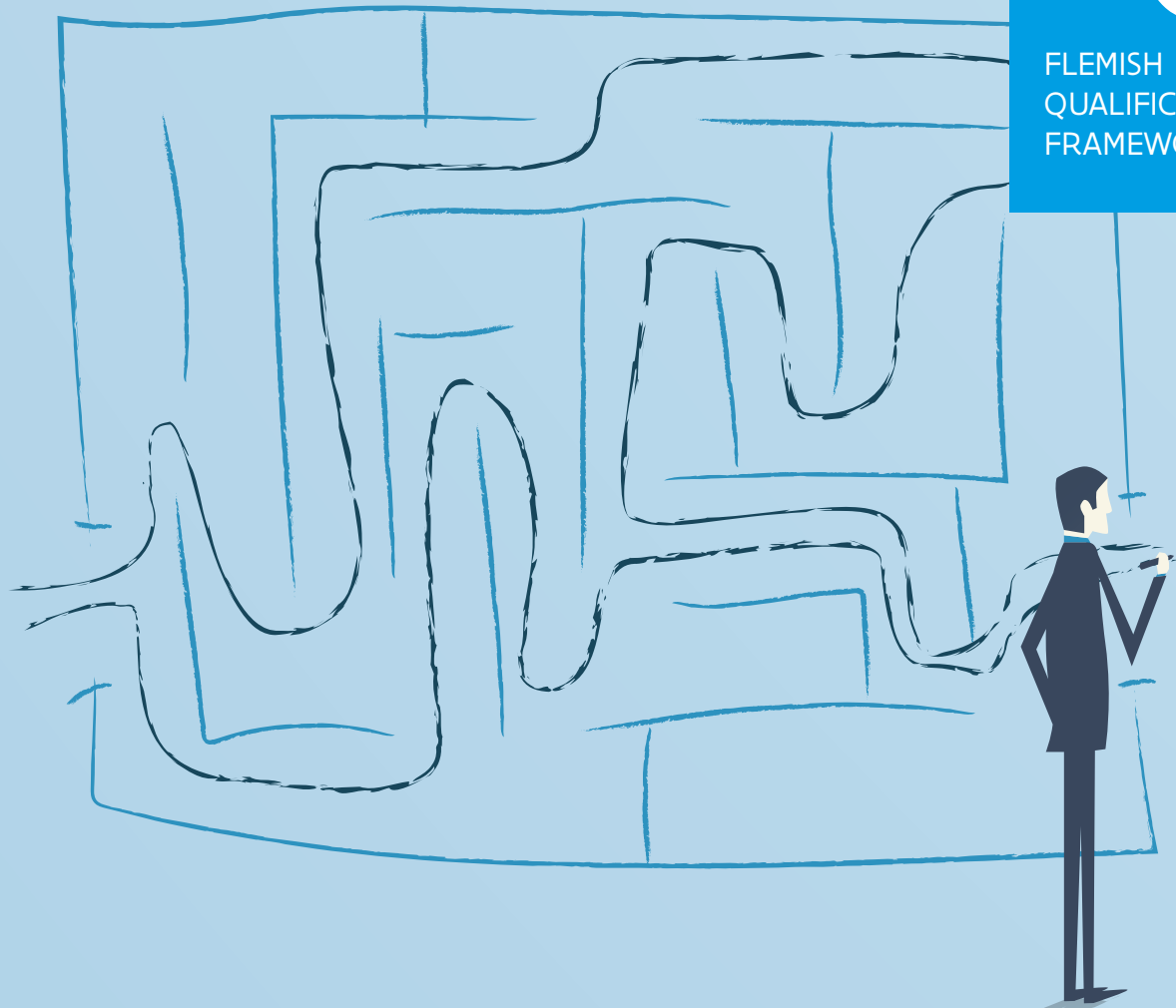




# FQF

FLEMISH  
QUALIFICATION  
FRAMEWORK



# THE FLEMISH QUALIFICATION FRAMEWORK

Qualifications Guide

AHOVOKS  
AGENCY FOR  
HIGHER EDUCATION,  
ADULT EDUCATION,  
QUALIFICATIONS &  
STUDY GRANTS

[vlaamsekwalificatiestructuur.be/en](http://vlaamsekwalificatiestructuur.be/en)


## Introduction

Rapid technological, economic and social changes make lifelong learning a necessity. People can acquire, develop and maintain competencies in a variety of ways. The Flemish qualification framework helps them to do so by highlighting which qualifications or sets of competencies are required to do a job, to start further studies or to participate in society.

## European qualification framework

The growing mobility of learners and workers makes it necessary to increase the visibility and employability of acquired competencies. Moreover, the internationalisation of the labour market requires competencies to be described in internationally comparable qualifications. This is why the European Commission launched the European Qualification Framework (EQF).

In 2008, the European Parliament and the European Council adopted the EQF Recommendation. The EQF is a common European reference framework consisting of eight levels. Its aim is to link the qualification frameworks of the European countries in order to make them more comparable.



EU MEMBER STATE A	EQF	EU MEMBER STATE B
1	1	1
2	2	2
3	3	3
4	4	4
5	5	5
6	6	6
7	7	7
8		
9		
10		
11		
12		

## The Flemish qualification framework

The Flemish Parliament approved the decree on the qualification structure in 2009. The Flemish qualification framework (FQF) consists of eight levels and offers a classification of qualifications recognised by the Government of Flanders. A qualification is a completed and graded set of competencies for which people can obtain a certificate recognised by the Government of Flanders.

### TWO TYPES OF QUALIFICATION

A **professional qualification** is a completed and graded set of competencies with which a person can practise a profession. People can acquire professional qualifications through education and other training providers or through a procedure for the recognition of acquired competencies (EVC). A professional qualification is established on the basis of a professional qualification file. The competent database forms the primary reference framework for this. As the competent service of the Government of Flanders, AHOVOKS coordinates the preparation of professional qualification files and organises their validation and grading.

**Educational qualifications** are sets of competencies with which people can function in society, start further studies and/or perform professional activities. Educational qualifications can only be acquired through education. Educational qualifications from levels one to four consist of learning outcomes, learning outcomes to prepare for higher education and/or recognised professional qualifications or partial qualifications. AHOVOKS develops proposals for educational qualifications on its own initiative or at the request of interested parties. For educational qualifications at levels five to eight, the higher education institutions describe the domain-specific learning outcomes for each study programme. The Dutch-Flemish Accreditation Organisation (NVAO) provides AHOVOKS with the recognised qualifications and the domain-specific learning outcomes contained therein.

## PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS: AN OVERVIEW

FQF LEVEL	PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS	EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS
8	x	Doctor
7	x	Master
6	x	Bachelor
5	x	Graduate education One or more recognised professional qualifications at level 5
4	x	a) learning outcomes and specific third-grade aso learning outcomes linked to one or more fields of science b) learning outcomes and specific third-grade tso learning outcomes linked to one or more fields of science c) learning outcomes and specific third-grade kso learning outcomes linked to one or more fields of science d) third-grade tso or kso learning outcomes and one or more recognised professional qualifications, whether or not supplemented by one or more partial qualifications e) learning outcomes and one or more recognised professional qualifications, whether or not supplemented by one or more partial qualifications f) learning outcomes for supplementary general education for adult education and one or more recognised professional qualifications, whether or not supplemented by one or more partial qualifications g) the learning outcomes and learning outcomes to prepare for higher education set out in b) or c) and one or more recognised professional qualifications, whether or not supplemented by one or more partial qualifications h) the learning outcomes for third-grade core professional training and learning outcomes to prepare for higher education for the cross-domain (aso) and domain-specific (tso/kso) core orientations of third-grade core professional training i) the learning outcomes for the third-grade double professional training and learning outcomes to prepare for higher education for the orientations of the third-grade double professional training (tso/kso) and one or more recognised professional qualifications, whether or not supplemented by one or more partial qualifications j) the learning outcomes of the structural component se-n-se in the third year third-grade that follows structural components of the first and second year third-grade labour market professional training and with which a diploma can be obtained that gives access to a bachelor's programme.
3	x	a) learning outcomes for the second year of third-grade BSO and one or more recognised professional qualifications, whether or not supplemented by one or more partial qualifications b) the learning outcomes for the second year of third-grade labour market professional training and one or more recognised professional qualifications, whether or not supplemented by one or more partial qualifications
2	x	a) learning outcomes in basic education b) learning outcomes for second-grade BSO and one or more recognised professional qualifications or partial qualifications c) learning outcomes for second grade of labour market professional training and one or more recognised professional qualifications or partial qualifications
1	x	Learning outcomes in primary education

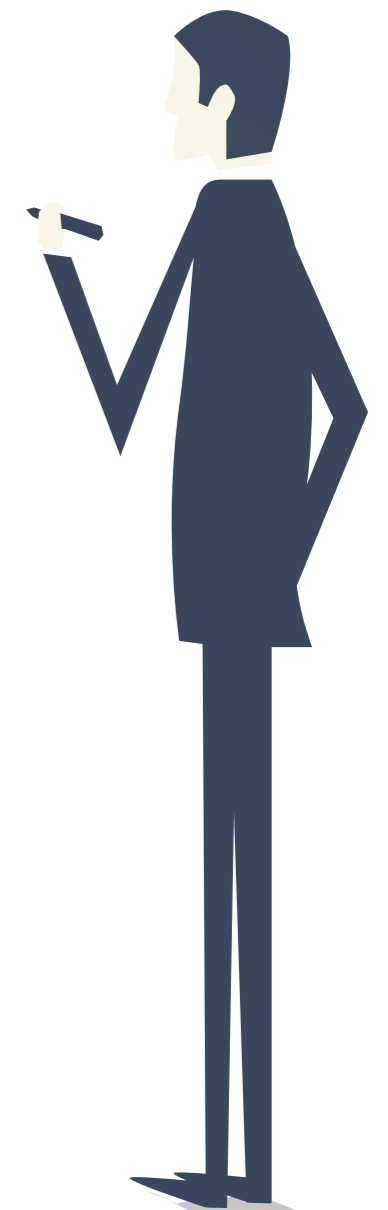
## QUALIFICATION FRAMEWORK WITH LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

Both professional and educational qualifications are placed on one of the eight levels of the Flemish qualification framework. Qualifications of different levels are distinguished from each other on the basis of level descriptors. The level descriptors describe the required knowledge and skills. In addition, they lay down the context, the degree of autonomy and the degree of responsibility that a certain level requires.

Qualifications can be compared in an objective and transparent way. This makes it easier for education, training and education providers and the labour market to communicate about qualifications and competencies. This is the case both in Flanders and in Europe.

### In short, the Flemish qualification framework

- is an overarching classification of recognised qualifications;
- clarifies the content of qualifications and their interrelationships;
- ensures that the competencies learned match the needs of the labour market;
- offers the opportunity to highlight, recognise and exchange competencies from formal, informal and non-formal learning.

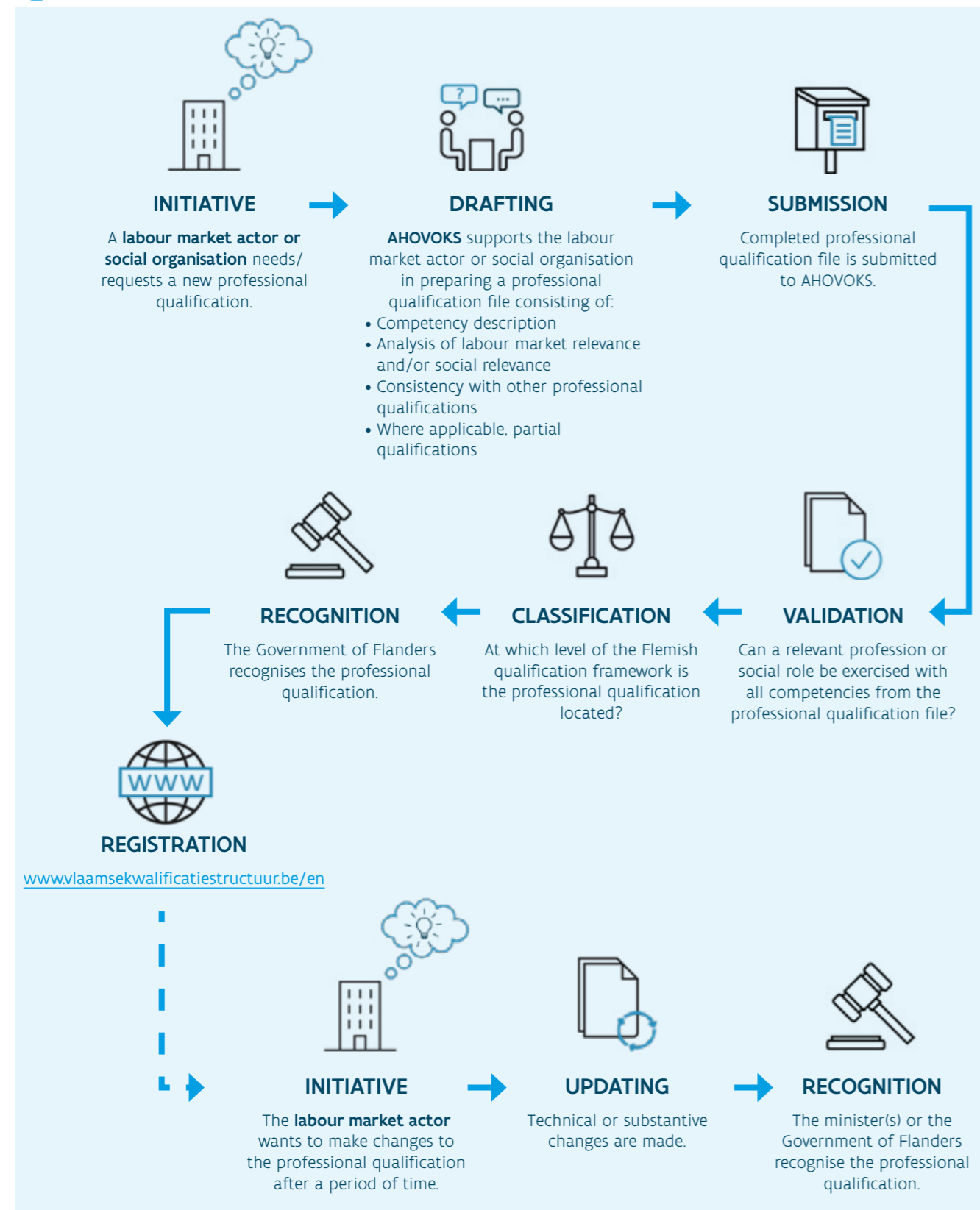


## The Flemish qualification framework: an overview

FQF LEVEL	LEVEL DESCRIPTOR ELEMENTS	
	SKILLS KNOWLEDGE	CONTEXT AUTONOMY RESPONSIBILITY
FQF 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>recognise materials, concise, unambiguous information and simple, concrete basic concepts and rules of a part of a specific area</li> <li>apply one or more of the following skills:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cognitive skills: retrieve information from one's memory, remember and apply it</li> <li>motorical skills: use automatisms and imitate practical actions</li> </ul> </li> <li>perform repetitive and recognisable actions in routine tasks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>act in a stable, familiar, simple and wellstructured context, in which time pressure is of little importance</li> <li>act with non-delicate objects</li> <li>functioning under direct supervision</li> <li>show personal effectiveness</li> </ul>
FQF 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>understand information, concrete concepts and standard procedures within a specific area</li> <li>apply one or more of the following skills:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cognitive skills: analyse information by distinguishing and relating elements</li> <li>motorical skills:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; transform sensory perceptions into motorical actions</li> <li>&gt; perform acquired practical-technical actions</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>apply a selected number of standard procedures when performing tasks; apply prescribed strategies to solve a limited number of recognisable, concrete problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>act in a limited number of comparable, simple, familiar contexts</li> <li>act with delicate, passive objects</li> <li>functioning under supervision with limited autonomy</li> <li>take limited executive responsibility for one's work</li> </ul>
FQF 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>understand a number of abstract concepts, laws, formulas and methods within a specific area; distinguishing between major and minor issues in information</li> <li>apply one or more of the following skills               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cognitive skills                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; analyse information using deduction and induction</li> <li>&gt; synthesize information</li> </ul> </li> <li>Motorical skills                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- make constructions based on a plan</li> <li>- perform actions which require tactical and strategic insight</li> <li>- apply artistic-creative skills</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>choose, combine and apply standard procedures and methods to perform tasks and solve a variety of well-defined, concrete problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>act in comparable contexts in which a number of factors change</li> <li>act with delicate, active objects</li> <li>function with a certain autonomy within a well-defined set of tasks</li> <li>take limited organisational responsibility for one's work</li> </ul>

FQF LEVEL	LEVEL DESCRIPTOR ELEMENTS	
	SKILLS KNOWLEDGE	CONTEXT AUTONOMY RESPONSIBILITY
FQF 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>interpret concrete and abstract data (information and concepts) within a specific area</li> <li>apply reflective cognitive and productive motorical skills</li> <li>evaluate and integrate data and develop strategies to perform diverse tasks and solve diverse, concrete, non-familiar (but subject-specific) problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>act in a combination of changing contexts</li> <li>functioning autonomously with some initiative</li> <li>take full responsibility for one's work; evaluate and adjust one's actions with a view to obtaining collective results</li> </ul>
FQF 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>extend the information from a specific subject with concrete and abstract data, or complete it with missing data; use frameworks of concepts; be aware of the scope of subject-specific knowledge</li> <li>apply integrated cognitive and motor skills</li> <li>transfer knowledge and apply procedures flexibly and inventively when performing tasks and for finding strategic solutions to concrete and abstract problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>act in a range of new, complex contexts</li> <li>operate autonomously with initiative</li> <li>take responsibility for the achievement of personal outcomes and for the stimulation of collective results</li> </ul>
FQF 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>critically evaluate and combine knowledge and understanding in a specific area</li> <li>apply complex specialised skills, linked to research outcomes</li> <li>gather and interpret relevant data and make innovative use of selected methods and resources to solve non-familiar complex problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>act in complex and specialised contexts</li> <li>operate with complete autonomy and considerable initiative</li> <li>take shared responsibility for the definition of collective results</li> </ul>
FQF 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>integrate and reformulate knowledge and understanding of a specific subject or at the interface between different areas</li> <li>apply complex new skills, linked to autonomous, standardised research</li> <li>critically evaluate and apply complex, advanced and/or innovative problemsolving techniques and methods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>act in unpredictable, complex and specialised contexts</li> <li>operate with complete autonomy and a right of decision</li> <li>take final responsibility for the definition of collective results</li> </ul>
FQF 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>extend and/or redefine existing knowledge of a substantial part of a specific subject or at the interface between different areas</li> <li>interpret and create new knowledge through original research or advanced scientific study</li> <li>design and execute projects which extend and redefine existing procedural knowledge, aimed at the development of new skills, techniques, applications, practices and/or materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>act in particularly complex contexts with broad, innovative implications</li> <li>take responsibility for the development of professional practice or scientific research whilst adopting a highly critical stance and showing managerial capacity</li> </ul>

# Procedure for recognising professional qualifications



# Applications of the Flemish qualification framework

## TRANSPARENCY

By describing qualifications clearly and in relation to each other, learners (pupils, students, job-seekers and those in employment) can gain insight into the possible pathways to a suitable qualification. The Flemish Qualifications Structure is thus the reference framework for study and career choice.

## QUALITY TRAINING

### • Educational training

AHOVOKS supports the development of educational qualifications from level 1 to 5. Educational qualifications aimed at the labour market include at least a professional qualification. Educational providers within secondary education, adult education, part-time art education and graduate courses align their curricula with recognised qualifications.

For each educational course from level five up to and including level eight, domain-specific learning outcomes are described under the coordination of the VLIR and VLHORA, with quality control by the NVAO.

### • Professional qualifying pathways

AHOVOKS supervises the preparation of professional qualifications. Organisations from the public, private or public-private sector that meet quality criteria can issue recognised professional qualifications after a training and/or EVC pathway, in which the competencies from the professional qualifications are taught and/or tested.

In this way, training courses connect to:

- competencies demanded by the labour market and/or society,
- competencies needed for personal development,
- competencies needed to embark on further training.

The quality control of the qualifying training courses is ensured by the competent services (Education Inspectorate, NVAO, supervisors, etc.).



**RESPONSIBLE PUBLISHER**

Peter Parmentier  
Ministry of Education and Training  
Agency for Higher Education, Adult Education, Qualifications and Study Grants  
Koning Albert II-laan 15  
1210 Brussel

kenc@vlaanderen.be

**DESIGN**

Leen Penxten

**ONLINE**

<http://vlaamsekwalficatiestructuur.be/en>

**FILING NUMBER**

D/2020/3241/061

**ISSUE**

March 2020

# AHOVOKS

AGENCY FOR HIGHER EDUCATION,  
ADULT EDUCATION, QUALIFICATIONS  
AND STUDY GRANTS

Koning Albert II-laan 15  
1210 BRUSSELS  
[www.ahovoks.be](http://www.ahovoks.be)