

Industry Stakeholder and Advisory Work

Good practice in the development and implementation
of skill standards-based qualifications

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NZQA SUPPORT FOR THE GUIDES

NZQA supports ConCOVE Tūhura’s approach in developing these guides to help standard setting bodies and end-users develop a deeper understanding of skill standards.

As the building blocks of vocational qualifications and micro-credentials, skill standards have huge potential to support consistent graduate outcomes and meet industry needs. We envisage that the toolkit approach to the good practice guides will be particularly useful to the target audiences, some of whom may be new to standards-based qualifications and programmes. – NZQA

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This guide was commissioned by ConCOVE Tūhura and part-funded by Waihangā Ara Rau Workforce Development Council. The work was delivered by Hummingbird Effect.

We extend our sincere thanks to the many individuals and organisations who contributed their time, expertise, and insights to the development of this guide, including:

- Waihangā Ara Rau Workforce Development Council
- Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO)
- Te Pūkenga
- Apprenticeship Training New Zealand (ATNZ)
- Eastern Institute of Technology (EIT)
- Competenz
- Ara Institute of Canterbury
- Site Safe New Zealand Incorporated
- New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) Policy Team

Technical Advisory Groups for:

- Rigging
- Core Construction
- Temporary Traffic Management
- Glazing
- Painting
- Structural Detailing
- Ringa Hora Services Workforce Development Council
- Toi Mai Workforce Development Council

Their collective knowledge and experience have been invaluable in shaping this resource to support assessment practice in vocational education and training.

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THIS GUIDE AND THE GOOD PRACTICE TOOLKIT

The guide is part of a larger good practice toolkit¹ that supports those involved in qualifications development and delivery to work with skill standards, which replaced unit standards in late 2023. Skill standards are now the compulsory components in learning programmes that lead to New Zealand national qualifications. The purpose of this guide is to clarify the system points at which industry stakeholders are involved, and the different purposes of those advisory conversations.

WHAT’S SO DIFFERENT ABOUT SKILL STANDARDS?

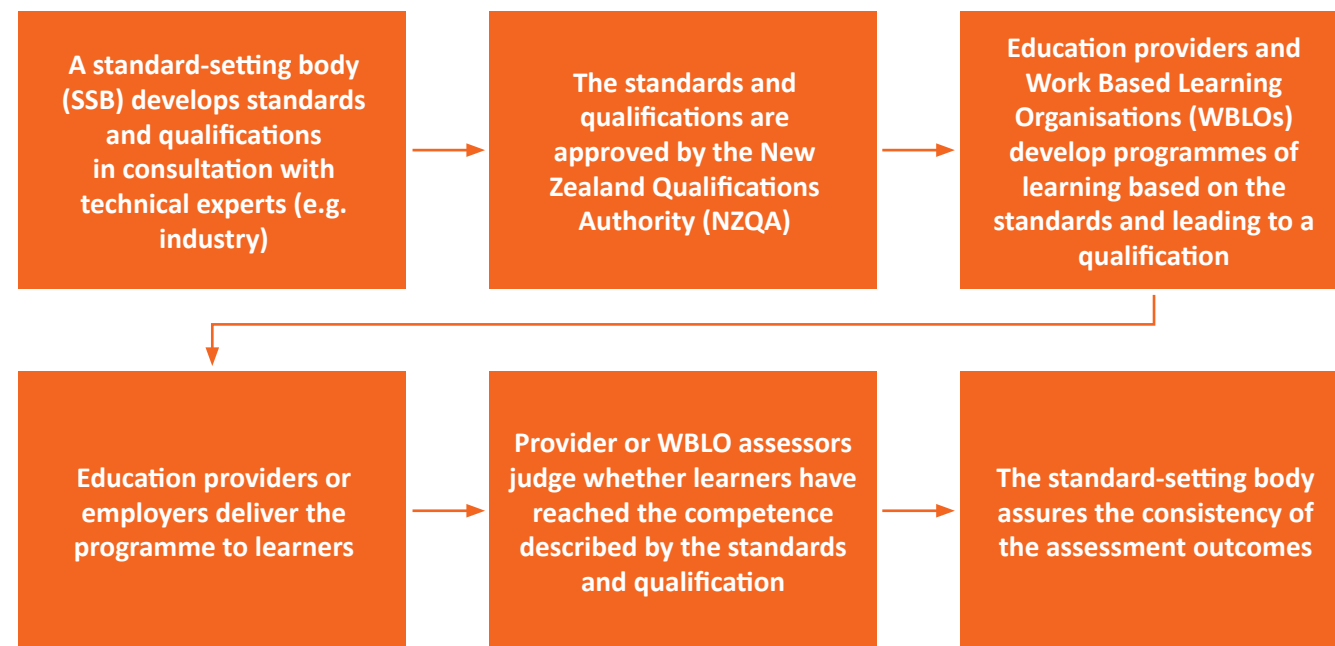
Many industry representatives (and others) will already be familiar with unit standards – the precursor to skill standards. What’s the difference?

Skill standards	Unit standards	The key difference
Compulsory for national qualifications from 2024.	Optional and being phased out.	While some learning programmes used unit standards, others used another component (e.g. Graduate Outcomes). So assessing against standards may be new for some providers (e.g. polytechnics).
SSBs for vocational education are Workforce Development Councils (WDCs).	SSBs were Industry Training Organisations (ITOs).	There are new roles and relationships between programme developers, providers and SSBs.
Larger credit values (e.g. 10-50) and integrated knowledge and skill (typically).	Small credit values (e.g. 1-10) and skill separated from knowledge – e.g. ‘DKO’ Unit standards (‘Demonstrate knowledge of...’).	Stronger real-world links between (applied) knowledge and skill, and a signal that learners need all the skills in the (larger) standard for meaningful competence. Learner progress can no longer be ‘ticked off’ against a list of small-credit unit standards. Employers and providers need to recognise learner progress in other ways.
Assessment Criteria and Assessment Specifications say what counts as reaching the standard. Indicative Content says what industry expects to be covered.	Performance Criteria give a list of tasks that learners do, using Sufficiency Statements (e.g. ‘must do it six times’) and Range Statements (e.g. list all possible tools that may be used).	More instruction and guidance for providers about what to cover, the conditions for assessment and what assessors should look for as evidence of reaching the standard. More future-proofing by avoiding overly-specific references that tie the standard to current contexts and technologies.

¹ There are five other guides in the toolkit, in addition to this one. The other guides are: A Background to the Emergence of Skill Standards; An Overview of the System; Standards and Qualifications Development; Programme Development and Delivery; Assessment and Consistency Measures.

THE QUALIFICATIONS SYSTEM AT A GLANCE

Updating an existing or developing a new qualification starts with SSBs and their industry advisors (and later involves other stakeholders) in a cycle that typically takes several years. The cycle is shown in the following diagram.



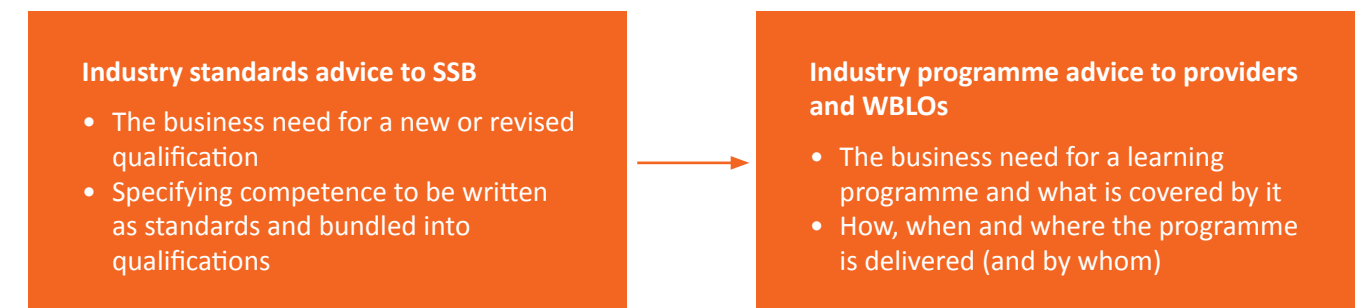
WHERE INDUSTRY GETS INVOLVED

Workforce Development Councils (WDCs) are the SSBs for industry standards, micro-credentials and qualifications at levels 1-6 on the New Zealand Credentials and Qualifications Framework (NZCQF).² Industry may approach their SSB about the possibility of a new qualification, or revision of an existing one.

Once the need has been determined, the WDC consults industry representatives who can represent or speak for the workforce needs of the sector concerned and provide technical guidance to help with standards development. By law, WDCs must also consult other stakeholders such as: education providers, iwi and hapū, and regulatory bodies that establish and enforce standards of practice and protect the interests of the public.

Once agreed and written, standards (and qualifications) are submitted to the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) for approval and listing on the NZCQF. The SSB (WDC) manages this process and keeps industry and other stakeholders informed.

Approved standards and qualifications are available for use in programmes of learning that are developed by education providers – e.g. Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics (ITPs) and Private Training Establishments (PTEs), wānanga, schools, and Work Based Learning Organisations (WBLOs). These programmes are delivered (taught) by employers or education providers. Industry may be involved in other advisory groups or relationships with programme developers or providers. Industry would be influencing the providers and WBLOs about how, when and where the programme will be delivered (and sometimes by whom).



² At the time of writing, the Government was consulting on further proposed changes to the vocational education system. One proposal is that WDCs are disestablished, with Industry Training Boards established to set standards.

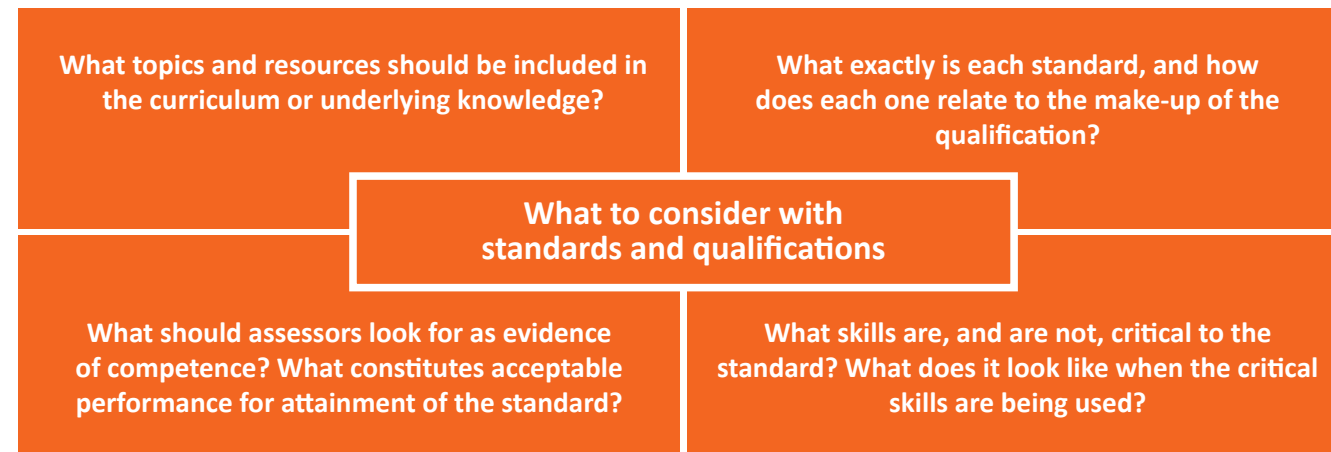
HOW INDUSTRY WORKS WITH THE SSB

Developing a qualification is like working on a jigsaw puzzle.

WDC qualifications developers typically convene Technical Advisory Groups (TAGs) to agree what needs will be met by the qualification, and the scope and standards of competence signified by the qualification. TAGs meet on an as-and-when-required basis. The role of industry representatives in a TAG is to:

1. define what competence is and what it 'looks like' in a workplace
2. work collaboratively with other industry representatives (including those in competing businesses), and other stakeholders from education providers, WBLOs and iwi.

The following diagram shows the kinds of high-level questions a TAG considers.



The qualifications developer's job is to understand the advice from industry and other stakeholders and to translate it into a written standard. Industry and other stakeholder representatives do not themselves write the standards. However, they may be asked to review and comment on drafts.