

Graduate: An Explanation

Graduate defined

Graduate is defined in the AQF as follows:

A graduate is a person who has been awarded a qualification by an authorised issuing organisation.

In common language usage, graduate and postgraduate are synonymous and both connote a stage after graduation. In Australia and internationally, there is no consistent usage of either term. The term postgraduate often is used in the education sector, particularly in higher education. The usage tends to be applied to Bachelor and post-Bachelor Degrees. This usage implies that the Bachelor Degree necessarily proceeds and is a pre-requisite for higher level qualifications. In contrast, modern qualification systems are based on taxonomically defined levels that allow for a multiplicity of pathways.

The AQF has adopted the term graduate in favour of postgraduate. The term graduate in the AQF is used for all qualification types in describing the learning outcomes to be achieved and applied to a person who has been awarded any AQF qualification.

Graduate also is used in the title of the AQF qualification types: Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma. Substitution of the term postgraduate in AQF qualification titles is not permitted.