



Guidelines for listing skill standards on the Directory of Assessment and Skill Standards

NZQA

Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority



describe



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Introduction

This document provides guidance to standard setting bodies (SSBs) to support them in applying to the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) for listing skill standards on the Directory of Assessment and Skill Standards (DASS).

The DASS lists all quality assured skill standards, unit standards, and achievement standards.

To list a skill standard an application must meet the requirements of the [Directory of Assessment and Skill Standards Listing and Operational Rules 2022](#).

These guidelines set out the NZQA's expectations of an application that meets the Rules. They explain each requirement and offer guidance on the evidence required to support an application.

Changes to this guide

- May 2023. Interim guide issued.
- August 2024. Guide finalised to enable web publication.
- April 2025. This version issued.

This version includes further guidance on

- design characteristics
- expectations for SSB collaboration
- relationships between skill standards, micro-credentials and qualifications
- skill standards replacing unit standards.

Please send feedback or questions on this guide to qaadmin@nzqa.govt.nz

What is a Skill Standard?

Definition and purpose

Skill standards are defined in the Education and Training Act 2020 as:

- (a) a specification of skills, the levels of performance in those skills, and the learning outcomes associated with those skills; and*
- (b) in relation to any vocational education and training (or proposed vocational education and training), a specification of some or all of the skills in which training is (or is proposed to be) received, the levels of performance in those skills intended to be attained by people receiving the training, and the learning outcomes associated with those skills.*

Skill standards are the building blocks of qualifications and credentials.

NZQA Rules are that where suitable skill standards exist that fit with the listed purpose and outcome statement of a qualification or micro-credential, **they must be included.** ([Qualification and Micro-credential Listing and Operational Rules 2022](#) Rule 5.3 (c) i). The intent is that skill standards will be used in all sub-degree qualifications and micro-credentials to support portability of learning and consistent graduate

outcomes.

Skill standards will replace unit standards

Progressively, skill standards will replace unit standards. SSBs will work through a programme of transition to review and replace unit standards with skill standards that are then available for use in qualifications and micro-credentials.

Transition from unit standards to skill standards is an opportunity for SSBs to take a fresh look at the education product landscape for their industries or communities, the available unit standards, and their usage. New skill standards may incorporate elements of superseded unit standards that are still current and required.

It is expected that SSBs will set transition periods of two years for unit standards that are superseded by skill standards.

National Certificates in Educational Achievement (NCEA)

Like unit standards, skill standards can contribute towards the credit requirements for the NCEA. For more information: [NCEA Levels and certificates](#).

Design characteristics

*SSBs should take a **holistic approach** to designing skill standards*

Skill standards will generally:

- replace several (one for many) unit standards
- have larger credit values than unit standards
- include transferable competencies where appropriate
- have less prescriptive detail than unit standards.

*Skill standards have **learning outcomes** associated with the specified skills*

Learning outcomes in skill standards provide:

- a clear link from the skill standard to graduate profile outcome(s) of the overarching qualification(s) or outcome statement of the overarching micro-credential(s)
- the framework for providers to design and deliver teaching and assessment that supports consistent achievement.

Learning outcomes in skill standards are generally associated with **skills**. In most cases, this means the learning outcomes will have a practical or applied aspect. While SSBs may also develop skill standards that assess underpinning knowledge, NZQA encourages SSBs to take a practical or applied approach to standard design wherever possible.

SSBs should not convert 'Demonstrate knowledge of...' or similar unit standards into theory skill standards without reviewing the skills pathways for their industries, and others, overall.

*Skill standards provide **guidance***

Skill standards have guidance for providers to:

- design programmes, micro-credentials and courses
- assess the learning outcomes to the required level of performance.

Skill standard development

Collaboration

SSBs lead the development of skill standards for their industries and sectors. Only SSBs can apply to NZQA to list standards. Currently the SSBs are:

- Workforce Development Councils
- NZQA Māori Qualifications Services (MQS)
- NZQA National Qualifications Services (NQS)
- The Ministry of Education.

SSBs develop qualifications, micro-credentials, and set skill standards in their area of coverage. * Providers are responsible for developing programmes. In developing and implementing skill standards, SSBs and providers should work together to ensure sector and learner needs are met.

- All users of skill standards and sector stakeholders will be consulted during development and review.
- Some skill standards will be used across a number of qualifications or micro-credentials, particularly where the learning outcomes apply to more than one sector or community need.
- SSBs can share the development of skill standards with one SSB nominated as the lead developer. The lead developer will be responsible for consent to assess requirements and the national external moderation system for the skill standards.

* The specified industries for each WDC are set out in its [Orders in Council](#).

Skill standard design principles

In February 2022, NZQA and WDCs established Te Rāngai Ohu Mahi - Paerewa Ako me te Marautanga ā-motu | Skill standards and National Curricula Sector Working Group. The purpose of the group was to support the NZQA and WDC-led co-design process for skill standards and national curricula and to maximise sector-wide benefits, collaboration, and engagement.

The Working Group proposed guiding principles for the development and design of skill standards, informed by ngā kaupapa that form [Te Hono o Te Kahurangi](#). These are set out in Table 1 below.

The principles aim to support a consistent, collaborative approach to developing and

designing skill standards.

There are various ways SSBs might choose to use the principles, for example as a foundation document when setting up qualification and skill standard development panels, and in the contextualised content of individual skill standards.

While NZQA expects each SSB to deeply consider how each principle can be applied in context, they are not intended to be used as an evaluation checklist for listing skill standards on the DASS.

Although each kaupapa is presented separately in Table 1, the overarching intent is that the kaupapa are intrinsically connected throughout the design, learning and teaching process.

Over time, SSBs and NZQA will continue to refine how the principles are used in the skill standard development and design process, and share examples of the principles in action.

Table 1: Skill standard design principles

Ngā Kaupapa Guiding principles	Whakamārama Description	Skill Standards:
Pūkengatanga: Skills Duty to learning and development	Skills, knowledge and abilities are valued.	Are current, relevant, meaningful, and meet the needs of all ākonga, industry, employers, communities, iwi/hapū/hapori. Are informed by mātauranga Māori as expressed through te reo Māori, tikanga and whakaaro Māori.
Rangatiratanga: Empowerment Duty to leading	Leadership of self and others is valued.	Support and empower educators to draw upon their skills, values, knowledge, and experience to innovate and facilitate the highest quality of learning and teaching. Support and empower industries, employers, and communities to build a sustainable quality workforce. Empower Māori, Pacific and other under-served learners and provide opportunities for all ākonga to achieve and excel their education and/or employment goals. Promote ākonga learning independence/self-determination, innovation, excellence, and leadership skill development.
Whanaungatanga: Belonging Duty to relating	Relationships are valued.	Enable whanaungatanga (connectivity) through engagement and partnership with iwi/hapū, hapori, ākonga, education providers, industries (including professional bodies), employers and wider communities.

Ngā Kaupapa Guiding principles	Whakamārama Description	Skill Standards:
		Maintain value to ākonga, industries, providers, employers, iwi/hapū, hapori, Pacific peoples, disabled peoples, and other communities within an Aotearoa context.
Manaakitanga: Collaboration Duty to supporting and serving	Support and service to others is valued.	Support equitable access and achievement of learning outcomes. Are written in plain language and easily understood by all end-users relative to the context. Support ākonga holistic wellbeing.
Kaitiakitanga: Stewardship Duty of care and responsibility	Care and responsibility for all learning environments are valued.	Support coherent pathways in context for learning and/or employment. Enable portability and transferability of learning across multiple contexts, and other qualifications and credentials. Supports work-based and applied learning. Provide flexibility for delivery while ensuring consistent learner outcomes. Include consideration of te Taiao (the natural environment) and sustainable practices. Enable aromatawai and the principles of assessment to be applied in practice (refer NZQA website for aromatawai document).
Te Reo Māori and Reo Tangata: Expression Duty to Māori and other languages	Diversity in language and culture within learning is valued.	Promote and include te reo Māori and tikanga Māori. Value and acknowledge Pacific cultures, other cultures, and worldviews.

Quality assurance

NZQA quality assures applications for listing standards on the DASS. NZQA's decision to list standards is based on the quality and sufficiency of evidence provided.

In the evaluation process NZQA will be clear about the information and evidence on which decisions have been made. An evaluation outcome of *approved*, *not approved*, or *request for information (RFI)* will be provided to the SSB, based on the overall quality of the application. The intention of an RFI is to address gaps in the evidence provided and may lead to an approved or not approved outcome.

Applications must be made through the TEO online application portal.

The **application form, evaluation checklist, style guide and skill standard template** are here: [Listing standards on the Directory of Assessment and Skill Standards](#)

Te Hono o Te Kahurangi quality assurance

SSBs can choose to have skill standards evaluated through Te Hono o Te Kahurangi framework.

Te Hono o Te Kahurangi is the name of a unique whare ako framework and methodology used by NZQA to carry out quality assurance in the tertiary sector. The framework recognises ākonga Māori choosing to achieve educational success through mātauranga Māori as relevant to their worldview, context and practices. Six dynamic and interconnected kaupapa are at the heart of Te Hono o Te Kahurangi.

- Rangatiratanga: Empowerment – Leadership of self and others
- Manaakitanga: Collaboration – Support and service to others
- Whanaungatanga: Belonging – Relationships are valued
- Kaitiakitanga: Stewardship – Care and responsibility for all learning
- Pūkengatanga: Skills – Skills, knowledge, and abilities
- Te reo Māori and reo tangata: Expression – Diversity in language and culture within learning is valued.

For more information, go to:

[Guidelines for Te Hono o Te Kahurangi evaluative quality assurance.](#)

Application requirements

NZQA evaluates skill standards against the criteria in the [Directory of Assessment and Skill Standards Listing and Operational Rules 2022](#) and considers the application using the question: *How well does the skill standard meet the requirements for listing on the Directory of Skill Standards?*

To be approved, all of the following must apply:

- The standard recognises a unified and cohesive set of skills.
- The standard is not overly or unnecessarily detailed, prescriptive or fragmented.
- The standard is easily understood.
- The skill standards match the needs of employers, industry and/or communities.
- The users of skill standards and other stakeholders were consulted during development and review.
- Other SSBs were consulted where a standard overlaps with any other SSB's standard setting coverage.
- The quality of the application reflects principles based on ngā kaupapa that form Te Hono o Te Kahurangi.
- The skill standards are of publishable quality.

If any of the above are not evident the standard will not be approved.

Details to be listed

The details for all standards listed on the Directory are:

- a title that reflects the outcomes of the standard:
- a classification, credit value and level (consistent with the level descriptors):
- a purpose statement:
- the outcomes and criteria to be achieved (including learning outcomes for skill standards):
- grades that can be awarded on achievement of the standard:
- learner prerequisites:
- guidance information directly relevant to the assessment or performance of the standard:
- the name and contact details of the standard-setting body:
- the intended period for ongoing review, being no longer than 5 years from listing:
- the referenced consent and moderation requirements:
- a status assigned to each standard in accordance with rule 5.

Standards will not be listed at levels 7 to 10 for qualifications that are degrees or post-graduate qualifications.

Directory of Assessment and Skill Standards Listing and Operational Rules 2022 Rule 4

Use of Te reo Māori and English

A skill standard may be listed in te reo Māori, English or in both te reo Māori and English. In this situation both versions will be considered as one standard and allocated a single skill standard number.

Education organisations applying for listing skill standards written in te reo Māori can have them evaluated under the Te Hono o Te Kahurangi approach.

In addition to providing the information required under DASS rule 8.1, applicants must provide the information that the Te Hono o Te Kahurangi quality assurance framework and tools require.

Applicants with skill standards that are written in te reo Māori should contact NZQA: email tehono@nzqa.govt.nz

Skill standards containing Māori content, and all standards listed and consistent with the principles within field Māori, can be identified with a matau.

The matau indicates the standard clearly contributes to:

- Māori well-being
- Māori educational performance
- The recognition of Māori skills and knowledge.

Examples of Matau domains

	Mau Rākau
	Ngā Mahi ā te Rēhia
	Ngā Mahi a te Whare Pora
	Reo Māori

Listing details

This section provides guidance for the skill standard details required for listing standards on the DASS.

Taitara | Title

A title that reflects the outcomes of the standard

Rule 4.1(a)

The title reflects the outcomes in the standard and is meaningful to stakeholders.

The title explains clearly what a learner awarded the standard can do, and in what context.

For example:

- Install an operating system for an organisation
- Interpret information from plans and documentation for construction tasks

For plain language and readability on an individual's Record of Achievement, skill standard titles must not be more than 120 characters including punctuation and spacing.

If there is only one learning outcome, it will also be the title.

Names of trademarked products, training and assessment material, tertiary education organisations, or commercial organisations must not be used as part of the title.

In addition to the title, each skill standard is allocated a unique numerical identifier by NZQA that allows it to be identified in the [Directory of Assessment and Skill Standards \(DASS\)](#) and other data systems.

Whiwhinga | Credits

A credit value

Rule 4.1(b)

Skill standards are assigned a credit value. The credit value is an indication of how much time it would take a learner to achieve the learning outcomes and become proficient in the skills in the standard.

One credit represents a notional ten hours of learning and assessment activities.

Skill standards are generally expected to have **larger credit values** than unit standards.

Kaupae | Level

A level consistent with the level descriptors.

Rule 4.1(b)

Standards will not be listed at levels 7 to 10 for qualifications that are degrees or post-graduate qualifications.

Rule 4.2

SSBs develop skill standards with reference to the [New Zealand Qualifications and Credentials Framework \(NZQCF\) level descriptors](#).

NZQA determines whether the level assigned to the skill standard is appropriate, as part of the standards approval and listing process.

NZQA acknowledge there is a 'best fit' approach to establishing the level of a standard.

Whāinga | Purpose statement

A purpose statement must be listed.

Applications must contain evidence that the standard is acceptable to the relevant sector (this may include the education sector) or industry and to providers that will be using them in study or training, and an explanation of the intended use of the standard.

Rule 4.1(c) and Rule 8.1(b) and (c)

The purpose of the standard matches the needs of stakeholders.

The purpose of the skill standard states who it is for and what the person will be able to do once awarded the standard. It may also include information about where the standard fits in a qualification or credential landscape.

For example:

Purpose

- This skill standard is intended for people who are already working in the automotive industry. They will be able to describe different types of automotive maintenance products and their applications, interpret maintenance product information and recommend compatible products to customers in an automotive environment. This skill standard aligns with New Zealand Automotive qualifications Level 4 and above.

Purpose

- People with this skill standard will be able to apply knowledge of New Zealand legislation relevant to the security industry to promote a safe and secure environment, mitigate security risks, and respond to security breaches. This skill standard has been developed to align with the New Zealand Certificate in

Security (Foundation) (Level 3) [Ref: 3642].

Skill standards may be applicable to more than one industry, community or sector. The SSB can use the purpose statement to outline the multiple contexts in which the standard may be used.

For example:

Purpose

- This skill standard is intended for ākonga who want to demonstrate pūkengatanga in a selected context. It can be used in a range of programmes leading to tikanga-based qualifications.

Skill standards designed to recognise knowledge

Before developing a skill standard solely to recognise theory or academic outcomes consider if the knowledge is underpinning and can be demonstrated through the application of skills directly or simulated. If learners need to memorise specific industry standards, rules, or safety procedures or if recall is required for providing professional services, consider including those requirements in the applied skill. Theory or knowledge required can be specified in the content, incorporated in assessment criteria and/or set out in some of the learning outcomes of a practical skill standard.

Where industry/stakeholders consider it essential to create a discrete skill standard to assess theoretical learning outcomes, the **purpose** of the skill standard must clearly identify the context, micro-credential or qualification outcome that necessitates a theory-only skill standard.

For example:

This skill standard is intended for people who work in health, disability, or community support setting roles, and need foundational and contextual knowledge to support people with long-term conditions.

- People credited with this skill standard are able to determine the scope of long-term conditions, management strategies; recognise privacy and confidentiality requirements, identify hauora, cultural considerations and recognise common risk behaviours, for a person with long-term conditions; and outline health promotion strategies in Aotearoa New Zealand. [Skill standard 40483]

Hua o te ako | Learning outcomes

The learning outcomes must be listed.

A standard will not be listed on the Directory if it unnecessarily duplicates a standard that is listed, except where that listed standard is being replaced.

Rule 4.1(d) and 8.2(a)

The learning outcomes describe the skill(s) and knowledge a learner will have once they have achieved the standard. Learning outcomes must include an action verb, content, and context.

Collectively, the verb, content and context help define the level and credit value of the standard.

Learning outcomes in skill standards must be specific, measurable, achievable and realistic.

For example:

- Implement a plan to monitor and protect a horticultural crop.
- Use best practice customer service techniques to provide general office services.
- Communicate the results of the site assessment to inform flooring installation operations.
- Progress the work programme and maintain a safe construction worksite.

For skill standards that recognise theory or academic learning outcomes, use an active verb that suits the context.

For example:

(Focus on self-development)

1. Describe own rangatiratanga in terms of own strengths.
2. Identify how these strengths can guide own short-term goals.
3. Identify how these strengths can guide own future pathways.

(Focus on recall)

1. Explain personal responsibilities to adhere to the health and safety policy.
2. Describe workstation health and safety requirements in a contact centre.
3. Explain emergency procedures in a contact centre workplace.

Refer to Writing learning outcomes: structure, considerations and examples for more guidance on writing learning outcomes.

[Writing learning outcomes: structure, considerations and examples \[DOCX, 114 KB\]](#)

Learning outcomes and qualification graduate profile outcomes

Skill standards' learning outcomes can align with the graduate profile outcomes (GPOs) of a qualification or the outcome statement(s) of a micro-credential. This can be a one-to-one relationship but, if so, the skill standard must provide learning outcomes, and assessment, for the whole GPO or micro-credential outcome statement.

The relationship between skill standards and qualification GPOs will be considered as part of qualification approval and programme approval.

Collaboration

A collaborative approach to skill standard development will minimise the proliferation of standards with similar learning outcomes. SSBs are encouraged to regularly share their qualification, micro-credential, and skill standard development plans with each other, and discuss opportunities for developing skill standards that apply to multiple contexts.

Pārongo aromatawai me te taumata paearu | Assessment criteria and grades

Assessment criteria, and grades that can be awarded on achievement of the standard, must be listed.

A standard will not be listed on the Directory if it creates unreasonable restrictions on the mode of assessment.

Rule 4.1(d), 4.1(e), and 8.2(b)

Assessment criteria

Skill standards must enable the design of quality assessment and enable assessors to assess the learning outcomes consistently to the required level of performance.

Assessment criteria and, where relevant, grade criteria describe the required levels of performance of the skill(s) in the standard.

Assessment criteria are aligned with the learning outcomes associated with each skill. This ensures that assessment measures the achievement of learning outcomes, which is a key principle of aromatawai and assessment practice.

Refer to [Aromatawai and the Principles of Assessment](#) for more guidance.

Assessment criteria must be specified in a way that informs valid assessment design and consistent assessor judgements. How the assessment criteria are expressed, and the amount of detail, will vary across standards and skills as determined by the SSB. However, SSBs are encouraged to write assessment criteria and specifications in active, plain language. This supports consistent interpretation of the standard and contributes to an efficient national external moderation process.

Example 1 (Manufacture a timber flooring cassette in a manufacturing environment to job specifications)

- a. Placing of components, hardware, and fixings in sequence and position is completed according to detail drawings and instructions.
- b. Components are checked and fixed using correct equipment and fixing methods.
- c. Quality control checks are completed according to checking schedule and workplace procedures.

[Skill standard 40000]

Example 2 (Carry out testing and safety control procedures for detachable grips to ensure safe operations of passenger ropeway.)

- a. Identify potential hazards associated with detachable grip testing and apply relevant control measures.
- b. Complete testing for detachable grips in accordance with manufacturers' recommendations to ensure safety.
- c. Measure tolerances of detachable grip components and rectify deviations from specified tolerances.
- d. Interpret test results and take corrective actions.
- e. Complete all relevant documentation in accordance with the organisation's requirements.

[Skill standard 40428]

Assessment specifications

SSBs may choose to set out additional context for assessment in assessment specifications. For example:

- the boundaries of the assessment
- critical contexts
- evidence to be used in assessment
- clarification using examples
- definitions that support consistent assessment where the term defined is outside of common understanding.

Example:

Assessment will include the construction of two different items of garden furniture.

The first item can be a basic garden furniture item including, a stepped planter box, a free-standing planter or wall mounted planter boxes, raised gardens, or stepladder-style plant ladders, or an item of similar complexity.

The second item must be a Cape Cod chair, picnic table, bench seat with garden tool storage, or an item of similar complexity.

Grades

Skill standards may be awarded with the following grades:

- achieved / paetae
- merit / kaiaka
- excellence / kairangi.

All skill standards have a minimum passing grade of 'achieved', where the learner must meet the assessment criteria for each of the learning outcomes specified in the standard.

Merit and excellence grades can be specified where there is a clear reason and support from stakeholders to recognise different performance levels of the same skill or learning outcome. This is typically to support NCEA endorsement (for more information - [NCEA endorsements](#)).

Grade criteria

Grade criteria must clearly describe the performance expected for each grade and ensure that performance at a higher grade includes the evidence of performance at lower grades. For example, grade criteria may be based on the:

- quality/level of performance of the skill
- effectiveness of the ways to achieve the same performance level
- depth of understanding and application of concepts.

For example:

Paetae Achieved	Kaiaka Merit	Kairangi Excellence
Materials selected are adequate for the project and there is allowance for some waste	Materials selected are appropriate for the project and some waste is minimised.	Materials selected are optimal for the project with a justification, and waste is minimised to the greatest practical extent.

Ihirangi waitohu | Indicative content

SSBs include the indicative content they encourage providers to cover with their learners.

Along with the learning outcomes, the indicative content provides the framework for a provider to develop its specific learning activities and assessment tasks, while also supporting portability of learning and consistent graduate outcomes.

The content is expressed at a high level as topics rather than tasks, and along with other skill standard details, helps inform the credit value.

For example:

- Project document interpretation
- Materials calculations
- Hand and power tool selection
- Materials selection and use
- Measuring and marking out materials
- Cutting and machining timber
- Assembly techniques
- Construction joints and fixing
- Safe working practices.

Indicative content is not mandatory for assessment purposes. Refer to the learning outcomes and assessment criteria sections of these guidelines for what must be assessed.

Whakaakoranga me mātua oti | Learner prerequisites

Prerequisites may be listed.

A standard will not be listed on the Directory if it creates unreasonable barriers to access in terms of gender, ethnicity, or cultural background.

Rule 4.1(f) and 8.2(c)

SSBs may specify other standards as pre-requisites. Mandatory pre-requisite standards typically relate to health and safety, or legislative requirements.

Recommended prerequisites typically relate to skills and knowledge that will support the learner and can be included in the Assessment Specifications section.

Rauemi | Resources

Guidance information directly relevant to the assessment or performance of the standard.

Rule 4.1(g)

Guidance for providers designing programmes, micro-credentials and courses

SSBs may include references to resources including relevant legislation, Rules, Codes

of Practice, textbooks, definitions, links to online material, equipment, and other useful guidance to tutors, assessors and learners.

SSBs may also choose to publish this information elsewhere so it can be kept up-to-date, without the need for a new standard version.

Pārongo Whakaū Kounga | Quality Assurance information

The classification, name and contact details of the SSB, and referenced consent and moderation requirements

Rule 4.1(b), (h) and (j)

Skill standards will include a section with information required for general quality assurance/administration purposes:

Whakaritenga Rārangi Paetae Aromatawai | DASS Classification

Skill standards must be classified in a domain listed on the DASS. The classification system for the DASS comprises three tiers: fields, subfields, and domains. The content of a skill standard must be consistent with the domain in which it is classified.

Refer to [Additions and Changes to the classification system](#) for more information on registering or lapsing classification names.

Ngā rōpū whakatau-paerewa | Standard Setting Body

Each skill standard listed on the DASS must include the name and contact details of the relevant SSB.

Ko te tohutoro ki ngā Whakaritenga i te Whakamanatanga me te Whakaōritenga | CMR

SSBs specify Consent to Assess and National External Moderation requirements for a particular industry or suite of standards in a Consent and Moderation Requirements (CMR) document.

Each standard must include the reference number of the relevant CMR.

Refer to [Consent and Moderation Requirements](#) for more information.

Tūranga whai tikanga | Status

Standards listed on the DASS are assigned one of three kinds of status: current, expiring or discontinued.

Current (Registered)

A standard when first listed is assigned a status of *current*. Standards with current status can be used for assessment of learners by education organisations in accordance with the Education and Training Act 2020.

Expiring

Standards with expiring status are those which are being:

- replaced with a new standard
- discontinued (normally because of a review or lack of use of the standard for an extended period of time).

A last date for assessment (expiry date) will be applied to each expiring standard. Once the skill standard reaches its last date for assessment it will have a discontinued status.

Learners may be assessed against standards with expiring status only if the assessment is complete before the 'last date for assessment' set out in the standard.

Discontinued (Expired)

Standards with discontinued status may no longer be used for assessment of learners, and organisations can no longer award credits for the standard. Credit for standards achieved before the last date for assessment can continue to be reported to NZQA up to three months after this date.

Arotakenga | Review

The intended period for ongoing review is no longer than 5 years from listing.

Review must be within the specified review period using the review guidelines published by NZQA on its website.

Rule 4.1(i) and 10.2

All skill standards must be periodically reviewed to ensure they remain fit for purpose. Skill standards are expected to be reviewed after a period of five years, although factors such as the extent and type of industry change, legislative requirements, and moderation feedback will also drive how often reviews take place.

Users of skill standards and industry stakeholders must be consulted during a review. SSBs are expected to provide evidence of consultation on request. Consultation should also take place with other SSBs if there is potential for a reviewed standard to overlap with any other SSB's standard setting coverage.

Changes to standards as a result of review

As a result of a review there may be minimal or moderate change where the overall outcome remains the same. This means the SSB considers that people credited with either the new or old version of the standard are comparable in terms of their skills. The new version of the standard carries the same ID and a new version number. Minor changes to a skill standard could include:

- correcting wording
- updating guidance, resources or pre-requisites

- updating content to take into account changes in practice or associated technology
- amending classification.

Alternatively, there may be major changes required to a standard following a review. For example, there may be changes to the learning outcomes, assessment criteria and/or level and credit values. For major changes, SSBs have two options:

1. Develop a new standard to replace the existing one. This means that while the original and replacement standard cover similar topics, the SSB considers that people credited with the original standard will have different skills to people credited with the replacement standard. The replacement standard has a new ID.
2. Expire the standard and not replace it.

If the status of a standard following a review is changed to expiring, the expiry date must take into account the extent of use of the standard and allow sufficient time for:

- providers with consent to assess against the standard to update impacted programmes and resources, and develop new or revised assessment materials
- learners to complete current programmes or micro-credentials or transition to new ones.

Following a review, the SSB completes a 'Change Report' to explain:

- the rationale for the review
- a summary of the review process
- changes made as a result of the review
- impact on providers with consent to assess
- transition arrangements for impacted standards
- any changes relating to the CMR.

The link to the Change Reports can be found on this page:

[Change reports](#)

Please check the change reports every month so your organisation is aware of approvals, reviews and changes to qualifications and standards. These may inform programme development.

Review support from NZQA

Prior to review, SSBs can request a review support package:

[Standard review support package](#)

Consent and moderation requirements

SSBs are responsible for establishing the consent to assess and national external moderation requirements for the standards they set. These requirements are described in the listed Consent and Moderation Requirements document (CMR).

For more information:

[Applying for approval of Consent and Moderation Requirements](#)

National External Moderation

The following principles follow the requirements of Rule 10.3 (a) to (f) and have also been designed to reflect the principles underpinning the Evaluative Quality Assurance Framework and ngā kaupapa o Te Hono o Te Kahurangi.

For more information:

[National external moderation principles](#)

Skill standard template and example standards

This section includes a skill standard template, completed with a brief description of each listing component for easy reference.

This section also includes example skill standards registered on the DASS .

NZQA and WDCs will continue to work together to refine the skill standard template and update these guidelines.

Reference template

Unique numerical identifier	The title reflects the outcomes in the standard and is meaningful to stakeholders
Kaupae Level	SSBs develop skill standards with reference to the New Zealand Qualifications and Credentials Framework (NZQCF) level descriptors. NZQA determines whether the level assigned to the skill standard is appropriate, as part of the standards approval and listing process.
Whiwhinga Credit	Skill standards are assigned a credit value. The credit value is an indication of how much time it would take a learner to achieve the learning outcomes and become competent in the skills in the standard. One credit represents a notional ten hours of learning and assessment activities.
Whāinga Purpose	The purpose of the skill standard states who it is for and what the person will be able to do once awarded the standard. It may also include information about where the standard fits in a qualification or credential landscape. Skill standards may be applicable to more than one industry, community or sector. The SSB can use the purpose statement to outline the multiple contexts in which the standard may be used.
Whakaakoranga me mātua oti Pre-requisites	SSBs may specify other standards as mandatory pre-requisites relating to health and safety, or legislative requirements.

Hua o te ako me Paearu aromatawai | Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

Hua o te ako Learning outcomes You will be able to:	Paearu aromatawai Assessment criteria You can:
1. The learning outcome(s) describe the skill(s) or knowledge a learner will have once they have achieved the standard. Learning outcomes must include an action verb, content, and context.	a. Assessment criteria and, where relevant, grade criteria describe the required levels of performance of the skill(s) or knowledge in the standard. Assessment criteria are aligned with the learning outcomes associated with each skill.

Pārongo aromatawai me te taumata paearu | Assessment information and grade criteria

Assessment specifications

SSBs may choose to set out additional context for assessment in assessment specifications. For example, assessment specifications may provide:

- the boundaries of the assessment
- critical contexts
- evidence to be used in assessment
- clarification using examples
- definitions.

Ngā momo whiwhinga | Grades available

Skill standards may be awarded with the following grades:

- achieved / paetae
- merit / kaiaka
- excellence / kairangi.

All skill standards have a minimum passing grade of 'achieved', where the learner must meet the assessment criteria for each of the learning outcomes specified in the standard.

Merit and excellence grades can be specified where there is a clear reason and support from stakeholders to recognise different performance levels of the same skill or learning outcome.

Ihirangi waitohu | Indicative content

SSBs include indicative content they encourage providers to cover with their learners.

Along with the learning outcomes, the indicative content provides the framework for a provider to develop its specific learning activities and assessment tasks, while also supporting portability of learning and consistent graduate outcomes.

Rauemi | Resources

SSB may include references to resources including relevant legislation, Rules, Codes of Practice, textbooks, definitions, links to online material, and other useful guidance to tutors, assessors and learners.

SSBs may also choose to publish this information elsewhere so it can be kept up-to-date, without the need for a new standard version.

Pārongo Whakaū Kounga | Quality assurance information

Ngā rōpū whakatau-paerewa Standard Setting Body	Each skill standard listed on the DASS must include the name and contact details of the relevant SSB
Whakaritenga Rāangi Paetae Aromatawai DASS classification	Skill standards must be classified in a domain listed on the DASS. The classification system for the DASS comprises three tiers: fields, subfields, and domains. The content of a skill standard must be consistent with the domain in which it is classified.
Ko te tohutoro ki ngā Whakaritenga i te Whakamanatanga me te Whakaōritenga CMR	SSBs specify Consent to Assess and National External Moderation requirements for a particular industry or suite of standards in a Consent and Moderation Requirements document (CMR). Each standard includes the reference number of the relevant CMR.

Hātepe Process*	Putanga Version	Rā whakaputa Review Date	Rā whakamutunga mō te aromatawai Last date for assessment
Rēhitatanga Registration	1	dd mm yyyy	dd mm yyyy The last date for assessment against a version of the standard allows providers time to update impacted products and develop new assessment materials.
Arotakenga Review	2	dd mm yyyy	dd mm yyyy

Whakaauroa Rollover	3		
Kōrero whakakapinga Replacement information	While the original and replacement standard cover similar topics, the SSB considers that people credited with the original standard will have different skills to people credited with the replacement standard. The replaced standard has a last date for assessment set. The replacement standard has a new ID.		
Rā arotake Planned review date	dd mm yyyy All skill standards must be periodically reviewed to ensure they remain fit for purpose. Skill standards are expected to be reviewed after a period of five years, although factors such as the extent and type of industry change, legislative requirements, and moderation feedback will also drive how often reviews take place.		

Please contact <SSB> at <email address> if you wish to suggest changes to the content of this skill standard.

Example skill standards

Carpentry

40000	Manufacture a timber flooring cassette	Level 3	 
		20 Credits	

Telecommunications - Service Delivery

40113	Install data cable support systems and flush boxes	Level 3	 
		15 Credits	

Visitor Interpretation

40123	Perform as a storyteller for visitors	Level 3	 
		5 Credits	

Fitness Assessment and Exercise Instruction

40068	Deliver an exercise experience using knowledge of functional anatomy and interpersonal skills	Level 4	 
		15 Credits	

Computer Support

40042	Maintain IT systems and support users in an organisation	Level 5	 
		15 Credits	