



**Title: Policy of Mapping Programs to National Qualifications  
Framework**

**Code:** GU-PL09MP

**Version:** 3.1

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**Effective Date:** July 2023

**Approval Authority:** Board of Trustees

**Document Owner:** Vice President for Academic Affairs

**Review:** The policy is subject to a periodic review every 4 years or in a shorter cycle as per amendments of policies and regulations

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all programs offered at Gulf University are mapped on the National Qualifications Framework in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all programs offered at Gulf University.

## 3. Acronyms

|              |  |
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| <b>CILOS</b> | Course Intended Learning Outcomes                        |
| <b>GDQ</b>   | General Directorate of National Qualifications Framework |
| <b>NQF</b>   | National Qualifications Framework                        |
| <b>PILOS</b> | Program Intended Learning Outcomes                       |

## 4. Definitions

**Benchmarking:** Benchmarking involves comparing university processes and practices against good practices in other Higher Education Institutions.

**Course:** A course is composed of teaching and learning activities, which guide and support students towards the attainment of a set of learning outcomes. A course is the smallest unit of teaching and learning activities at Gulf University.

**Course Intended Learning Outcomes:** Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs) describe the knowledge, skills and attributes envisaged to be achievable by students who have been enrolled in a course. CILOs therefore contribute to PILOs.

**Confirmation Panel:**

A confirmation panel is an independent group of individuals that moderates and judges the proposal made by the Mapping Panel.

**Graduate Attributes:** Graduate attributes refer to the characteristics a graduate is expected to display upon having completed a program associated with the qualification that has been awarded. Graduate attributes refer to the personal qualities, academic capabilities and more general skills developed as a result of following the program.

**Mapping:** Mapping refers to the process of placing qualifications on Bahrain National Qualifications Framework. This process requires the credit value of qualifications to be stated and for qualifications to be placed at the appropriate level on the NQF.

**Mapping Panel:** A mapping panel is a group of unbiased individuals with expert knowledge of the NQF established by the Higher Education Institution. The mapping panel establishes the NQF level of a qualification and the units that comprise it.

**Notional Learning Hours:** Notional learning hours describe time allocated to study. This study time can comprise formal classroom instruction, time spent in self-study (for example, reading and revising notes) and time spent on assessment. Notional learning hours are calculated by those with experience in the subject area by envisaging the time that the average student would spend on tasks required by a course or program.

**NQF Credit:** A NQF credit is a measurement of learning at specific levels of a National Qualifications Framework. It is assumed that one credit of learning will result from ten ‘notional’ hours of study. Credits are assigned to courses, programs, and qualifications. The credits assigned to qualifications comply with Bahrain National Qualifications Framework.

**NQF Level:** Bahrain National Qualifications Framework comprises ten levels. Each level signifies a stage of achievement with respect to learning ranging from the less to the more complex and demanding.

**NQF Level Descriptors:** NQF Level descriptors provide a general, shared understanding of learning and achievement at each of the ten levels of the NQF. Each descriptor relates to generic statements that describe the expected level of achievement with respect to:

- Knowledge (theoretical understanding and practical application)
- Skills (generic, problem solving, analytical skill and communication, ICT, numeracy)
- Competence (autonomy, responsibility, and context).

Level descriptors are used to map qualifications on the NQF and were designed to be used across a wide range of learning contexts.

**Program:** A program is a carefully designed and structured series of teaching and learning activities which support and guide students towards the achievement of the intended learning outcomes set for it.

**Program Intended Learning Outcomes:** Program Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs) describe the knowledge, skills and attributes envisioned to be achievable by students who have followed a program of study. Demonstration of achievement of the PILOs is a necessary requirement for the award of a qualification associated with a program.

**Purpose Statement:** A purpose statement describes the overall goal or purpose of a program of study by, for example, describing the way graduates of the program will contribute to workplace needs or to society more generally. It can also describe the way the program contributes to the vision and mission of the institution offering the program.

**Qualification:** A qualification recognizes and certifies the learning achieved as a result of following a program of study. It therefore signifies and certifies the achievement of the PILOs by a student who has followed the program.

## 5. Policy Statement

Gulf University (GU) ensures that all of its currently offered programs along with the newly approved ones are mapped to the NQF. All PILOs along with CILOs must be mapped to their relevant NQF level. GU's Quality Assurance and Development Center (QADC) in collaboration with the Colleges coordinate programs mapping to the NQF.

## 6. Policy Details:

- 6.1 Gulf University ensures systematic mapping of both its currently offered and newly approved programs with full compliance with GDQ regulations and NQF Handbook.
- 6.2 Gulf University ensures that mapping is done in accordance with GDQ guidelines and regulations.
- 6.3 GU ensures mapping is performed by Mapping Panel composed of members who should demonstrate expertise in the following areas:
  - One of more of the core disciplines on which the qualification draws.
  - Mapping of qualifications to the NQF.
  - Teaching in the subject or disciplines on which the qualification draws.
  - Assessment of learning.
- 6.4 GU ensures moderation of judgments of the Mapping Panel by an independent Confirmation Panel.

- 6.5 The Confirmation Panel resolves any difference of opinions regarding the level and credit value through discussion with the Mapping Panel to reach consensus.
- 6.6 All outcomes of the Confirmation Panels are subject to approval by Academic Councils (University and College Councils) before application for qualification placement on the NQF.

## 7. Responsibilities

### **HODs, Deans and QADC are responsible for:**

- Appropriate implementation of this document.

### **The Mapping and Confirmation Panels are responsible for:**

- Appropriate implementation of this document.

### **The Vice President for Academic Affairs is responsible for:**

- Appropriate implementation of this document.

### **University Policy Development and Review Committee is responsible for:**

- Systematic review of the effectiveness of this document.

## 8. Related Policies

- Assessment Policy
- Program Design, Development and Approval Policy
- Program Review and Development Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy

## 9. Related Procedures

- Assessment Procedures
- Procedures of Mapping Programs to National Qualification Framework
- Program Design Development and Approval Procedures
- Program Review and Development Procedures
- Teaching and Learning Procedures

## 10. Related References and Standards

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| <b>BQA</b> | Institutional Reviews Handbook             |
| <b>BQA</b> | National Qualifications Framework Handbook |
| <b>BQA</b> | Programs-within-College Reviews Handbook   |