

STANDARDS AND QUALITY ASSURANCE FOR GENERAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING UMALUSI POLICY

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Definitions

In this document, any word or expression to which a meaning has been assigned in the National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008 (Act no 67 of 2008), and the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, 2001, (Act no 58 of 2001, as amended in 2008), has the same meaning unless the context otherwise indicates.

Assessment	means the process of identifying, gathering and interpreting information about a learner's achievement in order to- (a) assist the learner's development and improve the process of learning and teaching; and (b) evaluate and certify competence in			
Assessment body	order to ensure qualification credibility; means a department of education or a juristic body accredited by the Council as a body responsible for conducting internal assessment and external examinations;			
Basic education	means education offered in schools from the Reception year to Grade 12, and includes other forms of education and training in general and further education and training ¹ ;			
Candidate	refers to any person, receiving tuition at a public or independent school or at a learning institution under an accredited assessment body and who achieved a subject credit in a qualification or the full qualification;			
Certification	means the formal recognition of a qualification or part qualifications awarded to a successful learner;			

¹This definition is based on the two descriptions provided for the 'Department of Basic Education' in the NCS National Policy pertaining to the Programme and Promotion Requirements of the National Curriculum Statement Grades R - 12 (2011: viii), and the NCS National Protocol for Assessment Grades R - 12 (2011: viii)

Council	means Umalusi, the Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training established in terms of the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, 2001 (Act No. 58 of 2001) as amended;		
Curriculum	refers to the underpinning policy provided for a qualification to facilitate a more general understanding of its implementation in an educational system. The curriculum encompasses three components: a) The intended curriculum: the documented curriculum for a qualification provides the core features and principles of the subject discipline, and includes a more detailed description (syllabus) which covers the topic areas and specifies, in terms of the depth, breadth and level of difficulty and cognitive demand, as well as the types of understanding and outcomes required from the candidate for the purpose of the qualification to be fulfilled. b) The enacted curriculum: the responsible, distinctive and creative delivery of the curriculum in an institution which includes leadership and management, the ethos and values, teaching and learning, extracurricular activities, learner support, institutional performance and the management of quality towards improvement.		

Department of Basic Education	c) The assessed curriculum: the internal assessment and the external examination of the intended curriculum. The curriculum policy and its syllabi provide the information necessary for the enactment of the curriculum in the institution and the necessary framework for assessment. means the national department responsible for basic education, Grades R – 12, which includes general and further education and			
	training;			
Department of Higher Education and Training	means the national department responsible for further education and training in colleges, higher education, and adult education and training;			
General and Further Education	means the sub-framework of qualifications			
and Training Qualifications Sub-				
Framework	Council for National Qualifications			
	Framework levels 1-4 as envisioned in Chapter 2 of the National Qualifications Framework Act (Act no 67 of 2008) as amended;			
GENFETQA Act	means the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, 2001 (Act no 58 of 2001) as amended;			
Minister	means the Minister of Basic Education or the Minister of Higher Education and Training;			
National Qualification Framework	is a comprehensive system for the			
(NQF)	classification, registration, publication and articulation of quality-assured national qualifications;			
NQF Act	means the National Qualification Framework Act (Act No 67 of 2008) as amended;			

Part-qualification	means an assessed subject or learning area that is registered as part of a qualification and/or recognition accorded to the achievement of part of a qualification registered on the sub-framework;
Qualification	means a registered national qualification, in the context of the National Qualifications Framework Act (Act no 67 of 2008) as amended;
Quality assurance	means the process of measuring, evaluating and reporting on quality against standards, and monitoring for ongoing improvement in the qualification, the curriculum / programme, the assessment, the implementation and delivery of the curriculum and the capacity of the institution or assessment body to offer and/or assess the qualification;
Standard	Statement of level of quality or attainment required.
Subject statement	means the certificate issued by Umalusi where a candidate did not meet the minimum requirements of the qualification but obtained credits towards the qualification.

STANDARDS AND QUALITY ASSURANCE FOR GENERAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

1. THE ACTS WHICH DETERMINE UMALUSI'S MANDATE

- 1.1 In 2001 Umalusi, the Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training, was mandated through its founding Act, The General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, (Act 58 of 2001) as the quality assurance body for bands 1 4 of the National Qualifications Framework.
- 1.2 The object of the Act is to enhance the quality of general and further education and training. This Act also repealed the South African Certification Council Act of 1986.
- 1.3 With the promulgation of the NQF Act, (Act 67 of 2008), Umalusi was constituted as the Quality Council for General and Further Education and Training, as provided for in the amended GENFETQA Act (2008). Accordingly Umalusi is required to collaborate with the South African Qualifications Authority and the other Quality Councils (QCs) to perform the functions of a quality council, subject to the NQF Act, its founding Act, and the National Education Policy Act, 1996 (Act No 27 of 1996).

2. GENERAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

2.1 Both the GENFETQA Act (2008) and the NQF Act (2008) make reference to General and Further Education, terms which appear in the Constitution. Section 29, the Bill of Rights states:

Everyone has the right

- to a basic education, including adult basic education; and
- to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible.
- 2.2 Section 2 of the Act indicates its application to education institutions established, declared or registered under the South African Schools Act, 1996 (No 84 of 1996), the Further Education and Training Act, 1998 (No 98 of 1998) and the Adult Education and Training Act, 2000 (no 52 of 2000).
- 2.3 Umalusi has been and remains responsible for quality assuring:
 - a. schooling, from Grade R through to Grade 12;

- formal adult learning insofar as it is associated with the acquisition of certified general and further education (viz from initial literacy and numeracy in AET Level 1 at least through to the NASCA and the National Independent Certificate (NIC)); and
- c. vocational education, as exemplified by the NC (V) levels 2-4, in colleges and in schools.
- 2.4 These forms of learning are separate from learning associated directly with workplace education and training as well as from that offered in universities and universities of technology.
- 2.5 Qualifications and part-qualifications for trades and occupation will, however, also be registered at NQF Levels 1- 4. Such qualifications are developed and managed by the QCTO.
- 2.6 The notice, Determination of the Sub-frameworks that comprise the National Qualifications Framework, as gazetted by the Minister of Higher Education and Training on the 14 December 2012, confines the General and Further Education and Training Sub-framework of Qualifications to Level 1-4 of the NQF, but allows for Umalusi to provide motivation by June 2013 for extension of the sub-framework into levels 5. Opening up of this NQF Level for qualification development and delivery would serve the needs of many South Africans well, Level 5 qualifications extends the further education and training space properly into post-schooling.

3 STANDARDS IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- 3.1 Educational standards in General and Further Education and Training are located and held in a number of places:
 - in the design and rules that govern qualifications,
 - in the depth, breadth and the specification of knowledge, skills, and the categories of cognitive demand laid out by supporting curricula,
 - In the accreditation and monitoring of assessment bodies, colleges and schools
 - in the implementation of the curriculum and
 - in the categories of cognitive demand and levels of difficulty established

through assessment.

- 3.2 The allocation of responsibility for setting and maintaining the standards in each of these areas is prescribed by legislation.
- 3.3 The National Education Policy Act, 1996 (No 27 of 1996) (NEPA), section 3 and the South African Schools Act, 1996 (No 84 of 1996) Section 6A, legislates that it is the responsibility of the Minister of Education to determine the minimum norms and standards for national education in both public and independent schools. The objectives of those Acts are to provide for the determination of national education policy by the Minister in accordance with certain principles; the consultations to be undertaken prior to the determination and the establishment of certain bodies for the purpose of consultation; the publication of national education policy, and the monitoring and evaluation of education.
- 3.4 In terms of NEPA, the Minister shall determine national educational policy in terms of the Constitution and the Schools Act, and is required by the same Act to give notice of having determined policy in the Gazette and to table the policy instrument in Parliament within 21 days after the notice has appeared in the Gazette. It is also a Ministerial responsibility to direct that the standards of education provision, delivery and performance be monitored and evaluated by the Department annually or at other specified intervals.
- 3.5 The FET Colleges Amendment Bill, published in Government Gazette No. 35401 of 30 May 2012, which amends the FET Colleges Act of 2006 and repeals the ABET Act of 2000, states in Section 43 14 (1) that 'The Minister may prescribe minimum norms and standards for continuing education and training qualifications or part-qualifications that are offered at colleges.'
- 3.6 Such policies are directed towards the advancement and protection of the fundamental rights of every person guaranteed in terms of Chapter 3 of the Constitution.
- 3.7 The long title of the General and Further Education and Training Act, 2001, indicates that its purpose is:
 - To provide for the establishment, composition and functioning of the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Council; to provide for quality assurance in general and further education and training; to provide for

- control over norms and standards of curriculum and assessment; to provide for the conduct of assessment...
- 3.8 The definitions² of both general education and training, and further education and training were amended in the GENFETQA Act in 2008 and now refer to all learning and training programmes leading to qualifications at level 1 4 on the NQF.
- 3.9 It is evident from the legislation cited above that the Minister, whether of Basic Education or Higher Education and Training, is responsible for determining norms and standards in national policy after consultation, and that such policy is determined to protect individual Constitutional rights in respect of education; but it is also evident that the GENFETQA Act requires that the Quality Assurer created by the Act assist the Minister to ensure the enactment of those norms and standards, especially with respect to curriculum and assessment.
- 3.10 Quality assuring education is a complex, ongoing process, which entails every facet of the work Umalusi undertakes, In each area of work, Umalusi provides principles, processes and procedures to inform the educational system as to how it works; what it expects from others in the system, whether these are institutions of education and training, assessment bodies, examination moderators or certification officers.
- 3.11 In support of assuring that the Minister's norms and standards are internalized within education and training, Umalusi sets its own quality standards through developing policy and directives for the work it is required to do.
- 3.12 Such policy is binding on the national education system, regardless of whether the institutions are public or independent ones and includes, i.a.:
 - The General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Subframework;
 - Policy related to the management of the qualifications sub-framework;
 - · Qualification policies;
 - Quality assurance policy;
 - Directives for certification of aualification:

²If these were to be taken as the letter of the law, there would be no space for the work of other QCs AT Levels 1 – 4, and Umalusi's work would have to expand to deal with all learning leading to qualifications.

- Frameworks for quality assurance of assessment as evidenced in directives, guidelines and requirements;
- Policies related to quality assurance, accreditation and monitoring of assessment bodies, independent schools, FET colleges and Adult Learning Centres and related policies.
- 3.13 Such policy serves to direct the conduct of all involved in delivering qualifications registered on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework.

4 THE SCOPE OF UMALUSI'S RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 The General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework (December 2008, revised August 2012) formally demarcates Umalusi's area of responsibility: Umalusi develops policy that express the standards it uses for quality assuring the qualifications on the sub-framework and their associated provision and assessments.

This section provides a brief overview of Umalusi's responsibilities.

Qualifications and curricula

- 4.2 Umalusi develops policy to manage the standards necessary for maintaining, developing and strengthening the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework so as to achieve the primary object of its Act 'to enhance the quality of general and further education and training' (paragraph 3, General and Further Education and Training Act, 2001, (Act 58 of 2001)). Such work entails, amongst others, the development of new qualifications and the review of existing qualifications.
- 4.3 Umalusi evaluates the curricula and assessment for subjects which comprise the component parts of the qualification as a means of establishing the nature of the standard and makes recommendations for curriculum improvement.
- 4.4 Umalusi benchmarks the qualifications and curricula against comparable international exemplars to ascertain the nature and standing of the qualifications on the sub-framework. To do so, Umalusi evaluates the intended, enacted and assessed curricula for the subjects, and by extension, for the

- qualification as a whole. It reports publically on its findings, which include recommendations for strengthening national policy and its own.
- 4.5 Umalusi has developed criteria/ minimum requirements for qualifications and curricula which inform its development and review of qualifications as well as its research in these areas.
- 4.6 Qualifications new to the framework are monitored during the planning and implementation phases, and then become included in the standard quality assurance work.

Quality assurance of assessment

- 4.7 In terms of both the GENFETQA and NQF Acts, Umalusi is responsible for quality assurance of assessment at exit points within its sub-framework.
- 4.8 The assessed curriculum is subject to a coherent set of quality assurance practices and processes that all contribute to a single end: Umalusi must be able to assure that the qualification has been credibly assessed, and achieved, at an identifiable standard through external examinations and internal assessments.
- 4.9 External examinations set sound standards for educational attainment that are specified in very precise terms for a large system; and through implementing processes and procedures to manage the conduct and administration of examinations.
- 4.10 National assessments are offered by the state and by private assessment bodies accredited to do so by Umalusi.

Accreditation of assessment bodies, independent schools, private FET colleges and adult/community learning centres

- 4.11 In accordance with the GENFETQA Act, Umalusi must accredit and quality assure the work of private assessment bodies, independent schools, private FET colleges and adult learning centres, in terms of policy and criteria developed for this purpose, and which are regulated by the Ministers of Basic Education and Higher Education and Training.
- 4.12 Private providers are accredited to offer and/or assess qualifications on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework.

Approval of results, certification and verification

- 4.13 Umalusi is required to work with the Departments of Education and private assessment bodies to ensure that all the requirements prescribed by the Council for conducting assessments have been complied with.
- 4.14 Once satisfied with assessment body compliance, Umalusi, after consultation with the relevant bodies, approves the publication of the results.
- 4.15 Umalusi issues certificates for qualifications and part-qualifications on its subframework in accordance with its directives on receipt of the data from the assessment bodies, and has the capacity to verify the certificates it issues.

Research

- 4.16 Research provides Umalusi with reliable, relevant and appropriate data, information and facts, so that the organization can formulate meaningful quality assurance policies and shape its strategic direction on an informed basis. In order to fulfill this requirement, Umalusi, empowered by legislation, conducts or commissions and publishes research on issues relevant to the development and implementation of its sub-framework.
- 4.17 The research conducted is rigorous, and underpins the theoretical basis for all Umalusi's professional work. It provides new direction when needed.
- 4.18 In conducting its research, Umalusi is guided by three principles. These are:
 - Quality: Umalusi undertakes and supports high quality research that not only
 meets the standards for research implementation but also assures review of
 the research at critical stages, from proposal to outcome.
 - Research Standards and Ethics: In order to ensure that Umalusi's research
 meets the highest ethical standards, Umalusi has developed a Research
 Ethics policy. The policy guides all Umalusi research to ensure the highest
 levels of accountability. It also aims to promote awareness of ethical
 principles and issues in the conduct of research activities, thereby clarifying
 for researchers and staff their ethical obligations.
 - **Integration:** As appropriate, it is the policy of Umalusi that research be fully incorporated and integrated into operations of Umalusi.

5. DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING THE GENERAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING QUALIFICATIONS SUB-FRAMEWORK

Table 1: The General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Subframework

NQF level	Q	Certificates for units of learning					
Level 4							
Designated variants	Senior Certificate and National Senior Certificate (Colleges)	National Senior Certificate (NSC)	National Certificate (Vocational) Level 4	National Senior Certificate for Adults (NASCA)	National Certificate (Vocational) for Adults (NACVA)	Subject certificates towards one or more qualification designated variants	
Level 3	Intermediate Certificate (IC)					Subject certificates	
Designated variants	[1430 - 01 11]		National Certificate (Vocational) Level 3	Intermediate Certificate of Education		towards one or more qualification designated variants	
Level 2	Elementary Certificate (EC)					Subject certificates	
Designated variants	[NSC	– Gr 10]	National Certificate (Vocational) Level 2	Elementary Certificate of Education		towards one or more qualification designated variants	
Level 1	General Certificate (GC)					0.1: 1.0.1	
Designated variants	Gene	ral Certificate	of Education (GCE)	General Education and Training Certificate: ABET		Subject (LA) certificates for adult learners	

Table 1 lists existing designated variants below each qualification type, as well as certain designated variants which Umalusi proposes for possible development.

The relationship between the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework

- 5.1 In terms of the NQF Act, 2008 (Act no 67 of 2008), the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is defined as a comprehensive system for the classification, registration, publication and articulation of quality assured national qualifications, approved by the Minister of Higher Education and Training.
- 5.2 The NQF is organized as a series of ten levels of learning achievement. It comprises of three co-ordinated sub-frameworks for:
 - General and Further Education and Training, contemplated in the GENFETQA Act;
 - Trade and Occupations, contemplated in the Skills Development Act; and
 - Higher Education, contemplated in the Higher Education Act.
- 5.3 These sub-frameworks define the scope of the work for the three Qualifications and Quality Assurance Councils (QCs), and each QC is responsible for establishing policy governing the quality assurance of qualifications, provision, and learner achievement within its respective framework. All three QCs are required to collaborate with SAQA and the other QCs in order to develop, register and publish qualifications.
- 5.4 SAQA is responsible for the development of a system of collaboration designed to further the objectives of the NQF, and, furthermore, the work associated with the development of the NQF is directed by an annual instruction from the Minister of Higher Education and Training.

Umalusi and the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Subframework of Qualifications

- 5.5 In terms of Paragraph 27 of the NQF Act, Umalusi must assist in the achievement of the objectives of the NQF through, i.a.:
 - a. Performing its functions in accordance with the NQF Act and its founding Act;
 - b. Developing and managing its sub-framework through the development

- and implementation of the necessary policies for the development, registration and publication of qualifications, taking into account the relevant national policies and criteria for assessment, recognition of prior learning and credit accumulation and transfer;
- c. Advising and making recommendations related to the sub-framework to the relevant Minister:
- d. Ensuring the development of such qualifications—and partqualifications—as are necessary for the sector, including indication of appropriate measures for the delivery and assessment of learning achievement, and recommend them to SAQA for registration;
- e. Maintaining a database of learner achievement and related matters, as well as providing SAQA with data for recording on the national learners' records database;
- f. Providing information regarding the sub-framework to the public; and
- g. Performing any other functions required by the NQF Act, or functions consistent with this Act which the relevant Minister may determine.
- 5.6 All this and more is to be achieved through a system of collaboration with the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) and the other Quality Councils.
- 5.7 Each of these processes is dealt with more fully in the following policy:
 - Policy for the management of qualifications on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework, a sub-framework of the NQF (November 2011, revised June 2012)

The character of the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework

- 5.8 The General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework is constituted as a register of qualification types, some with designated variants, each of which has a prescribed curriculum and is subject to external assessment. It is only possible to satisfactorily set and monitor quality assurance standards for relatively few qualifications, especially when they serve the needs of a majority of South Africans as those on this sub-framework do.
- 5.9 The chief purpose of these qualifications is to fulfill the state's constitutional responsibility to citizens' right to a basic education, a responsibility which

- specifically mentions adults' right to adult basic education. The constitution also makes provision for further education which is to be made progressively available and accessible.
- 5.10 The NQF Levels 1-4 qualifications on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework are therefore organized to cater for both schooling needs and the educational needs of adults.
- 5.11 The purpose of all the qualifications on the sub-framework is to prepare learners in a broad, general way for further learning, for becoming educated South African citizens with some readiness to enter the world of work, and so, these qualifications may be academic or vocational in nature.
- 5.12 All the qualifications include foundational learning which provides opportunities for proficiency in one or more languages as well as proficiency in some form of mathematical knowledge.
- 5.13 All qualifications are curriculum-based, and the subjects within the qualification are based in a parent discipline (or disciplines, and have a substantive external assessment component which is quality assured by Umalusi.
- 5.14 The policy managing the sub-framework directs Umalusi to promote opportunities for the recognition and transfer of learning already achieved, where such opportunities are to the benefit of learners and do not compromise the quality of the qualifications on the sub-framework. The principle applies equally to qualifications across sub-frameworks.
- 5.15 The nature and structure of the qualifications sub-framework is more fully laid out in the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework policy (March 2013).
- 5.16 For ease of reference, the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework is reproduced as Table 1 on p 19.

Qualifications and curricula

5.17 The qualification sets the founding parameters for the course of study. The curriculum provides the core features and principles of the subject discipline, and includes a more detailed description (syllabus) which covers the topic areas and specifies, in terms of depth, breadth and level of difficulty and cognitive demand, the types of understanding and outcomes required from

- the candidates for the purpose of the qualification to be fulfilled.
- 5.18 The qualification, together with its curriculum and the accompanying assessment requirements, establishes the necessary standard for the qualification as a part of the larger education and training system.
- 5.19 The quality of the implementation of qualifications is subject to various forms of monitoring such as, for example, systemic evaluation of assessment systems for a particular qualification nationally, provincially and in districts and institutions. The standing of the supporting curricula, assessment guidelines are monitored through research some of which serves to benchmark the South African curricula against best practice elsewhere in the world.
- 5.20 For any qualification that is registered on the sub-framework and certificated by Umalusi, the following requirements, amongst others, apply:
 - the learning laid out in the associated curriculum is considered adequate preparation for candidates in terms of the assessment offered by an Umalusi-recognized/accredited assessment body; and
 - the institutions offering the qualification and curriculum are accredited by Umalusi and have the necessary staff, equipment and funding, offer tuition to the required standard and are registered as an exam centre with an assessment body approved or recognised by Umalusi, and that
 - the assessment body, if it is a private one, is accredited by Umalusi; however, Umalusi and the QCs may also work co-operatively in this regard; and
 - d. successful achievement is certified against all the policy requirements laid out for the qualification by the Minister, the assessment body and the Council.
- 5.21 Umalusi is responsible for quality assuring the qualifications with the largest numbers in the entire education and training system. Because qualifications such as the National Senior Certificate and the National Certificate (Vocational) are intended as the basis for all subsequent learning, qualifications must be both highly recognizable and valued in the system. The assessments associated with these qualifications (and others on the subframework) are consequently viewed as 'high stakes' examinations because of the impact success or failure can have on a candidate's life.

Developing and managing the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework

- 5.22 In terms of the work required to develop and manage the sub-framework, the responsibilities are outlined in Section 3, above.
- 5.23 Umalusi has developed a policy regarding the development, registration and publications of qualifications on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework.
- 5.24 The policy provides criteria and guidelines for the management of the sub-framework, with regard to:
 - Managing the qualifications on the sub-framework, including the review, extension or cessation of delivery of a qualification;
 - Developing new qualifications;
 - · Registering and publishing qualifications;
 - Evaluating, comparing and benchmarking existing qualifications;
 - Developing positions and policies regarding issues of importance to the functioning of the NQF: recognition of prior learning (RPL) and credit accumulation and transfer (CAT) being two such issues
 - Working with the NQF Level descriptors, and
 - Advising the Minister(s) of Education.
- 5.25 Much of this policy draws on the accumulated experience derived from the work that Umalusi and its predecessors have done. The policy is informed by insights derived from research commissioned by Umalusi in order better to understand its own work and that of the national education system.

Policies

- The General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework (February 2011, revised February 2013)
- Draft Policy for the management of qualifications on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework, a Sub-framework of the National Qualifications Sub-framework, (November 2011, revised June 2012)
- Policy for the development, evaluation and review of qualifications for the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework (November 2012)
- Curriculum development and introduction a Framework (Draft, November 2010)

- Guidelines for the development of Curricula draft policy—October 2010
- Recognition of Prior Learning draft policy—October 2010
- Credit Accumulation, Exemption, Recognition and Transfer draft policy—February 2010
- Regarding the use of level descriptors August 2010

6. THE QUALITY ASSURANCE OF ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS AND LEARNER ACHIEVEMENTS

- 6.1 In terms of The General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act 2001 (Act 58 of 2001), as amended, Umalusi is mandated to:
 - a. Assure the quality of assessment at the exit point for qualifications within the sub-framework for general and further education and training³;
 - Issue directives for internal assessment to ensure the reliability of assessment outcomes; such directives must include measures for verification;
 - c. Externally moderate the assessment of all assessment bodies and education institutions;
 - d. Adjust raw marks during standardization if such is warranted;
 - e. With the concurrence of the Director- General, and after consultation with the relevant assessment body or education institution, approve the publication of results, provided that the Council is satisfied that due process has been followed;
 - f. Report any irregularity which may jeopardise the integrity of an assessment or its outcome to the Director-General.
- 6.2 In terms of Section 27 (i) of the NQF Act also, Umalusi is responsible for the quality assurance within its sub-framework, and is required to develop and implement policy for quality assurance to ensure that such quality assurance as is necessary is undertaken, and by doing so, to ensure the integrity and credibility of quality assurance.

³The changes to the FET Act have expunged the notion of further education from critical clauses in the Act. The amendments have not, however, for now removed Section 34 (2) which refers to Umalusi's responsibility for quality assurance. However, the Memorandum on the Objects of the FET Colleges Amendment Bill, are to repeal the AET Act, to amend the Act to allow CET Colleges 'to provide both basic and further education and training qualifications', and that the VCET colleges will offer trade and occupational qualifications and part qualifications.

- 6.3 Umalusi's quality assurance of assessment systems and learner achievements is made up of the following processes and procedures:
 - a. Evaluation and accreditation of private assessment bodies (Refer: Section 7 Accreditation), and
 - b. Quality assurance of external examinations through the:
 - 1. moderation of examination question papers;
 - 2. moderation of internal assessment:
 - 3. monitoring of the conduct of examinations;
 - 4. moderation of marking;
 - 5. standardization of assessment outcomes; and
 - 6. verification of the resulting process.

Each of these processes is outlined briefly below.

- 6.4 The framework for quality assurance of learner assessments and achievements is based on established and existing practices in assessment for certification.
- 6.5 External examinations at exit points of the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework are the measure for ensuring standards in large-scale assessments: the examinations systems, processes, and procedures are thus central to Umalusi's quality assurance approach.
- 6.6 A suite of systems, processes, and procedures to evaluate, inspect, monitor, and report on the examinations systems, and apply in both public and private assessment bodies and institutions in order to drive the development, maintenance, and improvement of standards in assessment.
- 6.7 Besides external examinations at exit points, a long-standing tradition with high levels of currency and credibility, the moderation of internal assessment is considered an additional quality assurance lever for influencing quality in the education system.
- 6.8 External examinations are thus used with a fair measure of success both to engender public trust in the education system and to drive the quality of attainment and educational standards as specified in the particular qualification policy documents.
- 6.9 The tradition of examinations at the exit level of a qualification permeates all the sectors that Umalusi quality assures: schools, adult education and training, and vocational education and training. The value of external examinations lies in:

- a. setting sound standards for educational attainment that can be specified and articulated in very precise terms for a large system and
- b. implementing processes and procedures to manage the conduct and administration of examinations.
- 6.10 The quality and standard of examinations is determined by the level of adherence to policy in the implementation of examination-related processes; the cognitive challenge of examination question papers; the appropriateness and weighting of content in question papers in relation to the curriculum; the standard of internal moderation of examination question papers; the compliance with technical specifications for question papers; the efficiency and effectiveness of systems, processes, and procedures for the monitoring of the conduct of the examinations; the quality of marking, and the quality and standard of internal quality assurance processes within the assessment body. These standards are captured in the policies cited below.
- 6.11 The process of **moderation of question papers** focuses on ensuring that question papers are of an acceptable standard, cover the appropriate content as prescribed in the syllabus, and are presented in a professional manner. For this purpose, a set of criteria are used.
- 6.12 Umalusi undertakes a rigorous and extensive **monitoring of the administration of examinations**. The monitoring focuses on the following main aspects:
 - a. the assessment bodies' monitoring systems;
 - b. their state of readiness to administer examinations;
 - c. the administration and conduct of examinations; and
 - d. the resulting processes and procedures.
- 6.13 Umalusi **verifies** the marking of scripts to ensure the reliability and standardization of the marking. This is accomplished through the presence of its external moderators at memorandum discussion meetings, and moderation of marking in a variety of ways.
- 6.14 Umalusi also moderates internal assessment as well as all practical, simulated, and work-based assessment conducted at the learning site which contributes to the learners overall result. In terms of the GENFETQA Act (2008), the Council may issue directives for internal assessment to ensure the reliability of assessment outcomes.

- 6.15 Umalusi standardizes (moderates) both the examination marks and internal assessment scores, including those for practical, simulated, and work-place-based assessment. Standardization is necessary to address the variation in the standard of question papers and marking that may occur across institutions and examining bodies. These variations can unfairly advantage or disadvantage a cohort of learners, depending on which examination they sat for. The statistical moderation process is conducted by the Assessment Standards Committee (a Committee of Council) and is informed by moderation and monitoring reports and other research-based qualitative educational input.
- 6.16 The **post-exam analysis** involves the question paper being evaluated against previous question papers by an independent panel of experts. When a new qualification is introduced or curriculum changes are implemented, a curriculum comparison is undertaken to determine the possible impact on the particular cohort of learners. Ongoing consideration of international trends in the monitoring of standards such as the use of **pre-standardised items** to set standards for subjects within a qualification, as well as to compare standards across qualifications and across assessment bodies, is an ongoing responsibility and Umalusi uses such initiatives to innovate its practices.
- 6.17 Umalusi **verifies the resulting process** to ensure that standardization decisions are correctly applied and that candidates are correctly resulted.
- 6.18 Umalusi ensures that it has-or commissions—the capacity to undertake all of these processes and procedures.

Policies

- Policy Framework for the Quality Assurance of Assessment (Feb 2012)
- Umalusi Standards for the Approval of Results (May 2008)
- Quality Assurance of Assessment: Directives, Guidelines and Requirements (2006 currently being amended)

7. ACCREDITATION AND MONITORING

- 7.1 Provision is quality assured through the accreditation and monitoring of private education institutions and private assessment bodies against a set of regulated criteria.
- 7.2 The scope of accreditation is determined by the qualifications registered on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework and certified by Umalusi.
- 7.3 In terms of The General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act 2001 (Act 58 of 2001), as amended, Umalusi is mandated to:
 - Develop policy for the accreditation of assessment bodies other than the Departments of Education for approval and regulation by the Minister;
 - b. Accredit assessment bodies in accordance with the regulations promulgated by the Minister;
 - Develop policy and criteria for the quality assurance of private education institutions, and must ensure compliance with these requirements;
 - d. Notify the registrar of the accreditation of a private college within 14 days of accreditation;
 - e. Notify the relevant Head of Department of the accreditation of an independent school or private centre, registered in terms of either the South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act no. 16 of 1996) or the Adult Education Act, 2000 (Act no. 52 of 2000) as amended, within 14 days of accreditation;
 - f. Monitor private education institutions to ensure compliance with policy, and may, in the case of lack of compliance, and in accordance with due process, withdraw accreditation from a date specified by Council;
 - g. Notify the Registrar or Head of Department concerned, of its intention to withdraw accreditation and the date of the intended withdrawal.
 - h. Provide, on request, such information as may reasonably be required by any Umalusi accredited provider or assessment body.
- 7.4 The quality of the enacted curriculum is intrinsic to the evaluation processes used when **private institutions are accredited** to offer and/or assess a

- qualification certified by Umalusi. Institutions are required to demonstrate the required capacity to offer and/or assess the qualification at the required standard.
- 7.5 Umalusi **quality assures and accredits the following private institutions** to offer and/or assess qualifications on the General and Further Education and Training Sub-framework of Qualifications:
 - Independent schools (Primary and high schools)
 - Private FET Colleges (TVET)
 - Private Adult Learning Centres (CETs)
 - Private Assessment Bodies.
- 7.6 Policies and criteria approved by the Minister are used to accredit private providers of education and training and private assessment bodies.
- 7.7 The criteria and processes informing accreditation, and the funding model for accreditation are addressed at length in the separate policies listed below.
- 7.8 Once accredited by Umalusi, private education institutions and private assessment bodies are **monitored for on-going improvement**. Umalusi expects accredited providers to participate in, and contribute to its quality assurance initiatives including participating in forums, conferences, and workshops.
- 7.9 While private assessment bodies are accredited and monitored, the quality of the public assessment system as represented by the Examination Directorates of the Department of Basic Education, the Department of Higher Education and Training, and the Provincial Departments of Education is also monitored and reported on annually.
- 7.10 Umalusi periodically undertakes **systemic evaluations** of the quality of educational provision and assessment systems, and recommends the necessary improvements to the Ministers of Education.
- 7.11 In order to quality assure provision, Umalusi ensures it has the capacity to:
 - accredit and monitor private institutions against a set of criteria approved by the Minister; and
 - accredit and monitor private assessment bodies and the public assessment systems.

⁴In terms of the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, 2001, the Ministers of Basic Education and Higher Education and Training must approve policy and criteria for the accreditation and monitoring of private education institutions and private assessment bodies. The policies were approved by the Ministers in May 2010 and October 2012 respectively.

Policies

Ministerial Policies

- Policy for the Quality Assurance of Private Adult Learning Centres, Private Further Education and Training Colleges and the Accreditation of Private Assessment Bodies (May 2010 - approved by Minister of DHET).
- Policy and Criteria for the Quality Assurance, Accreditation and Monitoring of Independent Schools and Private Assessment Bodies (October 2012 - approved by Minister of DBE).

Council policies

- Draft Policy and process for the accreditation and monitoring of Private Adult Education and Training Centres (September 2012)
- Draft Policy and process for the accreditation and monitoring of private Further Education and Training Colleges (September 2012)
- Draft Policy and process for the accreditation and monitoring of independent schools (September 2012)
- Policy and process for the accreditation and monitoring of private assessment bodies (Approved November 2012)
- Draft Funding model: accreditation and monitoring of private education institutions and private assessment bodies (February 2013).

8. CERTIFICATION: ITS CENTRALITY TO THE QUALITY ASSURANCE OF LEARNER ACHIEVEMENT

- 8.1 In terms of The General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act 2001 (Act 58 of 2001), as amended, Umalusi is mandated to:
 - a. Issue certificates to learners who have achieved qualifications or partqualifications;
 - b. Refuse to issue a certificate if a substantial irregularity has occurred in relation to external assessment:
 - c. Cancel a certificate that has been issued to a learner if, on investigation, it finds that the learner has not met the requirements for

the qualification;

- d. Provide, on request, such information as may reasonably be required by any provider or assessment body.
- 8.2 Certification is the formal recognition of a qualification or part-qualification awarded to a successful learner. Umalusi is mandated to issue such certificates at exit points in general and further education and training. It is obligated to ensure that the certificates it issues are credible both nationally and internationally.
- 8.3 To obtain a qualification or subject statement, a learner must be examined by a public examination body or an accredited private assessment body.
- 8.4 Assessment policy for each qualification includes an appropriate grading system in order to properly recognize and report a learner's achievement, and because levels of achievement are necessarily taken into account in promotion and/or certification decisions.
- 8.5 In order to issue certificates, Umalusi ensures it has the capacity to:
 - develop and maintain policies and directives for certification;
 - maintain acceptable standards for awarding certificates;
 - maintain a data-base of learner achievement; and
 - maintain a certification system and infrastructure including appropriate security arrangements.
- 8.6 Umalusi is also responsible for issuing replacement certificates under certain conditions.
- 8.7 In order to certify, directives are issued which determine how data is submitted for certification. These directives are based on the qualification policy, taking into account the structure and design of the qualification; its rules of combinations and provisos etc.; the requirements of the policy on assessment and reporting; the necessary certification requirements and any additional requirements determined by Council.
- 8.8 These directives serve to guide the development of the data systems which allow assessment bodies to submit the appropriate data in the correct format. Directives are amongst the most strictly enforced policies as the entire credibility of education depends on the accuracy and authenticity of the data presented on a certificate.

- 8.9 In terms of Paragraph 27 (j) (i ii), the NQF Act, Act 67 of 2008, requires that Umalusi and the other QCs maintain a database of learner achievement and related matters for the purposes of that Act, and to submit such data to SAQA in a format determined in consultation with SAQA for recording on the national learners' records database.
- 8.10 In addition, Umalusi is required to maintain the capacity to verify the qualifications that it—and SAFCERT—have issued since 1992. Verification of the authenticity of certificates is an important corollary activity.
- 8.11 The work of the unit is detailed in the policies and directives listed below.

Policies

- Policy for the certification of candidate records for qualifications on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Framework (December 2012)
- Certification Policy: Printing, storage and handling of certificates and certificate background paper (June 2010; revised March 2012)
- Directives for the certification of: Senior Certificate; National Senior Certificate (Colleges);
 National Senior Certificate (Schools); National Certificate (Vocational) Levels 2 4; GETC:
 ABET; N Courses (N3) Nated 190 and 191
- QCC circulars to assessment bodies
- Verifications Policy (February 2013)

9 RESEARCH

- 9.1 The GENFETQA Act, as amended in 2008, requires Umalusi to conduct or commission and publish research on issues of importance to the development and implementation of its qualifications sub-framework, as well as to advise the ministry of education on any matter that relates to the improvement of the quality of education in the country
- 9.2 The mandate is carried out by, amongst other measures, conducting various types of research in areas that relate to the key functions of Umalusi.
- 9.3 The findings that flow from such research contribute significantly to finding ways of continually improving the quality of education in the GENFET sector and also creates the theoretical basis for all the professional work that Umalusi engages in.

- 9.4 In order to undertake research and the necessary statistical analysis, Umalusi ensures it has the capacity to:
 - conduct both quantitative and qualitative research
 - manage commissioned research projects
 - provide statistical support
 - collaborate with other stakeholders on strategic research
 - disseminate the research findings through seminars, conferences and workshops.
- 9.5 Research is central to the development of suitable standards for qualification development and evaluation; the quality assurance of curricula, as well as of provision and assessment. The research that informs these process may be located in different functional units of Umalusi.
- 9.6 The research is conceptually initiated internally or through advice received from an established Research Forum.
- 9.7 The formulation of a research proposal is taken forward through discussion, planning and approval by Umalusi's executive in accordance with Umalusi's Research Framework and Research Policy.

Policies

- Research Framework February 2011
- Research Policy February 2010
- Research Ethics Policy February 2010

10 TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

- 10.1 As Umalusi develops qualifications and these are phased in to fulfill the needs already determined, Umalusi advises for the retention or phasing out of certain qualifications.
- 10.2 Qualifications should only be allowed to lapse when meaningful alternative opportunities are functional and widely offered in the national educational system.
- 10.3 Umalusi will finalise draft policies and revise existing policies as SAQA completes the various national policies required for further development of the NQF.

11 CONCLUSION

- 11.1 The value of certificates in General and Further Education and Training depends on maintaining high ethical standards not only in the final, high-stakes, and high-security processes of setting and marking exams, standardizing marks and processing them for certification, it also depends on the quality of the learning teaching and assessment that happens in classrooms in institutions of learning.
- 11.2 Umalusi's work in respect of monitoring provision is critical to improving the quality of internal assessment, and through that, the quality of learning in the classrooms themselves. Umalusi is committed to processes that support the strengthening of the standard of education in classrooms and workshops, a process which involves initial teacher training and continuing professional development: to that end, Umalusi contributes findings from its research back to the universities as well as to the Departments of Education and Umalusi accredited private assessment bodies.
- 11.3 The value of the certificate also depends critically on the foundation documents which underpin the whole learning enterprise: the qualification itself, and the curricula which unpack those qualifications in ways that make them teachable and learnable. Umalusi undertakes the necessary research to be able to understand the standards embodied in these documents, as this informed position strengthens all its related quality assurance processes such as moderation and standardization.
- 11.4 Furthermore, as the developer of the qualifications sub-framework for this sector, Umalusi also needs to remain abreast of international developments in education, quality assurance and assessment. It also needs to monitor the state of the South African education and training system in order to be able to advise the Minister(s) of Education and the public as to the health of the national system.
- 11.5 Finally, as the Quality Council for General and Further Education and Training, Umalusi is committed to researching and implementing new and effective ways for the national education system to strengthen and internalise the minimum norms and standards set by the Minister(s).

11.6 Umalusi sees its quality assurance responsibility as extending into all these areas. Umalusi works to strengthen these critical areas in the education process with all its partners.

12 REVISION OF THE POLICY

12.1 The policy will be reviewed and revised as required.

ANNEXURE 1: THE IMPLICATIONS OF CHANGES IN THE NAMING OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING SYSTEM

The term 'basic education' has had two divergent histories. In adult education, the idea of a basic education has taken on negative connotations, and has been subsumed by Adult Education and Training. So, the Adult Basic Education and Training Act, 2000 (Act No 52 of 2000) now goes under the name of the Adult Education and Training Act, which effectively elides the Constitutional responsibilities that were inscribed in that Act.

In terms of schooling, however, the term 'basic education' means education offered in schools from the Reception year to Grade 12, and includes other forms of education and training in general and further education and training. This new usage of the term is reflected in the name of the Department of Basic Education. It is also reflected in the policy documents emanating from the Department where the distinction between general education and further education has been downplayed. All twelve years of schooling are regarded as being of a piece and leading to the National Senior Certificate. In this context, the term 'Further Education and Training' has become the name for the last phase in basic education. It applies to Grades 10–12.

The term 'basic education' then has taken on a distinctly school-based overtone, but in doing so, has become a much larger entity, and one which finally accords with public perception of schooling being twelve years and ending with formal assessment and an exit certificate.

Further education and training

The changes associated with the term 'further education and training' are equally farranging.

The Department of Higher Education and Training is in the process of redefining the post-school environment and in doing so, has replaced the concept of further education and training with the notion of continuing education and training.

This redefinition is proposed in the latest FET Colleges Amendment Bill, published in

Government Gazette No. 35401 of 30 May 2012, which seeks to amend the name of the FET Colleges Act. These terms describing education have become somewhat obscured by the waves of change affecting education and training, and so it is important to understand the present environment before proceeding to the nature of the work to be achieved in this space.

Basic education

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In terms of schooling, however, the term 'basic education' means education offered in schools from the Reception year to Grade 12, and includes other forms of education and training in general and further education and training. This new usage of the term is reflected to the 'Continuing Education and Training Act, 2006'. It is explained that this amendment is regarded as necessary as post-school education is focusing on the continuing of education of all persons outside schools. The new name of the Act provides the certainty that learning opportunities to the adult student through education institutions continue within the sub-framework of general and further education and training contemplated in the National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008 (Act No. 67 of 2008).

The Bill proposes two institutional types: Technical and Vocational Education and Training Colleges ('TEVT Colleges') and Community Education and Training Colleges ('CET Colleges'), as identified in the Green Paper for Post-School Education and Training, 2012.

The proposed amendments to the FET College Act seek to convert existing Further and Education Training Colleges ('FET Colleges') established under the FETC Act into

TVET Colleges and to convert Adult Education and Training Centres ('AET Centres'), established in terms of the Adult Education and Training Act, 2000 (Act No. 52 of 2000) ('AET Act'), into CET Colleges.

According to the memo accompanying the Bill, the CET Colleges are intended to provide both basic and further education and training qualifications or part-qualifications such as the 'adult matric' (National Senior Certificate for Adults). It is envisaged that the qualifications or part-qualifications offered by TVET Colleges will mainly be those currently being offered by existing FET Colleges. TVET Colleges will offer trade and occupational qualifications or part-qualifications. What this appears to mean is that the FET/TVET colleges will exclusively service industrial training needs, while the AET, traditionally the weakest link in the educational chain will be required to offer adult learning in the form of the GETC for Adults (GETCA) and the NASCA. It is unclear what interest such a division of learning will serve in the long-term: the Australian TAFE model, for example, allows colleges to provide a mix of technical and further education.

The Bill also proposes that the TVET colleges will offer qualifications and part-qualifications rather than programmes. Previously excluded from offerings at NQF Level 1, the TVET Colleges would now be allowed to offer qualifications from NQF Level 1 through to NQF 4.

Given these changes in the education and training environment, some welcome and some less so, it is nevertheless important for Umalusi to state clearly its own developing understanding of the educational space in which it holds itself – and others – accountable.



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