



# **PLA EQF-REF Sofia Workshop1 How to adress criterion 2 in the referencing report**

March 31, 2011  
Karin van der Sanden  
Projectleader NLQF  
Dutch Ministry of Education Culture and Science

1



## **Criterion 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.



## Dutch national qualifications framework NLQF

### Objectives

- To enlarge the transparency within the Dutch educational landscape;
- To enlarge the transparency of qualifications within Europe;
- To enlarge the comparability of levels of qualifications;
- To stimulate the use of the concept in learning outcomes;
- To stimulate lifelong learning for individuals;
- To facilitate the participation in learning;
- To increase insight in the levels of qualifications for the players in the labour market;
- To facilitate the communication between the stakeholders in education and the labour market.



## Development & implementation

- Steering group
  - VET, GE, HE, Agriculture, LLL
- Expert group
  - GE, IVET, VET, HE (Bologna secretariat and accreditation organisation), private/sectoral
  - preparing descriptors & NLQF
- Working groups
  - Stakeholders (including social partners)
  - Testing descriptors
- Committee
  - broad stakeholder referencing ( including social partners)
  - advise to minister



## Planning

- development and testing
  - up to November 2010
- committee Leijnse
  - December 2010 – April 2011
- Formal referencing to the EQF
  - 2 st quarter of 2011




## Characteristics & Scope

- Comprehensive framework
  - Based on learning outcomes
  - Underpinned by quality assurance
  - Amount of levels will reflect national situation
  - Fully compatible with Bologna framework
- the formulation of the NLQF level descriptors differ because the NLQF also encompasses vocational education and training (VET), general education and work contexts, including at the highest levels.  
(Self certification completed)
- All levels are open, under conditions, to qualifications outside the formal system. also on the higher levels, no progression rights, no right to titles




### Development & implementation

- Dutch system is composed of several subsystems
  - initial VET
  - secondary VET (recent reforms to competence based qualifications),
  - general education
  - higher education (self certifying process completed)
  - well developed system of 'private' and sectoral qualifications
- Construction NLQF based on existing levels of qualifications in the formal system
- Existing levels described in one coherent way, using same expressions across the subsystems
- Integration of levels/qualifications  NLQF



### How we have taken the existing qualifications into account?

- description of all existing qualifications (levels) within the formal system in one coherent way, using same expressions across the subsystems
- the qualifications (levels) have been depicted in a matrix; a reproduction
- Where descriptions of qualifications (levels) had great overlap the levels have been combined to one level 
- NLQF with 9 levels, 1 entry level and level 1 t/m 8



## The descriptors

- Context
- Knowledge
- Skills :
  - › Applied knowledge
  - › Problem solving skills
  - › Learning and development skills
  - › Information skills
  - › Communication skills
- Autonomy and independence.



## Common points in EQF and NLQF

- based on learning outcomes
- each level has been developed based on the underlying level
- both frameworks contain all qualifications independently where they have been acquired
- level descriptions are not connected to the content of a qualification.



### Differences between EQF and NLQF

- More and more detailed descriptors in NLQF
- The NLQF has an entry level
- Clear description of context



### The best fit principle

- technical development has been done by experts from the different education sectors. This has assured the placing of the qualifications at the proper levels in the NLQF;
- testing by representatives of the different education sectors
- social referencing through:
  - round table meeting
  - presentations
  - online consultations



### Relation with the framework for Higher Education

- the Dutch higher education framework has already been related to the Dublin descriptors (self certification)
- The Dublin descriptors and the EQF level descriptors have been taken into account during the development of the matrix and the NLQF. Most changes are concerning the use of language.
- Higher education has been placed in the levels 5 – 8 in the NLQF



### The equality of qualifications so far

- In the Netherlands we have a school leaving certificate on level 4 and one on level 5, this creates a lot of discussion
- Not solved for the moment.
- Looking forward to the PLA on this issue.



Thank you for your attention