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**Abstract**

Both students and employers, the main users of the higher education system, need to have confidence that qualifications attest accurately to past achievement and current ability. The standards represented by higher education qualifications need to be explicit and, in an employment market that is increasingly global, qualifications must have a universal currency. The frameworks of higher education qualifications published recently in the United Kingdom provide explicit benchmarks, and do so in a manner that enables international comparisons to be drawn.

Users need assurance that the programmes of study leading to qualifications are effective in enabling the learner both to achieve, and to demonstrate achievement of, the standards embodied in intended learning outcomes. Students in particular want to know that the education in which they are investing will meet their expectations. However, proposed changes in quality assurance of higher education suggest an unwillingness on the part of institutions to demonstrate that the standards embodied in the qualifications framework are being delivered. The interests of the providers appear to be given supremacy over those of the users. (HRK /

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