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Abstract

Arguments for National Qualification Frameworks (NQF) are compelling. Indeed, such frameworks are now an international phenomenon. Yet, few studies take a critical perspective and challenge the broad assumptions underpinning NQF. Arguments presented in this paper attempt to open a debate within the higher education community that draws attention to conflicts and tensions regarding the diffusion and use of NQF. The emphasis of the debate is on the use of the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) within higher education. The SCQF is used in this paper as an exemplar to explore and highlight these conflicts and tensions. The critique is based on a historical and managerialist view that forms the basis of a number of research propositions regarding the future of NQF. Specifically, four distinct yet interrelated research perspectives requiring future attention are proposed: political; innovation-diffusion; normative; and consistency. Such perspectives are argued to provide a more robust and reliable basis for developing NQF. The paper thus contextualises the SCQF within the recent 'global tsunami' of NQF and uses the SCQF as an exemplar to open up a wider

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debate about NQF. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)