



THAILAND¹

Overview

The formal education qualification system of Thailand is divided into three parts

- Basic Education (primary and secondary education)
- Technical and Vocational Education
- Higher Education

The system also includes a professional qualifications system focused on assessing individual competencies in accordance with the developed occupational standards.

National Qualifications Framework

A Thailand NQF was developed and approved by the Cabinet in January 2013, and the Cabinet approved its implementation in November 2014. The NQF covers all of the education sectors (secondary education, TVET, higher education, etc.), as well as skills standards qualifications, and professional qualifications.

The NQF/framework structure includes nine levels of qualifications, which are based on increasing complexity of learning outcomes and involve knowledge, skills, and attributes at every level. There are three parts: (a) qualifications components and levels, (b) connecting and benchmarking mechanism, and (c) learning outcomes per educational qualification level.

Qualifications have not been unitized/modularized, but there are plans to do so in the future.

The Office of the Education Council (OEC) is responsible for providing national information, coordinating, managing and monitoring the NQF. Implementing agencies, i.e. the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Labor are responsible for assessing and recognizing qualifications from other economies. The NQF and its implementation plan were approved by the Cabinet of Thailand.

Sector qualifications are also in place for TVET and professional qualifications.

Quality assurance mechanisms

There are 3 key bodies responsible for quality assurance of TVET in Thailand:

- Office of the Vocational Education (OVEC) (Ministry of Education)
- Department of Skills Development (Ministry of Labour)
- Thailand Professional Qualifications Institute.

¹ This overview is based on the Thailand Report on Standards and Qualifications (2015) prepared by a team of Thai experts with support from the World Bank. The Report and its overview expand on the original submission by Thailand for the East Asia Summit Vocational Education and Training Quality Assurance Framework Project managed by Australia Commonwealth Government in 2012.



Quality assurance mechanisms – Office of Vocational Education (OVEC)

OVEC is responsible for 1) formulating national TVET policies and issues, 2) establishing a national TVET qualifications framework, 3) monitoring and evaluating TVET quality standards and qualifications, 4) organizing and implementing an Internal Quality Assurance System for TVET, and 5) supervising 421 public TVET colleges.

Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) is aimed at providing learners with the knowledge, skills, required attributes required for employment. There are three levels of TVE plus short-course vocational training (Certificate of Vocational Education (1 – 3), Diploma of Technical Education (1 – 2) and Bachelor's degree of Technology (1 – 2).

There is a TVET qualifications framework that outlines the learning outcomes of each level of qualification based knowledge, skills, and attributes, in addition to five levels of working performance comprised of 1) basic, 2) practice, 3) application, 4) develop, and 5) advance, in order to ensure quality, standards-based learning. There is a credit-based system to determine the range of hours of student effort for qualification types.

The OVEC is responsible for TVE national curriculum qualification. Monitoring and evaluation of TVE qualification is also carried out by OVEC. TVE institutions in both the public and private sector use the same TVE curriculum structures. The Office of Private Education under the Permanent Secretary Office is responsible for TVE in private TVE institutions. The Office of Educational Services areas are delegated power to oversee private TVE institutions in each area.

Accreditation (Approval) of qualifications: OVEC

According to the legislation, each educational qualification must be endorsed by the Ministry of Education and accredited by the Civil Service; this includes overseas qualifications. After the Vocational Education Commission has approved qualifications, they will be submitted to the Ministry of Education for final approval and sent to the Civil Service Commission under the Prime Minister Office for accreditation.

Quality standards or criteria that apply to accreditation include requirements stated in Vocational Educational Qualification Framework such as philosophy and objectives, learning process, total credit hours, structures of curriculum, learning conditions, assessment and evaluation, and quality assurance system. Quality standards that must be described clearly relate to four issues:

- 1) quality of the graduates, 2) curriculum management, 3) resources, 4) labor market demand

There are specific qualifications offered for specific purposes, i.e. military qualifications, electrical generation authority qualifications, and mailing and postal qualifications.

The Ministry of Education has a public register of educational qualifications.

Quality and currency of qualifications are monitored through Internal Quality Assurance System which the institutions have to send a self-assessment report every year, and the External Quality Assurance System which is organized by a public agency under the Prime Minister's Office, every five years. In addition, feedback from employers and professional organizations, and graduate employment rates are also taken into consideration to ensure the quality and currency of qualifications.



Assessment

Assessment for recognition of qualifications are organized at the Ministry of Education. A Working Committee comprised of educators, employers, and experts in the fields will assess qualifications according to criteria set forth in the Qualifications Framework.

After completing requirements of the program in each qualification, students are required to take two national tests. The first one is V-Net, a written test on students' Core or Generic Competencies. The second National Test is Vocational Qualification (VQ), which is comprised of both theory and practices in each specialized field that all students are required to pass as a condition for completion of a qualification. Each institution is authorized to issue the qualifications of the Ministry of Education.

Relationship to standards

Occupational/competency standards have been developed by the following agencies:

1. The Department of Skill Development (DSD), Ministry of Labor develops the National Skill Standards;
2. The Thai Professional Qualification Institute (TPQI); and
3. Industries and Professional Associations.

Standards are based on the notion of competence, which means the ability to perform work resulting from application/integration of knowledge, skills, and attributes. In the curriculum, the standards describe broad occupational functions and roles; in learning plans they need to involve more specific tasks.

OVEC works with a large number of industrial and service sectors in identification of competency needs and integrating into curriculum such as Petrochemical, Jewelry, International Maritime, Mold & Die, Mechatronics, Construction, Tourism and Hospitality, Meat Processing, Catering, Textiles, etc.

Employability or generic skills are taught through various ways:

- 1) embedded in practical subjects or workplace learning
- 2) provided in separate subjects
- 3) provided in extra-curricular activities

The competency standards development process includes:

- Working committees comprised of industrial representatives, educators, and teachers for are established for the purpose of developing standards.
- Industrial representatives play important roles in identification of standards, while educators and teachers have to interpret those standards into educational standards. Public hearings or workshops will be organized and standards will be made publically available on the website to invite stakeholder feedback.

OVEC has created guidelines/templates for developing the standards, which are to be strictly implemented by institutions. The Bureau of Vocational Education Standards and the National Board of Internal Quality Assurance of TVET, along with a task force comprised of representatives from sectors and related agencies are responsible for monitoring and evaluation of the standards.

After the standards are developed and carefully reviewed, they are endorsed by MOE and accredited by the Civil Service Commission prior to being made available on the OVEC on website and in hard copy.

OVEC's Bureau of Vocational Education Standards will develop national TVET curriculum structures, criteria, and other related standards. It will also develop some specific curriculum required at the



national level, however, most providers will develop a majority of the curriculum, submitting it to OVEC for approval.

Registration (Approval) of training providers/awarding bodies - OVEC

OVEC approves and supervises institutions according to the set standards. However, registration is not legislated.

The registration process involves a working committee from central authority, OVEC, visiting the providers and checking if required standards are met, and the report will be submitted to the Vocational Education Commission for approval.

Learning Conditions/Standards will be applied: 1) Buildings and facilities, equipment, and teachers are suitable for development of learners, 2) the ratio of theoretical and practical subjects are well managed, 3) new subjects can be developed according to industry needs, 4) flexible learning can be organized in formal, non-formal and dual/apprenticeship systems, 6) extra-curricular activities, 7) assessment and evaluation, and 8) quality assurance

Providers need to meet both internal and external quality standards. Internal Quality Standards focus on the process of education and training delivery/strategies while External Quality Standards emphasize output and outcome (i.e. employment of the graduates, satisfaction of employers, and the relevance of the qualification in the labor market).

OVEC is responsible for TVET providers through the system of Internal Quality Standards, and the Office of National Education Accreditation and Quality Assessment, Prime Minister Office will be responsible for External Quality Assessment and Accreditation of institutions/providers.

According to the law, providers must submit a self-assessment report annually, and have OVEC or another central authority provide a follow-up visit to assess performance every 3 years. The outcomes will be reported to the central authority of OVEC, and the public.

When OVEC organizes or establishes TVET providers, approval of each offered program will also be registered; there are no other public bodies involved.

Educator requirements - OVEC

There are minimum requirements for teachers, trainers, educators, and lecturers. For OVEC, teacher qualifications are organized and controlled by the Teacher Council as stated in relevant legislation. The Teacher Council is a body that monitors and manages the teacher standards system. There is a register of teachers/trainers/educators. Requirements are in the Education Act, Ministry of Education Administration Law, and Vocational Education Law.

Transnational/cross border education - OVEC

It is government policy to promote providers in other nations. Thai OVEC qualifications are recognized in other countries. Established quality standards/requirements apply to transnational delivery. Rules, regulations, and standards are organized to assess and recognize incoming providers. In-coming overseas qualifications are also recognized - Required documents must be submitted to MOE for assessment and recognition of overseas qualifications.



Quality assurance mechanisms - Department of Skill Development (DSD), Ministry of Labor

DSD is responsible for development of the National Occupational Skills Standards, and provides occupational skills training and testing to those already at work and those wishing to enter the world of work. The National Skills Standards Recognition System is also provided. The Occupational Skill Testing System is divided into three types: 1) skill testing for national skills standards qualifications, 2) skill testing for working with overseas qualifications, 3) skills testing for working in specific industrial or service sector qualifications. Incentives for industries to provide training, and training for trainers are also provided. DSD supervises the Skill Development Institutes located in every region of Thailand.

Accreditation (Approval) of qualifications: DSD

Approval

The National Committee for Promotion of Skill Standards comprises representatives from related ministries and the Federation of Thai Industries, Chamber of Commerce, employers, employees, and specialists of the various fields. They are responsible for development, approval and accreditation of the National Occupational Skills Standards, identification of promotion strategies, establishment of training and testing centres, and encouraging industries to use workers who have occupational skills standards qualifications. The Minister of Labor is responsible for final approval and signing the announcement of the National Skills Standards.

Accreditation of occupational skills standards are organized/legislated by the Skill Development Promotion Law. The accreditation process is organized through consideration and approval of the National Committee for Promotion of Skills Standards Development under the Skill Development Promotion Law; the Minister of Labor will endorse the National Skill Standards.

Quality standards indicators are required in six areas: 1) possess substantial theoretical knowledge for practical performance, 2) be safety and environment conscious, 3) demonstrate the ability to use and maintain equipment, machines, and auxiliary tools effectively, 4) perform work by taking suitable steps, 5) select the most effective and efficient materials, and 6) make the best use of time.

There are national qualifications besides the national skills standards, and there are specific skill standards for some industrial sectors. All occupational skills standards qualifications endorsed by the Minister of Labor will be registered in the public domain. The Bureau of Skills Standards in DSD is responsible for creating a working committee for development of skill standards, organizing the approval process, registering the standards and putting them into implementation

Feedback from industries, employers and employees indicate the quality and currency of the standards.

Assessment

The Skill Standard Testing Committee, comprised of trainers, employers and area expert, organize the assessment process. This is not a large-scale assessment; it is organized by program for each DSD centre. An external body or assessment system to ensure evaluation consistency has not been implemented for the DSD system.

The Skill Development Institute will issues certificates or qualifications after an individual passes a test.

Relationship to standards

There are occupational/competency standards identified by industry/service sector that are an important part of the national skill standards.

Occupational/competency standards are defined as the required, expected or accepted level of process or product quality presented by an individual, and/or demonstrated problem solving and/or hands-on work demonstrating capacity following learning/work experiences.

The standards are based on the notion of competence which means the ability to perform work resulting from application/integration of knowledge, skills, and attributes. The Skills Standards describe more specific tasks.

The National Skill Standards mainly cover industrial sectors such as construction, mechanics, electronics, electricity & computer, industrial arts, and agro-industry. A small number of National Skill Standards are in the service sectors (e.g. spa, catering, hospitality and tourism). Minimum wages in some skill standards are also required to be set by the law.

Employability or generic skills are embedded in practical training and assessing.

The standards development process includes:

- A working committee comprised of industrial representatives, employers, employees and experts in the field is organized to develop skill standards.
- The Federation of Thai Industry and occupational groups/associations are also authorized to develop skill standards for DSD. These skill standards must be approved by the National Committee for Promotion of Skill Standards Development, and endorsed by the Minister of Labor. They are not publicly accessible; they restricted to be used by DSD.

At DSD, the Bureau of Skills Standards, Department of Skills Development is responsible for the design, management and quality assurance through implementation. This office will study needs for skill standards development, organize working committees, and facilitate the working process until skill standards are approved and registered for implementation.

There are guidelines/templates for developing standards, which must be strictly carried out. The Regional Model Competency Standards are used. Approved Skills Standards will be registered and officially announced by the Ministry of Labor.

In terms of curriculum, curriculum can be developed at a national level through DSD but also individual providers can develop their own curriculum. It is a mix of both.

Registration (Approval) of training providers/awarding bodies - DSD

DSD approves and supervises institutions. There is no legislation or regulation for this. There are no quality standards that apply to the accrediting body.

Upon establishment, providers are authorized to provide training and testing, and to award certificates as part of DSD's "Skill Standards Development Institute."

Quality standards or criteria that apply to approving providers are focused on the quality of trainers, involvement of industries, and on the facilities in the training and testing centres. These are used for DSD providers, or centres only. DSD is responsible for supervising and monitoring their centres.

Providers are monitored through submission of an annual report by the institutes to DSD. DSD centres provide training and accreditation, no other public body is involved.



Transnational/cross border education - DSD

DSD works with other countries in conjunction with the International Labor Organization (ILO) and other international organizations in developing a regional competencies standards model, and assessment system. The majority of this takes place with nearby countries such as Myanmar, Lao PDR, Cambodia, and Vietnam. It is government policy to encourage providers to train and issue qualifications to workers from neighboring countries to ensure quality of work. Overseas skill qualifications are mostly assessed by employers, only education qualifications must be endorsed by the Ministry of Education.

Quality assurance mechanisms – Thailand Professional Qualifications Institute (TPQI)

The TPQI is a public organisation under the supervision of the Prime Minister, established by Royal Decree in 2011. TPQI is responsible for developing the national professional qualifications system, including the professional qualifications framework, supporting industry in developing occupational standards, registering and monitoring organisations responsible for assessing individuals' competencies in accordance with developed occupational standards.

Accreditation (Approval) of qualifications (TPQI)

Approval

TPQI awards professional qualifications to individuals and accredits professional qualifications and occupational standards. TPQI supports industrial and business sectors in developing the occupational standards to meet their needs and demands.

Accreditation processes are legislated through the role of the TPQI rather than specific legislation related to accreditation. Through the Royal Decree, TPQI can prescribe guidelines, goals and policies on administering the affairs of the Institute. Requirements of the TPQI are detailed in the Royal Decree.

Through the support of TPQI, occupational standards and qualifications are developed by the industrial and business sectors, agreed to and signed off on by senior representatives of the industry and business sectors and responsible government agencies, tabled at the TPQI's Board of management meetings and announced in the Royal Gazettes by the Institute.

ISO 17024 has been used as a platform for ensuring quality in assessing individuals' competencies and awarding professional qualifications. The qualifications are designed at a national level to meet the requirements of the Thailand Professional Qualifications Framework.

Qualifications (and units of competency) accredited will be listed in Royal Gazettes and on the TPQI website.

TPQI is responsible for managing and monitoring the accreditation process given its remit under the Royal Decree. The Bureau of Accreditation and Auditing (a bureau within TPQI) is in charge of management and monitoring the accreditation process.

TPQI will appoint a professional qualifications and occupational standards committee to monitor the quality and currency of qualifications. The committee will make decisions and set the date and time to review occupational standards and professional qualifications.

Assessment

Assessment centres that are accredited by TPQI undertake assessments of candidates. TPQI has registered 20 assessment centres for 14 industrial sectors.

Assessors must have at least 5 years of experiences in the field and are trained by TPQI in ISO 17024 (organization auditing) and in assessment materials. They are also given assessment guidelines and their assessment decisions will be checked by the assessment auditing committee. It is mandatory that assessment centres use the common assessment tools provided by TPQI. These assessment tools were developed by the industrial and business sectors.

TPQI will award accreditation to those who have complete qualifications and competencies.

Relationship to standards

Qualifications accredited by TPQI are derived from competency-based occupational standards that are developed by industrial and business sectors.

Units of competency include occupational classification, description of the unit of competency, elements of competence and performance criteria, prerequisite knowledge and skills, required knowledge and skills, evidence guide, assessment recommendations including conditions, plus required assessment methods.

Occupational standards are developed based on the notion of competence that is required in different occupations. Standards of competence are all about what people can do, not how much they know or how long they have been employed. Competence in this sense pertains entirely to what they can do in a work environment. These competencies can be derived from education and/or work experience. The key of competence is how individuals can apply their knowledge and experiences to work.

The units of competency describe occupational functions including key purposes, roles, functions, elements of competencies, performance criteria, evidence guides, required skills and knowledge, within a specific occupation. Competency indicators were developed for a wide range of industry sectors between 2013-2015.

TPQI aims to support the development of occupational standards and qualifications to cover all occupations so that none of Thai workforce will be disadvantaged.

Employability or generic skills such as communications or customer services are embedded in TPQI standards (refer to the attached file). However, there are still no separate competencies for generic skills. These may be generated with more occupational standards in the future.

The occupational standards are developed by individuals of the industrial and business sectors, which can be experts from the field with the support from TPQI. The process includes analysis of a specific occupational sector, functional analysis, development of occupational standards, piloting and endorsement by TPQI.

TPQI is responsible for maintenance of the occupational standards as well as professional qualifications, including reviewing and updating. TPQI competency standards include a standard format.



TPQI will be an information center and public registrar of standards, including these things on their website.

There is no separate curriculum body that develops curriculum for this sector, nor is curriculum required for accreditation (approval). Under TPQI it is the assessment that is quality assured.

TPQI only focuses on the occupational standards that the industrial and business sectors will develop themselves with TPQI's support.

Assessment providers (TPQI)

TPQI accredits assessment centres for the assessment of competencies and issuance of qualifications under its remit. Centres must meet the requirements of ISO/IEC 17024:2012 related to Personnel Certification Bodies/Certification Bodies for Persons. This standard contains principles and requirements for a body certifying persons against specific requirements, and includes the development and maintenance of certification schemes for individuals.

TPQI issues the qualifications if candidates have acquired enough competencies according to different occupational standards. Assessment centres undertake competency assessments on TPQI's behalf.

TPQI is currently developing the assessors' and candidates' general guidelines for assessment centres to refer to as the standard.

TPQI intends to audit and quality assure these assessment centres to meet certain standards. TPQI has determined that formal auditing will occur with assessment centres once a year. The TPQI has not confirmed whether outcomes of monitoring e.g. audit reports or public notices will be publicly reported.

The list of assessment centres is on the TPQI website, the user can search according to the occupational field. (www.tpqi-net.tpqi.go.th).

Assessor requirements (TPQI)

TPQI is responsible for accreditation of professional qualifications and occupational standards. The requirements of assessors will be developed according to occupational standards which industrial and business sectors are in charge of. Assessors are trained by TPQI in ISO 17024 and then they assess according to given assessment guidelines. Assessment decisions made by assessors will be checked by the assessment auditing committee.

Transnational/cross border education (TPQI)

TPQI is developing links with other countries' national qualifications framework, within Thailand e.g. OVEC and especially other members states within the ASEAN community.

Quality indicators/data collected - OVEC, DSD, TPQI

Three main agencies (OVEC, DSD and TPQI) collect data on standards, although some data is not applicable to TPQI, e.g. teaching qualifications and professional development, graduate destinations, and completion rates.



Additional information – OVEC, DSD, TPQI

Information for this summary was provided by the following representatives.

Name	Role	Organisation
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