



REGISTERED NATIONAL QUALIFICATION

Title:	National Certificate in Whale Guiding Level 4				
Note:	<p>There is an emphasis on Humpback whales in this certificate as all whale watching operations in Tonga focus primarily on these gentle giants. According to <i>Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)</i>, certain humpback whale populations found the warm waters of Tonga as their traditional breeding grounds and tend to return to the same waters every season.]</p>				
Version:	1	Qualification type:	Certificate	TQF level:	4
Credits:	70	TQF Registration code:	QR-04-NQ-018-04-0903-19-01		
Approval date:	11 June 2019		Next review:	11 June 2024	
Qualification developer:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tonga Ministry of Tourism 2. Dr. Semisi Taumoepeau Dr. Nick Towner Auckland Institute of Studies New Zealand 				
Purpose:	<p>To provide the whale-watching tourism industry in Tonga with highly trained guides who can utilize knowledge of both whale ecology and the Tonga marine environment to prepare and deliver guided whale-watching tours and interpretations which are not only rich of cultural and scientific understanding but also safe to both humans and the environment.</p>				

QR-04-NQ-018-04-0903-19-01

National Certificate in Whale Guiding Level 4

Tonga National Qualifications and Accreditation Board 2019

	<p>This qualification provides vital employment opportunities for many of Tonga's youth especially school leavers. It also presents a long-term solution to national development, and a significant contribution to and support of the Outcomes of <i>2nd Tonga Strategic Development Framework (2015 – 2025)</i>¹.</p> <p>This qualification builds on the skills and knowledge obtained in the <i>Tonga National Certificate in Tour Guiding Level 3</i>.</p>
Rationale	<p>Whale-watching, including swimming with whales, has the potential to contribute significantly to Tonga's economic development². The significant increase in the number of tourists visiting Tonga annually to watch the whales³ as well as the increase in the number of whale-watching businesses in Tonga, reflect the rate at which this industry is quickly gaining ground. By 2017 for example, Tonga registered a world-record of 20 commercial marine tour operators offering in-water encounters with humpback whales⁴.</p> <p>This qualification will help provide the necessary training to ensure safety for both human and whales and to minimise disruptions to the environment. It is also a convenient means of effectively introducing new legislations such as the <i>Tonga Whale Watching Act 2008</i>, <i>Tonga Whale Watching and Swimming Regulation 2013</i>, and appreciating the importance of complying with them.</p>
Outcomes Statement	<p>Graduates of this qualification will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Prepare for and carry out guided interpretations, applying knowledge of both the Tongan culture and physical environment as well as unique aspects of whale behaviour; 2) Plan for and manage the health and safety of a group during a tour including compliance with relevant Acts and health and safety legislations; 3) Apply workplace practices including greeting of clients and briefing of legal and safety requirements required of the tourism guiding industry; and

¹ Ministry of Finance. (2015). *2nd Tonga Strategic Development Framework 2015 – 2025*.

² Orams, M. B. (2002). Humpback Whales in Tonga: An Economic Resource for Tourism. *Coastal Management*, 30:361–380.

³ Addison, A., Spring, J., Taumoepeau, S. and Towner, N. (2017a). Community participation in the Vava'u whale watching industry: A local perspective. Paper presented at the Plenary session of the *Whales in a changing ocean conference, Nuku'alofa, Tonga (4-6 April)*.

⁴ Fiori, L, Martinez, E., Orams, M. B., and Bollard, B. (2019). Effects of whale-based tourism in Vava'u, Kingdom of Tonga: Behavioural responses of humpback whales to vessel and swimming tourism activities. *PLOS-ONE*, 14(7).

	4) Apply environmental 'best practice' in maritime safety, as well as regulations to minimise the negative impacts of business and visitor activity on whales and the rest of the marine environment.																								
Qualification Components	<p>This qualification consists of the following units of competency:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><i>Unit Code</i></th> <th><i>Unit Title</i></th> <th><i>Credit value</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>NS020-04</td> <td>Whale biology and history</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NS021-04</td> <td>Human and whale interactions</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NS022-04</td> <td>Guide clients through a whale watch tour</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NS023-04</td> <td>Tonga maritime regulations, whale watching and other legislations</td> <td>15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NS024-04</td> <td>Marine first aid and life support in whale-watching operations</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NS025-04</td> <td>Abandon ship procedures and sea survival techniques</td> <td>15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NS026-04</td> <td>Operational conditions of a vessel and its safety equipment</td> <td>10</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<i>Unit Code</i>	<i>Unit Title</i>	<i>Credit value</i>	NS020-04	Whale biology and history	8	NS021-04	Human and whale interactions	2	NS022-04	Guide clients through a whale watch tour	10	NS023-04	Tonga maritime regulations, whale watching and other legislations	15	NS024-04	Marine first aid and life support in whale-watching operations	10	NS025-04	Abandon ship procedures and sea survival techniques	15	NS026-04	Operational conditions of a vessel and its safety equipment	10
<i>Unit Code</i>	<i>Unit Title</i>	<i>Credit value</i>																							
NS020-04	Whale biology and history	8																							
NS021-04	Human and whale interactions	2																							
NS022-04	Guide clients through a whale watch tour	10																							
NS023-04	Tonga maritime regulations, whale watching and other legislations	15																							
NS024-04	Marine first aid and life support in whale-watching operations	10																							
NS025-04	Abandon ship procedures and sea survival techniques	15																							
NS026-04	Operational conditions of a vessel and its safety equipment	10																							
Entry Requirements	<p>All of the criteria below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Successfully completed <i>National Certificate in Tour Guiding Level 3</i> or equivalent; 2. Successfully completed <i>Tonga School Certificate (TSC)</i> or equivalent or at least 3 years relevant work experience in travel, tourism or hospitality; 3. A Pass of Grade 5 or better in <i>TSC Tongan Studies</i>, or have relevant cultural knowledge or experience that demonstrate adequate cultural competence (of Tongan society) as approved by the relevant authority (such as Course coordinator, Registrar, or Head of School); 4. A Pass of Grade 5 or better in <i>TSC English</i> or Minimum English level equivalent of IELTS 4.5; 5. Must be age 18 or older; and 6. Must be able to maintain natural buoyancy in water and swim a minimum distance. (Please check with the Provider for their minimum buoyancy time (minutes) and distance (metres). 																								
Learning Assumed to be in Place	<p>For candidates to successfully complete this qualification, it is assumed that they had acquired the following knowledge/skills at relevant levels of the TQF prior to enrolling in the course of study:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Basic Science at TQF Level 1 2. Human Biology at TQF Level 1 3. Mathematical literacy at TQF Level 1 																								

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Communication literacy at TQF Level 1 5. ICT literacy at TQF Level 1 (including computer, internet, mobile technology, and instructional media); 6. Tonga cultural awareness at TQF Level 1 (including Tongan language, protocol, etc.); 7. Basic boating knowledge; and 8. Physically fit and have basic skills for safety-at sea.
International Comparability	<p>This national qualification is comparable to the New Zealand <i>National Certificate in Tourism (Tour Guiding Level 4)</i> 60 Credits, in terms of the broad categories of skills that are learned as well as the levels at which these skills are learned. People who are awarded with this qualification can provide a range of services such as visitor interpretation, group management, and tour leadership. They will be able to provide services such as interpretation while on a whale watch tour, attend to administrative tasks both before and after a tour, and manage the health and safety of a tour group. In addition, they will be able to demonstrate knowledge of Tonga as a destination for tourists.</p> <p>Further, two of the components (competency units) of this national qualification have been adapted from NZQA registered standards, as shown below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The unit standard <i>NS025-04</i> is an adaptation of the NZQA registered standard 12309 version 5, with the title <i>Demonstrate knowledge of abandon ship procedures and sea survival techniques</i>; 2. The unit <i>NS026-04</i> is an adaptation of the NZQA registered standard 4137 version 4, with the title <i>Verify the operational condition of safety equipment on a vessel</i>.
Recognition of Prior Learning	<p>This qualification may be achieved in part or in whole through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), and in accordance with relevant national and institutional policies and processes. Evidence of skills and knowledge acquired must be shown before recognition can be given.</p>
Learning Pathways	<p><u>Pathways into:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Tonga National Form Seven Certificate</i>; 2. <i>National Certificate in Tour Guiding Level 3</i>, and other relevant TNQAB accredited Level 3 programmes; and 3. Staff of existing whale watching businesses with relevant work experience. <p><u>Pathways out:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Existing Diploma programmes: Level 5 - Tourism Management - Tonga Institute of Higher Education;

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Overseas (New Zealand): Level 5 - Tourism Management - Auckland Institute of Studies; and 3. Employment – Whale watching businesses – both Tonga and abroad.
Support for Qualification	<p>The standards in this qualification have been informally endorsed by the Tonga Ministry of Tourism and key stakeholders as the Level 4 industry standards for whale guiding.</p>
Accreditation Requirements	<p>Important accreditation requirements include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teaching staff must have must have at least a Level 5 qualification in tourism (or a related field) plus relevant industry experience; 2. Physical resources (satisfied with standard of computers and other class room resources); 3. Fire extinguisher; 4. A training boat (or relevant arrangements made) with safety gear and equipment such as life-jackets, UHF radio; 5. Marine First Aid Kit; 6. Dummies for first aid training; and 7. Relevant policies/ guidelines to ensure safety of staff and students in marine environments.