

DRAFT Integrated Broad Award Standards for Business at NFQ Levels 5-9

It is intended that this new Integrated Standards for Business will be used as reference to guide the development of future FE and HE programmes, facilitating the alignment of new programmes with industry needs and contemporary expectations for business programmes.

Knowledge-Breadth					
	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Level 8	Level 9
<i>The graduate should be able to demonstrate...</i>					
NFQ Grid Level Indicator	...a broad range of knowledge	...specialised knowledge of a broad area	...specialised knowledge across a variety of areas	...an understanding of the theory, concepts and methods pertaining to a field (or fields) of learning	...a systematic understanding of knowledge, at, or informed by, the forefront of a field of learning
Proposed Indicators	Knowledge of key concepts and theories in business.	Knowledge of key concepts and theories in business.	Specialised knowledge of key concepts and theories in the relevant subfield(s) of business.	Specialised knowledge of key and emerging concepts and theories in the relevant subfield(s) of business.	Specialised knowledge of key and emerging concepts and theories in relevant subfields business, including those that may be exploratory or contested.
	Knowledge of core processes and/or tools and/or methods (including digital) used in the business environment.	Knowledge of core and some alternative processes and/or tools and/or methods (including digital) used in business.	Specialised knowledge of core and alternative processes, tools and methods (including digital) used in the relevant subfield(s) of business.	Specialised knowledge of core and alternative processes, tools and methods (including digital) used in the relevant subfield(s) of business, encompassing matters of integration, interdependency or impact.	Specialised knowledge of core and alternative processes, tools and methods (including digital) used in the relevant subfield(s) of business, informing critical assessment of implications of integrations, interdependencies or impacts.
	General knowledge of the business environment.	Knowledge of the role that major stakeholders and events play within the business environment.	Knowledge of the role that major stakeholders, events and context-specific dynamics play within the relevant subfield(s) of business.	Knowledge of the role that major stakeholders, events and context-specific dynamics play within the relevant subfield(s) of business.	Knowledge of the role that major stakeholders and events as well as context-specific dynamics play within the current and emerging business environment.
	Knowledge of significant drivers and trends in the business environment.	Knowledge of current drivers, trends and diversity within the business environment.	Specialised knowledge of current drivers, trends and diversity within the relevant subfield(s) of business.	Specialised knowledge of current and emerging drivers, trends and diversity within the relevant subfield(s) of business.	Specialised knowledge of current and emerging drivers, trends and diversity within the relevant subfields of business, informing critical assessment of interactions, interdependencies and impacts.
	<i>This knowledge may be somewhat oriented toward a subfield of business, or it may represent knowledge of a broad field of business overall.</i>	<i>This knowledge may be somewhat oriented toward a subfield of business, or it may represent knowledge of a broad field of business overall.</i>			

Knowledge-Kind					
	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Level 8	Level 9
<i>The graduate should be able to demonstrate...</i>					
NFQ Grid Level Indicator	...some theoretical concepts and abstract thinking, with significant depth in some areas	...some theoretical concepts and abstract thinking with significant underpinning theory	...recognition of limitations of current knowledge and familiarity with sources of new knowledge; integration of concepts across a variety of areas	...detailed knowledge and understanding in one or more specialised areas, some of it at the current boundaries of knowledge	...critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, generally informed by the forefront of a field of learning
Proposed Indicators	Basic knowledge of foundational ethical frameworks in business, supporting application of these in a defined context.	Knowledge of ethical frameworks in business, supporting application and transferability of these across contexts.	Knowledge of ethical frameworks in business, supporting application, transferability and analytical/evaluative appraisal of these across contexts.	Knowledge of ethical frameworks in business, supporting application, transferability and analytical/evaluative appraisal of these across contexts.	Knowledge of ethical frameworks in business, supporting application, transferability and analytical/evaluative/critical appraisal of these across the business environment.
	Knowledge of foundational theory and research in directly relevant subfield(s).	Knowledge of foundational theory and research in directly relevant subfield(s).	Knowledge of current theory and research, supporting an integrated application in directly relevant and adjacent subfield(s).	Knowledge of emerging, theory and research, supporting integrated application in directly relevant and adjacent subfield(s).	Knowledge of emerging theory and research, supporting integrated application across the business environment and future-focused insight.
	Knowledge of the role that digitisation and data, information and evidence play in the directly relevant subfield(s).	Knowledge of the role that digitisation and data, information and evidence play in the directly relevant subfield(s).	Knowledge of the role that digitisation and data, information and evidence play, and the sources of new knowledge that inform the directly relevant and adjacent subfield(s).	Knowledge of the role that digitisation and data, information and evidence play, and the sources of new knowledge that inform the directly relevant and adjacent subfield(s).	Knowledge of the role that digitisation and data, information and evidence play, and the sources of new and emerging knowledge that inform the directly relevant and adjacent subfield(s).
	Knowledge of the broad implications of sustainability and climate change for business. <i>This may apply to the subfield(s) of business studied or the field of business more generally.</i>	Knowledge of the particular implications of sustainability and climate change for business. <i>This may apply to the subfield(s) of business studied or the field of business more generally.</i>	Knowledge of the particular implications of sustainability and climate change integral to the relevant subfield(s) of business.	Knowledge of the current and emerging implications of sustainability and climate change integral to the relevant subfield(s) of business, informing evaluative appraisal.	Knowledge of the current and emerging implications of sustainability and climate change integral to the business environment, informing evaluative and critical appraisal.

Know-How & Skill Range					
	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Level 8	Level 9
<i>The graduate should be able to demonstrate...</i>					
NFQ Grid Level Indicator	...basic practical skills and carry out directed activity using basic tools	...a comprehensive range of specialised skills and tools	...specialised technical, creative or conceptual skills and tools across an area of study	...mastery of a complex and specialised area of skills and tools; use and modify advanced skills and tools to conduct closely guided research, professional or advanced technical activity	...a range of standard and specialised research or equivalent tools and techniques of enquiry
Proposed Indicators	Ability to apply specific skills and techniques, utilising some technical language in the relevant sub-field(s) of business.	Ability to apply specialised skills and techniques, utilising technical language and know-how in relevant sub-field(s) of business.	Ability to select from and apply specialised skills, current techniques, mastery of technical language and know-how in one or more sub-field(s) of business.	Ability to select from and apply specialised skills, current techniques, mastery of technical language and know-how in one or more sub-field(s) of business.	Ability to select from and apply highly specialised skills, current techniques, mastery of technical language and know-how in one or more sub-field(s) of business.
	Ability to draw upon foundational concepts, processes and techniques (including digital) to execute tasks.	Ability to draw upon knowledge of specialised concepts, processes and techniques (including digital) to execute tasks.	Ability to draw upon knowledge of specialised concepts, processes and techniques (including digital) to execute tasks and creatively address problems.	Ability to draw upon knowledge of specialised concepts, processes and techniques (including digital) to execute tasks and creatively address novel problems.	Ability to draw upon knowledge of specialised concepts, processes and techniques (including digital) to execute tasks and creatively address novel and complex problems.
	Ability to recognise how qualitative and quantitative research in business can inform work in the relevant sub-field(s).	Ability to use the outputs of qualitative and quantitative research in business to inform own work.	Ability to use the outputs of qualitative and quantitative research in business to inform own work.	Ability to employ appropriate qualitative and quantitative methodological techniques to conduct primary and secondary research in business within a defined scope.	Ability to employ a range of qualitative and quantitative methodological techniques to conduct primary and secondary research in business for a range of purposes and of variable scope.
	Ability to source basic data and information and evaluate its reliability.	Ability to source data and information and evaluate its reliability.	Ability to source, evaluate, utilize and communicate reliable data and information.	Ability to source, evaluate, utilize and communicate reliable data and information, supporting forecasting and planning.	Ability to source, evaluate, utilize and communicate reliable data and information, supporting forecasting, planning and prediction for a range of possible futures.

Know-How & Skill-Selectivity					
	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Level 8	Level 9
<i>The graduate should be able to demonstrate...</i>					
NFQ Grid Level Indicator	... evaluate and use information to plan and develop investigative strategies and to determine solutions to varied unfamiliar problems	...formulate responses to well-defined abstract problems.	...exercise appropriate judgement in planning, design, technical and/or supervisory functions related to products, services, operations or processes.	...exercise appropriate judgement in a number of complex planning, design, technical and/or management functions related to products, services, operations or processes, including resources	... select from complex and advanced skills across a field of learning; develop new skills to a high level, including novel and emerging techniques
Proposed Indicators	Ability to define and suggest ideas/solutions in response to problems drawing upon technical knowledge/skill.	Ability to define and suggest ideas/solutions in response to problems drawing upon technical knowledge/skill.	Ability to utilize strategies for defining and responding to problems, generating ideas/solutions and drawing upon technical or domain expertise.	Ability to utilize strategies for defining and responding to complex problems, generating ideas/solutions and drawing upon technical or domain expertise, encompassing ideation, prototyping, testing and evaluation.	Ability to utilize strategies for defining and responding to complex problems, generating ideas/solutions and drawing upon technical or domain expertise, encompassing ideation, prototyping, testing and evaluation.
	Ability to implement (digital) processes requiring technical knowledge/skill in defined contexts.	Ability to design and implement basic (digital) processes requiring technical knowledge/skill in defined contexts.	Ability to design and implement effective (digital) processes grounded in technical expertise in a range of contexts.	Ability to design effective and context-sensitive (digital) processes grounded in technical expertise and/or evidence-based reasoning.	Ability to design effective and context-sensitive (digital) processes grounded in technical expertise and/or evidence-based reasoning.
	Ability to identify the social, ethical or environmental implications of business activities.	Ability to identify the social, ethical or environmental implications of business activities.	Ability to exercise judgement in the planning, design, execution or supervision of business activities that have social, ethical or environmental implications.	Ability to exercise appropriate judgement in the planning, design, execution or management of business activities that have complex social, ethical or environmental implications.	Ability to exercise appropriate judgment in the planning, design, execution or management of business activities that have complex ethical, social or environmental implications.
	Ability to communicate effectively for defined purposes in the relevant subfield(s) of business.	Ability to use (digital) communication strategies and tools and communicate effectively for a range of purposes in the relevant subfield(s) of business.	Ability to use a range of (digital) communication strategies and tools and communicate effectively for a range of purposes to diverse audiences, including peers and supervisors, in the relevant subfield(s) of business.	<p>Ability to use a range of effective (digital) communication strategies and tools to communicate effectively for a range of purposes to diverse audiences, including peers and supervisors. within and beyond the relevant subfield(s) of business.</p> <p>Ability to write, present, debate and defend ideas, analysis and proposals for action effectively and persuasively.</p>	<p>Ability to use a range of effective (digital) communication strategies and tools appropriate to distinct contexts and content to communicate, diverse audiences and content in the business environment.</p> <p>Ability to write, present, debate and defend ideas, analysis and proposals for action effectively and persuasively.</p>

Competence-Context					
	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Level 8	Level 9
<i>The graduate should be able to demonstrate...</i>					
NFQ Grid Level Indicator	... act in a range of varied and specific contexts, taking responsibility for the nature and quality of outputs; identify and apply skill and knowledge to a wide variety of contexts	... act in a range of varied and specific contexts involving creative and nonroutine activities; transfer and apply theoretical concepts and/or technical or creative skills to a range of contexts	... utilise diagnostic and creative skills in a range of functions in a wide variety of contexts	... use advanced skills to conduct research, or advanced technical or professional activity, accepting accountability for all related decision making; transfer and apply diagnostic and creative skills in a range of contexts	... act in a wide and often unpredictable variety of professional levels and ill-defined contexts
Proposed Indicators	Ability to recognise differences between the local, regional and global implications of business activities/contexts and suggest strategies for responding to these.	Ability to differentiate between the local, regional and global implications of business activities/contexts and employ appropriate differentiation strategies.	Ability to differentiate between the local, regional and global implications of business activities/contexts and employ appropriate differentiation strategies.	Ability to work adaptively, taking account of/leveraging the local, regional and global implications of business activities and contexts.	Ability to work adaptively, taking account of/leveraging the local, regional and global implications of business activities and contexts.
	Ability to work responsively to change in business environments.	Ability to work responsively to change in business environments, recognising transferability of knowledge and skills.	Ability to work responsively to change in business environments, recognising transferability of knowledge and skills.	Ability to manage uncertainty and work responsively in dynamic business environments.	Ability to manage uncertainty and work responsively in dynamic business environments.
	Ability to use knowledge of relevant sub-field(s) of business to inform diagnostic, creative and problem-solving activities.	Ability to use knowledge of relevant sub-field(s) of business to inform diagnostic, creative and problem-solving activities.	Ability to integrate knowledge of more than one sub-field of business to inform diagnostic, creative and problem-solving activities.	Ability to integrate knowledge of distinct sub-fields of business to inform diagnostic, creative and problem-solving activities.	Ability to integrate detailed knowledge of distinct sub-fields of business to inform diagnostic, creative and problem-solving activities.
	Ability to assess the credibility, authenticity and reliability of information sources.	Ability to assess the credibility, authenticity and reliability of information sources.	Ability to assess the credibility, authenticity and reliability of information and use information to support reasoning and decision-making.	Ability to assess the credibility, authenticity and reliability of information and use information to support reasoning and decision-making.	Ability to assess the credibility, authenticity and reliability of information and use information to support reasoning, critical evaluation and decision-making.

Competence-Role					
	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Level 8	Level 9
<i>The graduate should be able to demonstrate...</i>					
NFQ Grid Level Indicator	... Exercise some initiative and independence in carrying out defined activities; join and function within multiple, complex and heterogeneous groups	... Exercise substantial personal autonomy and often take responsibility for the work of others and/or for the allocation of resources; form, and function within, multiple, complex and heterogeneous groups	... Accept accountability for determining and achieving personal and/ or group outcomes; take significant or supervisory responsibility for the work of others in defined areas of work	... Act effectively under guidance in a peer relationship with qualified practitioners; lead multiple, complex and heterogeneous groups	... Take significant responsibility for the work of individuals and groups; lead and initiate activity
Proposed Indicators	Ability to adapt to others and participate constructively within diverse team settings.	Ability to adapt to others and contribute effectively within diverse team settings.	Ability to adapt to others, contribute effectively and take significant responsibility for the work processes of diverse teams.	Ability to adapt to others, contribute and collaborate effectively and take significant responsibility for the work processes of diverse teams.	Ability to collaborate with, manage and lead diverse teams and individuals effectively in complex business environments.
	Ability to differentiate roles and responsibilities in an organisational context and recognise interdependencies between these.	Ability to recognise interdependencies between roles and responsibilities in the relevant and adjacent subfield(s) of business.	Ability to consider interdependencies between roles and responsibilities in the relevant and adjacent subfield(s) of business in planning and executing tasks.	Ability to manage interdependencies between roles and responsibilities in the relevant and adjacent subfield(s) of business.	Ability to identify and manage complex interdependencies between roles and responsibilities in the business environment.
	Capacity to work in a self-directed manner, planning and executing tasks within defined contexts.	Capacity to work in a self-directed manner, planning and executing tasks within variable contexts.	Capacity to work in a self-directed manner, planning and executing substantive tasks within variable contexts.	Capacity to undertake and execute substantive programmes of work within dynamic contexts.	Capacity to undertake and execute/oversee the execution of significant programmes of work within dynamic contexts.
	Awareness of diversity in the wider social, business and community environment and the implications of this in the relevant subfield(s) of business.	Awareness of diversity in the wider social, business and community environment and the implications of this in the relevant subfield(s) of business.	Awareness of diversity in the wider social, business and community environment and the implications of this for the planning, design and execution of business processes and products.	Sensitivity to diversity in the wider social, business and community environment in the planning, design and execution of business processes and products.	Sensitivity to diversity in the wider social, business and community environment in the planning, design and execution of business processes and products.

Competence-Learning to Learn					
	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Level 8	Level 9
<i>The graduate should be able to demonstrate...</i>					
NFQ Grid Level Indicator	... learn to take responsibility for own learning within a managed environment	... learn to evaluate own learning and identify needs within a structured learning environment; assist others in identifying learning needs	... take initiative to identify and address learning needs and interact effectively in a learning group	... learn to act in variable and unfamiliar learning contexts; learn to manage learning tasks independently, professionally and ethically	... learn to self-evaluate and take responsibility for continuing academic/professional development
Proposed Indicators	Ability to identify own learning needs, interests and preferences.	Ability to identify own learning needs, interests and preferences and adopt strategies to support these.	Ability to identify own learning needs, interests and preferences and adopt strategies to support these.	Ability to identify own learning needs, interests and preferences, locating resources and adopting strategies to support intentional lifelong learning.	Ability to identify own learning needs, interests and preferences, locating resources and adopting strategies to support intentional lifelong learning.
	Ability to organise and plan own learning to meet defined goals in a structured environment.	Ability to organise and plan own learning to meet defined goals and support peer learning in a structured environment.	Ability to organise and plan own learning to meet defined goals and support peer learning a structured environment.	Ability to act autonomously to organise and plan own learning, meet defined goals and engage professionally with peer-to-peer learning.	Ability to act autonomously to locate opportunities for ongoing learning and to identify the range and breadth of activities and contexts in which professional and lifelong learning take place.
	Ability to reflect on structured feedback and consider implications for future performance.	Ability to reflect on structured feedback, success and failure and consider implications for future performance.	Ability to reflect on structured feedback, success and failure and consider implications for future performance.	Ability to respond constructively to variable forms of feedback, success and failure and evaluate implications for future performance.	Ability to respond reflectively and constructively to variable forms of feedback, success and failure and evaluate implications for future performance.
	Capacity to reflect constructively on own performance.	Capacity to reflect constructively on own performance.	Capacity to reflect constructively on own performance.	Capacity to reflect on own limitations, biases, dispositions and abilities and engage in strategies for responding to these. Capacity to contribute to the professional learning of others and to relevant communities of practice.	Capacity to reflect on own limitations, biases, dispositions and abilities and engage in strategies for responding to these. Capacity to contribute to the professional learning of others and to relevant communities of practice.

Competence-Insight					
	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Level 8	Level 9
The graduate should be able to demonstrate...					
NFQ Grid Level Indicator	... assume full responsibility for consistency of self-understanding and behaviour	... express an internalised, personal world view, manifesting engagement with others	... express an internalised, personal world view, manifesting solidarity with others	... express a comprehensive, internalised, personal world view, manifesting solidarity with others	... scrutinise and reflect on social norms and relationships and act to change them
Proposed Indicators	Ability to identify the ethical implications that arise in the context of particular challenges, situations and events.	Ability to identify the ethical implications that arise in the context of particular challenges, situations and events.	Ability to identify and assess the ethical implications of both action and inaction in response to challenges, situations and events.	Ability to identify and assess the ethical implications of both action and inaction in response to challenges, situations and events.	Ability to identify and assess the ethical implications of both action and inaction in response to complex challenges, situations and events.
	Awareness of own values and world view and capacity to reflect on how this influences own behaviour and reactions in the business environment.	Awareness of own assumptions, biases, values and world view and capacity to reflect on how this influences own behaviour and reactions in the business environment.	Awareness of own assumptions, biases, values and world view, and how this may differ from others. Capacity to reflect on how this may influence dynamics, behaviour and reactions in the business environment.	Ability to examine own assumptions, biases, values and world view, considering how this may differ from others. Capacity to critically reflect on how this may influence dynamics, behaviour and reactions in the business environment.	Ability to examine own assumptions, biases, values and world view, considering how this may differ from others. Capacity to critically reflect on how this may influence dynamics, behaviour and reactions in the business environment.
	Awareness of the emotional, personal, cultural and social dynamics of particular activities, challenges or situations in a business environment.	Awareness of the emotional, personal, cultural and social dynamics of particular activities, challenges or situations in a business environment.	Ability to identify and evaluate emotional, personal, cultural and social dynamics of particular activities, challenges or situations in a business environment and act with sensitivity.	Ability to identify and evaluate emotional, personal, cultural and social dynamics of particular activities, challenges or situations in a business environment and act with sensitivity.	Ability to identify and evaluate the nuanced emotional, personal, cultural and social dynamics of particular activities, challenges or situations in a business environment and act with sensitivity.
	Ability to propose contextually sensitive initiatives in business environments.	Ability to propose contextually sensitive initiatives in business environments.	Ability to propose creative, contextually sensitive initiatives in business environments.	Ability to develop creative, contextually sensitive initiatives and solutions in business environments.	Ability to develop creative, contextually sensitive initiatives and solutions in business environments.