

Manual of Saudi Unified Classification of Occupation

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1. Overview of Saudi Unified Classification of Occupation

* The Authority is considered the entity responsible for statistics and is the sole official reference for conducting statistical work. It serves as the technical supervisor and regulator of such work. To achieve its objectives, it has several responsibilities, including (preparing national statistical manuals and classifications according to international standards, utilizing them, and working on updating and developing them whenever necessary).
* The Kingdom has witnessed several initiatives to develop professional and occupational classifications by various entities within the country, as well as specialized professional standards that directly impact the classification of professions and jobs across multiple government and private sectors. As a result, it has become important to unify all these initiatives and produce a comprehensive classification to be adopted by all government and private entities, serving as the primary reference for all related statistical processes.
* The Saudi Unified Occupational Classification provides a system for classifying and organizing occupational information obtained through censuses, statistical surveys, and administrative records. This classification follows the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08), endorsed by the International Labour Organization and the United Nations Statistical Commission, and is a revision of the previous international version (ISCO-88), upon which it is based.
* The Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations is a hierarchical classification consisting of five levels, allowing for the classification of all jobs worldwide into 433 international units. These units form the most detailed level of the classification structure and are grouped into 130 minor groups, 43 sub-major groups, and 10 major groups, based on their similarity in terms of occupational level and the specialization required for the jobs at the fifth level. This structure allows for the production of relatively detailed and internationally comparable data.
* The Saudi Unified Occupational Classification is used to collect and publish statistics from sources such as population censuses, labor force surveys, other household surveys, employer surveys, and other sources. It is also used by entities in their systems for purposes such as classifying workers, linking job seekers with job vacancies, educational planning, reporting industrial accidents, managing worker compensation, and regulating labor-related migration.
* The General Authority for Statistics was tasked with preparing a manual for classifying all occupations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, covering all economic activities in both the public and private sectors. This ensures the existence of a unified and consistent classification reference, both locally and internationally, which is continually used by all entities concerned with occupational classifications in Saudi Arabia. This task is based on the Council of Ministers' decision No. (540) dated 16/9/1440 H, The second clause , which includes:

1. A technical team is to be formed within the General Authority for Statistics, with participation from representatives of the Authority, the Ministry of Civil Service, the Ministry of Labor and Social Development, the Secretariat of the Military Service Council, the National Information Center, and the Human Resources Development Fund. The team is also authorized to invite any other entity deemed important to participate in any matters under discussion or study.
2. The technical team shall work on preparing a Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations, taking into account the following:

* It must be aligned with the 2008 International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08) and its subsequent updates.
* It should include occupational descriptions derived from the Arab Standard Classification of Occupations and the descriptions used by relevant entities.
* The technical team must complete the classification preparation within a period not exceeding six months from the date of the decision's issuance and submit the outcomes for the necessary regulatory procedures to be completed.

Accordingly, a technical team was formed within the General Authority for Statistics, chaired by the Authority and comprising members from various government entities, in collaboration with a specialized consultancy firm. The team's objective was to review the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations, issued by the Council of Ministers' decision No. (540) dated 16/9/1440 H, ensuring its alignment with the strategic directions and developments in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. These developments necessitated a number of adjustments in certain classification aspects, while taking into account the latest global advancements and best practices in the field of occupational classification.

* This classification was approved by Cabinet Resolution No. (660) dated 24/10/1441H, which states in Clause (First: Approval of the Saudi Unified Occupational Classification in the accompanying form) and Clause Second: All ministries and government agencies must implement the classification — referred to in Clause (First) of this resolution — within their internal systems within twelve months from the date of this resolution, followed by a series of procedures to regulate the classification.
  1. General objectives of reviewing the Unified Saudi Occupational Classification

This project aims to review all current occupational classifications and benchmark them with leading international practices in this field, thus ensuring access to a modern and integrated system for occupational classification that meets the goals of the General Authority for Statistics. Generally, this project will include the following main phases:

1. Review the current approved national classifications in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which include the classification of the General Authority for Statistics, the Arab Standard Occupational Classification approved by the Ministry of Labor and Social Development, and the public sector job classification approved by the Ministry of Civil Service.
2. Review the processes of mapping and comparing the three classifications, providing necessary recommendations to ensure their alignment.
3. Prepare the unified occupational classification guide in coordination with relevant government entities, as needed.
4. Prepare the occupational descriptions for all occupations agreed upon within the approved classification tier within the new classification hierarchy.
5. Provide technical support in the implementation phase for adopting the approved Unified Saudi Occupational Classification.

This methodology aims to present the process of reviewing the Unified Saudi Occupational Classification, adopting the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08), including:

1. Classification methodology
2. The classification structure in the alignment with the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08).
3. Standards for preparing lists of occupations and titling rules
4. Occupations guide explaining the major groups and classification hierarchy
5. Occupational descriptions of the occupations classified in the Unified Saudi Occupational Classification
   1. Methodology of the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupation

* The process of classifying occupations is defined as a comprehensive and integrated process aimed at dividing jobs into various occupations. This division determines the type of work, the method of performing assigned tasks, and the qualification requirements. As a result, occupations are hierarchically divided into major groups, which branch into sub-major groups, and then into smaller groups, until reaching occupations, which represent the lowest occupational division in the lists of occupations.
* The importance of having a systematic and scientific occupational classification system is linked to a set of objectives, which can be summarized as follows:

1. Collecting statistical data on the availability of occupations in the labor market easily, with a high degree of accuracy and detail.
2. Matching labor market needs with the available occupations and identifying gaps.
3. Developing plans to bridge the gap between supply and demand in the Saudi labor market by working with entities responsible for occupational qualifications, such as the Ministry of Education and others.
4. Providing a common language for all human resources departments in both the public and private sectors across all economic sectors in the Kingdom.

* The Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations adopts the basic framework of the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08), developed by the International Labour Organization (ILO). The ISCO is a structured classification consisting of four classification levels based on occupational hierarchy, allowing the classification of all occupations worldwide into 436 unified groups.

The Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations also adopts a set of global standards that countries follow when developing unified occupational classification systems at the national level. These can be summarized as follows:

* **Alignment**: The classification system must be aligned and compatible with international classification systems and best global practices in this field.
* **Logical Basis**: The classification process should be logically structured according to the purpose it serves.
* **Consistency**: The approach used should be general and consistent, so that its rules are easily applied without the need for special rules to classify or divide certain occupations.
* **Comprehensiveness**: The method used should be comprehensive, covering all types of occupations and allowing for detailed classification into specific jobs.
* **Accuracy and Clarity**: The classification system must include clear descriptive definitions for all occupations.
* **Ease of Use**: The classification system should provide clear, guiding manuals that facilitate its continuous use and updating.
* Sustaining and Modifying Occupational Descriptions

This section addresses the processes and procedures followed by the authority responsible for the classification in reviewing, modifying, and updating occupational descriptions. It also clarifies the justifications and reasons for the review and update processes, and how they are managed and implemented flexibly and effectively.

The following points highlight several cases that may necessitate the need for an update or modification to an occupational description:

* New developments and advancements in the main activity or field to which the occupation belongs, changing its purpose and the nature of the tasks it performs.
* Significant advancements in technologies, methods, and knowledge related to the occupation, which alter the way the job is performed and the specifications of the jobholder.
* Convergence of work fields and activities, leading to the merging of two or more occupations into one, or specialized developments that necessitate splitting some occupations into more specific and specialized roles.
* Changes or additions to the specifications or requirements of the occupation, such as changes in educational qualifications and competencies.

**Steps for Updating or Modifying Occupational Descriptions:**

* Step 1: Submitting the modification request and obtaining approval  
  The Permanent Technical Committee for Classification evaluates the need to modify the job description by reviewing the justifications and reasons for the proposed change, submitting relevant recommendations, and obtaining approval from the authorized decision-maker.
* Step 2: Analyzing Information and Modifying the Job Description  
  The Permanent Technical Committee for Classification analyzes all available data and information, particularly the justifications and reasons that created the need for the modification. The committee then works on incorporating the initial recommendations and proposals for these modifications.
* Step 3: Discussing the Revised Draft of the Job Description  
  The Permanent Technical Committee for Classification consults with the technical team and the relevant entities and stakeholders in the field and activity of the profession under modification and review.
* Step 4: Approval of the Modifications and Preparation of the Final Version  
  After consulting with the technical team and relevant entities and reaching an agreement on the new modifications and changes, the Permanent Technical Committee for Classification prepares the final version of the job description and submits it to the authorized decision-maker for final approval and endorsement.
* Step 5: Communicating with Ministries and Government Entities The Permanent Technical Committee for classification communicate with the technical team and relevant entities regarding the approved final version of the job description and takes the necessary steps for its publication.
  1. Historical Overview of the International Standard Classification of Occupation (ISCO)
* The development of the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) dates back several decades and has always been linked to the work of the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS), held under the auspices of the International Labour Organization (ILO). The need for a unified international classification of occupations was discussed as early as 1921, during the first ICLS (ILO, 1923 and 1924, Resolution 1, Paragraph 1).
* Efforts to develop the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) began in 1947 at the Sixth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS). The first positive step towards its establishment was the adoption of a provisional classification consisting of nine major groups by the Seventh ICLS in 1949. In 1952, the International Labour Organization (ILO) published an international classification of occupations for migration and employment placement, which included detailed descriptions of 1,727 occupations based on the national classifications of eight industrialized countries. A provisional list of minor groups was approved at the Eighth ICLS (1954). During the Ninth ICLS (1957), the major, minor, and unit groups of the first International Standard Classification of Occupations were endorsed, and the ILO published it in 1958, where it became known as ISCO-58. It was recognized during the Ninth ICLS that ISCO-58 would need to be revised after some time. Subsequently, at the Eleventh ICLS, a revised version of the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-68) was adopted.
* The International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88) replaced ISCO-68, which was adopted in 1987 by the Fourteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS). ISCO-88 represents a significant departure from the two previous versions, as it uses the concepts of skill level and skill specialization as criteria to arrange similar occupations into progressively larger groups. The earlier versions of ISCO, along with many national classifications at the time, did not use the concept of skill level to distinguish between groups at the highest aggregate level of the classification. Occupational classifications at that time focused heavily on the goods and services produced and were very similar in structure to industrial classifications of economic activities .
* Since its adoption, ISCO-88 has been widely used as a foundation for the development of national and international occupational classifications and for the publication of international data classified by occupation. By the early 21st century, the need to update ISCO-88 became more urgent, to reflect changes in the occupational structure of the labor force and to address various issues identified during its application in statistical and other contexts.
* The process of developing the ISCO-08 structure resulted in the splitting or merging of a number of ISCO-88 unit groups. In some cases, completely new unit groups were created. There was also structural change at the minor and sub-major group levels, including both splitting and merging of groups and movement of unit groups from one part of the classification to another. These changes created the need for definitions of new groups to be developed and of other groups to be reviewed, to make sure they adequately reflected the content of the group.

1. Background for the creation of the Classification

The review process of the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations relies on the following methodology:

* Adhering to the standards and criteria of the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08).
* Following the skill-based approach to classifying occupations (four skill levels and their definitions).
* Matching the classification levels (four classification levels, where the highest level sets the skill level for all subsequent levels).
* Using the names of the classification levels and their quantities as stated in ISCO-08 (including 10 major groups that branch down to the fourth level, which is the unit where occupations are listed).
* Applying the coding method used in ISCO-08 and ensuring its alignment.
  1. Criteria and Steps for Reviewing the Classification
* Criteria for Reviewing the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupation

The Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations was developed to include a number of occupations characterized by a high degree of generality and inclusiveness, reflecting the nature of occupations as previously defined.

The occupation lists were systematically and consistently structured, with several general principles and standards established in line with global best practices and the objectives of the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations. These include:

* Reviewing the existing classifications approved in Saudi Arabia, including the Saudi classification issued by the Council of Ministers, the occupational classification approved by the Ministry of Labor, the government job classification approved by the Ministry of Civil Service, and the Arab Standard Occupational Classification approved by the Human Resources Development Fund.
* Preparing the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations manual with the participation of the relevant government entities specified by the Council of Ministers’ decision.
* Following the general standards of the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08) when determining occupations based on skill level and the type of work performed.
* Accurately reorganizing occupations into the major groups and/or units of ISCO.

Through an assessment of the current situation, during which the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations issued by the Council of Ministers was studied, a set of additional criteria were identified for preparing the occupation lists:

* Removing duplicate occupations, whether they have similar names or differ.
* Removing obsolete occupations.
* Eliminating job titles that cannot be defined as occupations, such as temporary or seasonal roles, those by election or delegation, or assignments that do not represent permanent work.
* Updating job titles to align with developments and changes in the labor market.
* Ensuring consistency in the level of detail while considering the specific needs of organizations that apply special classifications.
* Excluding job titles related to specific organizational structures.
* Ensuring accurate matching with the major groups of the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO).
* Ensuring accurate alignment with the appropriate unit in ISCO.
* Establishing a standardized approach to professional titles:
  1. The job title should clearly indicate the skill level (supervisory or individual contributor) of the occupation in line with the job description and the nature of its tasks, ensuring that the occupation can be easily understood from the name.
  2. The title should not indicate a job title, job level, grade, or be specific to a particular entity or organizational structure.
  3. The same job title should not be used for more than one occupation.
  4. The title should reflect the qualitative nature of the occupation, directly or indirectly linked to the minor group or unit under which the occupation falls, facilitating an understanding of the field and technical nature of the occupation.
  5. The job title should be commonly used by similar institutions in both the public and private sectors, particularly by those practicing and specializing in the profession.
  6. The title should be appropriate for the local culture.
* Using accurate translations of ISCO classification level names to avoid confusion in classifying occupations.
* Removing "groups" from the occupational classification limit, restricting it to specific job titles only.
* Avoiding titles that refer to job levels or career paths (e.g., researcher, expert, consultant).
* Eliminating overly detailed subdivisions of tasks or duties that do not represent distinct occupations.
* Adding new occupations that have emerged in both the Saudi and international labor markets.
* Steps for Reviewing the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupation

Following the aforementioned criteria for preparing the occupation lists, many documents and data were studied and analyzed to closely align with the actual needs of all entities applying specific classifications, those regulating certain professions, and the Saudi labor market in general. This resulted in an initial concept of the occupations that should be included in the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations lists. Therefore, it was necessary to prepare the occupation lists in several stages, establishing an efficient working mechanism, summarized as follows:

1. A review team was formed, consisting of representatives from: the Ministry of Civil Service, the Ministry of Labor and Social Development, the Human Resources Development Fund, the Saudi Commission for Health Specialties, the National Employment Plan Office, and the General Authority for Statistics. This team was tasked with reviewing the occupation lists and descriptions provided by the consulting firm and submitting a report on each completed task to the head of the technical team. Later, representatives from the National Cybersecurity Authority, the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, and the Ministry of Health joined the review team.
2. The project working group sends the list of occupations and occupational descriptions to the review team according to a set schedule of dates.
3. The review team members conduct an initial review of the sent occupation lists, identifying comments and observations before the review team meeting.
4. The review team meets on the second day after the list is sent to review and approve it, providing the consulting firm with feedback to be reflected in the classification. Any unresolved comments are referred to the technical team for appropriate decisions.
5. The approved list from the review team is sent to the team leaders and representatives of the entities for final approval within two working days.
6. The project working group adheres only to the list approved by the review team and begins preparing the occupational descriptions.
7. The technical team sends comments on the occupational descriptions via email to the consulting firm for review and to incorporate relevant feedback.
8. The technical team approves the occupation lists and occupational descriptions after addressing the feedback or receiving responses from the company's working group.

Based on the above steps, the final version of the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations list was prepared.

2.2. Mechanism and Procedures for Updating the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupation

* Mechanism for Updating the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations

This section defines what is referred to as the "Reasons for Updating" the Saudi Unified Occupational Classification. The Classification Management Team, through the Permanent Technical Committee for the Saudi Unified Occupational Classification, housed at the General Authority for Statistics, will study the necessary updates and maintain the classification according to the established procedures. Additionally, the entity responsible for the classification (the General Authority for Statistics) has developed an electronic portal and an automated database system for updating and maintaining the Saudi Unified Occupational Classification, in order to facilitate and monitor this highly important task.

The list below identifies the 'Update Triggers':

* Planned reviews of the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations according to an agreed timeframe.
* User requests or inquiries that lead to the need for approval of changes.
* The emergence of new occupational fields or new occupations, necessitating changes.
* Reviews of the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08) and assessing their impact on the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations.

A clear governance model has been established for decision-making related to the maintenance of the Saudi Unified Occupational Classification and any changes to it and The Permanent Technical Committee for Classification is responsible for approving any changes to the classification.

1. Planned Reviews of the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations (Maintenance of the Classification Manual) Occupational classifications are generally updated over extended periods, typically every 10 or 20 years, with only a few countries updating their classification systems every five years. Given that this shorter period aligns with the rapid pace of developments in all economic activities in the Kingdom and the resulting occupational demands, it is preferable to establish a fixed period for reviewing and evaluating occupation lists every five years. This process is referred to as a 'Periodic Review.' Classification specialists follow these steps to conduct the periodic review:

* Evaluate all change requests and additional information collected over five years (which were not addressed by changes requested by government entities) stored in the database.
* Consult classification experts, strategic partners, and relevant entities and present review recommendations.
* Issue recommendations for the classification review based on the received inputs.
* Update the classification manual, conduct a review on the electronic system, and amend related guides, reports, and supporting materials if necessary.
* Publish the revised versions on the electronic portal through the IT department and announce them for implementation by the relevant entities.

1. User request or inquiries that lead to the need for change approval

Users of the Saudi Unified Occupational Classification submit change requests to the Permanent Technical Committee for Classification. These requests, along with the accompanying data, are compiled for the purpose of reviewing the classification manual. Examples of change requests include:

* Adding a new occupation to the list (fifth classification level).
* Changing or modifying the description of an occupation.
* Deleting an occupation.
* Redefining the details and/or titles of different units within the classification.

Minor changes to the occupation classification manual may be made, especially if requested by classification users and supported by logical reasons. Such requests are expected to come during the early stages of implementation, and during this time, classification specialists are responsible for conducting appropriate audits to ensure consistency and the unified methodology of the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations is maintained. Minor changes (but not limited to) may include correcting typographical errors in occupation names or descriptions, making minor textual changes in job descriptions that do not affect the core details, etc.

1. Emergence of New Occupational Fields or Occupations Leading to the Need for Change Approval Changes related to technological advancements or other developments will be introduced during the periodic review of the classification occupation lists, as outlined above. If urgent implementation is required, emergency changes may be proposed before the periodic review.

Although most changes to the classification manual are expected to be submitted by users from the relevant entities, should the need to enhance the effectiveness of the Saudi labor market arise, changes may be proposed between the planned reviews of the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations.

1. Review of ISCO-08 and Its Impact on the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations The Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations is structured in its first four levels in alignment with the International Standard Classification of Occupations. As the international classification itself undergoes scheduled reviews approximately every 20 years, any review of ISCO-08 will necessitate a review of the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations. However, this may not automatically result in changes to the Saudi classification.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) takes into account the need to review the International Standard Classification of Occupations every five years, though these reviews often take a longer period of time. With each review of the International Standard Classification of Occupations, the Permanent Technical Committee for Classification must assess the impact of these changes and conduct a potential review of the classification to ensure consistency with the International Standard Classification of Occupations.

* Procedures for Updating the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupation

When there are occupations to be added to the lists of the Saudi Unified Occupational Classification, whether driven by user requests or through the review of classification specialists at the Authority, the following steps should be followed to ensure the accurate determination of the group to which the occupation belongs and its suitability within the classification's list of occupations:

1. Determining the Appropriate Major Group (Skill Level):

Occupations can be divided into three hypothetical groups to facilitate identifying the matching major groups in the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations:

* Managers Group: This includes all supervisory levels up to high-level senior officials. This level requires that the main tasks and duties involve managing staff. This group is identified in Major Group "1" of the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations.
* Professionals Group: This focuses on the technical aspects of occupations representing specialists. This level requires academic specialization and is defined in Major Group "2" of the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations.
* Support Group: This covers all remaining levels in the labor market that do not require a high level of academic education. These levels are identified in Major Groups "3" to "9" of the classification.

Based on the above, the skill level and minimum qualifications required for the occupation can be easily determined.

1. Determining the Appropriate Sub-Major, Minor, and Unit Groups:

The major groups are subdivided based on skill specialization or the nature of the work performed in the occupation. In other words, the field of tasks performed by the occupation. Therefore, having a clear definition and description of the occupation is crucial at this stage, and all requests and proposals to add occupations should be supported by descriptions of the work field and general tasks involved.

Based on the above, the skill specialization and lower groups within the major group can be easily identified, down to the unit group to which the occupation belongs.

The possible changes to the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations can be summarized as follows:

* 1. Adding an occupation to the classification list.
  2. Modifying an occupation (defining its details) in the classification list.
  3. Deleting an occupation from the classification list.

A. Adding an Occupation to the Classification List

Adding an occupation to the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations requires careful consideration and involves the following steps:

* Evaluate change requests and assess the necessity of implementing them before the next periodic review.
* Consult with the requesting entity regarding the reason for the request and their recommendations. This can be done through correspondence or meetings with the entity's specialists.
* Request input from relevant strategic partners regarding the effects of the request.
* Process the input and prepare recommendations regarding the change (acceptance or rejection of the request).
* Review the request and the classification specialists' recommendations by the approval authority in the classification department, then approve (or reject) the change.
* Update the classification list, review the electronic system, and modify the relevant guides, reports, and supporting materials if necessary.
* Send the changes to relevant strategic partners and announce the changes through the classification's electronic portal.

The request to add an occupation to the classification list must include the following information:

* Types of stakeholders: In which industries or services does this occupation exist? In which sector of economic activities? This information helps to understand the nature of the work performed and to assess the ability to collect data on this occupation.
* Education and training: What level of education and training is typically required for workers to be capable of performing this occupation? What is the typical educational background expected for workers in this occupation? What types of schools or training providers offer this education or training? How long does the education or training take? What are the generally required degrees or certifications, if any? The availability of specific education and training programs is important.
* Professional regulatory bodies: Are professional licenses or certifications required? Identifying the presence of regulatory bodies for the occupations is important.

B. Modifying an Occupation (Defining Its Details) in the Classification List

Modifications to the classification list should be limited to the periodic review period unless compliance with the law or other exceptional reasons are met. Requests for modification from classification specialists may include the following:

* Requests or requirements to modify the content of an occupation (which could affect its definition).
* Requests to redefine the details of an occupation listed in the classification.
* Requests to change the name of an occupation to better reflect its nature.

These changes are handled as follows:

1. The Classification Management Team, through the Permanent Technical Committee for Classification, should add modification requests received from users to the database. Each request is reviewed to determine whether it needs to be addressed outside the regular review process. This assessment is based on two key criteria:
   1. Is there a legal requirement necessitating the change? (If yes, the request is considered; if no, move to criterion "b").
   2. Is there an urgent labor market need to address the request? (If yes, the request is considered; if no, it will be included in the database for updating the classification list in the next periodic review).
2. The requesting entity is informed of the status of their request and the decision on whether to address it (or not).
3. Accepted requests are studied, and the validity and strength of the rationale for the request are verified. It is essential that classification specialists maintain the integrity of the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations list and not process requests unless they are justified and clarified from a technical perspective.
4. If changes lead to the redefinition of occupational groups (matching to a different classification level), it is important to transfer all data collected related to the occupation to the newly defined group. A review of the occupation’s description, including qualification requirements, educational field, competencies, and skill level, will be necessary, especially if the major group changes. This process is akin to deleting an occupation and introducing a new one in a different location.

C. Deleting an Occupation from the Classification List

The classification department will not follow proposals or requests to delete occupations from the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations outside the scheduled periodic review periods unless required by compliance with the law. If requests to delete occupations are submitted to the classification department, the following steps and controls apply:

* Deletion proposals from government entities will not be accepted if the occupation is still in use by other entities. The applicants will be informed that such requests will not be considered.
* The deletion requests submitted by government entities must be supported by statistics that prove the occupation is no longer in use.

The requests should include references and documents that support and justify the reasons behind the deletion proposal. These reasons may include, but are not limited to:

* The occupation has become obsolete.
* The occupation was mistakenly classified as an independent occupation, but it should actually be considered a task within another occupation.
* Duplication: The nature of the tasks covered by the occupation is highly similar or identical to another occupation in the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations.
* The occupation is culturally inappropriate for the national context.

3. Documenting and Publishing Information on Changes and Updates

* All updates to the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations will be documented in the form of a "Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations Update and Maintenance Report," which reviews the changes made to the classification, the rationale for the change, and the methodology used to implement the change. The documentation should include comparison tables that outline the changes made compared to the previous version of the classification manual, providing a quick reference for users where possible.
* These reports will be issued and published on the classification's electronic portal.

1. Relationship of the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupation with Other Classifications
2. Relationship with Educational Classifications (e.g., International Standard Classification of Education - ISCED)

The Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations (SSCO) is often used in conjunction with the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) to analyze the relationship between educational attainment and employment. This helps in understanding the alignment between education levels and various occupations, as well as in workforce planning and policy development.

* Linking Occupation with Academic Qualifications (Based on Skill Level and Type of Work)
* Education Levels

The major groups are directly linked to the education levels required for occupations within the group, according to the educational levels defined in the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED-11). The International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) aligns its skill levels with these educational levels.

The table below illustrates the connection between skill levels and the qualification levels recognized by ISCO, as well as the education levels established by ISCED-11.

| Skill Level | Education Levels ISCED-11 | Education Level Description ISCED-11 | Education Level Description Unified Saudi Occupational Classification |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 4 | 8 | Doctor or equivalent | Doctorate degree |
| 7 | Master’s or equivalent | Master degree (including vocational) |
| 6 | Bachelor’s or equivalent | Bachelor degree (including vocational) |
| 3 | 5 | Short-cycle tertiary education | Diploma |
| 4 | Post-secondary non-tertiary education |
| 2 | 3 | Upper secondary education | Higher secondary education |
| 2 | Lower secondary education | Lower secondary education |
| 1 | 1 | Elementary School | Primary education |
| 0 | Less than Elementary School | Less than primary education |

• Fields of education

The lists of fields of education and their branches were prepared in alignment with the international standards as stated in the International Standard Classification for Fields of Education ISCED-13.

The International Standard Classification of Education Fields uses three classification levels starting with the upper level of the broad field of education, the narrow field, which branches off into the detailed fields of education. In order to meet the needs of the Saudi labor market, the third limit detailing the fields of education has been relied upon when preparing academic requirements for Occupations.

The following is an example of a classification of international education fields:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Code | Broad Field | Code | Narrow Field | Code | Detailed Field |
| 08 | Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary | 081 | Agriculture | 0811 | Crop and livestock production |
| 0812 | Horticulture |
| 082 | Forestry | 0821 | Forestry |
| 083 | Fisheries | 0831 | Fisheries |
| 084 | Veterinary | 0841 | Veterinary |

1. Relationship with the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO)

The Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations (SSCO) closely aligns with the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) issued by the International Labour Organization (ILO). This relationship is based on several aspects aimed at achieving compatibility between the two classifications while taking into account the specific needs of the Saudi labor market.

The SSCO is primarily based on the structure of ISCO-08, which allows for alignment between national and international data related to occupations. This alignment facilitates the comparison of occupational statistics in the Kingdom with other countries and supports international labor reports that rely on the ISCO classification.

3.1. Major Changes between ISCO-88 and ISCO-08

* The sections of the classification related to managerial jobs were reorganized to address the issues faced by users of the ISCO-88.
* Some additional unit groups and one new sub-major group were created for selected supervisory roles, but only in areas where supervisors typically perform tasks significantly different from the workers they supervise.
* Jobs related to information and communication technology (ICT) were updated and expanded, allowing for the identification of professional and associate professional jobs in this field as major subgroups.
* The overall groups for sales and service workers were reorganized, including the provision of new major subgroups for personal service workers, personal care workers, and protective services workers.
* More detailed and clear categories were provided for some occupational groups involved in agriculture.
* More detailed categories were provided for jobs related to providing information and services to customers, including occupations related to tourism.
* The groups of plant and machine operators were restructured and reorganized in response to concerns that this section of ISCO-88 was overly detailed and outdated in some areas.

1. Conceptual Basis of the Classification

4.1. The Classification Concept

The Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations has also adopted the definition of "occupation" as stated in the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO), as follows: An occupation refers to the type of work performed in a job. Accordingly, an occupation is defined as: "a set of jobs whose main tasks and duties are characterized by a high degree of similarity."

The international classification distinguishes between occupations and jobs, with the classification being limited to occupations to meet the standards for preparing the classification. ISCO-08 defines jobs as: "A set of tasks and duties performed, or meant to be performed, by one person for a particular employer, including self-employment."

Below is an outline of the method used to structure the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations to align with the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08):

1. Defining the Major Groups

Defining the groups for the list of occupations is the cornerstone of the classification process, on which all subsequent sorting and grouping processes are based.

* Defining Major Groups by Skill Level

Skill refers to the ability to perform the tasks and duties associated with a particular occupation. Skill level refers to the complexity and scope of the tasks and duties to be performed. By determining the required skill level for the work, the major groups are identified, starting with supervisory and specialized jobs that require a high level of academic qualification, and descending to lower skill levels, such as manual jobs that do not require advanced education and require a limited amount of practical skills to perform.

It is worth noting that after determining the major groups based on skill level, skill specialization is used to define and classify the sub-major groups within the major groups. It is also common in many classification systems to use skill specialization (qualitative division) to define some major groups for the purpose of balancing and simplifying the classification process, provided that this does not violate the main principle that these groups must include occupations requiring the same skill level.

* Skill Levels

The skill levels adopted in the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08) are based on the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED11). Below is a brief explanation of the four skill levels used in ISCO-08:

1. Skill Level 1

This level involves occupations that require performing simple and routine manual or physical tasks, possibly using hand tools such as shovels or simple electrical equipment like vacuum cleaners. In some cases, completion of primary or basic education is required to achieve the competence needed for jobs in this level. Some jobs may require short on-the-job training.

1. Skill Level 2

This level involves occupations that require performing simple procedural tasks such as operating machinery, driving vehicles, and maintaining and repairing electrical and mechanical equipment. Competence in occupations at this level typically requires at least a secondary education. Some jobs may require on-the-job training, and in some cases, experience and training can substitute for formal education.

1. Skill Level 3

This level involves occupations that require performing complex technical and practical tasks requiring a significant amount of hands-on and procedural knowledge in specialized fields. Competence at this level is typically acquired through studies at higher education institutions for one to three years after completing secondary education, usually leading to a qualification below a bachelor's degree.

1. Skill Level 4

This level involves occupations that require complex problem-solving skills, decision-making, and analytical thinking, along with the application of a wide range of theoretical and practical knowledge in a specialized field. Competence is typically achieved through studies at higher education institutions for three to six years, leading to a bachelor's degree or higher. In some cases, in addition to formal education, extensive related experience and on-the-job training may be required.

1. Defining the Classification Boundaries (Classification Groups)

* Defining Major Groups and Subsequent Groups

The first four levels of classification in the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations are aligned with the classification boundaries of ISCO by following the same method of grouping occupations into qualitative groups (grouping by type of work and its fields) for all classification levels below the top level, which is the major group. As previously explained, the major groups are determined based on skill level.

The Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations includes the addition of a fifth and final level, which is the occupation level.

The classification structure includes the following main topics:

1. Major Groups
2. Classification Groups (Boundaries)
3. Occupation Name
4. Coding
5. Linking Occupations with Academic Qualifications (Based on Skill Level and Type of Work)

* Education Levels
* Fields of Education

1. Behavioral and Technical Competencies

## 1. Major groups

The major groups were identified in the Unified Saudi Occupational Classification according to the four skill levels internationally approved by the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08). The following table shows the major groups and skill levels defined by the International Standard Classification of Occupations:

| Code | Major Group | Skill Level |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Managers | 4-3 |
| 2 | Professionals | 4 |
| 3 | Technicians and associate professionals | 3 |
| 4 | Clerical support workers | 2 |
| 5 | Service and sales workers | 2 |
| 6 | Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers | 2 |
| 7 | Craft and related trades workers | 2 |
| 8 | Plant and machine operators, and assemblers | 2 |
| 9 | Elementary occupations | 1 |
| 0 | Armed forces occupations | 1-2-4 |

## 2. Classification Groups (Classification Boundaries)

Determining the classification tiers for all tiers subsequent to the major group are based on the type of work performed (skill specialization) within the subgroups, as the specialization segmentation begins at the second tier of groups reaching the lowest (i.e. from the sub-major group to the unit group). It is also possible to define major groups by specialization for creating balance, consistency and simplification of the aggregation processes, nevertheless with the condition of identifying one skill level for the major group (each group has only one skill level except for one sub-group in the Managers major group and the Armed forces occupations group, as stated in the International Standard Classification of Occupations).

The following table shows the distribution of occupational groups in the five-tiered hierarchical structure:

| Order | Classification Tier | Definition |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Major Group | Represent the highest tier and is cascaded into sub-major groups (e.g. Professionals Group) |
| 2 | Sub-major group | Represent the second tier and is cascaded into minor groups (e.g. Science and engineering professionals Group) |
| 3 | Minor Group | Represent the third tier and is cascaded into unit groups (e.g. Physical and earth science professionals Group) |
| 4 | Unit | Represent the fourth tier and is cascaded into occupations (e.g. Physicists and astronomers Group) |
| 5 | Occupation | Represent the fifth tier and is considered as the main statistical unit in the classification (e.g. Physicist) |

Characteristics of the fifth classification tier in the Unified Saudi Occupational Classification:

A occupation is defined as a group of jobs whose main tasks and duties are characterized by a high degree of similarity, where the description of tasks is comprehensive so as to accommodate the detailed jobs to be mapped by the various entities from all sectors. Occupational description defines the minimum requirements that must be met by professionals (in terms of education level, examples of education fields, technical and behavioral skills).

Occupations can be similar in nature of work, level and type of academic education, but differ according to the nature of tasks and duties required:

* When some occupations are similar in nature of work, general tasks and duties, level and type of education, the occupations are merged into one generic occupation.
* The broad scope principle was followed, which accommodates several similar occupations, whereas a narrow scope approach is followed whenever the need for specialization increases and where differences between the occupations appear in the way work is performed.
* Job levels are not considered when classifying occupations, job ranks, or the different organizational structures of any entities.

## 3. Occupation nomenclature

Occupations titles mostly reflect the type of work to clearly indicate what the occupation is, for all employers to identify the occupations appropriate for their jobs.

## 4. Technical and behavioral competencies

* Behavioral competencies

In this stage, the general technical and behavioral competencies of the occupation were defined, so that the framework of behavioral competencies was referred to in accordance with international best practices.

* Technical competencies

In accordance with international best practices, assigning technical competencies to national occupational classifications is based on the European Skills / Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO), which is considered one of the best global sources that can be relied upon in building technical competencies at the level of occupations, bearing in mind that this European standard is holistic and generic.

The following summary serves as a roadmap for the alignment between the International Standard Classification of Occupations and the Unified Saudi Occupational Classification:

• (10) major groups (same as the international standard classification of occupations ISCO-08)

The major group represents very broad areas of work and not specific types of work performed. There are ten major groups, each identified by one digit from 0-9.

• (43) sub-major groups (same as the international standard classification of occupations ISCO-08)

Sub-major groups are sub-divisions within the major groups cascaded according to the general field of work.

• (130) minor groups (same as the international standard classification of occupations ISCO-08)

Minor groups are sub-groups within sub-groups divided according to types of work sub-fields.

• (433) units (same as the international standard classification of occupations ISCO-08)

They are subsections of the minor groups. Their classification is more precise and more detailed than those included within the minor groups, and directly indicates the specialized types of work.

•More than (2000) occupation (the fifth tier of the Unified Saudi Occupational Classification)

They are subdivisions of units and are the most detailed tier of the Unified Saudi Occupational Classification.

The following table illustrates the statistics of the classification boundaries and the number of occupations included in the **Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations**:

| Major Group Code | Major group | Sub-major Group | Minor Group | Unit | Occupation\* |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Managers | 4 | 11 | 31 | 325 |
| 2 | Professionals | 6 | 27 | 92 | 640 |
| 3 | Technicians and associate professionals | 5 | 20 | 84 | 376 |
| 4 | Clerical support workers | 4 | 8 | 27 | 52 |
| 5 | Service and sales workers | 4 | 13 | 39 | 109 |
| 6 | Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers | 3 | 9 | 18 | 53 |
| 7 | Craft and related trades workers | 5 | 14 | 66 | 179 |
| 8 | Plant and machine operators, and assemblers | 3 | 14 | 40 | 219 |
| 9 | Elementary occupations | 6 | 11 | 33 | 77 |
| 0 | Armed forces occupations | 3 | 3 | 3 | 18 |
|  | Total | 43 | 130 | 433 | 2048 |

\* The total number of occupations at the national level may increase or decrease based on requests submitted by government entities to the Permanent Technical Committee for Classification, which will review and make decisions regarding them.

The following table illustrates a comparison between the number of groups at each level of the Saudi Unified Occupational Classification and the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08).

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group Code** | **Major group** | **Sub-major groups** | **Minor groups** | **Unit groups** |
| 1 | Managers | 4 (4) | 11 (11) | 31 (31) |
| 2 | Professionals | 6 (6) | 27 (27) | 92 (92) |
| 3 | Technicians and Associate Professionals | 5 (5) | 20 (20) | 84 (84) |
| 4 | Clerical Support Workers | 4 (4) | 8 (8) | 27 (29) |
| 5 | Services and Sales Workers | 4 (4) | 13 (13) | 39 (40) |
| 6 | Skilled Agricultural, Forestry and Fishery Workers | 3 (3) | 9 (9) | 18 (18) |
| 7 | Craft and Related Trades Workers | 5 (5) | 14 (14) | 66 (66) |
| 8 | Plant and Machine Operators, and Assemblers | 3 (3) | 14 (14) | 40 (40) |
| 9 | Elementary Occupations | 6 (6) | 11 (11) | 33 (33) |
| 0 | Armed Forces Occupations | 3 (3) | 3 (3) | 3 (3) |
|  | **Total SSCO (ISCO-08)** | **43 (43)** | **130 (130)** | **433 (436)** |
|  | Note: Numbers for ISCO-08 are shown in brackets . | | | |

* Preparation of Occupational Descriptions for the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations

1. **Criteria for Writing Occupational Descriptions in the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations**

Occupational descriptions are an integral part of building any professional or job classification system, as the concept of an occupation cannot be fully understood without describing the type of work performed and the main tasks involved. These descriptions help to identify what specific jobs or duties fall under the occupation, based on the requirements of the entities using the classification. While job titles provide a general idea of the occupation, the detailed occupational description offers precise information about the qualifications and skills required for individuals in those roles.

Based on this understanding, the lists for the **Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations (SSCO)** were developed, including a range of occupations characterized by a high degree of generality and comprehensiveness, reflecting the nature of the occupations as previously defined.

1. **Guidelines for Preparing Occupational Descriptions**

Just as the occupation lists in the classification were systematically and consistently developed, general principles and standards were followed in writing the occupational descriptions, in line with global best practices, as outlined in the official guide for writing occupational descriptions for the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations, which was prepared before the descriptions were written for the occupation lists:

* The prepared occupational descriptions are kept general and non-specific, allowing entities to adapt them to their diverse needs.
* The use of correct and proper Arabic language is essential, especially when drafting key fields such as the occupation summary and the main tasks and duties.
* Sentences should begin with a verb infinitive appropriate to the nature of the occupation being described.
* Avoid using any technical terms, jargon, or phrases that may have multiple meanings, as well as avoiding abbreviations, to ensure clarity and ease of understanding for all concerned parties.
* Avoid referencing gender when describing occupations and using pronouns, except in cases where the occupation is specifically for women.

1. **Occupational Description Template**

The following guidelines were established for designing the occupational description card and the required fields to specify the qualifications necessary for individuals in various professions, according to the table below, which provides definitions of the fields in the occupational description card and the sources used to populate these fields:

* Classification Data
* Occupation Name: The official name of the occupation.
* Occupation Code: The code assigned to the occupation in the classification system.
* Occupation Summary: A description of the occupation in two or three sentences at most. The user should be able to understand the nature of the occupation (its purpose and what it involves) by reading this field alone.
* Main Tasks of the Occupation: Up to five detailed tasks. The description of these main tasks should follow the instructions provided in the guide for preparing occupational descriptions.
* Educational Level: The minimum required educational qualifications for the occupation.
* Field of Education: Up to three fields of education relevant to the occupation.
* Behavioral Competencies: Up to five behavioral competencies required for the occupation.
* Technical Competencies: Up to five technical competencies required for the occupation.

The following table defines the fields of the occupational description card and the sources used to populate these fields:

| # | Field | Definition | Source |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Classification data | Position of the occupation in the classification and unit group to which it belongs | List of Occupations |
| 2 | Occupation title | The name given to the occupations describing its type of work | List of Occupations |
| 3 | Occupation Code | The digital identifier or code assigned to the occupation within the general framework of the Unified Classification of Occupations | List of Occupations |
| 4 | Summary description | Brief description of the hey accountabilities describing the main purpose of the occupation and its importance, this summary is brief and holistic and may be used by different entities | Text written according to the Occupation Description Guide |
| 5 | key accountabilities | A set of tasks and duties that describe the occupation in a comprehensive and generic way covering its main activities in most cases, characterized as generic same as in the summary but with some detail | Text written according to the Occupation Description Guide |
| 6 | Education Level | The minimum level of educational qualification required for the occupation holder to be able to carry out his/her work in an acceptable level of competence and effectiveness. This field is directly related to the position of the occupation in the classification | Table of Education Levels (according to ISCED-11) |
| 7 | Education Field | The field of education that allows the occupation holder to perform in an acceptable level of competence | Table of Education Fields (according to ISCED-13) |
| 8 | Behavioral competencies | A set of behavioral skills, abilities and knowledge that can be observed, measured and developed by professionals. The behavioral competencies support professionals in performing their duties in an outstanding manner. | Behavioral Competencies |
| 9 | Technical competencies | A set of technical skills, abilities and knowledge that can be observed, measured and developed by the owner of the profession that enable him/her to perform the job effectively and accurately | Technical Competencies |

* **Guide for Preparing Occupational Descriptions**

The Occupational Descriptions Guide aims to provide the guidelines upon which the occupational descriptions for the professions listed in the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations were developed, in order to achieve the following objectives:

* Ensure the adoption of modern human resource management practices in the preparation of occupational descriptions.
* Standardize and unify the basic procedures and processes related to occupational descriptions for future updates and development of occupations in the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations.
* Unify the general understanding of the occupation and prevent varying interpretations of the occupation's name based on different perspectives.

The guidelines outlined in this manual are followed when developing job descriptions:

* Definition of Occupational Description: A description of the type of work performed and its main features, in addition to a set of requirements, known as occupational requirements, that must be met by the jobholder to perform the work with an appropriate level of competence and effectiveness.
* Definition of Occupational Description Template: The document that outlines and describes the key aspects of the occupation, such as the job title, the nature of the tasks and responsibilities, the qualifications required to perform the job, and the competencies required for efficient and effective performance.

1. **Development of the Occupational Description**

First Step: Filling in the Fields Related to Occupational Classification

* In this step, the fields related to occupational classification are filled in based on the occupational titles and specific numerical data provided in the classification.
* The data for these fields is derived from the prepared classification.
* These fields serve as the identification and reference section for the occupation.

Second Step: Filling in the Fields Related to the Job Summary and Tasks

* In this stage, the fields related to the tasks and responsibilities of the occupation are written.
* This stage relies on inputs provided by the technical team and stakeholders, particularly the job and occupational descriptions submitted.
* The job summary should be clear, concise, and general, providing comprehensive information to give a general understanding of the occupation’s tasks when read.
* The focus is solely on the general tasks and duties of the occupation, without mentioning temporary or emergency responsibilities.
* The tasks are written in a general manner to ensure they can be easily used by relevant entities.

Third Step: Filling in the Fields Related to Job Requirements

* At this stage, the fields related to job requirements are completed, particularly the qualification level and field of education.
* The qualification level represents the academic degree required to perform the job efficiently, and this field is filled in based on the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED-11), which serves as a reference for organizing educational programs and qualifications by levels and fields of education.
* The "Field of Education" field specifies the type of educational qualification required, reflecting the nature of the occupation. This field is filled in based on **ISCED-13**.

Fourth Step: Filling in the Fields Related to Behavioral and Technical Competencies

* In this stage, the general behavioral and technical competencies for the occupation are identified, based on global best practices in defining competencies and skills in most occupational fields, as well as some international references that can be relied upon for competency building. One of the most important references is the European Skills, Competences, Qualifications, and Occupations (ESCO) Classification, focusing on the fact that this guide is broad and general, allowing various entities to specify the competencies they need, whether technical or behavioral. It also gives private and government entities the opportunity to develop their own detailed frameworks according to their specific needs.

4.2. Objects / units classified

The object to be classified is the occupation. In the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations (SSCO), an occupation is defined as a set of tasks and duties that are performed or are supposed to be performed by one person, including working for an employer or being self-employed.

A person may be associated with an occupation through their current main job, a secondary job, a future job, or a job they previously held.

4.3. Classification Criteria

Top of Form

Bottom of Form

The Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations (SSCO) relies on a set of criteria used to classify occupations into consistent and organized occupational groups. These criteria are based on conceptual foundations that support the classification of occupations in a way that reflects skill levels and specialization. The main criteria used in the classification are:

* **Skill Level**:  
  Skill level refers to the degree of complexity and difficulty required to perform the tasks associated with the job. This includes the level of education or training needed and the time required to acquire the skills to successfully perform the occupational tasks.  
  This criterion is used to determine the skill levels required for jobs and classify them into groups based on the complexity of the work.
* **Skill Specialization**:  
  This criterion addresses the level of specialization needed to perform occupational tasks. It includes the knowledge or skill domain to which the work belongs and the technical expertise or knowledge that a person must possess to perform the job effectively.
* **Economic Sector or Field**:  
  The classification takes into account the economic sector or field to which the occupation belongs. For example, some occupations may be classified according to specific industry or commercial standards, depending on the sector in which they operate.

5. Coding

* Determining the Number of Digits for the Classification Code

The four classification boundaries of the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations were coded based on the same coding method used in the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO), which assigns only one digit for each classification boundary. Two digits were assigned for the fifth boundary (the occupation boundary) to accommodate the number of occupations listed under the fourth boundary of the international classification.

* **The coding process must meet the following criteria**:
* Compatibility with the type of electronic systems used.
* The code should serve its purpose and provide the necessary information.
* The number of digits, whether numeric or alphabetical, within the code should be appropriate.
* The coding system should be easy to use and understand in terms of what the code represents.

Based on the coding methodology reviewed, the occupation code will consist of five boundaries, including six numeric digits, as follows:

* **First Boundary**: One digit (1-9), which is the first digit from the left.
* **Second Boundary**: One digit (1-9), which is the second digit from the left.
* **Third Boundary**: One digit (1-9), which is the third digit from the left.
* **Fourth Boundary**: One digit (1-9), which is the fourth digit from the left.
* **Fifth Boundary**: Two digits (01-99), as the number of occupations in a single occupational group can exceed nine occupations. These are the fifth and sixth digits from the left

* 1. Information required for Coding

In the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations, the coding process requires the collection of accurate information about the unit or element to be classified. This information is obtained from data sources that are classified according to the classification system. To ensure coding accuracy, specific information related to the classified unit must be provided, such as:

* **Job Title**:  
  The job title is a key piece of information used in the coding process.
* **Main Tasks**:  
  This refers to the tasks performed by the worker or employee in their job, which is essential information within the scope of work.
* **Skill Level:**  
  The required skill level for performing the job must be known, including the type of training or education acquired.
* **Economic Sector**:  
  Knowing the economic sector to which the job belongs helps in determining the appropriate occupational codes.
  1. How to use the Classification in Coding

To ensure the effective use of the **Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations** in the coding process, the best practices that focus on accurately matching the available information with the coding index can be followed. Below are the recommended steps and methods:

* **Matching the Information with the Coding Index**:  
  The first step is to match the available information (such as job title, duties performed, skill level) with the approved coding index in the classification. This method relies on matching each unit or occupation with a specific description in the coding index, which includes a list of occupations organized hierarchically.
* **Handling Inexact Descriptions**:  
  In some cases, the description found in the data source may not exactly match a single entry in the coding index. In this case, the closest description that accurately reflects the nature of the tasks performed or the required skill level is searched for. This may require starting from more aggregated classification levels and gradually working toward the most specific code.
* **Prioritizing Available Information**:  
  If the occupational information is incomplete or contradictory, priority is given to the main tasks performed over the job title. For example, if the job title is unclear, but the main tasks belong to a specific category in the classification, the occupation is coded based on the main tasks.
  1. Classification rules

The coding rules in the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations rely on a set of principles that guide coders on how to apply codes accurately, especially in complex or exceptional cases:

* **Coding Double Responses**:  
  In the case of more than one occupation or a double response in a questionnaire about the job title, the title that reflects the primary activities or tasks performed by the individual is selected. If the duties are not equally important, the occupation that is more significant or in which the worker spends the most time is chosen.
* **Rules for Classifying Supervisory or Administrative Occupations**:  
  In the Saudi Unified Classification of Occupations, there are specific rules for classifying administrative and supervisory occupations. Occupations that involve direct administrative responsibilities are classified under administrative occupation categories, while supervisory occupations that do not include direct administrative responsibilities are classified under supervisory occupation categories.
* **Coding for Atypical Tasks**:  
  If a coder encounters an occupation with atypical or rare tasks, the closest description in the coding index is used. This approach is followed to avoid excessive focus on minor differences that may lead to improper classification.