



Appendix 1

Oman Qualifications Framework Development Project

Environmental Scan of Qualifications Report

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Contents

ACRONYMS	4
GLOSSARY	5
1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND.....	9
2. CONTEXT	9
3. QUALIFICATION CRITERIA	10
4. PURPOSE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN.....	11
5. METHODOLOGY.....	11
5.1 GATHERING DATA.....	11
5.2 LIMITATIONS AND CONSTRAINTS.....	13
6. OVERVIEW OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN OMAN.....	13
6.1 GENERAL EDUCATION (SCHOOLS)	13
6.2 HIGHER EDUCATION.....	15
6.3 TECHNOLOGICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING.....	19
7. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS.....	22
7.1 PRINCIPAL OUTCOME	22
7.2 RANGE OF QUALIFICATIONS AND DESIGN OF THE NEW OQF.....	23
7.3 CRITERIA FOR LISTING ON THE NEW OQF.....	24
7.4 OUTCOMES-BASED LEARNING.....	25
7.5 QUALITY ASSURANCE	25
7.6 UNITISATION	26
7.7 MEETING THE CRITERIA FOR QUALIFICATION LISTING ON THE OQF	26
7.8 QUALIFICATIONS FOR SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION.....	26
7.9 INTERNATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS	27
7.10 INTERNATIONAL AFFILIATIONS.....	27
7.11 DURATION OF STUDY AND VOLUME OF LEARNING.....	28
7.12 CREDIT POINTS ALLOCATION.....	29
8. RECOMMENDATIONS	29
8.1 OQF DESIGN.....	29
8.2 SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION.....	29
8.3 QUALITY ASSURANCE IN TECHNOLOGICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING.....	29
8.4 CAPACITY BUILDING	30
8.5 QUALIFICATION GAPS.....	30
9. CONCLUSIONS	30
APPENDIX 1A – GENERAL EDUCATION.....	32
CIE; EDEXCEL; OCR; CCEA; AQA; WJEC	32
APPENDIX 1B – HIGHER EDUCATION	33
APPENDIX 1C – TECHNOLOGICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING.....	41
APPENDIX 2 - GOVERNANCE OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE HE INSTITUTIONS	44
APPENDIX 3 - HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AND THEIR SUPERVISORY AUTHORITIES	45
APPENDIX 4 - INTERNATIONAL AFFILIATIONS	49

ACRONYMS

ACCA	Association of Chartered Certified Accountants
AFTC	Air Force Technical college
CAS	Colleges of Applied Sciences
CEDEFOP	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
CoT	College of Technology
ELT	English Language Teaching
FTI	Fishery Training Institute
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution
IBD	International Baccalaureate Diploma
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoHE	Ministry of Higher Education
MoM	Ministry of Manpower
MoSD	Ministry of Social Development
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
OAAA	Oman Academic Accreditation Authority
OHIMI	Oman Health Information Management Institute
OMSB	Oman Medical Speciality Board
OQF	Oman Qualifications Framework
OSNI	Oman Specialised Nursing Institute
PTI	Private Training Institution
QA	Quality Assurance
ROP	Royal Oman Police
SQA	Scottish Qualifications Authority
SQU	Sultan Qaboos University
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
VTC	Vocational Training College

GLOSSARY

Environmental Scan Glossary of Terms	
Affiliated	Used to describe an organisation that is officially connected with or controlled by another, usually larger, organisation ¹ .
Apprenticeship	The method in which a learners learn a craft or trade by hands-on experience while working with a skilled worker ² .
Assessment	The term is synonymous with the concept of evaluation. Assessment relies on the measurement of multiple elements employing a variety of techniques. It also means the process for gathering and judging evidence in order to determine a learner's level of achievement against a standard or objective ³ .
Assessment Criteria	The standards of performance a learner is expected to demonstrate to determine that certain learning outcomes have been achieved ⁴ .
Awarding Body	An organisation that issues education or training certification following formal assessment, and includes education and training providers in Oman that certify professional competence such as Ministries, Higher Education Institutions, Technological and Vocational Education and Training and professional bodies ⁵ .
Basic Education (In Oman)	General Education from Grade 1 to 10.
Capacity Building	Planned development of (or increase in) knowledge, output rate, management, skills, and other capabilities of an education and training provider through acquisition, incentives, technology, and/or training ⁶ .
Certification	The formal acknowledgement of successful achievement of a defined set of learning outcomes ⁷ .
Continuous Assessment	A method or strategy of assessing the progress of learning of a learner on a continuous basis throughout a course of study as distinct from a final examination.
Course	The smallest component of a qualification for which a learner may enrol (see also Module and Unit). A course or collection of courses, if completed successfully, results in the award of a qualification ⁸ .
Credit	A quantitative measurement that represents the learning volume to achieve the respective learning outcomes ⁹ . This includes all activities

¹ <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/affiliated>

² <http://businessdictionary.com/definition/apprenticeship.html>

³ ANQAHE cited in OAAA Glossary

⁴ Adapted from QF Emirates

⁵ Adapted from OAAA Glossary

⁶ <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/capacity-building.html>

⁷ ANQAHE cited in OAAA Glossary

⁸ Adapted from OAAA Glossary

⁹ Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF)

	required to achieve the learning outcomes including independent learning.
Education and Training Providers	Organisations across all education and training sectors in Oman that provide formal or non-formal learning.
External Moderation	The external quality assurance procedure carried out by verifiers/reviewers (from outside the education and training provider) to ensure the suitability and consistency of assessment.
Externality (In the context of External Moderation)	The principle that External Moderation/External Verification is conducted by moderators who are independent and from outside the education and training provider that is being externally moderated. (See Impartiality).
Higher Education	Post compulsory education at universities, colleges and similar education establishments (especially to degree level). ¹⁰
Impartiality (in the context of External Moderation)	To make an independent and unbiased judgement to ensure the suitability and consistency of assessment. (See Externality)
Internal Moderation	The education and training provider's internal quality assurance procedure to ensure the suitability and consistency of assessment.
Internationally Benchmarked (of the Oman Qualifications Framework)	A Qualifications Framework that has been compared to those in other countries for the purpose of establishing best practice and contextualization to the conditions in Oman.
Jurisdiction	A group of people (or organisation) with official responsibility for a particular area of activity. ¹¹
Labor market	The nominal market in which workers find paying work, employers find willing workers, and wage rates are determined. ¹²
Learners with Special Needs	A learner who requires additional educational support.
Learning Outcome	Learning outcomes are statements of what a learner is expected to know, understand and be able to demonstrate after completion of process of learning ¹³ .
Level	An indicator of relative demand; complexity; depth of study; and learner autonomy ¹⁴ .
Level Descriptors	A set of progressive statements assigned to each level of the Oman Qualification Framework, that describe the complexity of acquired learning in terms of knowledge, skills and general competence ¹⁵ .

¹⁰ OAAA Glossary

¹¹ <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/authority>

¹² <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/labor-market.html>

¹³http://www.uwo.ca/tsc/resources/selected_teaching_topics/curriculum_course_design/learning_outcomes.html

¹⁴ 2001 Gosling and Moon

¹⁵ Adapted from Bahrain *NQF Handbook for Institutions*

Licensing	An evaluative process leading to formal approval from the relevant Omani Ministry for institutions and their programs. Institutions include organisations such as universities, vocational training institutions and schools.
Listing Qualifications	The initial inclusion of a qualification on the Oman Qualification Framework at a particular level following an evaluation of the qualification specification, learning outcomes and assessment ¹⁶ .
Module	The smallest component of a qualification for which a learner may enrol (see Course and Unit). A module or collection of modules, if completed successfully, results in the award of a qualification ¹⁷ .
Oman Qualifications Framework (OQF)	A comprehensive framework which includes all types of qualifications from all sectors of education and training in Oman.
Pathways	The vertical and/or horizontal routes learners take to navigate through their learning experience, by building on their knowledge and developing their skills, competencies and life experiences through education and training ¹⁸ .
Post Basic Education (In Oman)	General Education from Grade 11 to 12.
Program	The courses, modules or units that lead to a qualification.
Qualification	A certificate, diploma or a degree issued by an awarding body when, following established standards, the awarding body determines that a learner has achieved the learning outcomes related to a complete qualification ¹⁹ .
Qualification Type	Each broad category of qualification on the Oman Qualification Framework.
Quality Assurance Processes	The means through which a provider ensures and confirms that the conditions are in place for learners to achieve the standards set by it or another awarding body; the means by which an institution can guarantee with confidence and certainty, that the standards and quality of its education provision are being maintained and enhanced. ²⁰
Special Needs Education	The provision of education for learners who require additional educational support. This would include learners with learning difficulties but may also apply to learners who are gifted and who may need additional support to maximize their potential.

¹⁶ See OAAA Paper `Towards a policy matrix for the governance, management and implementation of the Oman Qualifications Framework.

¹⁷ Adapted from the OAAA Glossary (course)

¹⁸ NQF Bahrain Handbook for Institutions

¹⁹ Adapted from QF Emirates

²⁰ Adapted from OAAA Glossary

Technological and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)	Education and training which aims to equip learners with knowledge, know-how, skills and/or competences required in particular occupations or more broadly on the labour market ²¹ .
Unit	The smallest component of a qualification for which a learner may enrol (see Course and Module). A unit or collection of units, if completed successfully, results in the award of a qualification ²² .
Validation	The process to confirm that the decision to initially list (register) a qualification on the Oman Qualification Framework is valid ²³ .
Volume of Learning	The notional learning hours required to complete all activities for the achievement of the learning outcomes.

²¹ <http://www.eqavet.eu/qa/gns/glossary/v/vocational-education-and-training.aspx>

²² Amended from OAAA Glossary (course)

²³ See OAAA/SQA Paper *Governance, Management and Implementation of the OQF: creating an enabling legal and regulatory environment*.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This report is concerned with an Environmental Scan of current qualifications awarded in Oman, undertaken as part of the Oman Qualifications Framework (OQF) Development Project. The establishment of the Project follows a mandate from the Education Council in March 2014 making the Oman Academic Accreditation Authority (OAAA) responsible for: *“developing and maintaining the Oman Qualifications Framework (OQF) for all types of qualifications and levels for schooling, vocational and technical education and training and higher education”*.²⁴ The project is led by the OAAA and is supported by a team of experts from the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA).

The introduction of a new “comprehensive” qualification framework represents an expansion of the existing OQF²⁵, which is under the jurisdiction of OAAA but at the moment is only concerned with higher education. It is widely anticipated that this framework will be merged with the new OQF.

The OQF Development Project was launched in May 2015 and consists of two phases. Firstly, the development phase, which is scheduled to end in June 2016, followed by the implementation phase, ending in 2017.

The development process has been facilitated by the official appointment of a Project Development Team. The team consists of senior officials from various ministries representing the following sectors, i.e. General Education, Technological & Vocational Education & Training, Higher Education, Health Professional Education, and Military and Defence Education and Training. The team comes under the direction of a senior OAAA official and their broad remit is, together with the SQA team, to play a leading role in developing the new OQF. The team played a major part in conducting this Environmental Scan.

2. CONTEXT

In 2012, the World Bank, together with the Ministry of Education (MoE) published a report entitled “Education in Oman – The Drive for Quality”. The report noted that, while a qualifications framework for higher education already exists: *“this framework, does not include post-basic or technical and vocational qualifications*.

²⁴ http://www.oaaa.gov.om/Framework.aspx#Fm_Qualification

²⁵ <http://www.oaaa.gov.om/Docs/OQF-Ev1.pdf>

*As such, Oman lacks a comprehensive national framework of qualifications to compare educational and training qualifications within a coherent structure and to facilitate movement between courses*²⁶. The report goes on to make a policy recommendation (page 51) to: *“develop a comprehensive national qualification framework (NQF)”*, with the rationale that: *“A comprehensive NQF allows course comparison and facilitates transitions among pathways”*. It is in this context that the planned OQF is being developed and the Environmental Scan was conducted.

3. QUALIFICATION CRITERIA

Ron Tuck (2007)²⁷ discusses a number of issues concerned with the criteria necessary for a qualification to be recognised on a Qualifications Framework. These criteria are now a common feature in the design of qualifications in many countries that have introduced their own frameworks. It was evidenced during recent research conducted by the OQF Development Team to examine the qualification frameworks of seven countries as part of a benchmarking exercise. The countries included Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, Australia, Ireland, Malaysia, Scotland and New Zealand. The criteria can be summarised as follows:

- The learning program should be outcomes based and described with clear learning outcomes that state what the learner should be able to do at the end of the learning process;
- Each learning outcome should be assessed using methods that are valid, reliable, practicable and cost effective;
- The assessments and assessment processes that lead to a qualification must be quality assured;
- The learning program that leads to the award of a qualification should be unitised, i.e. based on units/modules/courses;
- The qualifications should have undergone a quality assured validation process to ensure they are “fit for purpose”.

It is anticipated that the OQF will require similar criteria to be satisfied when it is eventually introduced.

²⁶ World Bank Report 2012 “Education in Oman – The Drive for Quality” (Summary, page 35 & 51)

²⁷ An Introductory Guide to National Qualifications Frameworks

4. PURPOSE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

The Environmental Scan and subsequent report represents one of the key deliverables specified in Section A6b of the OQF Development Project Plan, which states:

“Conduct an Environmental Scan and needs analysis of a representative number of qualifications offered by a variety of providers (e.g. School, TVET and HE) in Oman (existing and planned) to determine the nature of existing qualifications related to the use of learning outcomes, knowledge, skills and competencies that define qualifications and contribute to the award of certificates.”

It is anticipated that the outcomes of the scan would include the following:

- A record of the range and levels of qualifications currently on offer in Oman in terms of title, levels, areas of discipline, providers and authorities responsible for their supervision;
- To what extent the qualifications would meet the criteria for recognition on a new comprehensive Oman Qualifications Framework that is benchmarked to international standards in terms of learning outcomes and quality assurance;
- Identification of gaps and shortfalls in the above;
- Identification of capacity building needs;
- Contribute towards decisions concerned with the design and architecture of the new OQF.

The Environmental Scan does not provide a detailed analysis of any specific type of qualification, nor does it allocate any particular qualification to a level in the OQF. The implementation of the OQF will include a process for the analysis of existing qualifications and their placement on the framework in accordance with the OQF design.

5. METHODOLOGY

5.1 Gathering Data

The Environmental Scan was conducted by members of the OQF Development Team with support from the SQA Team. Three educational sectors were identified as follows:

- General Education including Basic and Post Basic education provided by Government schools and the provisions in private schools leading to a range of international school qualifications;

-
- Technological Vocational Education and Training provided by the Colleges of Technology (CoTs) Vocational Training Centres (VTCs), Fisheries Training Institutes (FTIs); supervised by the MoM. It also includes Private Training Institutions (PTIs), which are licensed by the Ministry of Manpower (MoM).
 - Higher Education provided by the independent Sultan Qaboos University (SQU), and institutions that are administered and/or supervised by the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE), Ministry of Manpower (MoM), Ministry of Health (MoH) and Ministry of Defence (MoD);

The information was gathered by means of a questionnaire devised collectively by the SQA and the OQF Development Team.

The questionnaire was designed to focus on the following:

- The qualification's awarding body;
- The authority that is responsible for supervising the award;
- The range of qualifications awarded in the sector;
- Does the sector include qualifications that are awarded by professional bodies, including international bodies?;
- Does the sector offer qualifications that are recognised on an existing qualifications framework?;
- Are the qualifications described in terms of learning outcomes?;
- If not, what are the challenges in order to convert to an outcome-based system?;
- A general account of sector-wide quality assurance arrangements for the award of qualifications.

The term sector in the context of the questionnaire refers to the educational areas that are supervised by the different ministries described above.

Each development team member focused on qualifications within their own respective sector for the research. The questionnaire was sent out to selected stakeholders and in some cases was followed up by meetings, although this was often not possible for logistical reasons.

Once collected, the information gathered was collated onto a standard template (see Appendices 1A, 1B and 1C) and each member produced a separate and individual report of their findings. This document is a distillation of these reports.

5.2 Limitations and Constraints

The scope of the Environmental Scan was to ascertain the range of qualifications in Oman and as such did not focus on the above criteria. Due to the difficulties in arranging meetings with relevant stakeholders, a significant amount of research had to be conducted through desk-top and internet-based exercises with the result that often some of the important qualification details were not available, including learning outcomes, quality assurance arrangements, number of credits, awarding bodies and supervising authorities.

This was further compounded by the fact that there were certain flaws in the construction of the questionnaire which may have affected the accuracy and quality of the data gathered.

Another issue was concerned with the randomness with which the research was carried out. This resulted in an over representation in the Higher Education sector and an under representation in Technological and Vocational Education and Training. It also resulted in an under representation of international affiliations with USA institutions.

These issues have resulted in some of the information tabulated in appendices 1A, 1B and 1C to be incomplete. It means that, while the Environmental Scan has been successful in identifying a significant number and range of qualifications offered in Oman, the depth of detailed information about their status is quite shallow and therefore presenting difficulties in making a qualitative judgement about their readiness for listing on the OQF.

6. OVERVIEW OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN OMAN

6.1 General Education (Schools)

All schools offering general education including public and private schools, come under the jurisdiction of the MoE. Omani general education consists of a unified system of Basic Education (grade 1 – 10) and Post Basic Education (grade 11 – 12). The Basic Education curriculum consists of Islamic Education, Arabic, English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies plus Life Skills, Art, Physical Education and Information Technology.

The two-year post-basic education curriculum is organised on a “core plus electives” model, where students are given an element of choice. It consists of Islamic Education, Arabic, English, French, German, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Social Studies, Geography and History, plus Art, Physical Education and Information Technology.

Students who successfully pass Grade 10 are awarded the General Education Certificate, while those who successfully pass Grade 12 are awarded the General Education Diploma.²⁸

A General Vocational Education Diploma is planned to be offered in schools as an alternative choice to the General Education Diploma for Grade 10 students who wish to progress to Grade 11 – 12. This qualification is still under development in collaboration with the MoM and the MoE.

6.1.1 International School Qualifications

Several privately-run schools, which also come under the jurisdiction of the MoE, offer international qualifications as an alternative to the Omani school qualifications. They have recognised equivalency to the General Education Certificate and General Education Diploma and include the following:

- International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE);
- General Certificate of Education - O Level;
- General Certificate of Education - A Level (A2 & AS);
- International Baccalaureate Diploma (IBD);
- International Baccalaureate Certificate (IBC);
- International Baccalaureate Middle Year Program (IBMYP).

Examinations are held locally and the qualification awards are made by the relevant international organisations (see Appendix 1A).

6.1.2 General Education Learning Outcomes

All General Education Certificate and Diploma curricula are based on learning outcomes.

6.1.3 General Education Quality Assurance

Continuous assessment is quality assured by a system of internal moderation within each school. The system involves scrutiny by peer teachers, senior teachers, supervisors, school principals and Regional Governorate Assessment Officers.

Grade 12 continuous assessments are also externally moderated by teams of moderators that visit schools to examine the marks awarded by teachers to ensure that they are reliable and consistent.

²⁸ Source: World Bank Report 2012 “Education in Oman – The Drive for Quality”

The teams of moderators consist of subject specialists and come from regions outside those where the schools are located to ensure externality and impartiality. The system is managed and supervised by the General Directorate of Educational Evaluation in cooperation with the 11 Regional Education Governorates. External moderation takes place towards the end of each semester.

6.2 Higher Education

Higher education is provided by a range of government and private institutions, which come under the jurisdiction of different ministries, depending on their mandate and the qualifications they offer.

The exception to this is Sultan Qaboos University (SQU), which is independent from ministries and the only public university in Oman, founded in 1986 by Royal Decree 9/1986²⁹. The university has nine colleges, together offering qualifications that range from PhD to Higher Diploma (Appendix 2).

6.2.1 Role of the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE)

The MoHE is responsible for the administration of six regional Colleges of Applied Sciences (CAS) (through the Directorate General for CAS) and the supervision of private universities, university colleges and colleges (through the Directorate General of Private Universities and Colleges).

The six regional Colleges of Applied Sciences (CAS) are located in Ibri, Nizwa, Rustaq, Salalah, Sohar and Sur. They offer Bachelor and Diploma qualifications in a range of specialisms including:³⁰

- BSc – Design;
- BSc - Information Technology;
- BSc - International Business Administration;
- BSc – Applied Bio-Technology;
- BA – Mass Communication;
- B.Eng.- Engineering;
- B.Ed. – English Language Teaching (ELT);
- Diploma.

As stated above, the MoHE also has jurisdiction over private higher institutions as follows (Appendix 3):

²⁹ www.squ.edu.om

³⁰ www.cas.edu.om

-
- Six private universities;
 - Four private university colleges;
 - Sixteen colleges.

Each individual institution is responsible for awarding its own qualifications under the supervision of the MoHE.

6.2.2 Role of the Ministry of Health (MoH)

The MoH is responsible for the development of health professionals in Oman and has overall supervising authority for the provision of health professional education and the award of qualifications. It includes the supervision of providers, which consist of a combination of Government and private institutions.

Government Institutions include:

- The Institute of Health Sciences;
- Oman Health Information Management Institute (OHIMI);
- Oman Assistant Pharmacy Institute;
- Oman and Regional Nursing Institutes;
- Oman Speciality Nursing Institute (OSNI).

Qualifications from these institutions range from a two-year Diploma, three-year Advanced Diploma, four-year Bachelor Degree and a Post Graduate Diploma (Appendix 1B).

Private Institutions include:

- Oman Medical College;
- Oman Dental College;
- University of Buraimi;
- University of Nizwa.

The qualifications are awarded by each individual relevant institution under the supervision of the MoH.

6.2.3 Role of the Ministry of Defense (MoD)

Education and training for the military comes under the jurisdiction of the MoD. It provides qualifications through the following centres:

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- Sultan Qaboos Naval Academy;
 - National Defence College;
 - Military Technical College;
 - Command and Staff College;
 - School of Signals;
 - Air Force Technical College;
 - Oman Aircraft Control College;
 - Institute of Topographic Sciences;
 - Sultan Qaboos Military College;
 - Sultan Qaboos Air Force Academy;
 - Armed Forces Medical Services School;
 - A range of schools and centres run by the Royal Army, Royal Air Force and Royal Navy of Oman.

In addition, the military also uses other educational providers for certain types of education and training, including:

- Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) for a Master's Degree in Strategic Studies of National Security;
- Institute of Topographical Sciences for BTEC National Diploma in Geomatics Survey and Mapping.

The MoD's qualifications include: (Appendix 1B)

- Master of Arts (Provided by SQU);
- Bachelor;
- Advanced Diploma;
- Diploma;
- Certificate;
- Certificates of Course Completion.

The MoD is the awarding body for all qualifications provided within institutions that come under its supervision. In the case of military qualifications provided by other institutions, the awards are made by other bodies but ratified by the MoD. Examples include the Diploma in Geomatic Surveying and Mapping, provided by the Institute of Topographical Sciences and awarded by Edexcel International and the MA in Strategic Studies, provided and awarded by SQU. (See Appendix 1B).

6.2.4 Role of the Royal Oman Police (ROP)

The ROP provides education and training for its personnel in the Government owned Sultan Qaboos Academy for Police Sciences. It was not possible to gain access to the institution during the scan but they sent a statement providing the following information:

ROP's qualifications include:

- Bachelor in Law and Police Sciences;
- Diploma in Law and Police Sciences;
- Technical Diploma in Emergency for Employees in Ambulance Units;
- A range of short security and operational specialised courses.

6.2.5 Learning Outcomes in Higher Education

The Environmental Scan did not extend to carrying out a detailed in-depth examination of every qualification to determine whether individual courses and units are described in terms of learning outcomes. However, it was noted that a significant number of qualifications supervised by the MoH that were surveyed, are outcomes based and that all MoD programs are written in terms of outcomes, although some are referred to as objectives.

Most other Higher Education qualifications are specified in outcomes at overall program level but again, in some cases they were referred to as objectives or goals.

6.2.6 Quality Assurance in Higher Education

All Higher Education institutions are subject to the OAAA quality assurance criteria, which include a requirement for internal moderation mechanisms to quality assure assessments. The criteria are outlined in the Institutional Standards Assessment Manual (January 2016), requiring institutions to have regulations, policies and procedures which govern all aspects of assessment including assessment methods, grading and moderation. These must be implemented through assessment systems and processes to ensure that assessment is rigorous and fair. In addition, there should be processes in place to verify student standards of achievement and ensure that appropriate academic standards are maintained³¹.

³¹ http://www.oaaa.gov.om/Institution.aspx#Inst_Assessment_New

6.2.7 Higher Education International Affiliation

Several private universities and colleges are affiliated with international bodies and/or educational institutions for the purpose of offering their educational programs in Oman (Appendix 4). The arrangements are approved and licensed by the MoHE, and the institutions in question are required to comply with the conditions, regulations and quality criteria of their international partners. It would normally include a system of external moderation conducted by the international partners in question.

One example is Majan University College, which offers three Professional Body Qualifications on behalf of the UK-based Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), i.e. the ACCA Professional Qualification, the Diploma in Accountancy and Business, and the Certificate in International Financial Reporting.

The awards for these foreign qualifications are normally made by the relevant international institution or in some cases made jointly with the university or college in question. Details of these affiliations are identified in Appendix 1B and Appendix 4.

6.3 Technological and Vocational Education and Training

Technological and Vocational Education and Training comes under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Manpower (MoM) and is divided into three categories as follows:

- Technological Education provided by the Colleges of Technology (CoTs);
- Vocational Training provided by government owned Vocational Training Centres (VTCs) and Fisheries Training Institutes (FTIs);
- Vocational Training provided by Private Training Institutions (PTIs).

Technological Education provides qualifications that are at the level of Higher Education but because of the MoM's jurisdiction, the category has been included in this section of the report.

6.3.1 Role of the Ministry of Manpower (MoM)

The MoM has responsibility for human resource development in accordance with the needs of the Omani labour market. It is also responsible for developing and overseeing the delivery of appropriate technological and vocational education and training programs to meet these needs. It is the awarding body for all qualifications that come under its jurisdiction except for PTIs, which award their own qualifications.

6.3.2 Technological Education

Technological Education is provided by six regional Colleges of Technology and one Higher College of Technology. The regional colleges are located in Nizwa, Musanna, Shinas, Ibra, Ibri and Salalah; their provisions include two-year programs leading to Diplomas of Technology and three-year programs leading to Higher diplomas of Technology in a range of specializations as listed below.

The Higher College of Technology is located in Muscat and offers a Bachelor of Technology Degree in addition to the Diploma and Higher Diploma offered in regional colleges³².

Their main specializations include the following but the list is not exhaustive:

- Engineering;
- Business Studies;
- Information Technology;
- Applied Sciences;
- Pharmacy;
- Photography;
- Fashion Design.

Each college is responsible for awarding its own respective qualifications under the supervision of the MoM.

6.3.3 Vocational Training

Vocational Training is provided by a range of Government owned Vocational Training Centres (VTCs) and Fisheries Training Institutes (FTIs); and around 400 Private Training Institutions (PTIs). They all play an important role in providing the skills required to cater for the labor market's increasing demand for trained manpower at semi-skilled, skilled and craftsman levels.

Vocational Training qualifications include the following:

1. Vocational Diploma, awarded after a 2-year study program;
2. Certificate of Competency, awarded at three levels, i.e.:
 - Certificate of Competency (Semi – Skilled), which is at schooling level and can be accessed by learners that have completed Grade 10 Basic Education;
 - Certificate of Competency (Skilled) which is at the level of a skilled worker;

³² www.htc.edu.om; www.manpower.gov.om

-
- Certificate of Competency (Craftsman).

Each of these qualifications currently consists of a 1-year training program. However, they are planned to be replaced by a Certificate of Apprenticeship with a training period of 2 years in accordance with a bylaw issued in September 2015.³³

3. General Vocational Education Diploma, which is a qualification still under development and planned to be offered in schools, as described in paragraph 6.1.
4. Certificate of Vocational Training Course. This is awarded to people that have attended a short training course designed to upskill workers or is offered as part of a community development program. The duration of training varies according to the specialization or level of content.

6.3.3.1 Training provided by Government-owned Vocational Training Centres

Vocational training programs are provided by five Vocational Training Centres (VTCs) based in A'Seeb, Saham, Shinas, Sur and Ibri; and two Fisheries Training Institutes based in Salalah and Al-Khaboura.

These Centres are supervised by the MoM.³⁴ The qualifications they offer include Vocational Diplomas and Certificates of Competency at the three levels described in paragraph 3.3.3 above.

Their main specializations include:

- Engineering;
- Health and Beauty;
- Electrical and electronics;
- Construction and Carpentry;
- Vehicle maintenance and repair;
- Fisheries Training;
- Agriculture Technology.

6.3.3.2 Training provided by Private Training Institutions (PTIs)

PTIs currently provide a range of training programs that lead to qualifications similar to those offered in government-owned VTCs at the schooling level only. However, work is currently ongoing with plans to introduce Higher Education level qualifications including Vocational Diplomas.³⁵

³³ Ministerial Decree No 244/2015

³⁴ Ministerial Decision No 429/2008

6.3.4 Learning Outcomes in Technological and Vocational Education and Training

Qualifications awarded by Colleges of Technology are described in terms of learning outcomes at program level, including a general statement of graduates' attributes after they have successfully completed their studies. These general statements are included for all programs. The curriculum is also written in outcomes-based terms at individual course level.

With regard to the vocational training qualifications offered in VTCs, FTIs and private training institutions, few are described in terms of learning outcomes at program level, and most are based on goals and objectives. At the curriculum level some of the vocational qualifications are described in terms of learning outcomes but some are still based on objectives. However, it is reported that all vocational qualifications are to be outcome based in the future.

6.3.5 Quality Assurance in Technological and Vocational Education and Training

Qualifications offered by the Colleges of Technology are subject to the quality assurance criteria of the OAAA, which includes the quality assurance of assessments and internal moderation.³⁵

However, there are currently no sector-wide quality assurance arrangements for qualifications offered in VTCs, FTIs and PTIs. General guidelines for assessing vocational training are provided by the two Directorates General responsible for Government owned and private vocational training within the MoM but it is not clear if these guidelines are being fully implemented.

7. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

7.1 Principal Outcome

One of the main outcomes of the Environmental Scan has been the identification of 99 qualifications currently offered in Oman across the 3 education sectors. The scan covered the entire academic level spectrum from General Education at one end to Doctorate Degrees at the other. It provided an insight into the type of qualifications offered, how they are designed and quality assured. It also gave an insight into the range of providers, their supervising authorities and whether they have affiliations with international partners. The full range of qualifications scanned is presented in Appendices 1A, 1B and 1C.

³⁵ Ibid

³⁶ http://www.oaaa.gov.om/Institution.aspx#Inst_Overview

7.2 Range of Qualifications and Design of the New OQF

The following tables show a summary of the range of Omani qualifications identified by the Environmental Scan, covering Higher Education, Technological and Vocational Education and Training and General Education Sectors. Technological Education has been included in the Higher Education section. Table 7.2.3 also includes International School Qualifications.

The summaries will assist in informing the design and architecture of the new OQF.

Table 7.2.1 Higher Education

Type of Qualification	Qualification Researched During the Scan	Volume of Learning
Doctoral Degree	◆ PhD	300 Credits
Master's Degree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Master of Business Administration (MBA) ◆ Master of Arts (MA) ◆ Master of Science (MSc) ◆ Master of Technology (M.Tech) ◆ Master of Health Professions Education (MHPE) ◆ Master of Engineering (M.Eng) ◆ Master of Education (M.Ed) 	150 – 180 Credits
Post Graduate Diploma	◆ Post Graduate Diploma (PGDip)	120 Credits
Bachelor (Hon)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Bachelor of Arts (Hon) (BA Hon) ◆ Bachelor of Science (Hon) (BSc Hon) ◆ Bachelor of Engineering (Hon) (B.Eng Hon) 	480 Credits
Bachelor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Bachelor of Arts (BA) ◆ Bachelor of Science (BSc) ◆ Bachelor of Engineering (B.Eng) ◆ Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) ◆ Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS) ◆ Medical Doctor (MD) 	
	◆ *Bachelor of Technology (B.Tech)*	4 years
Advanced Diploma	◆ Advanced Diploma of Technology	3 years
Diploma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Diploma in Applied Sciences ◆ Associate Degree 	240 Credits
Certificate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Certificate in Military Engineering ◆ ACCA Certificate – Certified Accounting technician 	120 Credits 1 year

Note: The credit system in Technological Education is different to that of Academic Higher Education and therefore the Bachelor of Technology and Advanced Diploma of Technology has not been given a credit allocation in the Table 7.2.1 above.

Table 7.2.2 Technological and Vocational Education and Training

Type of Qualification	Qualification Researched During the Scan	Volume of Learning
Vocational Diploma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Vocational Diploma ◆ Diploma of Technology 	2 years
Vocational Certificate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Certificate of Vocational Competency - Craftsman ◆ Certificate of Vocational Competency – Skilled ◆ Certificate of Vocational Competency - Semi-skilled ◆ Vocational Training Course Certificate 	3 Years 2 years 1 year 1 week – 9 months

Table 7.2.3 General Education (Including International School Qualifications)

Type of Qualification	Qualification Researched During the Scan	Volume of Learning
Post Basic Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ General Education Diploma (Oman) ◆ International Baccalaureate Diploma (IBD) ◆ International Baccalaureate Diploma Middle Year Program (IBMYP) ◆ General Certificate of Education - A Level (A2 & AS) (International) 	Grades 11 - 12
Basic Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ General Education Certificate (Oman) ◆ General Certificate of Education - O Level (International) ◆ International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) 	Grade 10 Grades 9 – 10 Grades 9 – 10
Access to Education	Recommendation to be considered for the new OQF, i.e. Special Educational Needs, Adult Literacy	

7.3 Criteria for Listing on the New OQF

As previously stated in section 3 of this report, it is generally accepted that the following criteria are regarded as essential for the placement of qualifications on a national qualifications framework:

- The learning program should be outcomes based and described with clear learning outcomes that state what the learner should be able to do at the end of the learning process;
- Each learning outcome should be assessed using methods that are valid, reliable, practicable and cost effective;
- The assessments and assessment processes must be quality assured;

-
- The learning program that leads to the award of a qualification should be unitised, i.e. based on units/modules/courses;
 - The qualifications should have undergone a quality assured validation process to ensure they are “fit for purpose”.

The scope of the Environmental Scan was to ascertain the range of qualifications in Oman and as such did not focus on the above criteria. Because of the limitations and constraints described in paragraph 5.2, it was not possible to carry out an in depth analysis of every qualification in order to determine whether they meet the above criteria. However preliminary findings of their status in terms of learning outcomes and quality assurance are described below.

7.4 Outcomes-Based Learning

The General Education curriculum, both at Certificate and Diploma level, are based on learning outcomes. International school qualifications offered in private schools are similarly outcomes-based.

The outcomes-based learning status of Higher Education qualifications is less clear. While some programs clearly specify learning outcomes at overall program level, the Environmental Scan was unable to confirm the outcomes status of individual courses that make up these programs from the documentation provided. In some cases, program outcomes are described as objectives or goals.

Vocational education and training programs, including those that are provided by Private Training Institutions, are rarely described in terms of learning outcomes.

7.5 Quality Assurance

The quality assurance mechanisms in General Education Government Schools are well established. This includes the implementation of a national curriculum, and the monitoring of the teaching and learning by the school inspectorate. In relation to assessment of learning outcomes, there are systems for conducting internal and external moderation and procedures for routine reporting to their respective regional education authorities and the GDEE. (See paragraph 6.1.4 in section 6)

Higher education institutions are subject to OAAA quality criteria and review and therefore accredited institutions will be deemed to have robust quality systems in place. (See paragraph 6.2.6 in section 6) Internationally affiliated institutions that make foreign qualifications awards are required to comply with the quality criteria of the international partners.

The quality assurance arrangements for assessments conducted in Vocational Training Centres are less clear. All training centres are issued with a set of quality guidelines from the MoM but it is unclear to what extent they are implemented.

7.6 Unitisation

Preliminary findings from the information that was made available indicated that all Higher Education and Vocational Training programs are unitised. The units are referred to as “courses”. Because of the limitations of the scan, it was not possible to examine this in detail for each qualification, however this will be clarified by means of a mapping exercise, which will follow the Environmental Scan.

7.7 Meeting the Criteria for Qualification Listing on the OQF

As described in paragraph 5.2, the Environmental Scan has been successful in identifying a significant number and range of qualifications offered in Oman. The scope of the Environmental Scan did not allow for in-depth detailed information about their status with regards to their readiness for listing in the OQF.

However, provisional conclusions suggest that:

- The two Omani General Education qualifications are well placed to meet all the criteria described in paragraph 7.3 and section 3 of this report and the system of external moderation described in paragraph 6.1.3;
- A significant number of Higher Education qualifications would meet many of the criteria, particularly those supervised by the MoH and MoD;
- Qualifications awarded within the Technological and Vocational sector will require considerable review in terms of their outcomes based status. Also, sector-wide quality assurance arrangements for assessments need to be established before they would meet the necessary placement criteria.

7.8 Qualifications for Special Needs Education

The Environmental Scan noted that there is currently no qualification below the level of basic education to cater for people that need additional educational support.

The 2012 World Bank Report recommends that the MoE, together with the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) should consider developing a coherent national strategy for special needs education.³⁷ It also recommends the need to improve adult literacy.

It is believed that the Government will be committed to this in the future and therefore there is a need to take account of this during the design of the OQF to ensure that the academic achievements of these groups of learners are recognised on the framework by including a level (or levels) below that of the General Education Certificate.

7.9 International Qualifications

The Environmental Scan revealed a range of foreign and international qualifications that are awarded in all three sectors in Oman. In the General Education sector, many private schools offer international qualifications as an alternative to the Omani General Education qualifications as follows:

- Basic Education: The International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) and the General Certificate of Education (GCE - O Level);
- Post-Basic Education: The General Certificate of Education - A Level (A2 & AS), the International Baccalaureate Diploma (IBD) and the International Baccalaureate Middle Year Program (IBMYP).

These are currently regarded as having equivalence to their Omani counterparts but anecdotal and unconfirmed evidence from some practitioners suggest that there may be variation in relative levels of complexity, particularly at post-basic level. It is anticipated that these levels will be confirmed once the new OQF has been established.

In the Technological and Vocational Education and Training sector and Higher Education sector there are examples of qualifications of other countries such as Higher National Diplomas from the UK, and the professional awards of the ACCA.

7.10 International Affiliations

A significant number of institutions that were included in the Environmental Scan have international affiliations, with the purpose of collaborating to offer internationally accredited qualifications in Oman. In most cases the awarding bodies for these qualifications are the international partners

³⁷ World Bank Report – “Education in Oman – The Drive for Quality” (Summary p. 48 – 49)

concerned, particularly in the case of colleges and university colleges. However, in a few cases the qualifications are awarded by the Omani providing institution. (See Appendix 1B).

The following table (7.8) provides a summary of the total number of qualifications and institutions that were scanned and details of those with international affiliation.

Table 7.8 International Affiliation Summary

Details of International Affiliations of Qualifications and Institutions Included in the Environmental Scan		
Total number of qualifications that were included in the scan.	99	
Total number of providing institutions that were included in the scan.	39	
Number of institutions with international affiliations	16	41%
Number of international qualifications out of the total that were scanned	21	21%
Number of qualifications awarded by international bodies	15	71%
Number of international qualifications where the awards are made by the respective Omani institutions	6	29%
Countries with which Omani institutions are affiliated	UK	11
	USA	3
	Australia	1
	Austria	1
	Spain	1
	Ireland	1
	India	1
	Netherlands	1
	Middle East Region	1

Details of Omani institutions and their respective international partners, together with the qualifications they offer are given in Appendix 4.

7.11 Duration of Study and Volume of Learning

The scan noted wide variations in the way that qualifications were described in terms of duration and volume of learning (see Appendices 1A, 1B and 1C). The content and duration of some degree programs were described as credits while others were given in number of years. The duration of some qualifications supervised by the MoD are sometimes expressed in “weeks” or “learning hours”.

It points to the need for the various supervising authorities to reach agreement on a standardised way in which the duration and volume of learning of qualifications are described.

7.12 Credit Points Allocation

It was noted that from the data collected, only a small number of Higher Education qualifications had a credit points allocation. It is believed that this is not an accurate reflection of the real situation and is due to the lack of information at the time of data collection. It points to the need for further and more in-depth research, which will be addressed by the mapping activity that will follow.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 OQF Design

The outcomes of this Environmental Scan should be used to influence the design of the new OQF, in particular to:

- Determine the appropriate number of levels in order to accommodate the range of qualifications offered in Oman;
- Establish and take account of the relationship and possible parity between the Higher Education Certificate and Diploma, and their vocational counterparts;
- Establish relationships and possible parity between the Certificates of Vocational Competence and Grades 10 and 12 school qualifications.

8.2 Special Needs Education

As recommended by the World Bank and MoE Report, the new OQF design should take account of accommodating future qualifications designed for people with special educational needs and/or for adults with special needs who wish to access education, e.g. adult literacy³⁸.

8.3 Quality Assurance in Technological and Vocational Education and Training

It is recommended that a sector-wide quality assurance mechanism is introduced for quality assuring the assessments of qualifications delivered in VTCs, FTIs and PTIs. This should include a common model for internal moderation and a system of external moderation, supervised by Directorates General responsible for Government-owned and private vocational training in the MoM. It is

³⁸ World Bank Report 2012 “Education in Oman – The Drive for Quality”

recommended that this is carried out in agreement with the OAAA and Education Council, led by OAAA with MoM involvement.

8.4 Capacity Building

The scan revealed that many qualifications would not currently meet the criteria for placement on an internationally benchmarked qualifications framework, particularly in terms of the use of learning outcomes and the uncertainty of effective quality assurance. It is recommended that a capacity building program is introduced for curriculum developers, qualification designers and other associated personnel with a view to designing qualifications and quality assurance systems that are fit for purpose and meet the necessary criteria for placement on the new OQF. Details of this can be found in the Training Needs Analysis Report.

In order to identify capacity building needs and organise appropriate training in a coherent and systematic manner, it is recommended that an inter-ministerial committee be formed to establish a capacity building strategy, covering the three educational sectors. It is recommended that the OQF Oversight Committee should facilitate this process.

8.5 Qualification Gaps

Due to the constraints and limitations of the Environmental Scan a number of qualification categories have not been captured, in particular some professional qualifications and those within the Oil and Gas sector.

9. CONCLUSIONS

This exercise was a scan of a wide sample of qualifications that are currently offered in Oman. It did not involve any in-depth analysis to establish whether they would meet the criteria for recognition on an internationally benchmarked qualifications framework. However, a mapping exercise involving a much greater in-depth analysis of a smaller sample of qualifications has also been conducted. The subsequent report provides more detailed information on the following:

- The qualification structure and design;
- The content complexity level;
- Learning outcomes;
- Assessment criteria;
- Quality assurance of the assessment process;

-
- Student progression.

It is anticipated that the outcomes of this Environmental Scan will assist in the design and architecture of the new OQF.

APPENDIX 1A – General Education

Name of Qualification	Specialization	Supervising Authority	Provider	International Affiliation	Awarding Body	Outcomes-Based	Duration	Quality Assurance	Remarks
Basic Education Certificate	Arabic; English; Mathematics; Science; Social Studies; Islamic Studies; Information Technology	Ministry of Education	Government Schools	None	Ministry of Education	Yes	10 years Grades 1 - 10)	Yes	The outcomes are for each subject.
General Education Diploma	Arabic; English; Mathematics; Science; Social Studies; Islamic Studies; Information Technology; Physics; Chemistry; Geography; History; French; German; Languages; Sport; Music	Ministry of Education	Government Schools	None	Ministry of Education	Yes	2 years (Grades 11 - 12)	Yes	The outcomes are for each subject.
International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE)	English; English literature; ICT Humanities; Languages; Mathematics; Science; Social Science; Technology; The Arts	Ministry of Education	Private Schools	CIE; Edexcel; OCR; CCEA; AQA; WJEC	CIE; Edexcel; OCR; CCEA; AQA; WJEC, MoE	Yes	2 years; (Grades 9 - 10)	Yes	Omani students must also do Islamic Studies and Social Studies in order for the award to be nationally recognised.
General Certificate of Education - O Level	English; Languages; Humanities; Science; Social Studies; Mathematics; Arts; Information Technology	Ministry of Education	Private Schools	CIE; Edexcel	CIE; Edexcel, MoE	Yes	2 years; (Grades 9 - 10)	Yes	Omani students must also do Islamic Studies and Social Studies in order for the award to be nationally recognised. This program is a prerequisite for students wishing to progress to General Certificate A Level.
General Certificate of Education - A Level (A2 & AS)	English; Languages; humanities; Science; Social Studies; Mathematics; Arts; Information Technology	Ministry of Education	Private Schools	CIE; Edexcel; OCR; CCEA; AQA; WJEC	CIE; Edexcel; OCR; CCEA; AQA; WJEC, MoE	Yes	2 years (Grades 11 - 12)	Yes	Students must have General Certificate of Education O Level or Grade 10 certificate of Omani educational system to gain access to this program. Omani students must also do Islamic Studies and Social Studies in order for the award to be nationally recognised.
International Baccalaureate Diploma (IBD); International Baccalaureate Middle Year Program (IBMYP)	Language 1; Language 2; Individuals & Societies; Mathematics & Computer Science; Arts; Practical Science; Creativity Action Services (CAS); Theory of Knowledge (TOK); Writing Extended Essay (EE)	Ministry of Education	Private International Schools Community Schools	CIE; Edexcel	CIE; Edexcel, MoE	Yes	2 years (Grades 11 - 12)	Yes	Omani students must also do Islamic Studies and Social Studies in order for the award to be nationally recognised.

APPENDIX 1B – Higher Education

Name of Qualification	Supervising Authority	Provider	International Affiliation	Awarding Body	Outcomes-Based	Duration	Credits	Quality Assurance	Remarks
Doctoral Degrees									
PhD in Information Studies	SQU	SQU	None	SQU	TBC	4 years	480	Yes	
PhD in Civil Engineering	SQU	SQU	None	SQU	TBC	4 years	480	Yes	
PhD Human & Clinical Anatomy	SQU	SQU	AMEEMR & WFME	SQU	TBC	4 years	480	Yes	
Masters Degrees									
Master of Business Administration (MBA)	MoHE	Majan University College, Middle East College, Waljat College	University of Bedfordshire	University of Bedfordshire	Yes	2 years	180 Credits	Quality assured by University of Bedfordshire	
Masters in Social Work	SQU	SQU	None	SQU	TBC	2 years		Yes	
Masters of Science in Nursing	SQU	SQU	None	SQU	TBC	2 years		Yes	
Master of Technology	MoHE	Mazoon College	Banasthali Vidyapeth University, India	Banasthali Vidyapeth University, India	TBC	2 years		Quality assured by Banasthali Vidyapeth University	
Masters in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology	SQU	SQU	None	SQU	TBC	TBC		Yes	
Masters in Nursing	SQU	SQU	None	SQU	TBC	2 years		Yes	
Masters in Health Professional Education (HPEM)	Oman Medical Specialty Board (OMSB)	Oman Medical Speciality Board (OMSB)	University of Maastricht	OMSB and University of Maastricht	TBC	2 years		Accredited by OAAA and University of Maastricht	
M A in Strategic Studies of National Security and Defence	SQU & General Secretary MoD	SQU & National Defence College	None	SQU National Defence College	TBC	1 year		Yes	
MA in Translation	SQU	SQU	None	SQU	TBC	2 Years		Yes	
ACCA Professional Qualification	MoHE	Majan University College	ACCA (UK)	ACCA	Yes	800 learning hours		Yes	

APPENDIX 1B – Higher Education (Continued)

Name of Qualification	Supervising Authority	Provider	International Affiliation	Awarding Body	Outcomes-Based	Duration	Credit Points	Quality Assurance	Remarks
MSc in Marine science & Fisheries	SQU	SQU	None	SQU	TBC	3 years		Yes	
MSc in Finance	MoHE	College of Banking and Financial Studies	Strathclyde Business School, Scotland	Strathclyde Business School	TBC	2 years		Quality assured by Strathclyde Business School	
B.Eng. in Civil Engineering	MoHE	SQU	None	SQU	TBC	3 years		Yes	
M.Ed. in Curriculum & Methods of Teaching Arabic Language	SQU	SQU	None	SQU	TBC	3 Years		Yes	
Post Graduate Diploma									
Post Graduate Diploma in Electronic Engineering	MoHE	Middle East College	Coventry University UK	Coventry University	Yes	1 year		Yes	
Post Graduate Diploma in Translation	SQU	SQU	None	SQU	TBC	1 year		Yes	
Graduate Diplomas in Nursing, Healthcare and Health Administration	MoH	Oman Specialised Nursing Institute (OSNI)	None	MoH	TBC	1 year		Yes	
Graduate Diploma in Midwifery	MoH	Oman Specialised Nursing Institute (OSNI)	None	MoH	TBC	18 months		Yes	
Bachelor Degrees (Hon)									
BSc (Hon) in General Nursing	MoH	Oman Specialised Nursing Institute (OSNI)	University of Cardiff (UK)	University of Cardiff (UK)	TBC	1 year		Quality assured by University of Cardiff	
BSc (Hon) Event Management	MoM	Oman Tourism College	Dublin Institute of Technology	Dublin Institute of Technology	Yes	4 years;	240 ECT credits	Quality assured by Dublin Institute of Technology	
B Eng. (Hon) Mechanical Engineering (Well Engineering)	MoHE	International College of Engineering & Management (ICEM)	University of Central Lancashire (UCLan)	(UCLan)	Yes	4 years		UCLan	
BA (Hon) Business Computing	MoHE	Muscat College	University of Stirling UK	University of Stirling	TBC	4 years		Quality assured by University of Stirling	

APPENDIX 1B – Higher Education (Continued)

Name of Qualification	Supervising Authority	Provider	International Affiliation	Awarding Body	Outcomes-Based	Duration	Credit Points	Quality Assurance	Remarks
Bachelor Degree/First Degree									
Medical Doctor (MD)	MoH	Oman Medical College	West Virginia University (USA)	Oman Medical College	TBC	7 years		Quality assured by West Virginia University	
B.Eng. in Mechatronics Engineering	SQU	SQU	Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET)	SQU	TBC	5 years		Quality assured by the Engineering Accreditation Commission (EAC) of ABET	
Bachelor of Design	MoHE	Colleges of Applied Sciences	None	MoHE	TBC	4 years		Yes	Other specializations include IT, Engineering, IBA, Communications, Biotechnology and English
BSc Medical Laboratory Science	MoHE	Institute of Health Sciences (IHS)	None	MoH	TBC	4 years		Yes	
BSc in Food Science & Human Nutrition	MoHE	A Sharqiya University	None	A'Sharqiya University	TBC	4 years		Yes	
BSc in Health Studies (Nursing)	MoH/MoHE	University of Buraimi	University of Applied Science Vienna	University of Applied Science, Vienna	TBC	4 years		Quality assured by the University of Applied Science, Vienna	
BSc Health Studies (Optometry)	MoH	University of Buraimi	University of Bradford (UK)	University of Bradford	TBC	4 years		Quality assured by the University of Bradford	
Bachelor in General Nursing	MoH	Oman Regional Nursing Institutes.	None	MoH	TBC	4 years		Yes	

APPENDIX 1B – Higher Education (Continued)

Name of Qualification	Supervising Authority	Provider	International Affiliation	Awarding Body	Outcomes-Based	Duration	Credit Points	Quality Assurance	Remarks
BSc in Pharmacy	MoH/MoHE	University of Nizwa	None	University of Nizwa	Yes	4 years		Yes	
Bachelor in Pharmacy	MoH	Oman Assistant Pharmacy Institute	None	MoH	TBC	4 years		Yes	
Bachelor of Pharmacy (B. Pharm)	MoH/MoHE	Oman Medical College	West Virginia University (USA)	Oman Medical College	TBC	4½ years		Quality assured by West Virginia University	
BA Mass Communication	MoHE	Sur College of Applied Science	None	MoHE	TBC	4 years		Yes	
B Ed in Educational Administration	SQU	SQU	None	SQU	TBC	4 years		Yes	
Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS)	MoH/MoHE	Oman Dental College	University of Complutense, Madrid	University of Complutense	TBC	5 years		Quality assured by University of Complutense	
Bachelor of Health Information Management	MoH	Oman Health Information Management Institute (OHIMI)	None	OHIMI & MoH	TBC	4 years		Yes	
Bachelor in Business Information Technology	MoHE	Sohar University	University of Queensland	Sohar University	TBC	4 years		Quality assured by University of Queensland	
Bachelor of Technology	MoM	Higher College of Technology	None	MoM	TBC	4 years		Yes	
Bachelor of Military Science	General Secretary MoD	Command & Staff College	None	MoD Command & Staff College	TBC	1 year + 12 years experience		Yes	
Bachelor in Military Engineering (5 specializations)	General Secretary MoD	Military Technical College	University of Portsmouth (UK)	University of Portsmouth	Yes	4 years	480	Quality assured by University of Portsmouth	
Bachelor in Law and Police Sciences	Royal Oman Police (ROP)	Sultan Qaboos Academy for Police Sciences	None	Royal Oman Police	TBC	2 years		Yes	

APPENDIX 1B – Higher Education (Continued)

Name of Qualification	Supervising Authority	Provider	International Affiliation	Awarding Body	Outcomes-Based	Duration	Credit Points	Quality Assurance	Remarks
Advanced Diploma									
Advanced Diploma of Technology	MoM	Colleges of Technology	None	MoM	TBC	3 years		Yes	
Advanced Diploma in Military Naval Science	General Secretary MoD Royal Navy of Oman	Sultan Qaboos Naval Academy	None	MoD Royal Naval Academy	TBC	3 years		Yes	
Advanced Diploma in Strategic Studies of National Security and Defence	General Secretary MoD & National Defence College	National Defence College	None	National Defence College	TBC	1 year		Yes	
Advanced Diploma in Military Engineering (5 specializations)	General Secretary MoD	Military Technical College	University of Portsmouth (UK)	University of Portsmouth	Yes		360	Quality assured by University of Portsmouth	
Associate Degree									
Associate Degree (6 specializations)	MoHE	Mazoon University College	University of Science and Technology, Missouri, USA	Mazoon University College	TBC	2 years		Quality assured by University of Science and Technology, Missouri	
Diploma									
Diploma in Technology	MoM	Colleges of Technology	None	MoM	TBC	2 years		Yes	
Diploma in Food Science & Human Nutrition	MoHE	A Sharqiya University	None	A'Sharqiya University	TBC	2 years		Yes	
Diploma in Pharmacy	MoH/MoHE	University of Nizwa	None	University of Nizwa & MoH	TBC	3 years		Yes	
Bridging Pharmacy Diploma	MoH/MoHE	University of Nizwa	None	University of Nizwa	TBC	TBC		Yes	
Diploma in Health Information Management	MoH	Oman Health Information Management Institute (OHIMI)	None	MoH	TBC	2 years		Yes	

APPENDIX 1B – Higher Education (Continued)

Name of Qualification	Supervising Authority	Provider	International Affiliation	Awarding Body	Outcomes-Based	Duration	Credit Points	Quality Assurance	Remarks
Diploma in Nursing	MoH/MoHE	University of Nizwa	None	University of Nizwa	TBC	3 years		Yes	
Bridging Nursing Diploma	MoH/MoHE	University of Nizwa	None	University of Nizwa	TBC	2 years		Yes	
Military Nursing Diploma	General Secretary MoD Royal Army of Oman	Armed Forces Medical Services School (AFMSS)	None	MoD Royal Army of Oman	TBC	18 months		Yes	
Diploma in Accounting and Business	MoHE	Majan University College	ACCA (UK)	ACCA (UK)	TBC		45	Quality assured by ACCA	
Higher National Diploma (HND)	MoHE	Muscat College	Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) UK	SQA	Yes	2 years		Quality assured by SQA	
Vocational Diploma	MoM	Vocational Training Centres (VTCs) and Fishery Training Institutes (FTIs)	None	VTCs & FTIs + MOM	Yes	2 years		Under development	
BTEC Diploma of Geomatic Surveying and Mapping	General Secretary MoD	Institute of Topographical Sciences	Edexcel International	Edexcel International	Yes	2 years		Quality assured by Edexcel	
Diploma in Hydrographic Surveying	General Secretary MoD Royal Navy of Oman	Sultan Qaboos Naval Academy	None	MoD Royal Naval Academy	TBC	3 years		Yes	
Diploma in Military Science	General Secretary MoD Royal Army of Oman	Sultan Qaboos Military College	None	MoD Royal Army of Oman	TBC	2 years		Yes	
Diploma in Military Engineering (5 specializations)	General Secretary MoD	Military Technical College	University of Portsmouth (UK)	University of Portsmouth	TBC		240	Quality assured by University of Portsmouth	

APPENDIX 1B – Higher Education (Continued)

Name of Qualification	Supervising Authority	Provider	International Affiliation	Awarding Body	Outcomes-Based	Duration	Credit Points	Quality Assurance	Remarks
Technical Diploma in Aircraft Engineering (7 specializations)	General Secretary MoD Royal Air Force of Oman	Air Force Technical College	None	MoD Royal Air Force of Oman	TBC	3 – 60 weeks		Yes	7 specializations of various durations
Diploma in Law and Police Sciences	Royal Oman Police (ROP)	Sultan Qaboos Academy for Police Sciences	None	ROP	TBC	TBC		Yes	
Technical Diploma in Emergency for Employees in Ambulance Units.	Royal Oman Police (ROP)	Sultan Qaboos Academy for Police Sciences	College of Health Science	ROP	TBC	TBC		Yes	
Certificate									
Higher National Certificate (HNC)	MoHE	Muscat College	Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) UK	SQA	Yes	1 year		Quality assured by SQA	
Certificate of Medical Assistant	General Secretary MoD Royal Army of Oman	Armed Forces Medical Services School (AFMSS)	None	MoD Royal Army of Oman Armed Forces Medical Services School	TBC	1 year		Yes	
Certificate of Course Completion in National Security and Defence Studies	General Secretary MoD	National Defence College	None	National Defence College	TBC	1 year		Yes	
Certificate in Military Engineering (5 specializations)	General Secretary MoD	Military Technical College	University of Portsmouth (UK)	University of Portsmouth	TBC		120	Yes	
Certificate in Aircraft Engineering – Survival Equipment	General Secretary MoD Royal Air Force of Oman	Air Force Technical College	None	MoD Royal Air Force of Oman	TBC	30 weeks		Yes	

APPENDIX 1B – Higher Education (Continued)

Name of Qualification	Supervising Authority	Provider	International Affiliation	Awarding Body	Outcomes-Based	Duration	Credit Points	Quality Assurance	Remarks
Short Course Skills Certificates									
ACCA Certificate in International Financial Reporting Standards (Cert IFRS)	MoHE	Majan University College	ACCA (UK)	ACCA	TBC	6 months		Quality assured by ACCA	
Certificate in Health Information Management	MoH	Oman Health Information Management Institute	None	MoH	TBC	3 months		Yes	
Certificate in Aircraft Engineering – Survival Equipment	General Secretary MoD Royal Air Force of Oman	Air Force Technical College	None	MoD Royal Air Force of Oman	TBC	30 weeks		Yes	
Certificate in Leadership and Management	Oman Medical Speciality Board	Oman Medical Speciality Board	University of Maastricht	Oman Medical Speciality Board and University of Maastricht	TBC	10 weeks		Quality assured by University of Maastricht	
Certificate in Assessment and Evaluation	Oman Medical Speciality Board	Oman Medical Speciality Board	University of Maastricht	Oman Medical Speciality Board and University of Maastricht	TBC	7 weeks		Quality assured by University of Maastricht	
Certificate in Curriculum Development	Oman Medical Speciality Board	Oman Medical Speciality Board	University of Maastricht	Oman Medical Speciality Board and University of Maastricht	TBC	7 weeks		Quality assured by University of Maastricht	
Certificate in Work-Based Learning	Oman Medical Speciality Board	Oman Medical Speciality Board	University of Maastricht	Oman Medical Speciality Board and University of Maastricht	TBC	7 weeks		Quality assured by University of Maastricht	
ACCA Certificate - Certified Accounting Technician (CAT)	MoHE	Majan University College	Association of Certified Chartered Accounting (ACCA) UK	ACCA UK	Yes	1 year		ACCA	

APPENDIX 1C – Technological and Vocational Education and Training

Name of Qualification	Supervising Authority	Provider	International Affiliation	Awarding Body	Outcomes-Based	Duration	Credits	Quality Assurance	Remarks
Vocational Diploma									
General Vocational Education Diploma (Under development and not yet released)	Under discussion between Ministry of Education and MoM	To be confirmed							Under development No information currently available
Vocational Skills Certificates (Old qualifications but still running as at 2016)									
Certificate of Vocational Competency: (Semi-skilled)	GD of Vocational Training and GD of Occupational Standards & Curriculum Development Ministry of Manpower	Vocational Training Centres (VTCs) Fisheries Training Institutions (FTIs) Private Training Institutions (PTIs)	None	Ministry of Manpower & Providing Institutions	No	9 – 24 months depending on specialization		None (Currently under development)	No learning outcomes currently available. No evidence of quality assurance currently available
Certificate of Vocational Competency: (Skilled)					Yes				No evidence of quality assurance currently available
Certificate of Vocational Competency: (Craftsman)					No				No learning outcomes currently available. No evidence of quality assurance currently available
Certificate of Vocational Training Course (Various specializations)					No	1 week – 9 months depending on specialization	No learning outcomes currently available. No evidence of quality assurance currently available		

APPENDIX 1C – Technological and Vocational Education and Training (Continued)

Name of Qualification	Supervising Authority	Provider	International Affiliation	Awarding Body	Outcomes-Based	Duration	Credit Points	Quality Assurance	Remarks
Vocational Skills Certificate – Military									
Certificate in Communications (7 specializations)	MoD Royal Army of Oman	School of Signals	None	MoD Royal Army of Oman	Yes	2 – 16 months		TBC	7 specializations of various durations Quality assurance of assessments to be confirmed
Certificate in Air Movements (5 specializations)	MoD Royal Air Force of Oman	Royal Air Force Technical College	None	MoD Royal Air Force of Oman	Yes	78 – 1600 hours		Yes	6 specializations of various durations
Certificate in Supplies (5 specializations)	MoD Royal Air Force of Oman	Royal Air Force Technical College	None	MoD Royal Air Force of Oman	Yes	105 – 735 hours		Yes	5 specializations of various durations
Certificate in Operations	MoD Royal Air Force of Oman	Royal Air Force Technical College	None	MoD Royal Air Force of Oman	Yes	1265 hours		Yes	

APPENDIX 1C – Technological and Vocational Education and Training (Continued)

Name of Qualification	Supervising Authority	Provider	International Affiliation	Awarding Body	Outcomes-based	Duration	Credit Points	Quality Assurance	Remarks
Certificate for Military Aviation (12 specializations)	MoD Royal Air Force of Oman	Oman Aircraft Control College	None	MoD Royal Air Force of Oman	Yes	50 – 300 hours		Yes	12 Specializations of various durations

APPENDIX 2 - Governance of Public and Private HE Institutions

Higher Education Institutions	Under the Jurisdiction of:	Sector	No. of Institutions	Total No.
Sultan Qaboos University	Independent	Government	1	1
Colleges of Applied Sciences	Ministry of Higher Education	Government	6	27
Private Universities		Private	7	
Private Colleges (established as University Colleges)			20	
Higher College of Technology	Ministry of Manpower	Government	1	7
Colleges of Technology			6	
Fisheries Training Institutes			2	8
Vocational Training Centres			6	
Institute of Health Science (IHS)	Ministry of Health (Health Education Training Institutions)	Government	1	13
Oman Specialty Nursing Institute (OSNI)			1	
Oman Health Information Management Institute (OHIMI)			1	
Oman Assistant Pharmacy Institute			1	
Oman Nursing Regional Nursing Institutes			9	
The Command and Staff College	Ministry of Defence	Government	1	9
Air Force Technical College (AFTC)			1	
Sultan Qaboos Air Force Academy (SQAFA)			1	
Sultan Qaboos Military College (SQMC)			1	
Sultan Qaboos Naval Academy (SQNA)			1	
Military Technical College (MTC)			1	
Sultan Armed Forces Medical Services School (SAFMSS)			1	
Institute of Topographic Sciences (ITS)			1	
The National Defence College			1	
The Institute of Shari'a Sciences	Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs	Government	1	1
Omani Academy of Tourism & Hospitality	Ministry of Commerce & Industry	Government	1	1
Institute of Higher Juridical	Ministry of Justice	Government	1	1
The Royal Oman Police Academy	Royal Oman Police	Government	1	1
The College of Banking & Financial Studies	Central Bank of Oman	Government	1	1
Overall				76

APPENDIX 3 - Higher Education Institutions and their Supervisory Authorities

Supervising Authority	Sector	Type of Education	Provider	Qualifications Awarded	Academic Affiliation or Cooperation	Awarding Body	Admission to HEIs HEAC – Regulatory System
Governmental HEIs - Independent							
Sultan Qaboos University (SQU)	Public University	Academic	SQU	PhD, MSc, MBA, MA, BSc, BA, BSN, B.Eng. Higher Diploma	No	SQU	Admission through HEAC
Governmental HE Institutions - Under Jurisdiction of Ministries							
MoHE	Six Public Colleges	Academic	Colleges of Applied Sciences	BSc, Diploma	MoU with NZTEC	MoHE	Admission through HEAC
MoM	One Higher Technical College	Technical	Higher College of Technology (Muscat)	BSc, Advanced Diploma, Diploma, Certificate,	No	MoM	Admission through HEAC
	Six Public Regional Colleges	Technical	Regional Colleges of Technology	Certified Accounting Technician (CAT) course of ACCA (UK)			
	Two Public Institutes	Vocational	Fisheries Training Institute	Diploma	No		
	Six Public Regional Institutes		Vocational Training Centres				
MoH	Public Institutes	Academic	Institute of Health Sciences (IHS)	BSc (Hon), Diploma	MoU with Glasgow Caledonian University	MoH	Admission through HEAC
			Oman Health Information Management Institute (OHIMI)	Diploma, Certificate			

APPENDIX 3 (Continued)

Supervising Authority	Sector	Type of Education	Provider	Qualifications Awarded	Academic Affiliation or Cooperation	Awarding Body	Admission to HEIs HEAC – Regulatory System
MoH	Eleven Public Institutes	Academic	Oman Nursing Institute & Regional Nursing Institutes	BSc, Diploma			Admission through HEAC
	Public Institute	Academic	Oman Specialty Nursing Institute (OSNI)	BSc (Hon)	MoU with Cardiff University	MoH	Admission through MoH
MoA & RA	Public Institute	Religious	College of Shari'a Sciences	Bachelor & Diploma	No	MoA & RA	Admission through HEAC
MoJ	Public Institute	Religious - Vocational	Higher Judicial Institute	Diploma	No	MoJ	Admission through MoJ
Military Institutions							
MoD	Public Military Colleges & Institutes	Academic & Military	Military Technical College (MTC)	BSc, Diploma, Certificate	University of Portsmouth	University of Portsmouth	Admission through HEAC
		Academic & Military	Air Force Technical College (AFTC)	Diploma	No	Air Force	Admission through MoD (Air Forces, Royal Army, Royal Navy Or directly through MoD)
			Sultan Qaboos Air Force Academy (SQAFA)	Diploma	No	Air Force	
			Sultan Armed Forces Medical Services School (SAFMSS)	Diploma (cooperation with MoH)	No	Royal Army	
			Sultan Qaboos Military College (SQMC)	Diploma	No	Royal Army	
		Academic & Military	Sultan Qaboos Naval academy (SQNA)	Diploma	No	Royal Navy	

APPENDIX 3 (Continued)

Supervising Authority	Sector	Type of Education	Provider	Qualifications Awarded	Academic Affiliation or Cooperation	Awarding Body	Admission to HEIs HEAC – Regulatory System
MoD	Public Military Colleges & Institutes	Academic & Military	The Command and Staff College	Bachelor of Military Science	No	CSC (MoD)	Admission through MoD (Air Forces, Royal Army, Royal Navy Or directly through MoD)
			The National Defence College	MA, Diploma & certificate	SQU		
			Institute of Topographic Sciences (ITS)	Diploma	Edexcel International	The National Survey Authority (MoD)	
ROP	Public Institute	Police Sciences	Sultan Qaboos Academy for Police Sciences	certificates	No	ROP	Admission through ROP
Private HE Institutions Under Jurisdiction of MoHE							
MoHE	Private Universities	Academic	Seven Private Universities	Bachelor, Bachelor (Hon), Diploma, Advanced Diploma, Master	Academic MoUs	University itself (Qualifications awarded are local)	Admission through HEAC
MoHE	Private University Colleges	Academic	Four Private University Colleges	Bachelor, Bachelor (Hon), Diploma, Advanced Diploma, Master	No		Admission through HEAC
MoHE	Private Colleges	Academic	Sixteen Colleges	Bachelor, Bachelor (Hon), Diploma, Advanced Diploma, Master, ACCA	No		Admission through HEAC

APPENDIX 3 (Continued)

Supervising Authority	Sector	Type of Education	Provider	Qualifications Awarded	Academic Affiliation or Cooperation	Awarding Body	Admission to HEIs HEAC – Regulatory System
Semi-Governmental HE Institutions - Under Jurisdiction of Central Bank of Oman							
The Central Bank of Oman	Governmental College	Academic	The College of Banking & Financial Studies	Master B.Sc. Diploma Professional Courses			Admission through HEAC

APPENDIX 4 - International Affiliations

International Institution	Country	Provider	Program of Study	International Institution	Country	Provider	Program of Study
AMEEMR & WFME	Middle East	SQU	PhD Human & Clinical Anatomy	Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET)	USA	SQU	B.Eng. in Mechatronics Engineering
University of Bedfordshire	UK	Majan University College	Master of Business Administration (MBA)	University of Applied Science Vienna	Austria	University of Buraimi	BSc in Health Studies (Nursing)
Banasthali Vidyapeth University	India	Mazoon College	Master of Technology	University of Bradford	UK	University of Buraimi	BSc Health Studies (Optometry)
University of Maastricht	Holland	Oman Medical Speciality Board (OMSB)	Masters in Health Professional Education (HPEM)	University of Complutense, Madrid	Spain	Oman Dental College	Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS)
Strathclyde Business School, Scotland	UK	College of Banking and Financial Studies	MSc in Finance	University of Queensland	Australia	Sohar University	Bachelor in Business Information Technology
Coventry University	UK	Middle East College	Post Graduate Diploma in Electronic Engineering	University of Portsmouth	UK	Military Technical College	Bachelor in Military Engineering (5 specializations)
University of Cardiff	UK	Oman Specialised Nursing Institute	BSc (Hon) in General Nursing	University of Science and Technology, Missouri	USA	Mazoon University College	Associate Degree (6 specializations)
Dublin Institute of Technology	Ireland	Oman Tourism College	BSc (Hon) Event Management	ACCA	UK	Majan University College	Diploma in Accounting and Business
University of Central Lancashire (UCLan)	UK	International College of Engineering & Management (ICEM)	B Eng. (Hon) Mechanical Engineering (Well Engineering)	Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)	UK	Muscat College	Higher National Diploma (HND)
University of Stirling UK	UK	Muscat College	BA (Hon) Business Computing	Edexcel International	UK	Institute of Topographical Sciences	BTEC National Diploma in Geomatics Level 3
West Virginia University	USA	Oman Medical College	Medical Doctor (MD)				