
The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) in Austria

Mag. Eduard Staudecker, MBA
Geschäftsführer der NQR-Steuerungsgruppe
Member of the EQF AG

Overview

- European Qualifications Framework (EQF)
- National Qualifications Framework (NQF) in Austria
- NQF-Act
- State of Implementation

The EQF as stimulus to develop the NQF

- EQF Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council 2008 ; new Recommendation 2017
- EQF as meta level: in a first step the qualifications will be mapped at national level in a second step referenced to the EQF
- Includes all sectors of education (formal, non-formal & informal)
- Reference on all diplomas and qualification certificates
- Learning outcome-orientation as common denominator

Learning Outcome Orientation

- The EQF is based on learning outcomes
- Learning outcomes have been defined as a statement of what a learner is expected to know, understand, or is able to do at the end of a learning process
- They are also defined as knowledge, skills and competences/responsibility and autonomy
- For a mapping of a qualification to the NQF in Austria the curricula has to be learning outcome oriented

National Qualification Framework in Austria



BMBWF

BUNDESMINISTERIUM
FÜR BILDUNG, WISSENSCHAFT
UND FORSCHUNG

www.bmbwf.gv.at

Adherent to following principles

- Eight levels
- All areas of education
- Splitting the NQF table of descriptors at levels six to eight
- Dimensions: Knowledge, Skills, Competence/ Responsibility and Autonomy
- Not legally binding
- Integration of formal, non-formal and informal learning

The key objectives of the NQF

- Increase the transparency of education systems in Europe and at national level
- Comparability of qualifications at a national level and in Europe
- Visability of non-formal and informal learning
- Learning Outcome Orientation
- Strenghtening of the Austrian labour market

Legislative Process

- **2014:** Comprehensive desk work integrating all relevant stakeholders
 - **2015:** Discussion and negotiation of positions with all stakeholders
 - **End of 2015:** Assessment and parliamentary process
- It went into effect on **15 March 2016**

NQF-ACT

- § 1 – Scope of the Act and objectives
- § 2 – Definitions
- § 3 – NQF qualification levels
- § 4 – NCP (National Coordination Point) for the NQF Austria
- § 5 – Tasks of the NCP
- § 6 – NQF-Advisory Board
- § 7 – NQF-Steering Group
- § 8 – Mapping of formal qualifications
- § 9 – Mapping of non-formal qualifications
- § 10 – NQF-Manual

§ 1 – Scope of the Act and objectives

- Regulation of the mapping of national qualifications to a NQF qualification level and publication of this mapping in a publicly accessible register (NQF-register) for information purposes
- Mapping process – including persons with expertise and learning outcomes as basis in accordance to the EQF-Recommendation
- Objectives: Transparency, Comparability, Lifelong Learning
- **The mapping serves for information purposes only and has no legal effect for professional licences or any admission qualifications.**

§ 3 – NQF-qualification level

NQF – Level 8	3 rd cycle QF-EHEA PhD
NQF – Level 7	2 nd cycle QF-EHEA Master
NQF – Level 6	1 st cycle QF-EHEA Bachelor/ Engineer
NQF – Level 5 School for Higher Vocational Education	
NQF – Level 4 School for Intermediate Vocational Education/ Apprenticeship	
NQF – Level 3	
NQF – Level 2	
NQF – Level 1	

§ 4 – NQF-NCP (National Coordination Point)

- Contract between BMBWF and OeAD-GmbH
- Information and disclosure rights by BMBWF
- Obligations and tasks of the NCP, option for termination, qualification profile of the employees of the NCP
- Rules of procedures and guidelines of the NCP > approval by NQF-Steering Group and authorization by BMBWF
- Reimbursement of expenses by Federal State, Budget plan
- Yearly work report to BMBWF, NQF-Steering Group and National Council by the 10th of April

§ 5 – Tasks of the NCP

- Mapping of qualifications to the NQF according to the act
- Further development of the NQF-Register
- Support of all relevant bodies in the process
- Public Relations and consultation
- Networking at national and European level

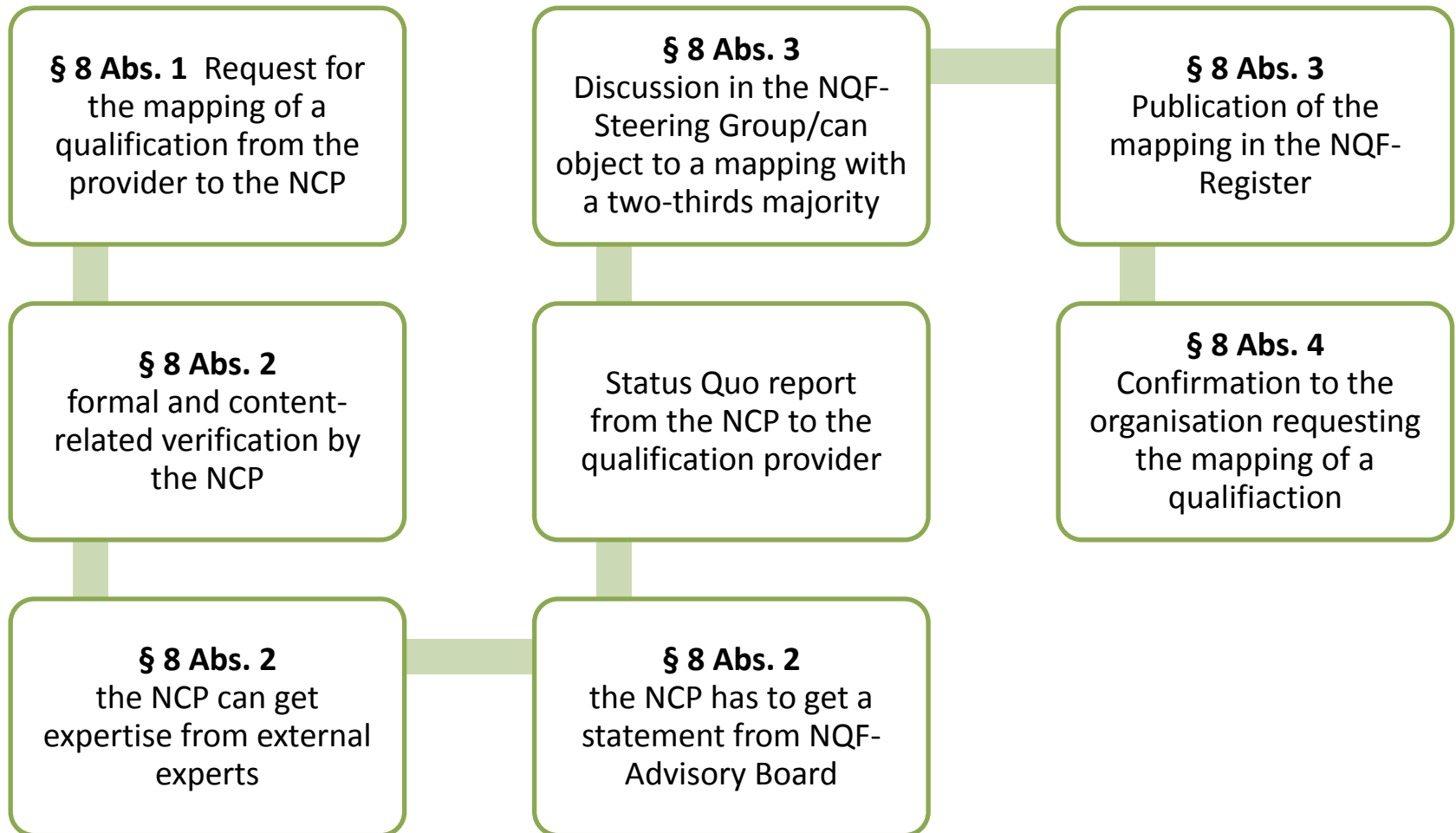
§ 6 – NQF-Advisory Board

- NQF-Advisory Board established within the NCP for its consultation
- Consists of seven experts
- Authorization by NQF-Steering Group, appointment by BMBWF
- Appointment for a maximum period of five years
- Written statement on the mapping of a qualification
- Rules of procedure for the NQF-Advisory Board provided by the NCP; Approval by the members of the NQF Advisory Board with a simple majority

§ 7 – NQF-Steering Group

- For the consultation of the national authorities
- Supervisory body concerning the rules of procedure, the NQF-Manual, the Guidelines of the NCP and the members of the NQF-Advisory Board
- Can appeal against a mapping of a qualification with a 2/3 majority

§ 8 – Mapping of formal qualifications



§ 9 – Mapping of non-formal qualifications

- NQF-Act provides information about the term „NQR-Servicestelle“
- Appointment of the „NQR-Servicestellen“ by BMBWF following proposals of the NQF-Steering Group
- Support of qualification-providers for non-formal qualifications in the mapping process
- Defined in more detail in the guidelines of the NCP

§ 10 – NQF-Manual

- Provided by the NQF-NCP (National Coordination Point)
- Manual for qualification-providers aiming to request for the mapping of a qualification
- Right to veto by the NQF-Steering Group