

Appendix A – Excerpt from Australian Qualifications Framework

AQF level 9 – Masters Degree

AQF level 9 criteria	
Summary	Graduates at this level will have specialised knowledge and skills for research, and/or professional practice and/or further learning
Knowledge	Graduates at this level will have advanced and integrated understanding of a complex body of knowledge in one or more disciplines or areas of practice
Skills	Graduates at this level will have expert, specialised cognitive and technical skills in a body of knowledge or practice to independently: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyse critically, reflect on and synthesise complex information, problems, concepts and theories • research and apply established theories to a body of knowledge or practice • interpret and transmit knowledge, skills and ideas to specialist and non-specialist audiences
Application of knowledge and skills	Graduates at this level will apply knowledge and skills to demonstrate autonomy, expert judgement, adaptability and responsibility as a practitioner or learner

Descriptors	Masters Degree (Research)
Summary	The Masters Degree (Research) qualifies individuals who apply an advanced body of knowledge in a range of contexts for research and scholarship and as a pathway for further learning
Knowledge	Graduates of a Masters Degree (Research) will have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a body of knowledge that includes the understanding of recent developments in one or more disciplines • advanced knowledge of research principles and methods applicable to the field of work or learning
Skills	Graduates of a Masters Degree (Research) will have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cognitive skills to demonstrate mastery of theoretical knowledge and to reflect critically on theory and its application • cognitive, technical and creative skills to investigate, analyse and synthesise complex information, problems, concepts and theories and to apply established theories to different bodies of knowledge or practice • cognitive, technical and creative skills to generate and evaluate complex ideas and concepts at an abstract level • cognitive and technical skills to design, use and evaluate research and research methods • communication and technical skills to present a coherent and sustained argument and to disseminate research results to specialist and non-specialist audiences • technical and communication skills to design, evaluate, implement, analyse, theorise and disseminate research that makes a contribution to knowledge
Application of knowledge & skills	Graduates of a Masters Degree (Research) will demonstrate the application of knowledge and skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • with creativity and initiative to new situations and/or for further learning • with high level personal autonomy and accountability • to plan and execute a substantial piece of research

AQF level 10 – Doctoral Degree (PhD and Professional Doctorate)

AQF level 10 criteria	
Summary	Graduates at this level will have systematic and critical understanding of a complex field of learning and specialised research skills for the advancement of learning and/or for professional practice
Knowledge	Graduates at this level will have systemic and critical understanding of a substantial and complex body of knowledge at the frontier of a discipline or area of professional practice
Skills	<p>Graduates at this level will have expert, specialised cognitive, technical and research skills in a discipline area to independently and systematically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • engage in critical reflection, synthesis and evaluation • develop, adapt and implement research methodologies to extend and redefine existing knowledge or professional practice • disseminate and promote new insights to peers and the community • generate original knowledge and understanding to make a substantial contribution to a discipline or area of professional practice
Application of knowledge and skills	Graduates at this level will apply knowledge and skills to demonstrate autonomy, authoritative judgement, adaptability and responsibility as an expert and leading practitioner or scholar

Descriptors	Doctoral Degree
Summary	The Doctoral Degree qualifies individuals who apply a substantial body of knowledge to research, investigate and develop new knowledge, in one or more fields of investigation, scholarship or professional practice
Knowledge	<p>Graduates of a Doctoral Degree will have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a substantial body of knowledge at the frontier of a field of work or learning, including knowledge that constitutes an original contribution • substantial knowledge of research principles and methods applicable to the field of work or learning
Skills	<p>Graduates of a Doctoral Degree will have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cognitive skills to demonstrate expert understanding of theoretical knowledge and to reflect critically on that theory and practice • cognitive skills and use of intellectual independence to think critically, evaluate existing knowledge and ideas, undertake systematic investigation and reflect on theory and practice to generate original knowledge • expert technical and creative skills applicable to the field of work or learning • communication skills to explain and critique theoretical propositions, methodologies and conclusions • communication skills to present cogently a complex investigation of originality or original research for external examination against international standards and to communicate results to peers and the community • expert skills to design, implement, analyse, theorise and communicate research that makes a significant and original contribution to knowledge and/or professional practice
Application of knowledge & skills	<p>Graduates of a Doctoral Degree will demonstrate the application of knowledge and skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • with intellectual independence • with initiative and creativity in new situations and/or for further learning • with full responsibility and accountability for personal outputs • to plan and execute original research • with the ongoing capacity to generate new knowledge, including in the context of professional practice