

Naming and Awarding Qualifications and Recognising Achievement

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Applies From:	Immediately unless otherwise stated		

Major changes/additions since the last version are indicated by a vertical line in the left-hand margin.

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a broad framework and set of principles to ensure that all qualifications and other awards issued by Ara Institute of Canterbury Ltd¹ meet the definitions set by NZQA and/or other relevant external bodies and are according to standard formats.

1.2 Scope and Application

- a All qualifications and other records of achievement awarded by Ara. This currently includes certificates, diplomas, degrees (Bachelor's and Master's), graduate certificates and diplomas, and postgraduate certificates and diplomas.
- b In recognition of student achievement in courses that do not lead to a qualification, Ara also issues Statements of Attendance, Statements of Attainment, and other Awards/Prizes.

1.3 Formal Delegations

- a From the Ara Academic Committee to Head of Department or delegate:
 - Release final marks/grades; confirm eligibility for awarding of qualifications; approve Statements of Attendance, Statements of Attainment and Student Awards/Prizes according to set criteria.
 - Approve self-funded short/non-assessed courses.
 - Develop effective processes at Department level to ensure compliance with Ara academic regulations/external requirements, in particular those related to admission and special admission of students and confirmation of student results.

¹ From herein referred to as Ara

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- b From the Ara Academic Committee to other persons/bodies:

To the DCE – AIR: authority to approve variations to graduation eligibility (January 1999), including students studying at Ara but enrolled through another institution (October 2003), or students studying under collaborative arrangements (August 2013).

1.4 Definitions

- a Graduate in Absentia: Graduating without attending a graduation ceremony.

<p>Related Ara Procedures and Forms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APP503a Regalia Required for Graduation • APP503b Change of Name on Awards • APP503c Confirmation of Eligibility to Receive an Award • APP503d Application for Reissue of Awards • CPP120d Academic Delegations Register 	<p>Related Ara Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APP504 Regulations Governing Admission and Enrolment • APP514 Withdrawals, Refunds and Compassionate Consideration • APP603 Programme and Product Development and Approval • CPP601 Council Delegations Policy • CPP606 Common Seal and Bank Authorities and Signatories Policy
<p>References</p> <p>NZQA website (http://www.nzqa.govt.nz) for details relating to all quality assured qualifications</p> <p>Guide to Tertiary Funding, Tertiary Education Commission (updated annually) http://www.tec.govt.nz</p> <p>Qualification Definitions – NZQA http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/Studying-in-NZ/New-Zealand-Qualification-Framework/requirements-nzqf.pdf</p>	
<p>Notes (oldest to newest changes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degrees: Maximum number of credits allowed at Level 4 (20 credits) introduced by NZQA in June 2001. • Diplomas: Prior to 2002, Ara required a minimum of 80 credits at the registered level of the Diploma; was reduced to 72 in line with the revised NZQA definition. • Graduate Certificates/Diplomas: Criteria for graduate certificates and Graduate Diplomas introduced by NZQA in 2001; the existing graduate qualifications brought into line progressively over the next two years. NZQA amended some aspects in 2004, followed by a re-interpretation of entry criteria in 2006. • Foundation Certificates: In September 2003, Ara added “Foundation” certificates to its formal list of approved qualifications, in line with government priorities. Note that in 2006 NZQA distributed additional draft guidelines related to “foundation” qualifications aimed at improving basic literacy and numeracy. • In this version Statement of Attendance (annotated) for Courses Delivered On-Line as non-assessed courses has been removed from the policy. Minimum number of credits for degrees reduced to 75 credits at Level 7 (from 80 credits), graduate diplomas and diplomas also required 75 credits. • TEC funding rules for Short Awards changed in December 2010 – now must be a minimum of 20 credits. • NZQA in April/July 2011 redefined qualification definitions and removed the provision for Level 4 credits (20 maximum) for degrees, graduate diplomas, graduate certificates, and Level 6 diplomas. Graduate diplomas and certificates now at Level 7 or above (previously Levels 5 -7). • Delegation to PAC for programmes approved by any ITP’s Academic Board (previously TANZ only). Dec 2011. • 2012 – Changes made to reflect the changes to the structures within Ara. Short Awards replaced by Training Schemes. Removal of Level 1-3 exclusion from formally graduating. • 2013 – NZQA references updated. Definition for Master’s Degree and Postgraduate Diplomas and Certificates added. Deleted TEC requirement for approval for COP and Exit qualifications – TROQ prevents this; Deleted Change in Nomenclature provision – no longer relevant. Distinction between qualifications and programmes of study made explicit. Council delegation to CE reviewed and delegated powers to Academic Board endorsed. Embedded qualifications removed as an outcome of TRoQ. 	

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- 2014 – Changes made to signatories on award certificates. Wording on certificates and statements of attainment updated.
- 2015 – Minor changes to requirements for re-issuing lost qualifications. Removal of Ara from policy title.
- 2016 – New branding
- 2017 – Minor change – Add section 3.2 Variation to an Award (text was previously included in policies APP507 Credit Recognition and APP603 Design, Development, Review and Approval of Programmes.
- 2018 – Minor change – Allow students to graduate In Absentia and still be eligible to attend a graduation ceremony.
- 2018 – Restructure of Te Kāhui Manukura.
- 2020 – Removal of Boards of Studies; inclusion of Department Programme Groups; addition of new qualification definitions; removal of exit qualifications. Organisation name changed to Ara Institute of Canterbury Ltd.
- 2020 – NZIST changes – Academic Board becomes Ara Academic Committee; Ara Council becomes Ara Board. Delegation from Ara Board to Academic Committee removed. Changed delegation to Head of Department to include “or delegate (L400 Manager)”.
- 11/2020 – Change of Education Act 1989 to Education and Training Act 2020.

2 Principles

- 2.1 All qualifications awarded by Ara fairly and accurately reflect the outcomes achieved by students and are consistent with the definitions and rules set by NZQA.
- 2.2 Other awards and prizes issued by Ara fairly and accurately reflect the outcomes achieved by students and are consistent with the criteria set by Ara and/or a Department and are according to standard formats.

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3 Associated Procedures for Ara Academic Policy on: Naming and Awarding Qualifications and Recognising Achievement

Contents:	3.1	Qualifications and Other Awards at Ara
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	3.13	Re-issuing Qualifications and Other Awards

3.1 Qualifications and Other Awards at Ara

a Qualifications and other awards currently issued by Ara are as follows:

i **Master's Degree (Level 9):** A Master's Degree is at least 240 credits except where it builds on:

- a Bachelor Degree with Honours or an equivalent qualification, or significant relevant professional experience, in which cases it can be fewer than 240 but no fewer than 120 credits;
- a three-year Bachelor Degree or an equivalent qualification, in which case it can be fewer than 240 but no fewer than 180 credits;

A Master's Degree must comprise a minimum of 40 credits at level 9 with the remainder at level 8.

The title must adhere to the following nomenclature convention: *Master of X (optional modifier indicating specialisation)*.

ii **Postgraduate Diploma (Level 8):** A Postgraduate Diploma requires a minimum of 120 credits from Levels 7 and above, with a minimum of 75 credits from Level 8. Note: NZQA specify a minimum of 72 credits from Level 8.

The title must adhere to the following nomenclature convention: *Postgraduate Diploma in X (optional modifier indicating specialisation)*.

iii **Postgraduate Certificate (Level 8):** A Postgraduate Certificate requires a minimum of 60 credits at Level 8.

The title must adhere to the following nomenclature convention: *Postgraduate Certificate in X (optional modifier indicating specialisation)*.

iv **Bachelor Degree (Level 7):** A Bachelor's Degree is a Level 7 qualification requiring a minimum of 360 credits from Levels 5 to 7, including at least 75 credits at Level 7. Note NZQA specify a minimum of 72 credits at Level 7.

The title must adhere to the following nomenclature convention: *Bachelor of X (optional modifier indicating specialisation)*.

v **Graduate Diploma (Level 7):** A Graduate Diploma requires a minimum of 120 credits from Levels 5 or above with a minimum of 75 credits at Level 7. Note NZQA specify a minimum of 72 credits at Level 7.

The title must adhere to the following nomenclature convention: *Graduate Diploma in X (optional modifier indicating specialisation)*.

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- vi **Graduate Certificate (Level 7):** A Graduate Certificate requires a minimum of 60 credits from Levels 5 or above including at least 40 credits at Level 7 or above.
The title must adhere to the following nomenclature convention: *Graduate Certificate in X (optional modifier indicating specialisation)*.
- vii **NZ Diploma (Level 6):** A NZ Diploma (Level 6) requires a minimum of 120 credits from Level 5 or above, with at least 75 credits at Level 6 or above. Note NZQA specify a minimum of 72 credits at Level 6.
The title must adhere to the following nomenclature convention: *New Zealand Diploma in X (optional modifier indicating strand)*.
- viii **NZ Diploma (Level 5):** A NZ Diploma (Level 5) requires a minimum of 120 credits from Level 4 or above, with at least 75 credits at Level 5. Note NZQA specify a minimum of 72 credits at Level 5.
The title must adhere to the following nomenclature convention: *New Zealand Diploma in X (optional modifier indicating strand)*.
- ix **NZ Certificate (Levels 1-6):** A NZ Certificate requires a minimum of 40 credits from Levels 1–6, with the level determined by the highest 40 credits.
The title must adhere to the following nomenclature convention: *New Zealand Certificate in X (optional modifier indicating strand)*.
- x **Training Scheme:** A training scheme is study or training that leads to an award, but does not, of itself, lead to an award of a qualification on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF). A training scheme can be at any NZQF level and can be up to 40 credits (although there are some exceptions) and has no minimum value.
- xi **Micro-credentials:** A micro-credential certifies achievement of a coherent set of skills and knowledge and will be subject to the same requirements as a training scheme. A micro-credential will be 5 to 40 credits in size; have strong evidence of need from employers, industry and/or community; and not duplicate current quality assured learning approved by NZQA.
- xii **Statement of Attainment:** A formal record of achievement, in recognition of successful completion of an approved, assessed course at any Level that (either because it is less than 40 credits including Training Schemes OR for any other reason) has not been approved as a formal qualification.
- xiii **Statement of Attendance:** A formal record of course completion which may be issued by Departments in cases where attendance is the only stated course requirement. The percentage of attendance required to receive the statement must be specified, and the statement is issued only to students who meet that requirement.

3.2 Variation to an Award

- a A student may be granted an exemption for prescribed core or compulsory courses because they are unable to complete all the requirements of a prescribed course due to factors outside their control. In such cases, the student is not awarded credit for the prescribed course but is given the opportunity to complete an approved alternative course of the same or higher credit value at the same or higher level via approval of a 'variation to programme'.
- b 'Variation to a programme' is approved by exception, on a case by case basis. In all cases, a variation is approved only if the graduate profile for the programme in which the student is enrolled is achieved.

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- c Applications for a 'variation to a programme' are submitted to the Ara Academic Committee via the AIR Division by the relevant Head of Department or delegate, either of whom can endorse the variation.
- d Approval of the variation is via a subgroup operating under delegation of the Ara Academic Committee and consisting of one member of the Portfolio Assurance and Academic Risk Committee (PAARC) and two additional members of the Ara Academic Committee who are not members of the PAARC. All decisions are reported to the Ara Academic Committee, and a central file is maintained by the AIR Division.
- e No more than 25% of the total credit value of any programme can be varied (equivalent to one standard 15-credit course in a 60-credit qualification). If multiple applications are received for students in the same programme, this can signal a need for the programme and/or the entry criteria to be reviewed.

3.3 With Distinction

- a In July 2000, the Ara Academic Committee approved the awarding of qualifications 'With Distinction' in recognition of identified students' high achievement/exemplary performance in the overall programme.
- b The following regulations apply:
 - i Departments are not required to award Distinction in any programme.
 - ii Distinction is awarded at programme level only.
 - iii Ara reserves the right to recognise exemplary performance of its students in any way it deems appropriate. Distinction may, therefore, be given for local qualifications. In cases where the qualification itself is awarded by another body, students meeting the criteria for Distinction are issued with a separate acknowledgement and/or a notation is included on the Ara record/transcript.
 - iv Criteria for Distinction are stated clearly, approved by the Ara Academic Committee and available to students in writing.
 - v Criteria are standards based, not norm referenced (e.g. Distinction is not awarded to the 'top student' in each intake, regardless of the standard achieved).
 - vi Criteria vary from qualification to qualification, as relevant to the particular discipline. Personal attributes such as punctuality, cooperativeness, reliability and speed are acceptable provided these attributes are relevant to the graduate profile/outcomes and/or likely employment for graduates.
 - vii Criteria include the specified standard of overall academic achievement in the courses that make up the qualification (e.g. 'Achieve an A- grade average over all courses in the programme, with no mark lower than A-').
 - viii The award and/or official academic record/transcript of students receiving Distinction includes the notation "With Distinction",
 - ix At graduation, all students obtaining Distinction are recognised by having 'With Distinction' printed after their names in the programme.

3.4 Issuing Qualifications

All qualifications are issued through Central Academic Records which arranges production through Marketing.

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3.5 Issuing Statements of Attendance and Statements of Attainment

Heads of Departments are responsible for ensuring that the stated procedures are followed and the criteria for issuing the Statements are met. Departments decide whether a Statement of Attendance is issued automatically to all students meeting the requirements or only on request.

The **Statement of Attainment** is requested by the Department on the *Request for Course Certificates* form and forwarded to Central Academic Records who will arrange the production of the certificate with Marketing.

Production of the **Statement of Attendance** is by any of the following, at the discretion of each Department:

- a Produced by the Department, following the standard format (see Section 3.8).
- b Produced by Marketing (also in standard format) at a Department's request.
- c Produced by the Department, on letterhead paper, usually when individual student(s) request evidence of course attendance.

3.6 Student Awards/Prizes

The issuing of Student Prizes and Awards is delegated to each Department. Students are advised of the criteria and procedures in Programme Handbooks. Students are identified within a Department, with the Head of Department responsible for ensuring that the stated procedures are followed and the criteria for the prize or award are met. Student awards are produced by Marketing, following the standard format for Ara Student Awards (see section 3.8).

The types of awards or prizes given out could include the following terminology:

- Top Student
- 1st in Class
- Scholarship
- Industry Award
- Excellence in ...
- Apprentice of the Year
- Student of the Year
- Degree Prize

Terminology not listed above would require the approval of the DCE - AIR before it could be used on a student award.

A manual register of awards will be held and maintained by the Academic Quality team.

3.7 Official Authorisation Terminology

When Ara issues an award for a qualification that has been approved and/or accredited by NZQA or other external body, the specified legal wording describing the authority under which the award is made is included on the award. In some cases, this can be abbreviated. The approved text for awards is as follows:

- a Qualifications Level 1-7, excluding degrees (Bachelor's and Master's) and postgraduate
*This is to certify that on [Day] [Month] [Year]
[Name of learner]
has met the requirements of the programme leading to the above qualification and was awarded this qualification by Ara Institute of Canterbury Ltd*
- b Degree (Bachelor's and Master's)/Postgraduate qualifications

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*Ara Institute of Canterbury Ltd, exercising its powers under the Education and Training Act 2020, and being satisfied that the requirements of the Ara Academic Committee have been met, hereby confers upon
[Name of the learner]
the degree of
[Qualification Title, Level]
awarded on [Day] [Month] [Year] Christchurch, New Zealand*

- c To be inserted at the bottom of all awards

Ara Institute of Canterbury Ltd is accredited to provide the (name of programme) by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority under section 441 of the Education and Training Act 2020.

- d Other qualifications e.g. qualifications at Level 1 to Level 6 that do not have New Zealand in their title, e.g. offered under the auspices of or in partnership with another body or organisation: The wording is decided on a case by case basis.

- e Statement of Attainment:

*This is to certify that
[Name of learner]
Has successfully completed a course of
[no. of hours] total learning hours in
[name of course]
Awarded
[date]*

- f Statements of Attendance: No authorisation statement included, as this is not a programme.

3.8 Design of Awards and Statements

- a Certificates, Graduate Certificates and Postgraduate Certificates are A4 in size, landscape format, carry the Ara embossed logo and are signed by the Chief Executive and DCE - AIR.
- b Diplomas, Graduate Diplomas and Postgraduate Diplomas are A4 in size, landscape format, carry the official Ara common seal and are signed by the Chief Executive, the Chair of Ara Board and the DCE - AIR.
- c Degrees (Bachelor's and Master's) are B2 in size, landscape format, carry the official Ara common seal and are signed by the Chief Executive, the Chair of Ara Board, and the DCE - AIR.
- d Statements of Attainment are A5 in size, portrait format, carry the Ara embossed logo and are signed by the Head of Department or other designated person.
- e Statements of Attendance are A5 in size, portrait format and are signed by the Head of Department or other designated person. They do not carry the embossed logo or common seal and can be produced by the Department or Marketing. Alternatively, a confirmation of attendance can be issued by the Department on letterhead paper.
- f Student Awards/Prizes are A4 in size, portrait format, carry the Ara embossed logo and are signed by the Head of Department or other designated person. The Nomenclature of 'certificate' cannot be used.
- g Variations to any of the above are approved by the Ara Academic Committee, on application from the Department, Registry, Executive or other relevant body.
- h Signatures may be original or electronic. Permission must be granted from the individual for the use of an electronic signature for each graduation ceremony or when an award is conferred.

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3.9 Use of the Ara Common Seal

The Ara Common Seal is affixed to Diplomas, Graduate Diplomas, Degrees, Postgraduate Certificates and Diplomas, and Master's Degrees. The awards are signed by the Chief Executive, Board Chair and DCE - AIR. Central Academic Records maintains a register of currently offered qualifications and reports the list bi-annually to the Ara Board.

Certificates do not have the Ara Common Seal affixed and these are signed by the Chief Executive and DCE - AIR.

3.10 Conferment

- a Level 1-3 qualifications are automatically conferred to students upon successful completion of the qualification, unless the student has special dispensation to attend a graduation ceremony at which time they will be conferred.
- b Level 4-9 qualifications are conferred at graduation.
- c In special circumstances, a student's qualification/other award can be conferred outside the scope of this policy, on application to and approval from the DCE - AIR.

3.11 Eligibility for Graduation

- a Ara students who have successfully completed the requirements of an assessed, defined programme of study leading to a qualification at or above Level 4 are eligible - as of right to receive the award at an official Ara graduation ceremony. Inclusion of other programmes in the graduation ceremony is approved on a case by case basis by the DCE - AIR.
- b Where a student has completed a qualification awarded by another institution, but taught mainly at, or through Ara, and there is an agreement between Ara and the awarding institution, the student may receive the award 'in absentia' from the awarding institution and receive the documentation at an Ara graduation ceremony. Specific regulations include:
 - i The Academic Committees (and Boards if required) from both Ara and the awarding institution agree that the qualification be awarded in this way. The Head of Department and the manager of the Ara graduation ceremony are consulted as part of the process leading to this agreement.
 - ii Ara and the awarding institution decide whether the Ara logo is included on the award or other documentation.
 - iii The awarding institution makes arrangements for the appropriate regalia (if any) and is responsible for payment of any costs incurred.
 - iv Each student receiving the award is named in the Ara graduation ceremony programme under a heading that indicates the qualification is awarded by another institution and explains the relationship with Ara. The awarding institution must provide a list of all students and the relevant qualification/s to be awarded. Ara then treats the students in the same way as other graduates (ie notices posted, inclusion in programme).
 - v The Chief Executive or delegate of the awarding institution may attend the graduation ceremony as a guest of Ara and may participate in the ceremony at the discretion of the Chair of the Ara Board.
- c Where a qualification is developed collaboratively with another provider, the Memorandum of Understanding must outline the conditions for awarding the qualification which will include graduation specifics e.g. dual branding, graduation ceremony attendance.

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- d All students eligible for graduation must complete the required documentation by the advertised due date.
- e If a student dies before the conferment of the qualification or statement of attainment/attendance, it may be conferred posthumously.
- f All graduands are expected to wear the appropriate academic dress as specified by the Ara. For Māori or Te Puna Wānaka staff/students, appropriate dress may include a korowai (cloak). Graduands who have previously graduated with another qualification may opt to wear academic regalia appropriate to the qualification already conferred. Staff also are expected to wear appropriate academic dress, which may include the gown, hood, and head gear relevant to the specific academic qualification held by the person. (Refer to *APP503a Regalia Required for Graduation*.)
- g In special circumstances students graduating In Absentia are still eligible to attend a formal graduation ceremony within 12 months. Where a student is unable to attend the next available ceremony, they may attend any in the next 12 months upon application to Central Academic Records. Those who wish to have their qualification conferred in absentia apply on the appropriate form by the advertised date, and the qualification is posted to them after the graduation ceremony.

3.12 Issuing Transcripts

- a Final academic transcripts are issued by the Central Academic Records for inclusion in the graduation folders. They are issued in the student's legal name.
- b Final transcripts are available on request for students not attending graduation.
- c Transcripts are issued/reissued at no cost to the student.

3.13 Re-issuing Qualifications and Other Awards

- a Requests from students for a re-issue must be received by the Central Academic Records in writing, accompanied by the original qualification (which will not be returned) and any required fee. The Department may decide to re-issue the award to all students without requiring individual requests.
- b Lost Qualifications
 - i If a student loses the original qualification/other award, it can be re-issued by Registry, Customer Experience and Engagement Division. A signed statement that the original qualification has been lost must accompany the request, along with any required fee. The re-issued qualification is generated in the name of the current legal entity, states that it is a re-issue, includes the date that the original qualification was obtained, the date of the re-issue, and identifies the name of the entity when the student qualified for the award.
 - ii On occasion, the Central Academic Records Office is asked to re-issue a lost transcript and/or award for a former student for whom no formal evidence of results or the qualification can be found. When this occurs, the Registry Manager will ensure that steps are taken to check all existing records (e.g. by contacting department staff, checking the Student Management System, checking archived records, talking with academic staff involved in delivery of the programme at that time, requesting any relevant information from the AIR Division).
 - iii If the information gathered from the above is insufficient to validate positively the student's results or award, the current Head of Department has the authority to decide how to proceed. If the decision is to re-issue the award or transcript as requested, and the information is not definitive, the student must sign a statutory declaration prepared by the Secretary to Board before the transcript/award is issued. The standard fee for re-issuing an award applies.

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- iv The original qualification/award, or a formal declaration that it has been destroyed or lost but will be returned if found, must accompany the application along with any required fee.
- c Change in Student's Name
Qualifications/other awards are issued (and re-issued) in the student's legal name. This may include the name of the student as recorded on her/his enrolment form/student enrolment system at time of enrolment OR in the name recorded on the student's birth certificate OR marriage certificate OR formal change of name notice, provided an original or verified copy of the relevant document is sighted and a written request from the student is approved by DCE - AIR, Registry Manager or Customer Experience and Engagement Division delegate (refer *APP503b Change of Name on Awards*).

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