

Australian Qualifications Framework

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Main features of the Associate Degree

The Associate Degree is a new two-year qualification accredited against higher education requirements and able to be offered by providers meeting the requirements set by the higher education sector in accordance with the *MCEETYA National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes*.

Where does the Associate Degree 'sit' in the AQF?

- a new sub-degree qualification accredited against higher education requirements
- two years in duration following year 12 or equivalent, or Certificate III or IV
- positioned alongside the Advanced Diploma

What are its distinctive outcomes?

- emphasis on the foundational, research-based knowledge of an academic discipline
- broad-based in conceptual and theoretical content, often multi-disciplinary
- generic employment-related skills as appropriate to the discipline(s)

What does it add to the AQF?

- expanded learning pathways
- outcomes oriented to the newer evolving knowledge-based occupations
- programs responsive to the diverse international market and the globalisation of knowledge

How is the Associate Degree different to the other qualifications?

- more focussed on the foundations of an academic discipline than the Advanced Diploma, with less emphasis on industry-specific workplace competency
- a shorter-cycle higher education qualification offering an exit point at the sub-degree level, or a fully articulated pathway into the Bachelor Degree for further in-depth study and professional preparation, or articulation into an Advanced Diploma for specialist industry competencies

How does it articulate with other qualifications in the AQF?

- typically articulates with full credit with a Bachelor Degree in the same field
- may also articulate with an Advanced Diploma for applied skills development

Who may undertake it?

- as for the Bachelor Degree - school leavers, mature age students, those with bridging or foundation qualifications, holders of appropriate VET Certificates
- employment experience is not a requirement

Who may offer an Associate Degree?

- Universities and other self-accrediting institutions
- Non self-accrediting providers, including TAFEs and private RTOs, able to meet higher education approval processes (refer to the *AQF Register of Recognised Education Institutions and Authorised Accreditation Authorities in Australia*, subsections i and iii, and to the *National Protocols*, Protocol 3).



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