**Ministry of Education and Research (MoER)**

**Moldova Higher Education Project (MHEP)**

**Procurement Reference: MD-MOED-206709-CS-CQS**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**Consulting Company/ organization / institution to develop Qualification Standards**

**for the general field of study *031 Social and behavioural sciences for Higher Education***

* + - 1. **Background information on the project**

„Moldova Higher Education” Project (MHEP) is a World Bank-financed Project to be implemented between May 2020 and December 2025.

The total cost of credit is EUR 35.7 million (US$39.4 million equivalent) financed by the International Development Association (IDA) and is provided to the Republic of Moldova in support of Moldova Higher Education.

The Project Objective is to improve the labour market orientation of selected higher education institutions and the quality assurance mechanisms. The Project is organized around three components and includes systemic interventions in the areas of higher education quality, financing and management, as well as a targeted program to be implemented by selected higher education institutions and pedagogical colleges to address some of their most pressing needs in labour market orientation.

The MHEP components are described below:

1. Improving the Quality Assurance Mechanisms
2. Improving the Labour Market Orientation through Targeted Interventions
3. Project Management

*Component 1* ***–*** Improving the Quality Assurance Mechanisms. This component aims to improve Moldova higher education system’s quality assurance mechanisms, which would also contribute to improve its labour market orientation. It comprises three sub-components that support activities in: (i) National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and Quality Assurance (QA); (ii) System Management and Monitoring; (iii) Higher Education Financing.

*Component 2* – Improving the Labour Market Orientation through Targeted Interventions. This component will finance the design and implementation of a targeted and needs-based program (Higher Education Improvement Program - HEIP) aimed at improving the labour market orientation of Moldova’s higher education institutions, as well as their research capacity.

*Component 3* – Project Management. This component will support the day-to-day management of the Project by the MoER with assistance of a dedicated team of individual consultants who would provide managerial, fiduciary, and technical support to the implementation of the proposed Project for its full duration.

Component 1 of the Project will support the modernization and enhancement of key elements of the system’s quality assurance mechanisms, such as the development and revision of qualification standards that would guide the subsequent revision of the curricula and accreditation of academic programs. The development and revision of qualification standards will be done with the participation of relevant employers or their associations in each specific field. The MoER will organize competitions for the development and revision of Qualification Standards (QS) for ISCED[[1]](#footnote-1) levels 6, 7 and 8 in 23 fields. In this context, the MoER intends to hire a Consulting Company / organization / institution which will develop the Qualification Standards for the general field of study ***031 Social and behavioural sciences.***

* + - 1. **Objective(s) of the assignment**

The objective of the proposed assignment is to develop the Qualification Standards for the NQF levels 6, 7 and 8, for the general field of study ***031 Social and behavioural sciences*** in alignment with the National Qualification Framework.

* + - 1. **Scope of Work**

In order to achieve the objective, the Consultant shall perform the following tasks:

* Develop qualification standards for the NQF levels 6, 7 and 8 for the general field of study ***031 Social and behavioural sciences*** and the competence standards as part of the qualification standards, based on CORM, ESCO, ISCO, ISCED 2013F[[2]](#footnote-2), international/regional sectorial competences standards, researches on futures skills for labour market as well as international good practices, in accordance with the methodology[[3]](#footnote-3) established by the MoER;
* Establish the working groups in accordance with the methodology approved by the MoER, in order to develop qualification standards, including competence standards as part of the qualification standards for the NQF levels 6, 7 and 8 for the general field of study ***031 Social and behavioural sciences***;
* Organize training sessions for members of the Working groups in order to develop the qualification standards for the general field of study ***031 Social and behavioural sciences***;
* Manage the process of qualification standards development, validation and endorsement according to the methodology;
* Organize training sessions for teaching staff and managers in developing curricula for the general field of study ***031 Social and behavioural sciences*** based on qualification standards and learning outcomes, as well as in writing and assessing learning outcomes at the level of courses;
* Organize training sessions for the specialists responsible for internal quality management and university curricula development on issues of monitoring the quality of qualification, assessment of implementation the qualification standard in teaching and learning processes, in evaluation and recognition of learning outcomes, final certification of qualification, guaranty of relevance, establishing the needs for updating of qualification.
  + - 1. **Duration of the assignment, estimated time input and expected outcomes**

This consultancy is expected to last 9 months starting in May 2022, with the deliverables submitted as follows:

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| Deliverables | Submission Deadline | Approval by |
| Copies of the decisions to set up the Working Groups, in accordance with the mode established by the MoER, in order to develop qualification standards, including competence standards, for the NQF levels 6, 7 and 8 in the general field of study ***031 Social and behavioural sciences****.* | 3 weeks from signing the contract | Ministry of Education and Research, NQF Department |
| Report on delivering trainings for the members of the Working Groups in order to develop qualification standards, including competence standards, for the NQF levels 6, 7 and 8 in the general field of study ***031 Social and behavioural sciences****.* | 5 weeks from signing the contract | Ministry of Education and Research, NQF Department |
| Set of qualification standards for the NQF levels 6, 7 and 8 in the general field of study ***031 Social and behavioural sciences***, developed and validated in accordance with the methodology established by the MoER, coordinated with the relevant Ministry and presented to the MoER for final endorsement by the National Council for Qualifications. | 26 weeks from signing the contract | Ministry of Education and Research, NQF Department |
| Report on trainings delivered for teaching staff and managers in developing the curricula related to NQF levels 6, 7 and 8 in the general field of study ***031 Social and behavioural sciences***, based on the qualification standards and learning outcomes, in writing and assessing learning outcomes at the level of courses. | 32 weeks from signing the contract | Ministry of Education and Research, NQF Department |
| Report on delivering training sessions in monitoring quality, relevance, regular assessment and updating of qualifications in higher education, assessment of implementation the qualification standard in teaching and learning processes, in evaluation of learning outcomes, and final certification of qualification, for the specialists responsible of internal quality management and university curricula. | 36 weeks from signing the contract | Ministry of Education and Research, NQF Department |

All deliverables shall be submitted in electronic format (MS Office) in Romanian. Set of qualification standards shall be submitted in both electronic and paper formats in Romanian, English and Russian.

* + - 1. **Qualification requirements and basis for evaluation (evaluation criteria)**

1. **General experience**

* Extensive knowledge and understanding of the processes related to NQF development, curricula development, educational standards and qualification standards development, quality assurance of higher education qualifications;
* Experience in developing of at least three educational standards and/or university curricula for the NQF levels 6, 7 and 8, have a partnerships agreement and/or good cooperation with representatives of labour market and other relevant interested parts.

1. **Specific experience**

* Team members hold scientific-didactic titles, with experience in the development of the normative framework for organization of study processes, development of educational standards and curricula for higher education, including in the field *of* ***031 Social and behavioural sciences****;*
* Experience in implementation of international projects in the development of the NQF and qualifications in the higher education, in the development and implementation of the normative framework for quality assurance in in higher education would be an asset.
  + - 1. **Institutional Arrangements**

The consultant will report to the MHEP Project Coordinator, Project Executive Director and to Head of the National Qualifications Framework Department of the MoER. The MHEP team will oversee the process of consulting services, manage the implementation of the contract.

The MoER will provide the firm with all Project documents deemed necessary for assignment accomplishment.

**Confidentiality statement:** All data and information received from MoER for the purpose of this assignment are to be treat confidentially and are only to be use in connection with the execution of these Terms of Reference. All intellectual property rights arising from the execution of these Terms of Reference are assign to MoER. The contents of written materials obtained and used in this assignment may not be disclose to any third parties without the expressed advance written authorization of the MoER.

1. <http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/international-standard-classification-of-education-isced-2011-en.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/international-standard-classification-of-education-fields-of-education-and-training-2013-detailed-field-descriptions-2015-en.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://mec.gov.md/sites/default/files/metodologia_de_elaborare_revizuire_si_validare_a_standaardelor_de_calificare.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)