

# Reading grid on the way to a European Qualifications Framework for the arts

## Explanation of approach and invitation for further discussion

---

### Why a reading grid?

#### Concise descriptions of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> levels in higher arts education

This reading grid provides a concise description of levels of higher arts education characterised in terms of knowledge, skills and competences, typical for the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle. It is based on the discipline-specific wording of these levels in the *Tuning* documents for Fine Art, Design, Theatre and Dance Education as developed and discussed by colleagues from the different arts disciplines. The general references include the levels 6 – 8 defined in the proposal for a ‘*Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning*’ by the European Commission, which is now formally adopted by the European Council. The grid should be seen as a tool for arts institutions involved in establishing national qualifications frameworks for the arts. It does not pretend to be the ultimate description of the levels and will be regularly updated. The grid was developed in Strand 2 as an exercise. Comments and suggestions are appreciated.

#### Comparison between general level qualifications and higher arts education qualifications

The grid makes it possible to make an exact comparison between level 6 qualifications and level 6 arts qualifications in terms of knowledge, skills and competences. As one would expect there are broad similarities, but also important differences between the generic level 6 qualifications and level 6 arts qualifications. The same is true for level 7 and 8, although in level 8 (3<sup>rd</sup> cycle) the differences are less significant.

### Explanation of the approach

#### The grid was developed in 3 steps:

1. The reference in the first column is the set of 3 reference levels (out of a total of 8) from the European Commission proposal on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for *Lifelong Learning*.
2. The level descriptions at 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> cycles from the Fine Art, Design, Theatre and Dance *Tuning* documents served as a basis. The discipline descriptions in these documents resulted in a series of columns for each of the disciplines. Each extra box on the grid described 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> level cycles for each of these disciplines.
3. The main challenge was to characterise general arts degrees at 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle in terms of knowledge, skills and competences. These got a separate set of boxes describing the cycles in terms of knowledge, skills and competences. The descriptions in each box are an amalgamation from the descriptions of individual disciplines.

## Background information

### European Qualifications Framework (EQF)

The core element of the EQF developed within the context of the *Bologna* process is a set of 8 reference levels, which act as a common reference point for education and training authorities at national and sectoral level. Levels 6 - 8 are the levels defined in the context of the *Bologna* process (*'Dublin-descriptors'*). The description of the 8 EQF reference levels is based on learning outcomes - in the EQF this is understood as the statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process. The EQF document emphasises this is not an attempt to develop a cross-European standard qualifications framework, but only a neutral reference and invited interested groups including sectoral groups to consider developing a reading grid, which would allow straight forward comparisons to be made between different national qualification frameworks and a sectoral Qualifications Framework following the general guidelines / structure of the EQF. The document COM (2006) 479 final 2006/0163 (COD) is downloadable from [http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/eqf/com\\_2006\\_0479\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/eqf/com_2006_0479_en.pdf) In December 2005 *inter}artes* submitted comments on an earlier consultation document and proposed to develop a Qualifications Framework for the arts. See the text at [www.inter-artes.org](http://www.inter-artes.org).

### 'Tuning Educational Structures in Europe'

The *Tuning* project a well established European university project where different subjects /groups of subjects attempt to characterise their discipline at 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle according to a common template. The exercise has already been completed for a variety of scientific subjects. *Inter}artes* liaises with the *Tuning* project. The template has a series of headings: definition of the subject, relationships with other subjects, relationships with key stakeholders but most importantly how the subject at 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle is characterised in terms of '*Learning Outcomes and Competences*'. Specifically, it asks about key subject competences and key generic competences. The *Tuning* template is not entirely compatible with the division in skills, knowledge and competences used in the *European Commission* document, which created some difficulties in drafting the reading grid. For more information on *Tuning*: <http://tuning.unideusto.org/tuningeu/>

|   | KNOWLEDGE  |   | SKILLS   |  | COMPETENCE   |   |
|---|--|---|--|--|--|---|
|   | European QF  | ARTS  | European QF  | ARTS   | European QF  | ARTS  |
| 6 | Advanced knowledge of a field of work or study, involving a critical understanding of theories and principles  | A practical and/or embodied knowledge of the language and theories of a specific arts discipline. A critical understanding of the major reference points of that discipline, and its history allied to knowledge of how to interrelate theory and practice constructively within the area of study.                   | Advanced skills, demonstrating mastery and innovation, required to solve complex and unpredictable problems in a specialised field of work or study.                         | A command of the skills, techniques and methodologies of a specific arts discipline. An ability to utilise interpretive, evaluative and analytical skills appropriately. An ability to identify and understand audiences and how to communicate with them effectively. | Manage complex technical or professional activities or projects, taking responsibility for decision-making in unpredictable work or study contexts. Take responsibility for managing professional development of individuals and groups.                 | The effective articulation of conceptual, creative and imaginative resources. Command of the theories, techniques and individual sensibilities, necessary to operate successfully within the professional arena. Be critically self-reflective and have the potential to work autonomously and to contribute as part of a team. |
| 7 | Highly specialised knowledge, some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work or study, as the basis for original thinking<br>Critical awareness of knowledge issues in a field and of the interface between different fields. | An advanced and specialised ability to interrelate theory and practice in the creation of a body of work that is personally innovative and informed by advanced practice and knowledge within the field. Critical and creative awareness of interdisciplinary possibilities between differing fields and disciplines. | Specialised problem-solving skills required in research and/or innovation in order to develop new knowledge and procedures and to integrate knowledge from different fields. | The ability to create a self-initiated body of work that demonstrates innovation and mastery of expressive, intellectual and technical skills. The ability to analyse and develop working processes, and plan and manage their own projects.                           | Manage and transform work or study contexts that are complex, unpredictable and require new strategic approaches<br>Take responsibility for contributing to professional knowledge and practice and/or for reviewing the strategic performance of teams. | An advanced capacity to work with critical reflection and originality at a professional level of autonomy.<br>Articulate and communicate the intentions, values, and meanings of their own work to relevant audiences.<br>Identify pathways for further personal and professional development in an international context.      |

|   | KNOWLEDGE  |  | SKILLS  |  | COMPETENCE   |   |
|---|--|--|---|--|--|---|
|   | European QF  | ARTS   | European QF   | ARTS   | European QF  | ARTS  |
| 8 | Knowledge at the most advanced frontier of a field of work or study and at the interface between fields. | Make a significant contribution to the advancement of knowledge and/or creative practice in the subject and produce outcomes worthy of dissemination within the public domain. | The most advanced and specialised skills and techniques, including synthesis and evaluation, required to solve critical problems in research and/or innovation and to extend and redefine existing knowledge and professional practice. | An ability to identify issues worthy of research and/or investigative creative practice, and develop a reasoned methodology and processes of documentation, resulting in new knowledge or innovative expression, capable of dissemination. | Demonstrate substantial authority, innovation, autonomy, scholarly and professional integrity and sustained commitment to the development of new ideas or processes at the forefront of work or study contexts including research. | Make informed judgements on complex issues, often within unexplored fields or unstable areas of knowledge, and be able to communicate ideas and outcomes clearly and effectively to specialist audiences and within appropriate public domains. |