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PROFESSIONS ACT

Passed 22 May 2008

Chapter 1 GENERAL PROVISIONS

§ 1. Scope of application of Act

(1) This Act provides the bases for the creation, functioning and supervision of the professional qualifications system.

(2) This Act does not apply to professions in the case of which the bases for the development of professional requirements and awarding of professional qualification are regulated by other Acts.

(3) The provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act apply to administrative proceedings prescribed in this Act, taking account of the specifications provided for in this Act.

§ 2. Objective of Act

(1) The objective of this Act is to create an integral system for awarding professional qualifications (hereinafter *professional qualifications system*) and ensure its functioning in order to increase the competitiveness of Estonian employees and promote the development, assessment, recognition and comparison of their professional competence.

(2) The professional qualifications system is part of the qualifications system for recognition of learning outcomes. The professional qualifications system connects the educational system with the labour market.

§ 3. Definitions

For the purposes of this Act, the terms shall be used in the following meaning:

1) competency – the set of knowledge, skills, experience and attitudes necessary to engage successfully in professional activities;

- 2) profession – the official result of an assessment, received when the body that awards vocations decides that the person has the required competency in the profession on the level determined in the relevant professional qualification standard;
- 3) professional area – an area of activity which requires similar competency;
- 4) domain of professional activity – an area of activity which includes several close professional areas;
- 5) qualification – competency recognised as an official result of assessment, which is accompanied by *responsibility and autonomy*.

§ 4. Professional level and qualification framework

(1) A professional level is the scope of knowledge, skills, *responsibility and autonomy* required in a profession.

(2) Professional levels are comparable to levels of education, and the professional system and education system belong to a joint qualification framework which is internationally comparable.

(3) The qualification framework classifies professional and educational levels on the basis of criteria imposed on the acquired knowledge, skills, *responsibility and autonomy*.

(4) The qualification framework is divided into eight levels where level 1 is the lowest and level 8 is the highest. Descriptions of the levels are provided in Annex 1 to this Act «Qualification framework».

(5) The lowest professional level (initial professional level) has been established for each profession. Awarding a profession on this level is referred to as awarding a first-level profession .

(6) The body of chairmen of professional councils shall determine the placement of first-level vocations in the qualification framework, as well as the need to award higher professional levels.

§ 5. Professional standard

(1) A professional standard is a document which describes professional activities and provides the competency requirements for professions and professional levels.

(2) Professional standards shall be approved by professional councils.

(3) The procedure for the preparation, amendment and recording of professional standards shall be established by a regulation of the Minister of Education and Research.

Chapter 2

PARTIES TO THE PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS SYSTEM

§ 6. Professional institution

(1) The Ministry of Education and Research is the institution that organises the development of an integral and structured professional system (hereinafter *professional institution*).

(2) The Minister of Education and Research may enter into a contract under public law with a private legal person for the performance of the function of a professional institution pursuant to the procedure provided in the Administrative Co-operation Act.

§ 7. Functions of professional institutions

(1) Based on the objective of the activities of a professional institution, its functions are:

- 1) to develop and implement the professional qualifications system;
- 2) to organise and coordinate the activities of professional councils and the cooperation between professional councils;
- 3) to develop and approve document forms and samples related to the professional qualifications system;
- 4) to organise supervision over the vocation awarding activities of bodies that award professions;
- 5) to develop and approve the procedure for archival processing of documents related to awarding professions;
- 6) to maintain, upon request of the chief processor, the register of professions in the capacity of an authorised processor;
- 7) to organise consultation and training related to the professional qualifications system;
- 8) to introduce the Estonian professional qualifications system on the national and international level by creating conditions for the mutual comparison of professions;
- 9) to organise the development and updating of professional standards on the basis of decisions made by professional councils;
- 10) to develop and approve the common methodology for preparing professional standards and awarding professions;
- 11) to develop annexes to professional certificates;
- 12) to organise the technical aspect of issuing professional certificates;
- 13) to organise the work of Europass Centre;
- 14) to perform other functions provided in this act and a contract under public law.

(2) A body of chairmen of professional councils that coordinates cooperation between professional councils operates at the professional institution, with functions and rules of procedure that shall be determined by the professional institution.

§ 8. Professional councils

(1) A professional council is an administrative body operating at the professional institution, which consists, on an equal basis, of the representatives of employees, employers and professional associations of the same area of professional activity and the representatives of the state.

(2) Professional councils are formed and their activities are terminated by an order of the Government of the Republic.

(3) The institutional membership of professional councils shall be approved by an order of the Government of the Republic.

(4) The personal membership of professional councils shall be approved by a directive of the Minister of Education and Research.

(5) Upon making a proposal to the Government of the Republic and approving the personal membership, the Minister of Education and Research relies on the proposals made by active and registered employees, employers, professional associations, legal persons and state or government authorities (hereinafter *institutions*) that are immediately connected to the corresponding area of professional activity.

(6) The list of areas of professional activity, the names of professional councils, the procedure for the formation and termination thereof, the organisation of activities, and the procedure for appointment of representatives of institutions shall be determined by a regulation of the Government of the Republic.

(7) The chairman and vice-chairman of a professional council may be paid a remuneration for performing their official duties, the amount and payment procedure of which shall be determined by a directive of the Minister of Education and Research.

§ 9. Objective and functions of the activities of professional councils

(1) The objective of the activities of a professional council is to develop and implement the professional system in its area of professional activity.

(2) The functions of a professional council are:

- 1) to make proposals for developing and updating professional standards;
- 2) to approve professional standards;
- 3) to give a body the right to award professions and to participate in supervision exercised over the professions awarding activities of a body that awards profession;
- 4) to approve the procedure for awarding professions;
- 5) to approve the amount of the fee for awarding professions and recertifying professions;
- 6) to resolve disputes related to awarding professions;
- 7) to perform other functions provided in law.

(3) In order to perform the functions listed in subsection 2 of this section, a professional council may engage the employees of the professional institution, involve experts or set up working groups.

§ 10. Body that awards professions

(1) A legal person or their agency or a state or government authority that has been declared a winner by a decision of a professional council in a public competition (hereinafter *competition*) organised by the professional institution and that has the corresponding registration in the register of professions may act as a body that awards professions (hereinafter *awarder of profession*). Upon registration, the names and levels of professions which the awarder of profession shall be entitled to award will be determined on the basis of the professional standards.

(2) A professional council shall decide on giving an educational institution the rights of a awarder of professions shall register the institution in the professional register without the competition specified in subsection 1 of this section on the basis of an application by the educational institution, if the curriculum of the institution complies with the professional standard and is recognised nationally.

(3) The right to award of profession shall be given for up to five years.

(4) If the competition specified in subsection 1 of this section fails twice, the awarder of profession shall be appointed by a directive of the Minister of Education and Research.

(5) Upon awarding a profession, the awarder of profession shall proceed from this Act, professional standards and the procedure for awarding profession approved by a professional council.

§ 11. Election of awarder of profession

(1) A participant in the competition must meet the following conditions:

- 1) the activities of a awarder of profession include the development of relevant professional activities;
- 2) the awarder of profession must have the means and possibilities necessary to organise the awarding profession;
- 3) the awarder of profession is required to have hired a sufficient number of employees with the necessary education, training and experience for awarder of profession, and has to have set up a professional qualifications committee;
- 4) the awarder of profession must be able to act independently, professionally, impartially and without discriminating anyone.

(2) The procedure for the organisation of the competition and the list of documents certifying compliance with the conditions specified in subsection 1 of this section shall be established by a regulation of the Minister of Education and Research.

(3) The professional institution shall register the awarder of profession declared the winner of the competition in the register of professions.

(4) The professional institution shall not satisfy an application for participation in the competition if:

- 1) the participant in the competition does not meet the requirements provided in legislation;
- 2) the participant in the competition has not submitted the required documents;
- 3) the participant in the competition has submitted incorrect or incomplete data;
- 4) the participant in the competition has state tax arrears for which no payment schedule has been arranged.

(5) A person who finds that their rights have been violated or freedoms limited has the right to contest the organisation of competition in an administrative court according to the conditions and procedure provided in the Code of Administrative Court Procedure or by submitting a challenge through the professional institution to the Minister of Education and Research pursuant to the procedure provided by the Administrative Procedure Act.

§ 12. Functions of awarder of profession

(1) The awarder of profession shall:

- 1) develop in cooperation with the professional qualifications committee the draft procedure for awarding profession and submit it to the professional council upon applying for the right to award profession;
- 2) organise the preparation of instructions for assessment of professional competence, examination materials and other documents necessary for awarding profession;
- 3) calculate and submit to the professional council for approval the amount of the fee for awarding profession and re-evidencing a profession after co-ordinating the amount of the fee with the professional qualifications committee;
- 4) organise the declaration of awarding a profession;
- 5) organise the disclosure of information related to the awarding a profession;
- 6) accept the application and documents of the person applying for a profession (hereinafter *documents*) and, based on the preconditions for applying for a professional certificate specified in the procedure for awarding of profession, assess the suitability of the applicant for the requested professional level and submit the required documents to the professional qualifications committee for decision;
- 7) issue a professional certificate or a duplicate of a professional certificate;
- 8) ensure protection of information not subject to disclosure received during the awarding profession;
- 9) assume responsibility for compliance with the procedures for the organisation of profession awarding;
- 10) submit to the professional council at least once a year a report on the organisation of professional awarding and a report on the use of financial means related to the awarding profession;
- 11) submit the data to be entered in the register of professions to the professional institution.

(2) The awarder of profession shall appoint a responsible person for the performance of the functions listed in subsection 1 of this section.

§ 13. Repeal of the right to award profession

A professional council may repeal the right to award profession given to a awarder of profession selected in a competition if:

- 1) the person does not meet the conditions set for the awarder of profession in subsection 11 (1) of this Act;
- 2) the person has submitted the corresponding application in writing;
- 3) the person does not allow supervision over its activities upon awarding professions;
- 4) the person has not complied with the precept of a professional council by the prescribed deadline and pursuant to the prescribed procedure;
- 5) the person has to a substantial extent or repeatedly violated the requirements imposed on it in its activities or has failed to perform the functions imposed on it;
- 6) the person has submitted incorrect data for participation in the competition;
- 7) the activities of the person are terminated or its bankruptcy is declared;
- 8) the person has not organised the awarding of profession within one year as of registration;

9) the activities of the awarder of profession has been suspended for at least six consecutive months.

§ 14. Register of professions

(1) The register of professions is a state database used to collect, preserve and systemise information on professional councils, professions, professional standards, awarders of profession and valid professional certificates.

(2) The procedure for maintenance of the register of professions shall be provided in the statutes of the register of professions, which shall be approved by a regulation of the Government of the Republic.

(3) The chief processor of the register of professions is the Ministry of Education and Research.

(4) The register of vocations shall be maintained pursuant to this Act, the Public Information Act, the Personal Data Protection Act and the statutes of the register of professions.

Chapter 3 AWARDING PROFESSION

§ 15. Awarding profession

(1) Awarding profession is the assessment of conformity of the professional competence of a person applying for a profession (hereinafter *applicant*) with the requirements specified in the professional standard, as a result of which a professional certificate shall be issued to the applicant.

(2) Holding a professional certificate is not a precondition of working unless legislation has provided the requirement for a professional certificate in order to work in a certain post.

(3) The methods and forms of assessment of professional competence shall be determined in the procedure for awarding profession.

(4) Discrimination is forbidden in awarding professions and the applicant shall not be required or precluded from being a member of any association, nor shall they be required to complete their training in a specific educational institution.

(5) The initial professional level is deemed to be awarded upon the completion of studies, by making a notation of the academic report issued to the person if:

- 1) the person has completed their studies of a regulated profession specified in the directive 2005/36/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the recognition of professional qualifications (OJ L 255, 30.9.2005, pp 22–142), and
- 2) the curriculum complies with the professional standard and is officially certified.

(6) The initial professional level is deemed to be awarded by a notation made on the academic report or result report issued to the person upon the completion of studies by an educational institution with the right to award professions.

§ 16. Procedure for awarding professions

(1) The procedure for awarding profession regulates the organisation of awarding profession, it shall be developed by a body applying for the right to award profession in cooperation with the professional qualifications committee, and shall be approved by a professional council.

(2) The procedure for awarding professions shall contain at least the following data:

- 1) name of the awarder of profession;
- 2) membership of the professional qualifications committee and requirements for members of the professional qualifications committee;
- 3) list of the names and levels of professions to be awarded, and references to the relevant professional standards;
- 4) preconditions for applying for a profession;
- 5) documents to be submitted by the person applying for a profession;
- 6) minimum frequency of awarding professions;
- 7) established methods of informing the public of the deadlines and conditions related to the awarding of professions;
- 8) methods and forms of assessment of the professional competence of the person applying for a profession;
- 9) procedure for organising and deciding on awarding professions;
- 10) period of validity of a professional certificate;
- 11) conditions and procedure for re-evidencing the profession;
- 12) requirements for the members of the assessment committee.

(3) Changes to the procedure for awarding professions shall be submitted to the professional council for approval no later than ten working days before a meeting of the professional council and shall be brought into force upon the declaration of awarding a profession following the meeting.

§ 17. Expenses related to awarding professions and their compensation

(1) The following expenses shall be considered expenses related to awarding professions and issuing professional certificates:

- 1) expenses related to the preparation of awarding professions;
- 2) expenses related to the work of the professional qualifications committee and the assessment committee;
- 3) expenses related to the organisation of awarding professions;
- 4) expenses related to the technical issue of a professional certificate and its duplicate.

(2) Expenses related to awarding professions shall be compensated:

- 1) by the person applying for a profession, or
- 2) from the resources allocated for the vocational training of an employee, or
- 3) to the graduates of a vocational educational institution once a year after graduation, or
- 4) by a regional department of the Labour Market Board from the resources allocated for labour market training to the unemployed and job seekers, or
- 5) from allocations of the state budget.

(3) If the text of a professional certificate is illegible or contains mistakes or a professional certificate has been destroyed, lost, damaged or stolen at the fault of the issuer of the certificate or an authorised processor of the register of professions, the expenses for the issue of a duplicate shall be covered by the issuer.

(4) The awarder of profession shall submit a calculation of the expenses related to the issue of a professional certificate for approval to a professional council.

(5) The issuer of a professional certificate shall submit a yearly report to a professional council concerning the use of monetary means received from the persons specified in subsection 2 of this section.

§ 18. Professional qualifications committee

(1) To ensure impartiality in awarding professions, the awarder of profession shall set up a professional qualifications committee that shall consist of the parties interested in awarding profession in the given field: specialists, employers, employees, trainers, representatives of professional associations and, if necessary, representatives of clients and consumers, as well as other interested parties.

(2) The professional qualifications committee shall:

- 1) prepare the procedure for awarding profession in cooperation with the applicant for the right to award of professions;
- 2) approve, if necessary, the requirements for the place of assessment of professional competence;
- 3) examine the documents of the person applying for a profession and decide on the form and manner for assessment of the professional competence of the person applying for a profession;
- 4) appoint, if necessary, assessment committee(s) to assess the conformity of the person applying for a profession with the requirements of the professional standard;
- 5) approve the instructions for the organisation of an assessment and the examination materials;
- 6) decide on awarding or refusing to award profession to the person applying for the profession;
- 7) resolve the complaints submitted regarding the activities of the assessment committee.
- 8) perform other functions provided by law.

(3) A member of the professional qualifications committee may not participate in deciding whether to award a profession to the person applying for the profession if the member:

- 1) has participated in the work of the assessment committee, or
- 2) is directly related to providing preparatory training for the person applying for a profession, or
- 3) is the employer of the person applying for a profession or is otherwise personally interested in awarding the profession, or if other circumstances give reason to doubt their impartiality.

§ 19. Assessment committee

(1) The assessment committee is a committee set up by the professional qualifications committee to assess the competence of the applicant for a professional certificate.

(2) In order to assess the professional competence of the person applying for a profession, the professional qualifications committee may set up one or several assessment committees.

(3) The assessment committee shall comprise no less than three members. If the assessment takes place in the form of an examination that uses an automatic testing system which does not require the involvement of a person in the assessment of the examination and only records the results, the assessment committee may have one member.

(4) Members of the assessment committee shall be independent and have the necessary professional knowledge and experience.

(5) No more than one third of the members of the assessment committee may be directly related to organising the preparatory training for the particular assessment or examination and no more than one third of the members may work at the same institution as the employer of the person applying for a professional certificate, except in the case of the automatic testing system described in subsection 3 of this section.

(6) The assessment committee shall:

- 1) assess and accept the professional examination;
- 2) prepare a report on the organisation and results of the assessment and submit it to the professional qualifications committee.

§ 20. Documenting the awarding of profession and preserving the documents

(1) The activities related to the awarding of profession shall be documented pursuant to the document forms prepared by the professional institution and to the extent determined by the professional institution, and the documents shall be preserved for the time period specified in the archival processing procedure approved by the professional institution, unless other time limits have been provided by legislation.

(2) The documents related to the awarding of professions are public records which are subject to the requirements established in the Archives Act and on the basis thereof.

§ 21. Professional certificate

(1) The professional certificate is a document which certifies the compliance of a person's professional competence with the requirements established in the professional standard. Liability for correctness of the professional certificate lies with the awarder of profession that issued the professional certificate.

(2) The person holding a profession may use the name of the profession or its abbreviation as specified in the professional certificate during the validity period of the professional certificate, and present themselves as competent in the profession according to the awarded professional level.

(3) The statute and form of the professional certificate shall be established by a regulation of the Minister of Education and Research.

(4) A professional certificate shall be entered in the register of professions pursuant to the procedure established in the statute of the register of professions. The professional certificate is valid only if a relevant entry exists in the register of professions.

(5) A duplicate of the professional certificate shall be issued by the awarder of profession that issued the professional certificate or, upon absence thereof, by the professional institution specified in subsection 6 (1) of this Act.

§ 22. Repeal of the professional certificate

(1) The professional qualifications committee and the professional council have the right to repeal an issued professional certificate if:

- 1) the professional certificate is acquired by way of fraud;
- 2) the professional certificate is issued on the basis of a falsified document or a document containing false data;
- 3) the activities of the person holding the profession do not comply with the provisions of the professional standard.

(2) If an issued professional certificate is repealed, it is deleted from the register of professions and the body that has repealed the professional certificate shall inform the relevant person of the decision by registered mail and shall publish a relevant announcement in the official publication *Ametlikud Teadaanded (Official Notices)*.

(3) Upon the repeal of their professional certificate, the relevant person is required to surrender the professional certificate to the awarder of profession or to the professional council.

(4) A decision to repeal a professional certificate may be disputed in the administrative court according to the conditions and procedure established in the Code of Administrative Court Procedure, or by submitting a challenge to the relevant professional council through the professional institution pursuant to the procedure established by the Administrative Procedure Act.

Chapter 4 STATE SUPERVISION

§ 23. State supervisory authority

The Ministry of Education and Research (hereinafter *supervisory body*) shall exercise state supervision over the activities of professional institutions and professional councils upon compliance with the requirements provided for in this Act and legislation established on the basis thereof.

§ 24. Objective and content of state supervision

(1) The objective of state supervision is to verify the legality of the functioning and development of the professional system.

(2) The supervisory body has the right:

- 1) to perform on-site inspections regarding compliance with the requirements arising from the legislation;
- 2) to receive the information required for exercising supervision;
- 3) to examine original documents and receive extracts therefrom and copies thereof;
- 4) to make proposals to the institution being supervised for development of the professional system;
- 5) to issue precepts and decisions.

(3) Decisions and precepts of the supervisory body may be disputed in the administrative court according to the conditions and procedure established in the Code of Administrative Court Procedure, or by submitting a challenge to the Minister of Education and Research pursuant to the procedure provided in the Code of Administrative Court Procedure.

§ 25. Precepts issued by supervisory body

(1) In the event that an offence is detected, the supervisory body may issue a precept to the professional institution or professional council requiring them to end the offence.

(2) Upon failure to comply with a precept specified in subsection 1 of this section, the supervisory body may implement penalty payment pursuant to the procedure provided in the Substitutive Enforcement and Penalty Payment Act. The maximum amount of a penalty payment shall be 5000 kroons.

(3) Upon failure to comply with a precept specified in subsection 1 of this section, the supervisory body may make a proposal to the Government of the Republic for the termination of activities of the professional council.

Chapter 5 IMPLEMENTING PROVISIONS

§ 26. Transitional provisions

(1) Memberships of professional councils, professional qualifications committees and assessment committees shall be brought into conformity with the requirements of this Act within one year as of its entry into force.

(2) Upon entry into force of this Act, grantors of vocation that have an activity license with an unspecified term shall be entered in the register of professions with a term of up to 1 January 2011.

(3) The professional standards established on the basis of the professional system applicable before entry into force of this Act (on the basis of annex 2 to this Act «Descriptions of qualification levels on the basis of the Professions Act of 2001») shall be valid until the expiry of the validity period of the professional standard or until the professional standard is brought into conformity with annex 1 «Qualification framework» established on the basis of section 4 of this Act.

(4) Professional certificates issued before entry into force of the Act (annex 2 to this Act «Descriptions of qualification levels on the basis of the Professions Act of 2001») shall be valid until the expiry of the validity period of the professional certificate or until the professional certificate is brought into conformity with annex 1 «Qualification framework» established on the basis of section 4 of this Act.

(5) The data contained in the register of professions kept on the basis of the Professions Act before entry into force of this Act shall be transferred within six months to the register of professions kept on the basis of section 14 of this Act.

§ 27. Amendment of the Administrative Co-operation Act

Subsection 13 (1¹) of the **Administrative Co-operation Act** (RT I 2003, 20, 117; 2008, 20, 139) shall be supplemented with clause 13 in the following wording:

« 13) a contract under public law mentioned in subsection 2 of section 6 of the Professions Act.»

§ 28. Amendment of the Rural Development and Agricultural Market Regulation Act

Subsection 25 (2) of the **Rural Development and Agricultural Market Regulation Act** (RT I 2004, 32, 227; 2007, 24, 129) shall be amended and worded as follows:

« (2) A farm relief person may be a person who has been awarded the profession of agricultural employee on the basis of the Professions Act and who has undergone the relevant farm relief person training.»

§ 29. Amendment of the Social Welfare Act

Clause 21² (3) 2) of the **Social Welfare Act** (RT I 1995, 21, 323; 2007, 45, 320) shall be amended and worded as follows:

« 2) a copy of a document or a professional certificate attesting education or training completed in a foreign state, if it has not been entered in the information system founded on the basis of subsection 36⁶ (4) of the Republic of Estonia Education Act or in the register of professions founded on the basis of subsection 14 (2) of the Professions Act;».

§ 30. Amendment of the Security Act

Clauses 2 6) and 7) of the **Security Act** (RT I 2003, 68, 461; 2006, 26, 191) shall be repealed.

§ 31. Repeal of an Act

The **Professions Act** (RT I 2001, 3, 7; 2007, 24, 127) shall be repealed.

§ 32. Entry into force of an Act

(1) This Act shall enter into force on 1 September 2008.

(2) Subsections 10 (2) and 15 (6) shall enter into force on 1 January 2011.

Vice-President of the Riigikogu
Kristiina OJULAND

Annex 1 to
the Professions Act

Qualification framework¹

Descriptions of the levels of the qualification framework determine the general requirements for study results of the education system and for professional levels of the professional system			
	Knowledge (<i>theoretical and factual knowledge is differentiated</i>)	Skills (<i>cognitive skills: use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking and practical skills: manual dexterity and use of methods, materials, tools and instruments are differentiated</i>)	Scope of <i>responsibility and autonomy activity</i>
Level 1	basic general knowledge	basic skills required to carry out simple tasks	work or study under direct supervision in a structured context
Level 2	basic factual knowledge of a field of work or study	basic cognitive and practical skills required to use relevant information in order to carry out tasks and to solve routine problems using simple rules and tools	work or study under supervision with some autonomy
Level 3	knowledge of facts, principles, processes and general concepts, in a field of work or study	a range of cognitive and practical skills required to accomplish tasks and solve problems by selecting and applying basic methods, tools, materials and information	take responsibility for completion of tasks in work or study adapt own behaviour to circumstances in solving problems
Level 4	factual and theoretical knowledge in broad contexts within a field of work or study	a range of cognitive and practical skills required to generate solutions to specific problems in a field of work or study	exercise self-management within the guidelines of work or study contexts that are usually predictable, but are subject to change supervise the routine work of others, taking some responsibility for the evaluation and improvement of work or study activities
Level 5	comprehensive, specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work or study and an awareness	a comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills required to develop creative solutions to abstract problems	exercise management and supervision in contexts of work or study activities where there is unpredictable change

	of the boundaries of that knowledge		review and develop performance of self and others
Level 6	advanced knowledge of a field of work or study, involving a critical understanding of theories and principles	advanced skills, demonstrating mastery and innovation, required to solve complex and unpredictable problems in a specialised field of work or study	manages complex technical or professional activities or projects, taking responsibility for decision-making in unpredictable work or study contexts take responsibility for managing the professional development of individuals and groups
Level 7	highly specialised knowledge, some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work or study, as the basis for original thinking and/or research critical awareness of knowledge issues in a field and at the interface between different fields	specialised problem-solving skills required in research and/or innovation in order to develop new knowledge and procedures and to integrate knowledge from different fields	manage and transform work or study contexts that are complex, unpredictable and require new strategic approaches take responsibility for contributing to professional knowledge and practice and/or for reviewing the strategic performance of teams
Level 8	knowledge at the most advanced frontier of a field of work or study and at the interface between themes	the most advanced and specialised skills and techniques, including synthesis and evaluation, required to solve critical problems in research and/or innovation and to extend and redefine existing knowledge or professional practice	demonstrate substantial authority, innovation, autonomy, scholarly and professional integrity and sustained commitment to the development of new ideas or processes at the forefront of work or study contexts including research

¹ Levels of the Estonian qualification framework correspond to the European qualification framework.

Basis: Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008 on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (OJ C 111; 06.05.2008, pp 1–7)

Annex 2
to the Professions Act

Descriptions of professional qualifications on the basis of the Professions Act passed in 2001

On the basis of the Professions Act of 2001, professional qualifications are divided into five levels where level I is the lowest and level V is the highest as follows:

1) level I – an employee performs his or her duties in similar situations, has acquired the professional knowledge and skills mainly in the course of professional training, may need guidance during work, is responsible for the performance of his or her duties;

2) level II – an employee performs his or her duties in different situations, in addition to the knowledge and skills acquired mainly in the course of professional training has experience, works independently, is responsible for the performance of his or her duties;

3) level III – an employee performs his or her duties in different and changing situations, in addition to the knowledge and skills acquired mainly in the course of professional training is masterly, ready to pass on his or her professional skills and knowledge, organises the distribution of funds and the work of others and is responsible therefor

4) level IV – an employee performs duties requiring analysis and decision-making in changing situations, has professional knowledge and skills; organises the distribution of funds and the work of others and is responsible therefor;

5) level V – an employee performs duties requiring the expansion of knowledge, resolution of problems, application of scientific theories and definitions, analysis, systematisation and improvement of the existing knowledge and teaching in changing situations, has extensive professional knowledge and skills, organises the distribution of funds and the work of others and is responsible therefor.