence supporting it shall be published by the competent national bodies, including the National Coordination Point, and shall address separately each of the criteria.

**Assessment:** In accordance with the description below, it is assessed that criteria 8 has been fulfilled.

The present reference report is the official Swedish report on the referencing of the SeQF to the EQF. The report has followed the criteria and procedures set out in the EU's recommendation for referencing to EQF: Criteria and Procedures for referencing national qualifications levels to the EQF. The report has been approved by the Swedish Government office and is published on www.seqf.se.

8.9 Criteria 9

The official EQF platform shall maintain a public listing of member states that have confirmed that they have completed the referencing process, including links to completed referencing reports.

**Assessment:** In accordance with the description below, it is assessed that criteria 9 has been fulfilled.

When the reference report is finalised and has been presented to the steering group of the EQF, it will be published on www.seqf.se The report will also be linked to the EQF’s web platform.
Qualifications obtained through an education residing nearby the public education system, preferably education in adult education and education undertaken by working life organizations, are quality assured by each “owner” and the responsible body for the education.

8.10 Criteria 10

Following the referencing process, and in line with the timelines set in the Recommendation, all new qualification certificates, diplomas and Europass documents issued by the competent authorities contain a clear reference, by way of national qualifications systems, to the appropriate European Qualifications Framework level.

Assessment: In accordance with the description below, it is assessed that the process to fulfil criteria 10 has started but that it is not yet fulfilled. This criteria will be addressed in a second step.

Education courses in adult education is quality assured partly by the Swedish National Council of Adult Education (Folkbildningsrådet) that has the Government's task of distributing government grants and to review the terms of these follow, and by the Board of Directors/management of the respective institute. Systematic quality work at the school level is a precondition for state grants. The management of schools must annually report to Folkbildningsrådet how the systematic quality work has been conducted and its results.

8.10.1 How the levels on the national qualifications framework can be presented in the relevant qualification documents

Quality assurance of education programs conducted by working life organizations may be done partly by the education provider which complies with national policy documents and requirements and/or have their own system of quality assurance in the form of goal statements and follow-ups and/or through visits. The qualifications that can potentially be placed in the Swedish framework can be issued by stakeholders outside or within the public education system. Below are proposals from the Swedish Agency for HVE, presented to the Ministry of Education and Research, on how the levels of the SeQF can be introduced in these documents.

Quality assurance of a qualification obtained through validation is done by the responsible performer. It can be done with the help of the validation models that different industries have developed, when the purpose of a validation is to make visible and confirm the professional competence. Each industry model may include several different professional roles. The models can differ between industries but are based on the same basic process description. If validation leads to a vocational certificate is the industries' evidence which equals the final document, such as a certificate, journeyman's certificate, license or permission.

8.10.2 Qualifications within the public education system

The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education, which is responsible for coordinating and supporting a national structure for validation, has developed validation criteria and guidelines for quality assurance and documentation of how validation efforts can take place. The proposal is that the government establishes that it is mandatory to refer to the Swedish qualifications framework regarding diploma or equivalent documents within the public education system. The Agency proposes that this reference also should be included in the Europass attachments to these qualification documents. The designation of the Swedish Framework is SeQF and qualification documents should make use of the mention of both SeQF, and the EQF.

It is further proposed that the government gives the responsible authorities the right to regulate the references to the SeQF in the education forms that they are respectively responsible for.

Conclusion
The Swedish quality assurance system for the public education system is in line with the European principles and guidelines, as described above. For the new qualifications, which will be connected to the Swedish framework, there will be requirements for quality assurance systems. This is regulated by Ordinance (SFS 2015:545) concerning the qualifications framework for lifelong learning and will be followed up by MYH. In accordance with the description above, it is judged that the reference process has been accomplished with regards to the demands of criteria 5.

8.10.3 Qualifications outside the public education system

The qualifications provided outside of the public education system, that are levelled in the SeQF by MYH shall also have a qualifications supplement with the given SeQF- and EQF level. The qualifications supplement will have a nationally standardized format, where it is shown what knowledge, skills and competences the qualification relates to. The qualification supplement shall be seen as an appendix to the qualification document, for example, a certificate, diploma or certificate.
9 The levelling of qualifications in the framework

The Swedish framework should, as mentioned above, include qualifications from both outside and within the public education system. The government has established the levelling of the public education system’s qualifications. See Annex 3.

A model for the levelling of qualifications outside the public education system has been developed in consultation with the relevant authorities, working life organizations, student organizations and The Association of Swedish Higher Education. The model has also been anchored in a consultation round in which most stakeholders supported the process. Organization, application procedures, preparation of the application and quality assurance in the SeQF is regulated by the ordinance on the qualifications framework for lifelong learning. In §12 of the mentioned ordinance, it is stated that MYH may issue further regulations on the learning outcomes that are relevant to level 1-8 in the framework, the issuer’s (of a qualification) systematic quality work, the issuer’s information and notification requirements, as well as the enforcement of the regulation that governs the Swedish framework.

9.1 The Council of the National Qualifications Framework

It is stated in §13 of the regulation (2011:1162), with instructions for MYH, that within the authority there shall be an advisory body called the Council for the National Qualifications Framework. This provision shall enter into force on January 1, 2016. The advisory body shall assist the authority with a basis for decisions about the levelling of a qualification according to §4 and §9 of the ordinance (2015: 545) on qualifications framework for lifelong learning. The Council shall consist of a chairperson and no more than 14 other members. The chairman shall be head of the authority (currently MYH) or the person the authority head determines. The members of the Council for the National Qualifications Framework shall be appointed by MYH after consultation with relevant authorities and organizations. Members are appointed for a term of six years. The council will consist of members from the labour market, education area, liberal adult education and relevant authorities. It is the authority head who determines the levelling decisions of a qualification outside the public education system.

9.2 The application procedure

The actors who issues a qualification outside the public education system may apply to have a decision on what level a qualification corresponds to the SeQF §4 of the ordinance (2015: 545) on the qualifications framework for lifelong learning it is stated that MYH is responsible for reviewing the application.

The issuer of a qualification applies to MYH via a web-based platform. The issuer will have to pay MYH a fee for the application. MYH will not consider the application until the fee is paid. The application procedure consists of an assessment of the levelling of a qualification. §4 in above mentioned ordinance states that a qualification, in order to be included in the framework, must meet the necessary condition, which are; that the issuer conducts systematic quality work where quality assurance of the specific qualification is included. MYH has been authorized by the government to issue further regulations on how the systematic quality work, including quality assurance of qualification, must be expressed. The regulations will describe the criteria that must be met for an application to be granted. The regulations are clear and are valid from January 1, 2016. If the provider does not meet these criteria, or if the application is otherwise deemed inadequate or incomplete, the authority will demand additional information. When the application is complete, the authority collects opinions from the Council for the National Qualifications Framework, in compliance with. §§5 of mentioned ordinance. The Council shall assist the Authority (MYH) with a basis for decision. The basis for decision will also include a recommendation to the authority whether the application should be approved or rejected.
9.3 Decision
Before the decision, the issuer of a qualification shall have been given the opportunity to comment on the information that the Council will present and be given the opportunity to withdraw the application. This is shown in §9 in the mentioned ordinance. With the support of the Council's backing, the authority will make a decision to approve or reject the application. The decision can be appealed. A decision for a level placement of a qualification in the framework is valid for ten years.

9.4 Appeal
An issuer who has applied for a levelling of its qualification has the right, according to §13 in the mentioned ordinance, to appeal to the Higher Education Appeals Board. This applies if the decision has gone completely or partially against the issuer. The Board of Appeal's decision cannot be appealed.

9.5 Publication of the qualifications levelling in the Swedish Qualifications framework
When the authority has decided on the level of a qualification outside the public education system, information on the decision and the issuer of the qualification will be published on the website of the Swedish Qualifications Framework, www.seqf.se.

9.6 Review of qualifications
MYH should when necessary, but at least on one occasion during the decision's validity period, review that the issuer of a qualification maintains the level corresponding to its placement in the framework set out in the decision, and that the requirements for systematic quality work are met. MYH should also, within the scope of its review responsibility, provide advice and guidance to the issuer.

9.7 IT systems for applications
A simple and user-friendly IT system for handling applications for a decision has been developed and is in place. The IT system was opened for users March 1st, 2016. The system will also be used to make relevant compilations of qualifications, according to different stakeholders' needs. A plan of the second phase of the IT system for the Swedish framework is to develop and establish a national database for qualifications that can be linked to the European framework. A feasibility study on how a national database can be designed and linked to European framework was developed in 2013 and will form the basis for the creation of a national database for qualifications.
10 Plan for information about and implementation of the SeQF

10.1 Purpose
The purpose of this plan is to increase awareness of SeQF/EQF and present the framework's possibilities for different target groups. The goal is also to get different stakeholders to engage in information and implementation of SeQF/EQF.

10.2 Target groups
The different interested parties who will be affected by SeQF / NQF’s are working life organizations, government authorities, colleges and universities, education providers, school heads, various student organizations and the public. It is important that those with overall responsibility for information in the above organizations/authorities have good knowledge of the framework, and access to information about SeQF that can be spread within the organization/authority. Therefore, general accessible informational materials and more targeted materials will be developed for the different target groups.

In 2016, an "ambassador network" among interested parties will be created. The ambassadors will be those who distribute the information, and are in charge of the implementation within their own organizations/authorities. NCP's mission is to keep the ambassadors updated on developments in SeQF/EQF for example via conferences, meetings and targeted information.

Primary external target groups:
- Employers’ organizations,
- Trade Unions,
- Trade associations
- Folkbildning,
- Students’ Organisations,
- School and education authorities,
- Authorities with authority education programmes,
- Private education providers and owners of qualifications,
- Guidance counsellors and communicators and,
- The end-user, the individual

10.2.1 Employers’ Organizations
The major employers’ organizations, at the central level, have seen the benefits of a Swedish qualifications framework. That which has been mentioned from these organizations is that a Swedish framework for qualifications, in a good way, exposes all the qualifications that can occur in the workplace.

The ability to level the working life’s qualifications in the SeQF would also enhance the quality of the working life’s internal training. Regionally and further branched out in the working life organizations, knowledge of the framework is variable and likely flawed. One challenge is to inform and implement the EQF and SeQF among local and regional employers' organizations and also demonstrate the direct benefits of the framework.

An important group of employers are the small and medium enterprises, which are many and which are expected to be a key player for new employment opportunities. Their trade association, The Swedish Federation of Business Owners, is the group with which the NCP will have contact.

10.2.2 Trade Unions
The unions see the benefits of SeQF/EQF, which will be used for mapping and reviewing what qualifications their members have. Especially for those who have no formal education or those who
acquired their skills through internal training. SeQF reveals profession proficiency for those who are about to change jobs or, for various reasons, risk being out of a job and end up in some kind of conversion measures.

10.2.3 Trade associations
In Sweden, it is common that you create organizations which act as umbrella organizations where unions, employers or smaller industries are organized. Construction Industry, the Transport sector and Craftsmen are examples of such organizations. Interest in the framework and how the information will be disseminated on SeQF in the trade associations is very similar to the way information activities will be conducted against the employers and the trade unions.

10.2.4 Folkbildning
Folkbildning in Sweden has extensive activities through educational associations and folk high schools. Some folk high schools have shown interest in applying to and having their qualifications levelled in the SeQF. Swedish National Council of Adult Education will be the main stakeholder within Folkbildning with which the NCP will have contact.

10.2.5 Students’ Organisations
The student organization involved in the development of the Swedish framework is the SFS, The Swedish National Union of Students, which organizes students in higher education. There is not yet an established organization within HVE that organizes students in the way that characterizes the SFS. Nevertheless, information and implementation of SeQF must reach all students in the public education system and it will be a challenge to find the channels for this.

10.2.6 School and Education authorities
Swedish National Agency for Education, Swedish Higher Education Authority and Swedish National Council of Adult Education are three education authorities that NCP has close cooperation with concerning the European Tools such as EQVAVET, EQVET, Validation, EQF, Euroguidance and Europass.

10.2.7 Training conducted by authorities
There are authorities engaged in and responsible for, their own education programs which leads to various positions related to the authority’s remit. In the development and emergence of the Swedish framework, several authorities showed interest for their qualifications be levelled to the framework. Examples of such authorities are:
- Swedish Customs (Tullverket),
- Swedish Prison and Probation Service (Kriminalvård),
- Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och bevakning) and
- Swedish Coast Guard (Kustbevakningen).

10.2.8 Private education providers and owners of qualifications
They who are engaged in education, or issue qualifications, outside the public education system, are a key target group. This target group is very diverse and the challenge is to develop information that suits the different stakeholders in this target group.

10.2.9 Guidance counsellors and communicators
Counsellors are the most important target when it comes to spreading information about the Swedish framework to the individual. To develop information materials tailored to this target group, materials that help counsellors to, pedagogically, explain what the framework concretely could mean for the individual, will be an important work.
10.2.10 End-users, the individuals

Finally, the end-users, the individuals, are an important group and NCP will reach them through different stakeholders, for example guidance counsellors.

10.3 National conference

A national starting conference was carried out on November 11, 2015 which was targeted to all possible stakeholders. The conference should be seen as the starting point for the implementation of the Swedish framework. The conference was organized jointly with other authorities that all have government tasks which are similar to MYH’s and that focuses on EU tools and the education system’s ability to match the labour markets competence demand to an individual’s qualifications. The authorities which cooperated with MYH in the conference were the Swedish National Agency for Education, Swedish counsellor for higher education and Swedish Public Employment Service.

Nearly 400 representatives from working life organizations, regional bodies with responsibility for regional competence platforms, employment agencies, staffing- and recruitment companies, as well as policy makers and those responsible for education in government authorities, municipalities, universities, liberal adult education, businesses and others, participated in the conference.
Annex 1 – Law and regulations

**Lag** (2015:478) med bemyndigande att meddela föreskrifter om avgift för ansökan om att få beslut som avser kvalifikationer för livslångt lärande


**SFS 2015:545** Förordning om referensram för kvalifikationer för livslångt lärande


**SFS 2015:546** Förordning om ändring i förordningen (2011:1162) med instruktion för Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan


**SFS 2015:547** Förordning om ändring i förordningen (2007:991) med instruktion för Överklagandenämnden för högskolan

### Annex 2 – All the levels of the Swedish Qualifications Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Knowledge (experience and/or theoretical)</th>
<th>Skills (to perform tasks and solve problems)</th>
<th>Competence (ability to take responsibility, to assess, to act independently and to cooperate)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Can demonstrate:</td>
<td>Can:</td>
<td>Can:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Basic general knowledge within a field of work or study, an understanding of the essential in simple instructions and descriptions within a field of work or study.</td>
<td>Carry out routine tasks within a field of work or study, follow simple instructions and descriptions within a field of work or study.</td>
<td>Under leadership perform simple tasks, collaborate with others in management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Can demonstrate:</td>
<td>Can:</td>
<td>Can:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Broadened knowledge in a field of work or study, knowledge of how facts can be gathered, compiled and reported.</td>
<td>Apply the specified rules, methods and tools to perform assigned tasks, follow instructions and descriptions within a field of work or study.</td>
<td>Perform work or studies with some autonomy and take responsibility for simpler tasks, cooperate under leadership and contribute to common results, assess how their own tasks have been performed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Can demonstrate:</td>
<td>Can:</td>
<td>Can:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skills required to accomplish tasks within a field of work or study, knowledge of different methods of work used for gathering, methodizing and accounting for information.</td>
<td>Select and apply information with the help of the designated methods, tools and materials, accomplish tasks both on their own and in groups within given time frames, on their own search and process information, communicate experiences and knowledge in their own language.</td>
<td>Take responsibility for their learning and for completion of assigned tasks, assess their own and common result, assess information from different sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Can demonstrate:</td>
<td>Can:</td>
<td>Can:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Depth of knowledge in a field of work or study, knowledge of models and methods within a field of work or study.</td>
<td>Select and apply relevant concepts, theories, models, materials, tools and methods within a field of work or study, follow instructions and perform defined practical and theoretical tasks within given</td>
<td>Take the initiative, reflect, organize and carry out work and studies independently, independently treat the contents of a field of work or study that can lead to further learning and professional development,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Can demonstrate:</td>
<td>Can:</td>
<td>Can:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Specialized knowledge within a field of work or study,</td>
<td>Plan, execute and identify resources needed to perform specialized</td>
<td>Independently treat the contents of a field of work or study that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>knowledge and overview of the areas adjacent to their own field of work or study area,</td>
<td>tasks,</td>
<td>leads to further learning and professional development,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>knowledge of work processes and the quality criteria within a field of work or study</td>
<td>solve complex problems within a field of work or study,</td>
<td>supervise work or study activities and complete the prescribed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>communicate commitments and solutions within a field of work or study</td>
<td>projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Can demonstrate:</td>
<td>Can:</td>
<td>Can:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advanced knowledge in a field of work or study,</td>
<td>Identify, formulate, analyse and solve problems and perform complex tasks,</td>
<td>Evaluate information and methods in a field of work or study area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>insight into the area's established methods for knowledge,</td>
<td>communicate commitments and solutions in the field of work or study in both national and international contexts</td>
<td>with respect to relevant social, ethical and scientific aspects,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>profound knowledge of some part of the field and orientation of the area's current research and development issues.</td>
<td></td>
<td>apply specialized knowledge for development in a field of work or study,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Can demonstrate:</td>
<td>Can:</td>
<td>Can:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very advanced knowledge within a field of work or study,</td>
<td>Participate in research or development work,</td>
<td>Evaluate a field of work or study’s information, facts and methods with regards to relevant aspects,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>profound knowledge into the area’s research and development methods;</td>
<td>identify and formulate issues,</td>
<td>identify the needs for further knowledge,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>profound insight into the area’s current research and development.</td>
<td>analyse, evaluate and solve sophisticated and complex tasks,</td>
<td>assess an area's potentials and limitations,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>communicate the research or the areas knowledge base and findings in both national and international contexts</td>
<td>take responsibility for and manage their own area of work or study,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>take responsibility for the results of their own research or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>development work.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 8 | Can demonstrate:  
The most sophisticated and systematic knowledge within a field of work, study and research,  
current specialist knowledge within a well-defined sub-area and an overview of adjacent areas,  
mastering the methods of knowledge development in general and to the specific field of work, study or research in particular. | Can:  
Analyse, synthesise and critically review and assess complex phenomena, questions at issue and situations;  
plan and implement development or research work and other qualified tasks,  
communicate results of development and research in both national and international contexts | Can:  
Evaluate the field of work or study's research or development work,  
create and select your own research, innovation or development tasks,  
evaluate the qualified development work or the scientific possibilities and limitations,  
take responsibility for how the results of development or research are used,  
take responsibility for or lead the development of the profession and area of operation. |
Annex 3 - Overview of the statutory regulated qualification levels of the public education system and the responsible national authority

Level 1
- Final grades from Compulsory school for pupils with learning disabilities
- Final grades from Special education for adults at compulsory level

Level 2
- Final grades from Compulsory school
- Final grades from Special school at compulsory level
- Final grades from Municipal adult education and training at compulsory level
- Certificate from Upper secondary education for individuals with learning disabilities
- Certificate from Special education for adults at upper secondary level
- Grade from Swedish for Immigrants course D, or equivalent awarded by a Folk high school

Level 4
- Degree from a national program in Upper secondary education (qualification title for students starting 2011 onwards)
- Final grades from a complete national or specially designed program
- Degree from Municipal adult education and training at upper secondary level (qualification title for students starting 2011 onwards)
- Final grades from Municipal adult education and training at upper secondary level

Level 5
- Qualified graduate from Upper secondary engineering courses
- Diploma in Higher Vocational Education

Level 6
- Degrees, first cycle, Annex 2 to the Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100)
- Degrees, first cycle, Annex to the Regulation (1993: 221) Sveriges Lantbruksuniversitet
- Advanced diploma in Higher Vocational Education

Level 7
- Degrees, second cycle, Annex 2 to the Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100)
- Degrees, second cycle, Annex to the Regulation (1993: 221) Sveriges Lantbruksuniversitet
- Degrees, second cycle, in the Annex to Regulation (2007: 1164) Försvarshögskolan

Level 8
- Degrees, third cycle, Annex 2 to the Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100)
- Degrees, third cycle, Annex to the Regulation (1993: 221) Sveriges Lantbruksuniversitet
Annex 4 - The development and the progress of the Swedish Reference Framework

The development of the SeQF based on the EQF
The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Agency was tasked, by the government, to:

- With basis in the European Parliament and Council’s Recommendation on the European Qualifications Framework in lifelong learning (EQF), develop proposals for level descriptors of a national qualifications framework, design level descriptors so that they cover and can be applied in all parts of the public education system and allows opportunity for stakeholders outside the public education system to link their qualifications to the framework,
- create a consultative group in which Svenskt näringsliv, Företagarna, TCO, LO, SACO, Sveriges Kommuner och Landsting, Skolverket, Högskoleverket and Arbetsförmedlingen are represented,
- cooperate with Högskoleverket on matters relating to the overall common framework for qualifications in higher education (European Qualifications Framework EHEA) according to the Bologna Process,
- ensure that proposals are rooted in different users’ groups such as trade associations and professions councils (yrkesråd),
- Gather information about how the corresponding work was carried out, and how the solutions were adopted, in comparable countries such as Finland, Denmark, Belgium, etc.
- ensure that the results of the work can be the basis for a decision by the government on the National Qualifications Framework and its links to the EQF levels,
- submit proposals on how the assessment of the level of qualifications outside the public education system should be made, in conjunction with such qualifications being linked to the National Qualifications Framework,
- and to ensure that terms, abbreviations and acronyms that will be used in the national framework meets the Language Act (2009:600) requirements.

The task, which was reported on 4 October 2010, is the basis for the Swedish Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning. The framework has broad support after the cooperation with the working life organizations, adult education, relevant authorities and education providers within the public education system.

Connection of the public education system to SeQF
In the appropriation for the financial year 2011, the National Agency for Higher Vocational Educations received its assignment which was to describe how the diplomas and equivalent in all parts of the public education system and related programs can be linked to the proposed eight levels of the SeQF.

The Authority's assignment was to report the following three proposals:

- a linkage of only academic qualifications to the top three levels,
- a linkage of academic and other qualifications for the top three levels and
- a linkage of only academic qualification to the highest level and the level of 6-7, and for other qualifications on 6-7 as well.

The authority was also tasked to analyse the implications of the proposals and weigh the pros and cons. An international comparison of how other countries connects to the European Qualifications Framework, the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF-LLL), as well as including an analysis of this in the report.
The assignment, which was reported June 7, 2011, proposed that academic and as well as other qualifications can be linked to the three top levels, a proposal that the government also used to establish the Swedish SeQF.

**A model for connecting non-formal learning to SeQF**

The authority was, in the letter, also instructed to develop the model so that it could include the stakeholders outside the public education system in the qualifications framework, in a second step. The task showed that the proposed model would be independent of the SeQF’s final form, the work should be characterized by openness and a dialogue with stakeholders, and that consultation would take place with a consultative group. Högskoleverket, Skolverket, Arbetsförmedlingen, Företagarna, Landsorganisationen i Sverige, Svenskt Näringsliv, Sveriges Akademikers Centralorganisation, Sveriges Kommuner och Landsting and Tjänstemännens centralorganisation would be represented. Furthermore, the proposed model is anchored in different user groups, such as sectoral councils and professions councils (yrkesråd).

The task was presented to the government on 1 September 2011.

**Financial cost calculation**

The mission statement order MYH to include an overall cost calculation regarding the proposal on the model of how qualifications should be linked to the framework which the authority has reported (U2011/4728/GV). The cost estimate will partly cover the entire administration of the model, and the different steps, organization, process, quality assurance, monitoring and inspection. The findings were reported to the government 14 September 2012 where MYH specified what costs it believes to be associated with the whole process concerning the application for referencing of qualifications outside the public education system to SeQF in Sweden.

**Clarification of the level descriptors**

The government’s aim with this mission was to get supplementary information which clarifies the meaning of the proposed descriptions of the knowledge, skills and competences required to be placed at level 1-8 of the framework and the crucial differences between the levels.

A clarification of the Swedish level descriptions based on the European (EQF) was reported to the government on 28 September 2012.

**Placement of qualifications under the older conditions**

In this mission the government wanted to get suggestions how qualification under the old conditions, such as the older advanced higher vocational education diploma and training in upper-secondary schools which was completed before July 1, 2011, can be placed in the framework.

The proposition on how older qualifications, such as the upper-secondary school diploma pre-2011, could be placed in the framework was reported to the government on 16 November 2016.

**Development of national quality criteria**

In this part, the government was given propositions on the national quality criteria, meaning the criteria that have to be achieved in order for a qualification to be placed in the framework.

MYH proposed three clusters of national quality criteria that should be achieved for a qualification to be placed in the framework. The task was reported to the government on the 16 November 2012. Based on this, the government has given MYH the mandate to draft regulations that regulate the national quality criteria that must be fulfilled for a qualification to be connected to the SeQF.
Develop an IT system for the application procedure

MYH have begun the development of a simple, easy to understand and effective IT system for the application procedure. The IT system that today handles the applications regarding HVE and which MYH has developed together with IT consultants is the same technical platform from which MYH wishes to base its new platform on. The IT system will be up and running during the first quarter of 2016.

Making qualifications connected to SeQF searchable

The website, www.seqf.se, is the hub for information and the implementation work of the SeQF. Qualifications that are placed in the framework by the government as well as qualifications from outside the public education system which have been placed through an application and decision by MYH’s head of authority will be published and made available on the website.

Information and implementation work regarding SeQF

The Information and implementation work will be conducted during meetings, conferences and the development of information material for select target groups.

How the level of the SeQF can be displayed in relevant qualifications documents

MYH suggests how the level of the national qualifications framework can be displayed in the relevant qualifications document within the public education system as well as the qualifications which have been placed in the framework through the application procedure.

- **MYH** suggests that it should be mandatory to refer to the Swedish qualifications framework for qualification documents within the public education system. This referral shall also be present in the Europass annexes to these documents.
- **MYH** suggest that any referral to the Swedish qualifications framework shall be abbreviated to SeQF and that the qualifications documents that refer to the framework should use both SeQF and EQF.
- **MYH** suggests that **MYH**, **UHR** and **Skolverket** should regulate these referrals in the respective education form that they are responsible for.
- **MYH** also presents how qualifications outside the public education system whose qualifications have been placed in the framework through the application procedure can refer to the qualification level in the relevant documents.
Annex 5 - Comments from the international experts

Report according to the agreement between MYH and the international experts Kim Faurschou and Volker Gehmlich

In the process of the development of the Swedish Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning the experts participated in the required meetings. The main contribution was – as agreed in with Stefan Skimutis, Internationell koordinator, Utbildningsfrågor, Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan - made through active and well-prepared participation in the discussions during these meetings.

The work included preparation of and commenting during and after the meetings. The comments have been focused on opinions and advice within the following issues:

- Sharpen the structure of the final report
- Concepts, definitions (e.g. qualification) and taxonomy of the Qualifications Framework to be precise and concise and politically correct
- The need of perspectives from all stakeholders, in particular the learners’ and working life
- The need for clarification regarding validation
- The proposal for having one overarching qualifications frameworks instead of a separate one for higher education
- The need of a clear lifelong learning perspective
- The need for focusing on the learning outcomes instead of institutional perspectives
- The need for clarity about the different level-descriptors
- Select examples covering key actors and activities
- Secure that the framework can be and will be used in practice
- Ensure that the framework is understood and used within and across the national and international environment
- Make an implementation plan and a respective road map
- Identify the implications of the framework
- Communicate clearer the usefulness of the framework to all stakeholders
- Upgrade the sections concerning non-formal and informal learning
- Reflect on the qualifications frameworks in other countries
- Describe the quality criteria for all actors regarding the framework
- Use the qualifications framework as a starting point for the planning phase of the quality process
- Finalise the English version
- Detailed descriptions should be shifted to the annex
- Highlight the wording of the ten criteria to assure that the documentation reflects them
- Check the correctness of the descriptions of tools (Europass, 48 countries participate in the EHEA etc.)
- Give reference to the various guidelines for the tools published on the web
- Reveal clearly the interrelationship and interaction between policies and tools
- Outline the Swedish distinctiveness without an undertone of being better
- Formulate precisely the progression of learning from level to level. The level indicators should reflect the detailed descriptors (text).
- Ensure the distinctive progression by checking all levels vertically and horizontally.

Stockholm 2015-10-12

Kim Faurschou and Volker Gehmlich
Annex 6 - Criteria and procedures for referencing national qualifications levels to the EQF

The EQF Recommendation invites countries to refer their national qualifications levels to the EQF by 2010. To meet this deadline and to ensure that the referencing process is designed in such a way that it can be understood and trusted by stakeholders in all countries involved, the EQF Advisory Group has agreed on a set of criteria and procedures to guide this process. In addition to listing the 10 criteria/procedures agreed by the EQF Advisory Group, this note contains a brief explanatory part clarifying context and intentions. Further clarification will be brought by debate within the EQF Advisory Group, based on work by its thematic subgroups and on the experience gathered through the practice of referencing.

1. REFERENCING CRITERIA AND PROCEDURES

These criteria aim to ensure that the information and documentation that is put into the public domain is validated by the competent authorities, is relevant, is transparent, can be compared and generates trust. This emphasis reflects that the success of the EQF depends on the ability of the countries to refer their qualifications systems and levels to the EQF in a demonstrable, explicit and defensible way; that means in a way that the information can be judged as valid or not by those not familiar with a country’s qualifications.

The referencing criteria are essential in the sense that they indicate the general direction of the referencing process. It is however important to note that criteria have to be proved through practice. This means that an agreement on a set of referencing criteria represents only a first step and that the application of the criteria needs to be followed up through guidance and systematic exchange of experiences and good practices. The National Coordination Points as well as the test and pilot projects play an important role in pursuing this.

The EQF is a voluntary initiative, based on mutual trust among the participating countries. These criteria and procedure provide countries that wish to engage in the EQF referencing process with a guide to carry it out in a transparent and consistent way, contributing to mutual trust.
Criteria and procedures for referencing national qualifications levels to the EQF

1. The responsibilities and/or legal competence of all relevant national bodies involved in the referencing process, including the National Coordination Point, are clearly determined and published by the competent public authorities.
2. There is a clear and demonstrable link between the qualifications levels in the national qualifications framework or system and the level descriptors of the European Qualifications Framework.
3. The national qualifications framework or system and its qualifications are based on the principle and objective of learning outcomes and linked to arrangements for validation of non-formal and informal learning and, where these exist, to credit systems.
4. The procedures for inclusion of qualifications in the national qualifications framework or for describing the place of qualifications in the national qualification system are transparent.
5. The national quality assurance system(s) for education and training refer(s) to the national qualifications framework or system and are consistent with the relevant European principles and guidelines (as indicated in annex 3 of the Recommendation).
6. The referencing process shall include the stated agreement of the relevant quality assurance bodies.
7. The referencing process shall involve international experts.
8. The competent national body or bodies shall certify the referencing of the national qualifications framework or system with the EQF. One comprehensive report, setting out the referencing and the evidence supporting it shall be published by the competent national bodies, including the National Coordination Point, and shall address separately each of the criteria.
9. The official EQF platform shall maintain a public listing of member states that have confirmed that they have completed the referencing process, including links to completed referencing reports.
10. Following the referencing process, and in line with the timelines set in the Recommendation, all new qualification certificates, diplomas and Europass documents issued by the competent authorities contain a clear reference, by way of national qualifications systems, to the appropriate European Qualifications Framework level.
2. REFERENCING CRITERIA AND PROCEDURES: CONTEXT AND INTENTIONS

2.1. The role of National Qualifications Frameworks in the referencing process
Countries are not required by the EQF Recommendation to develop National Qualifications Frameworks and can, in principle, relate their qualifications levels to the EQF without formally establishing a national framework. The criteria and procedures have therefore been written in such a way that countries without a formally established NQF will be able to refer to the EQF (see criteria 2, 3 and 4).

While keeping the door open to national qualifications systems, there are several reasons why NQFs will play a key role in the referencing process. First, all countries concerned by the EQF have committed to developing NQFs compatible with the QF-EHEA in the framework of the Bologna process (cf. the Bergen Communiqué) and will therefore have NQFs for at least the higher education part of their education systems. Second, the overwhelming majority of countries in the EQF co-operation are currently introducing NQFs covering the full scope of qualifications. While a few countries are still considering their options as regards the development of NQFs, the referencing of national qualifications levels to the EQF will therefore in the majority of cases take place via a national qualifications framework. Third, and crucially, countries which want to relate their qualifications levels to the EQF have to make these levels explicit as well as define them in terms of learning outcomes. While the adoption of a formal NQF is not required for referencing to the EQF, a shift to learning outcomes and an explicit listing of qualifications levels will be necessary and can to a certain extent be seen as introducing a de facto NQF.

2.2. The learning outcomes requirement
The learning outcomes approach is fundamental to the EQF and criterion 3 states that the national framework or qualifications system and its qualifications should be demonstrably based on learning outcomes. Some countries argue that the learning outcomes approach can only be introduced gradually and that it is unrealistic to expect that all countries will have completed a total shift to learning outcomes before starting the referencing process. Instead, some argue, criterion 3 should be seen as a strong impetus for using a learning outcomes approach, not as something preventing countries entering into the process of gradual shifting to learning outcomes.

The requirement to develop and use learning outcomes may be seen as providing a link to mechanisms and systems supporting transfer of qualifications, notably credit transfer systems and validation of non-formal and informal learning. Criterion 3 underlines, however, that the link to credit systems and validation is non-mandatory and should reflect existing national or European practices.
2.3. EQF and the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)

The entire set of referencing criteria and procedures has been drawn up so as to take into account the relationship between EQF and the European qualification framework for higher education (the EHEA framework or ‘Bologna framework’).

While based on separate political initiatives, the EQF and the Bologna Framework overlap in terms of objectives and timing. Given the fact that EQF levels 5-8 are fully compatible with the EHEA first, second and third cycles as well as with the possibilities for national frameworks to comprise intermediate qualifications within these cycles, the Bologna framework can be seen as part of the overarching EQF.

This has to be reflected at national level and consequently, the criteria for referencing to the EQF and those for self-certification in the Bologna Process22 must be compatible.

The referencing criteria have been designed in such a way that the framework initiatives can work together. A country which has completed the referencing process within the context of the EHEA has the choice of not repeating it for the relevant levels of the EQF. And vice versa, a country which refers its qualifications levels to the EQF has likewise the choice not to repeat it for the QF-EHEA. While this is eventually up to each country to decide, it should in principle be possible to carry out one of the two exercises and recognize its results within the other. Aiming for one national referencing process covering both the EQF and the EHEA would not only help to avoid double work but also – most importantly – avoid confusion among individuals and employers – the main users of qualifications. The development of overarching NQFs covering the entire scope of qualifications, including higher education, will greatly contribute to achieving this integration.

It is important to note that levels 5-8 are relevant to other institutions than those covered by the EHEA framework. The EQF level descriptors, through their focus on knowledge, skills and competence, should also be used as a reference for high level vocational qualifications awarded outside the EHEA context.

2.4. The link to national quality assurance systems and bodies

The success of the referencing process, and the mutual trust it generates, is closely linked to criteria 5 and 6, both addressing quality assurance. Countries are asked to demonstrate the links between national quality assurance systems, NQFs and the overarching European agreements in this field (criterion 5), including a statement from the relevant quality assurance bodies that they agree with the documentation provided in the referencing process. If such an agreement were to miss, this would seriously undermine the credibility of the referencing.

2.5. The limitation of the referencing criteria and procedures

The criteria and procedures outlined above will guide countries in their interaction with the European meta-framework, its levels and descriptors. The referencing criteria are thus not addressing the national political processes of reforming qualifications systems, for example by developing NQFs or introducing quality assurance systems. This distinction is illustrated by criterion 7 concerning the involvement of international experts. This requirement applies to the referencing process, for reasons of mutual trust, and not to national reforms (where the inclusion of international experts is a matter of national decision). In particular, involving international experts should be seen as a contribution to producing a report that, while complying with the criteria, presents the results of the referencing process in such a way that readers not especially

22 See in annex for self-certification criteria for the European Higher Education Area.
acquainted with the national system can understand and appreciate the validity of this referencing. International experts do not need to be involved in the detailed referencing. The selection of the international experts is the competence of the national authorities in charge of the referencing process. As a general guideline, the membership of the referencing team should reflect a variety of stakeholders.

2.6. The need to speak with one voice
Criterion 8 asks for one comprehensive report outlining the national referencing process. This report must be certified by the competent national body/bodies. The aim of this criterion is to ensure that countries cover the entire range of qualifications levels (and types) in their framework or system, thus reflecting the overarching, lifelong learning character of the EQF.
Certificate

The Swedish reference report has been produced in consultation with Folkbildningsrådet (National Council of Adult Education) as a member of the reference group. We agree with the documentation provided in the referencing report and can confirm that criterion 5 is fulfilled. We also agree on the conclusions of the level to level referencing.

Best regards

Britt Månsson-Wallin
Secretary General
Stated agreement regarding the Swedish reference report “Sveriges referensram för kvalifikationer”

The Swedish reference report has been produced in consultation with Director of Education Cristina Pontis as a member of the advisory group. The Swedish National Agency for Education, Skolverket, agrees with the documentation provided in the referencing report and can confirm that criterion 5 is fulfilled. We also agree on the conclusions on the level to level referencing.

Anna Ekström
Director General

Charlotte Wieslander
Senior Advisor
Certificate

The Swedish reference report has been produced in consultation with the Swedish Schools Inspectorate. The Swedish Schools Inspectorate has participated by continuously being informed about the work of advisory group.

We agree with the documentation provided in the referencing report and can confirm that criterion 5\(^1\), is fulfilled. We also agree on the conclusions of the level to level referencing.

On behalf of the Swedish Schools Inspectorate

Camilla Hangård
Head of the Division of Operational Support

\(^1\) Criteria 5 The national quality assurance system(s) for education and training refer (s) to the national qualifications framework or system and are consistent with the relevant European principles and guidelines
Stated agreement regarding the Swedish reference report: "Sveriges referensram för kvalifikationer"

The Swedish reference report has been produced in consultation with Senior Advisor Joakim Palestro as a member of the advisory group. The Swedish Higher Education Authority agree with the documentation provided in the referencing report and can confirm that criterion 5 is fulfilled. We also agree on the conclusions of the level to level referencing.

Harriet Wallberg
University Chancellor

Per Westman
Head of Strategic Planning