

# MAKOYA

June 2015

UMALUSI



Council for Quality Assurance in  
General and Further Education and Training

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF UMALUSI

June 2015



*Think beyond  
command  
words*

*QCC launches  
research  
beyond the  
Gauteng  
borders*

**GENFET  
sub-framework  
policy unveiled**



**The  
IACESA  
conference**



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## Editor's Pen



We are pleased to bring you the latest issue of Makoya, Umalusi's official newsletter. In this issue you will read some intriguing articles on the work of Umalusi.

First, the CEO's take on the group copying saga that unfolded during the 2014 National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations. Then, among the many articles in this issue, you can read Ms Anne McCallum's report on why it is so very important for candidates to supply correct personal information when they register to write any exams.

Dr Celia Booyse has contributed more than one article. She covers the launch of QCC research "beyond Gauteng's borders" as well as the celebration of 21 years of cognitive education at the IACESA conference.

Ms Nombuyiselo Mabitsele has written a most interesting article on the success of independent schools' information and quality promotion workshops. An article by Mr Biki Lepota on education quality at independent schools sheds much-needed light on the latest trends in that sector. Mesdames Matshoba and Burroughs have written a piece on the recent successful launch of the GENFET sub-framework policy, and Mr Chaile Makaleng has contributed an interesting piece on the highlights of a visit by NEASC executives.

You are more than welcome to take a free copy of Makoya and share it with friends and colleagues. Makoya is Umalusi's external newsletter and it communicates key messages about the mandate, plans, achievements and projects of the organisation. Enjoy! 📄

*Lucky*  
Lucky Ditaunyane

# *From the CEO's desk*



**It gives me great pleasure to share some of Umalusi's work with our readers in this issue of Makoya. We are quickly nearing the end of the first semester of 2015 and much has happened at Umalusi since the beginning of the year.**

I would like to highlight some of the progress we made in our quality assurance of assessment in 2014, and outline some of our plans going forward.

Umalusi quality assures the qualifications of the following assessment bodies:

- (a) Independent Examinations Board (IEB) – NSC and GETC: ABET Level 4
- (b) South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI) – NSC
- (c) Benchmark – GETC: ABET Level 4
- (d) Department of Basic Education – NSC and Senior Certificate
- (e) Department of Higher Education and Training – National Certificate (Vocational) - NCV; GETC: ABET Level 4, and NATED N1 to N3 Programmes.

SACAI administered its first NSC examination in 2014 and its results were subjected to Umalusi's standardisation process.

Another new independent assessment body, Benchmark, which is also in the process of obtaining accreditation from Umalusi, completed a pilot of its first GETC examinations in November. Benchmark's results were subjected to Umalusi's standardisation process.

To make these determinations, there are various quality assurance measures that must be carried out. These are:

- (i) Moderation and approval of question papers
- (ii) Verification of the moderation of School Based Assessment (SBA)
- (iii) Monitoring of the conducting of examinations
- (iv) Monitoring of the marking process

- (v) Verification of marking
- (vi) Standardisation of the results.

Umalusi completed all these processes with different assessment bodies by the end of 2014.

Regarding the NSC examinations conducted by the Department of Basic Education, Umalusi decided to block the results of selected centres on the basis of prima facie evidence of group copying of answers by learners, pending the outcome of a full investigation. To this end, Umalusi requested that the DBE undertake a full investigation and provide Umalusi with a final report on the findings. The audit was confined to the subjects that had been identified at the marking centres, and then extended to cover the seven gateway subjects: Mathematics, Physical Science, Life Sciences, English First Additional Language, Geography, History, and Business Studies.

The centres investigated were those that had been blocked. These included 39 centres in KwaZulu-Natal and 19 centres in the Eastern Cape. Further incidents of group copying were uncovered in five other provinces – Mpumalanga (3), Western Cape (1), Gauteng (5), North West (1), and Northern Cape (1).

Based on observations made in the investigation, which is ongoing, Umalusi is continuing to strengthen its quality assurance regime to ensure early detection of such irregularities in future. Umalusi is determined to protect the integrity of the National Senior Certificate and all other qualifications that fall under its General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework. 🇿🇦

**Dr Mafu S Rakometsi**  
Chief Executive Officer

# NEASC executive's visit highlights benefits of partnership

By Chaile Makaleng

In the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) Umalusi has found an appropriate, committed and highly experienced partner in the evaluation and accreditation of, in particular, independent schools.

While it is in terms of legislation in South Africa that Umalusi's mandate includes accrediting private education and training institutions, it is also critical to view accreditation as an instrument that assists private education and training institutions to continually improve the daily enactment of the intended curriculum (currently, CAPS). Umalusi's evaluation and accreditation system is premised on school-based data (SBD) as invaluable for school improvement. The ability and internal capacity of schools to gather and analyse SBD informs improved quality of the enactment of the intended curriculum and the quality of learner achievement. As Umalusi and others believe, it is important in that "...schools will improve in response to a variety of external accountability measures". (Earley et al, 1995.)

Mr Peter Mott, NEASC's Director of the Commission on International Education (CIE), visited Umalusi from 12-18 March 2015, his second visit. In May 2014 he trained evaluators and subject specialists and accompanied evaluation teams to St Cyprian's School and Christel House. He also met Mr Chris van der Merwe, the CEO of Curro schools, altogether exposing Mr Mott to some of the many and varied models of school ownership in South Africa.

His 2015 programme began with an in-depth training session for full-time and ad hoc evaluation team members at Diep in die Berg, in Pretoria East, with the theme 'What makes an accreditation visit successful?'

He accompanied Umalusi's evaluation team to Tertia King Academy in Tembisa to verify the school's self-evaluation report, submitted to Umalusi in the school's accreditation application. Mr Mott's role during the site visit was that of a 'critical friend' and his frank observations contributed immensely during the subsequent evaluation and review.

He also accompanied the evaluation team and subject specialists to Benoni Muslim School, also an applicant for accreditation. Here he was able to observe the team's improved approach, which incorporated comments and suggestions from the Tertia King Academy debriefing.

His recommendations are, further, being taken into consideration in Umalusi's ongoing deliberations on the efficiency and impact of its accreditation approach and systems.

His visit concluded with a presentation at a Quality Promotion (QP) meeting, where he discussed, with all tiers of Umalusi's management, NEASC's views on the impact of accreditation on school improvement.

During the three-day visit, Mr Mott and Umalusi's executive management also met to review and enhance the implementation of the MoU.

## Lessons learned from Mr Mott's visit: the way forward

It was evident that there were a few good 'takeaways' for Mr Mott from Umalusi's evaluation and accreditation practices, while his visit highlighted where Umalusi can improve its approach to evaluation and accreditation, instruments and guidelines, and activities and processes. His formal report will serve as a reference for the Evaluation and Accreditation (E&A) Unit's annual review of its evaluation and accreditation approach and system.

There is no doubt Umalusi, through the E&A Unit, is benefitting from its MoU with NEASC. It is also strategically prudent for Umalusi to continue monitoring the implementation of the MoU and its desired impact on Umalusi's work.

Umalusi extends its gratitude to Mr Staples for NEASC's support for the work of Umalusi as a QC. Although a fairly new player in evaluation and accreditation, Umalusi's practices clearly compare favourably with those of NEASC. This point is in part accentuated by the generally positive post-site verification reports received from schools it visits daily. 🌍



Chaile Makaleng

## COLLABORATING IN PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

On 2 December 2013, the CEO of Umalusi, Dr Mafu Rakometsi and the President and CEO of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), Mr Cameron Staples, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at the NEASC offices in Boston, Massachusetts.

Founded in 1865, NEASC's mission is '...to establish and maintain high standards for all levels of education, from pre-K to the doctoral level'. NEASC serves more than 2000 public and independent schools, colleges and universities in the six states of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, and American/international schools in more than 67 nations worldwide.

The MoU provides a framework for collaborative, strategic and operational relations between Umalusi and NEASC. It accords with Umalusi's intention to ensure, through strategic relations with stakeholders and partners, that its quality assurance approaches and practices remain relevant, and it provides guidelines for Umalusi's benchmarking initiatives.

Mr Staples is of the view that accreditation is '...a longstanding stimulus for educational improvement throughout New England'.

In South Africa, Umalusi carries a legislated mandate to accredit independent schools, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges, Adult Education and Training providers and private assessment bodies, against criteria approved by the Ministers of Higher Education and Training and Basic Education. 🌍

# Why personal information supplied at exam registration is important



Ms Anne McCallum

Grade 12 learners in mainstream schools complete a form to register to write their final examinations in either January or February of the year in which they write the November examinations. According to the Minister of Basic Education, every effort must be made to ensure registration forms are accompanied by a copy of an ID document, birth certificate, some form of identification document for foreign nationals.

One might wonder at these requirements. Surely a child in Grade 12 knows their ID number, names, surname and date of birth? What must be remembered is that the information supplied at this point is the information Umalusi will print on the certificate.

Once the information has been captured on the examination system, a schedule of entries is sent to the school for verification. Any errors identified are indicated on this document, which the school returns to the assessment body for corrections to be effected. A second schedule of entries is sent to the school and, if it is the final schedule, each candidate's record should be signed by the candidate, a parent and the principal. All witnesses thus confirm that the information is correct.

If no corrections were indicated and the record is signed, it will be accepted that the information is true and correct and can, therefore, be printed on the certificate issued by Umalusi. Any errors in the record will not miraculously disappear or be corrected.

The candidate is given another opportunity to check that all personal information is true and correct when the examination timetable is issued. And, when results are released, a Statement of Results is issued. This is yet another opportunity afforded to candidates to verify personal information and request the assessment body to make any changes if errors are detected. Unless errors are identified and brought to the attention of the assessment body at any one of these points, the certificate will be issued accordingly.

These multiple opportunities to check personal details are critical because, once the certificate has been issued, it is extremely difficult to change personal information, and for good reason – no candidates want their hard-won school-leaving certificates to be falsely claimed by others!

Umalusi will, however, consider a change to personal information under the following circumstances, and only where necessary supporting documentation is provided:

1. Home affairs made an error in the allocation of gender and this has now been corrected in the population register. Such a request would need to be accompanied by copies of both ID documents, the letter from Home Affairs indicating the change in the population register, a detailed affidavit indicating the reason for the request, as well as the original certificate issued by Umalusi. It must be the original certificate and not a replacement certificate (i.e., not a certificate issued because the original was lost, damaged or destroyed).
2. Two persons have been issued with the same ID number and the error has been corrected by Home Affairs and indicated as such in the population register. This request would need supporting documentation: copies of both ID documents, the letter from Home Affairs indicating the change in the population register, a detailed affidavit indicating the reason for the request, and the original certificate issued by Umalusi (i.e., not a certificate issued because the original was lost, damaged or destroyed).
3. If it is believed that an administrative error was made by the Department of Education or the school at the time of registration, the request must be accompanied by original examination material to substantiate evidence of the mistake, a detailed affidavit and the original certificate issued. Once again, the original certificate must be submitted, not a replacement certificate issued if the original was lost, damaged or destroyed.  
  
It is the candidate's responsibility to prove this administrative error, particularly in light of the number of occasions given for the candidate to correct such an error.
4. The candidate has voluntarily changed gender and this has been reflected in the population register. The request will need to be accompanied by copies of both ID documents, the letter from Home Affairs indicating the change in the population register, a detailed affidavit indicating the reason for the request, and the original certificate issued by Umalusi. Once again, the original certificate must be submitted, not a certificate issued to replace a lost or destroyed original.

Submitting a request for a change to personal information is not a guarantee that the request will be successful.

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## Why personal information supplied at exam registration is important

An example explains why this is so: a Grade 12 candidate is known as Sonnyboy Mahlangu at school and in the community. However, his ID document indicates his names to be Matshidiso Tebogo Mhlongo. Sonnyboy ignores his ID document and completes the registration form as Sonnyboy Mahlangu, and does not include a copy of any identifying documentation. At the point of capturing his information, 'Sonnyboy Mahlangu' is registered to write the examination. This is the name that will be printed on his matric certificate issued by Umalusi.

Although Sonnyboy Mahlangu is known as such at school and in the community, his ID document indicates otherwise. In the eyes of the law Sonnyboy Mahlangu is not Matshidiso Tebogo Mhlongo. When the certificate has been issued, Sonnyboy Mahlangu has a matric, but Matshidiso Tebogo Mhlongo does not.

Sonnyboy Mahlangu would not be able to have the name on his certificate changed to match the information in his ID document as this was neither an administrative nor a Home Affairs error. The onus of proof of ownership of the certificate falls to him.

While it may seem unfair that Umalusi "won't even help a candidate who has made a genuine error", consider:

- Sonnyboy Mahlangu was given at least four opportunities to correct the information before the certificate was issued.
- What proof is there that Sonnyboy Mahlangu and Matshidiso Tebogo Mhlongo are one and the same person?
- If Umalusi makes the change, could it be issuing a fraudulent certificate and defrauding Sonnyboy Mahlangu of the matric he has earned?

An error such as the one made by Sonnyboy Mahlangu would have serious repercussions when he tries to register at an institution of higher learning or applies for a job. The determination could be made that the certificate does not belong to Matshidiso Tebogo Mhlongo – that the certificate Matshidiso is supplying is fraudulent; or that he has stolen it from "Sonnyboy Mahlangu". As a result, he could be blacklisted by a verification agency and would, therefore, not be considered for any position for which he applies for at least three years.

Even 'small' errors, such as a date of birth of 6 December instead of 5 December, or the spelling of a surname as 'Matebula' instead of 'Mathebula', can have similar devastating results.

The importance of supplying correct information – as it appears in the candidate's ID document (or other identifying documentation) at the time of registration – and checking and confirming at every opportunity that the supplied information is correct, cannot be over-emphasised. 



Left to right: Dr Mafu Rakometsi and Ms Liz Burroughs cutting the ribbon to officially unveil the GENFET sub-framework policy.



Left to right: Prof L Makalela, Ms Liz Burroughs & Dr M Rakometsi.



Back row standing left to right: Ms H Matshoba, Ms GJ Mashabela, Mr C Makaleng, Dr MR Mampane, Dr D Webbstock, Dr LR Becker, Ms F Ramothlhale, Mr MHW Ehrenreich and Mr L Ditaunynane.

Front row seated left to right: Prof L Makalela, Ms L Burroughs, Dr M Rakometsi, Ms Z Modimakwane and Mr JR Thomas.

# UMALUSI MILESTONE: GENFET SUB-FRAMEWORK POLICY UNVEILED

By Helen Matshoba and Liz Burroughs

Umalusi formally launched its policy for the General and Further Education and Training (GENFET) Qualifications sub-framework on 8 May 2015 at the Fire and Ice! Hotel in Gauteng. Guests included representatives of the Department of Basic Education (DBE), the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO), the Council on Higher Education (CHE), provincial Departments of Education, assessment bodies and other interested parties in the GENFET sector.

Since the sub-framework and its related policies form the nucleus for all Umalusi's quality assurance work as a quality council, the occasion was an opportunity to both unveil the sub-framework and its qualification in a public forum, and to share this milestone broadly.

The occasion also provided, as SAQA CEO Joe Samuels said in his closing remarks, a moment to recognise the progress being made towards the ideals embodied in the National Qualifications Framework: quality education for all South Africans, ease of access to learning, and lifelong learning. He noted that the three sub-frameworks were determined by the Minister for the Department of Higher Education and Training in 2013, and Umalusi's own policy had been gazetted in September 2014, just one year later.

## Umalusi's responsibility for the sub-framework qualifications

Umalusi's mandate is provided for in the NQF Act (No 67 of 2008), which requires that it develop and maintain the sub-framework of qualifications for the GENFET sector. The Act also provides for Umalusi's establishment as a quality council alongside the QCTO and the CHE, which are responsible for qualifications in universities and the workplace respectively.

The policy, published in Government Gazette No 38029 on 29 September 2014, demarcates the extent of the quality assurance work required of Umalusi, since qualifications registered on the sub-framework must be quality assured. It also explains the nature of the qualifications and provides guidance for future qualifications.

National GENFET qualifications offered are registered on the sub-framework on NQF Levels 1–4. These qualifications encompass the three sub-framework streams: academic qualifications offered in public schools and Umalusi-accredited independent schools, vocational qualifications offered in public and Umalusi-accredited private Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges, and adult qualifications offered in public and Umalusi-accredited private Adult Education (AET) centres.



Helen Matshoba



Liz Burroughs

This mandate means that Umalusi is the only quality council to work with both the Department of Basic Education (DBE) for school education and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) for vocational and adult education and training.

The standards of the various qualifications on the sub-framework are determined through:

- The design specification for qualification policies
- The curricula supporting the qualifications
- The nature of assessment, including Site-Based Assessment (SBA)
- Quality assurance of assessment
- Certification, which closes the quality assurance cycle; and
- Research.

These activities form a significant set of means to exercise control over standards and improving the quality of education.

### Other policies that govern the sub-framework:

- **Standards and quality assurance for GENFET is an overview of Umalusi's policies shaping its understanding of the quality assurance mandate for which it is responsible**
- **The policy for the management of qualifications on the GENFET qualifications sub-framework provides details for developing, registering and reviewing qualifications as required by the NQF Act.**

## The importance of quality education

Guest speaker and psychologist Hannelie Spies reminded the audience of the positive changes that just five good years of schooling can bring to the lives of children. Her lecture was a timely reminder that the ultimate beneficiaries of the work being done in education are often poor, stressed and adversely affected by difficult living conditions. Her message, based on the work of Erik Jensen, highlighted the importance to education of neuro-scientific research findings. The brain's capacity to undergo change for the better in conducive circumstances underscores the importance of quality assurance to making education a truly transformative experience for all. 🌟

# GENFET SUB-FRAMEWORK

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## The General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework

NQF level	Qualification types and qualifications					Certificates for units of learning
<b>Level 4</b>	<b>National Certificate (NC)</b>					Subject certificates towards one or more qualification designated variants
<b>Designated variants</b>	Senior Certificate/ National Senior Certificate (Colleges)	National Senior Certificate (NSC)	National Certificate (Vocational) Level 4	National Senior Certificate for Adults (NASCA)	Senior Certificate (SC) (as amended in 2014)	
<b>Level 3</b>	<b>Intermediate Certificate (IC)</b>					Subject certificates towards one or more qualification designated variants
<b>Designated variants</b>	[NSC – Gr 11]		National Certificate (Vocational) Level 3	Intermediate Certificate of Education		
<b>Level 2</b>	<b>Elementary Certificate (EC)</b>					Subject certificates towards one or more qualification designated variants
<b>Designated variants</b>	[NSC – Gr 10]		National Certificate (Vocational) Level 2	Elementary Certificate of Education		
<b>Level 1</b>	<b>General Certificate (GC)</b>					Subject (LA) certificates for adult learners
<b>Designated variants</b>	General Certificate of Education (GCE)			General Education and Training Certificate: ABET	General Education and Training Certificate for Adults (GETCA)	



A copy of the framework document is available at [www.umalusi.org.za/docs/research/2012/hl\\_examinations.pdf](http://www.umalusi.org.za/docs/research/2012/hl_examinations.pdf). Alternatively, you may send an e-mail to [sisanda.loni@umalusi.org.za](mailto:sisanda.loni@umalusi.org.za) or phone 012 349 1510 extension 274 to request a free copy.

(Cross Reference - Umalusi Milestone: GENFET Sub-framework policy unweild article p.6)



# QCC launches research beyond the Gauteng borders

**Qualifications, Curriculum and Certification make it a hat-trick!**

by Dr Celia Booysse



Umalusi stakeholders at the "What's in the CAPS" series launch at the University of the North West, in Potchefstroom.

The first set of reports in the *What's in the CAPS Package?* series includes no fewer than seven published reports emanating from FET research into the curricula for English Home Language and English FAL, Mathematics, Mathematical Literacy, Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, Geography, History, Accounting, Economics and Business Studies. All the reports were launched simultaneously, in collaboration with North West University, at the Potchefstroom Campus on a frosty 11 June last year. The occasion paved the way for additional seminars in collaboration with the Eastern Cape Department of Education and the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT), as well as a panel discussion at the South African Education Research Association (SAERA) conference in Durban.

A second launch beyond the borders of Gauteng took place at the University of the Western Cape in November 2014, where the research findings and recommendations from a comparative investigation of Life Orientation in the NSC and the NCV were publicly released. The report, titled *Living up to expectations?* attracted the attention of a wide spectrum of attendees involved with Life Orientation in various capacities. In the week before the formal launch of the report, Ms Helen Matshoba, who managed the Life Orientation project, presented the findings and recommendations to the DBE and the DHET at a joint workshop attended by officials involved with Life Orientation. The discussions at both events included policy implications should the findings and recommendations be taken up. It was notable that those attending confirmed the

importance of this subject, which they argue is underpinned by life-enhancing intent.

Also in November last year, three additional reports in the *What's in the CAPS package?* series were launched in collaboration with CPUT's School of Sport, Events, Tourism and Hospitality (SETH) in the Faculty of Business and Management Sciences at the Hotel School in Granger Bay, Cape Town. These reports draw from the findings of a comparative analysis of the NCS/CAPS for Consumer Studies, Hospitality Studies and Tourism; a Practical Assessment Task (PAT) investigation; a search for models of best practice for practical assessment tasks; and an international benchmarking exercise.

The launch also sealed continued collaboration between Umalusi and the CPUT in curriculum research, languages and the consumer, hospitality and tourism fields. Opening the event, CPUT Vice-Chancellor Dr Prins Nevhutalu congratulated Umalusi on the quality of the research and pledged shared commitment in future research initiatives.

The National Department of Tourism (NDT), which has been a loyal partner in research conducted by Umalusi since 2011, also contributed substantially to the event. High ranking officials, including the Director-General, Deputy Director-General and directors attended the launch. In her address, Deputy Minister of Tourism Tokozile Xasa said she believed the research would help strengthen three subjects critically needed in Tourism and Hospitality, sectors identified as helping to grow the South African economy.

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## QCC launches research beyond the Gauteng borders

The chairman of Umalusi's Qualifications Standards Committee, Professor Leketi Makalela, who officiated, reflected:

*It is clear that the in-depth research done in Tourism, Hospitality Studies and Consumer Studies called for research expertise, knowledge of the fields and the ability to involve a large number of stakeholders in a complex research process. The Deputy Minister of Tourism applauded the inclusive nature in which the curriculum evaluation process leading to these reports unfolded and, on a personal note, referred to Dr Celia Booyse as the "master mind" of the research process and collaboration. The Deputy Minister expressed confidence that these reports will pave the way towards addressing some of the chronic reputation challenges that these three services subjects battle with, namely, the value- and quality-standing of the services subjects in the broader scheme of things in education, as well as the issue of subject designation for university entry.*

*It was evident from the participants that such an undertaking needs to be continued and that the detailed collaboration with stakeholders such as NDT, CATHSSETA, FEDHASA, working group boards on skills development, higher education institutions and TVET colleges should be sustained.*

*Attendees at the launch regarded the reports as very impressive and industry representatives felt "humbled by the invitation and found the launch to be very informative". Many are looking forward to further engagements with Umalusi on the findings and recommendations of the reports.*

*Feedback from researchers who attended the launch was that of gratitude and most reflected what one of them said to me: "Again I want to express my gratitude for being part of this amazing process: I have learnt so much; I have acquired new skills. I also want to offer my services in any way to be of assistance in any further undertakings in this regard – you don't even have to pay me!"*

*A representative from higher education found the presentations insightful and realised the opportunities for further research. Another expressed interest in projects of this nature going forward as she is currently doing a PhD at the University of Witwatersrand, in the field of Hospitality in Higher Education.*

With the research having been launched beyond the borders of Gauteng, many more higher education institutions have realised their value. As a result, UKZN, NWU, UJ and CPUT have asked to use the reports as reference material in their teacher development programmes and research methodology courses. According to the Director of the Global Travel and Tourism Programme in Kenya, the reports will be used to support and strengthen the Kenyan programme too.

QCC looks forward to taking greater curriculum research strides into South Africa, the rest of Africa – and the rest of the world. 



## EDUCATION QUALITY: A CONVERSATION WITH INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

By Biki Lepota

Umalusi's Evaluation and Accreditation (E&A) Unit is to host a national conference to provide a platform for discussions on improving the quality of education in South Africa's independent schools. The conference will take place on 21–22 August 2015 at Emperors Palace, Kempton Park, Johannesburg.

Themed "Education quality in the South African independent schooling system", the conference will engage all stakeholders: independent school owners, principals, heads of departments and teachers; officials from the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and Provincial Departments of Education (PDEs); university academics, researchers and scholars; and anyone else interested in improving the sector's education quality. Some 250 participants from across the country are expected to attend.

As all speakers are invited, Umalusi will not be calling for papers. All contributions will be subject to critiquing prior to inclusion in the proceedings. All conference presentations are to be converted into publishable papers and considered for inclusion in a post-conference publication, to be coordinated by Umalusi's Statistical Information and Research (SIR) Unit. Umalusi hopes that the publication will contribute significantly towards amplifying and sustaining an important dialogue on strengthening and enhancing education standards within independent schools in particular and the South African education and training system in general.

The conference begins mid-morning on Friday, 21 August, with a keynote speaker who will present an international perspective on the strengths and weaknesses of accreditation, with arguments dovetailing with the South African context. A panel discussion will conclude business on Saturday, 22 August, during which each panellist will present a perspective on a topic linked to the conference theme. 



Should you wish to attend the conference, please email [gugu.chili@umalusi.org.za](mailto:gugu.chili@umalusi.org.za) or call Ms Gugu Chili on 012 349 1510 ext 269, **before 15 July 2015** to make provisional arrangements.

# MATRIX OF UMALUSI QUALITY ASSURED AND CERTIFIED QUALIFICATIONS

	NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE (NSC)	AMENDED SENIOR CERTIFICATE	NATIONAL CERTIFICATE VOCATIONAL (NCV) LEVEL 4	GENERAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING CERTIFICATE: ADULT BASIC EDUCATION AND TRAINING (GETC: ABET)
On which NQF level is the qualification?	NQF Level 4	NQF Level 4	NQF Level 4	NQF Level 1
What kind of qualification is this?	Academic qualification	Academic qualification	Vocational qualification	General qualification with academic and vocational subjects
Which Grade is equivalent to this qualification?	Grade 12	Grade 12	Grade 12	Grade 9
Who can study for the qualification?	School learners who are between 16 and 19 years old and who have passed Grade 9	Adult learners who are over the age of 21 years	School learners who are between 16 and 19 years old and who have passed Grade 9 or another NQF Level 1 qualification	Learners who are 16 years and older who have not passed Grade 9 or another NQF Level 1 qualification
How long does it take to complete the qualification	A minimum of three years, from Grade 10, then Grade 11 and finally Grade 12	It takes a minimum of one year to complete the qualification	A minimum of three years, since NCV Level 2 and NCV Level 3 must be completed before entry into NCV Level 4. Each of the NCV qualifications takes a minimum of one year.	Minimum of one year to complete AET Level 4, which is the point of certification. The one year does not include AET Levels 1–3.
How many subjects are required to successfully complete the qualification?	Register for 7 subjects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 official language at Home Language (HL) Level</li> <li>1 official language at First Additional Language (FAL) Level</li> <li>Mathematics/ Mathematical Literacy</li> <li>Life Orientation</li> <li>3 subjects from the list of approved NSC subjects</li> </ul>	Register for 6 subjects <p><b>New SC applicants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 official languages</li> <li>Mathematics/ Mathematical Literacy</li> <li>3 subjects selected from the list of newly approved SC subjects</li> </ul> <p><b>Learners with SC credits obtained before July 2014</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Select the remaining subject from the list of approved SC subjects</li> </ul> <p><b>NSC part-time repeaters</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 subjects selected from the list of approved SC subjects</li> <li>Mathematics is a requirement for certification purposes</li> </ul>	Register for 7 subjects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 official language at HL or FAL level</li> <li>Life Orientation</li> <li>Mathematics/ Mathematical Literacy</li> <li>4 subjects chosen from the vocational programmes</li> </ul>	Register for a minimum of 5 subjects, which must add up to 120 credits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Language, Literacy and Communication</li> <li>Mathematical Literacy/ Mathematics and Mathematical Sciences</li> <li>Life Orientation</li> <li>A minimum of 2 electives from the academic or vocational specialisations, which must make up 51 credits</li> </ul>
What are the pass requirements for the qualification?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimum 40% in three subjects, one of which must be an official language at HL level</li> <li>Minimum 30% in 3 subjects</li> <li>Submit the SBA component in the failed subject</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimum 40% in a minimum of 5 subjects which must include 2 languages, one at HL and one at FAL Level</li> <li>Obtain a minimum aggregate of 720 marks</li> <li>A sub-minimum of 20% in the failed subject</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimum 40% in the required official language</li> <li>Minimum 40% in Life Orientation</li> <li>Minimum 30% in Mathematics/ Mathematical Literacy</li> <li>Minimum 50% in each of the 4 vocational subjects</li> </ul>	Minimum 50% in a minimum of 5 subjects which must add up to 120 credits
Where can one study for this qualification?	At public schools or independent schools accredited by Umalusi	At public Adult Learning Centres or private Adult Learning Centres accredited by Umalusi	At public Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges or Umalusi-accredited private TVET colleges	At public Adult Learning Centres or private Adult Learning Centres accredited by Umalusi

# CELEBRATING 21 YEARS OF COGNITIVE EDUCATION: THE IACESA CONFERENCE

by Dr Celia Booyse

## Ms Liz Burroughs and Dr Celia Booyse attended an intriguing conference arranged by the International Association for Cognitive Education in Southern Africa (IACESA).

Held in Cape Town in February 2015, the inclusive conference with the theme "Personalising thinking and learning in the conceptual age", contributed new, interesting and theoretically sound ideas – and some reliable old ones – to foster educational development and support the creation of a diverse Southern African community of responsible thinkers.

Presenters included representatives from the deaf education sector.

In her keynote address, Dr Lynn Meltzer spoke about developing children's executive functions in the conceptual classroom by promoting flexible thinking strategies and encouraging both persistence and resilience. She touched on metacognition, the ability to plan and aspects of emotional intelligence such as awareness and adaptability. These are ideas that were foregrounded in the research questions for the curriculum investigation of the NSC Services Subjects and were included in the instrument for the evaluation of the Practical Assessment Tasks (PATs) and NCV ISATs.

Findings from Umalusi's research have often referred to a lack of critical thinking and low performance in exam items that require an opinion and judgement. Findings from curriculum analyses conducted by the Qualifications, Curriculum and Certification (QCC) Unit point to the importance of including detailed knowledge of concepts in the curriculum, as this requires deep conceptual understanding and a complex understanding of relationships between concepts. These aspects surfaced in many of the presentations and discussion sessions at this conference. One notable session dealt with how learners can be empowered to develop critical thinking dispositions that enable behaviour regulation in unpredictable and ever-changing environments.



Dr Celia Booyse

Besides discussions about cognitive education, the conference celebrated the life and work of Professor Reuven Feuerstein, the father of the mediated learning experience model. It was surprising to learn how extensive an impact positive psychology has in creating a happy and conducive teaching and learning environment. Psychologist Dr Pieter van Jaarsveld, CEO of Tandem Training, stunned the audience with practical examples of how negative emotions affect the wellbeing of people. He described how five minutes of negativity, worry and anger have a six hour-long effect on the body's immune system. Negativity increases stress hormones, which lead to low energy levels, fatigue, heart disease, chronic pain and, potentially, brain damage.

He provided hints that we at Umalusi might adopt to encourage our colleagues and to enhance our working environment, because positive emotions transform your brain, body and life:

- Have gratitude and share blessings every day
- Keep a journal and write down your feelings and experiences
- Don't worry, and stop thinking negatively
- Share acts of kindness
- Foster belonging with friends, family and colleagues
- Look after your health
- Laugh a lot and enjoy humour.

From information about brain-responsive strategies, innovative practices that boost motivation and the capacity to self-regulate; use of "working memory" to enhance learning achievement; co-operative learning strategies and multiple intelligences; to the effect of emotions on the education environment, all brought us again to the realisation of how broad, deep and intense education is.

We have since found that the conference serves as a 'memory box' that we often revisit to reflect on the remarkable content and insight shared in such a short time. What a privilege it was to have been part of such an experience, and one where we also developed new contacts and built new bridges. 



*An etching of Rodin's famous statue (left) was presented at the conference as a reminder of what it takes to become an effective critical thinker and to develop critical thinkers: to think in terms of a range of different perspectives and, most of all, to think critically about teaching and learning.*

# *Understanding how to analyse question difficulty*

## *Thinking beyond command words*

by Biki Lepota

Umalusi has successfully concluded a series of workshops for quality assurers of exit-level examinations to help exam practitioners – moderators, assessment specialists and exam evaluators – to develop a shared understanding of a new framework for assessing and comparing the cognitive challenge and difficulty level of examinations.

The first workshop was held in April 2014 for Umalusi moderators and post-examination analysis teams and the second, in June 2014, for subject specialists from the Independent Examinations Board (IEB) and the South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI). The final workshop in the series, for Umalusi moderators appointed to quality assure Adult Education and Training (AET) examinations, took place from 19–21 March 2015 at Emperors Palace, Kempton Park.

The series' concept was the result of collaboration between Umalusi's Statistical Information and Research (SIR) and Quality Assurance of Assessment (QAA) units. Discussions, which centred on what it is that makes a question difficult,

advanced an increasingly accepted view that quality examination papers are characterised by, among other things, questions that cover a wide range of difficulty levels so as to assess the entire range of achievement levels.

The author of the new framework, Dr Cheryl Reeves, showed how the new instrument enables examination practitioners to, separately, analyse the type of cognitive demand of a question and the level of difficulty of each question. Equally, she explained, the framework powered a conceptual shift away from a practice that is sometimes used – whether consciously or unconsciously – to draw conclusions about the standard of a question paper by searching for the number of questions with command words such as 'explain' and 'describe'. Instead, the new framework sharpens the focus of examiners, moderators and evaluators and helps them to follow a more inferential and nuanced approach to assessing question difficulty. This is done through introducing the following four general categories where difficulty may reside:



Umalusi AET moderators at one of three workshops designed to help quality assurers understand a new framework for proving difficulty levels in examination questions.

(continued from p12)

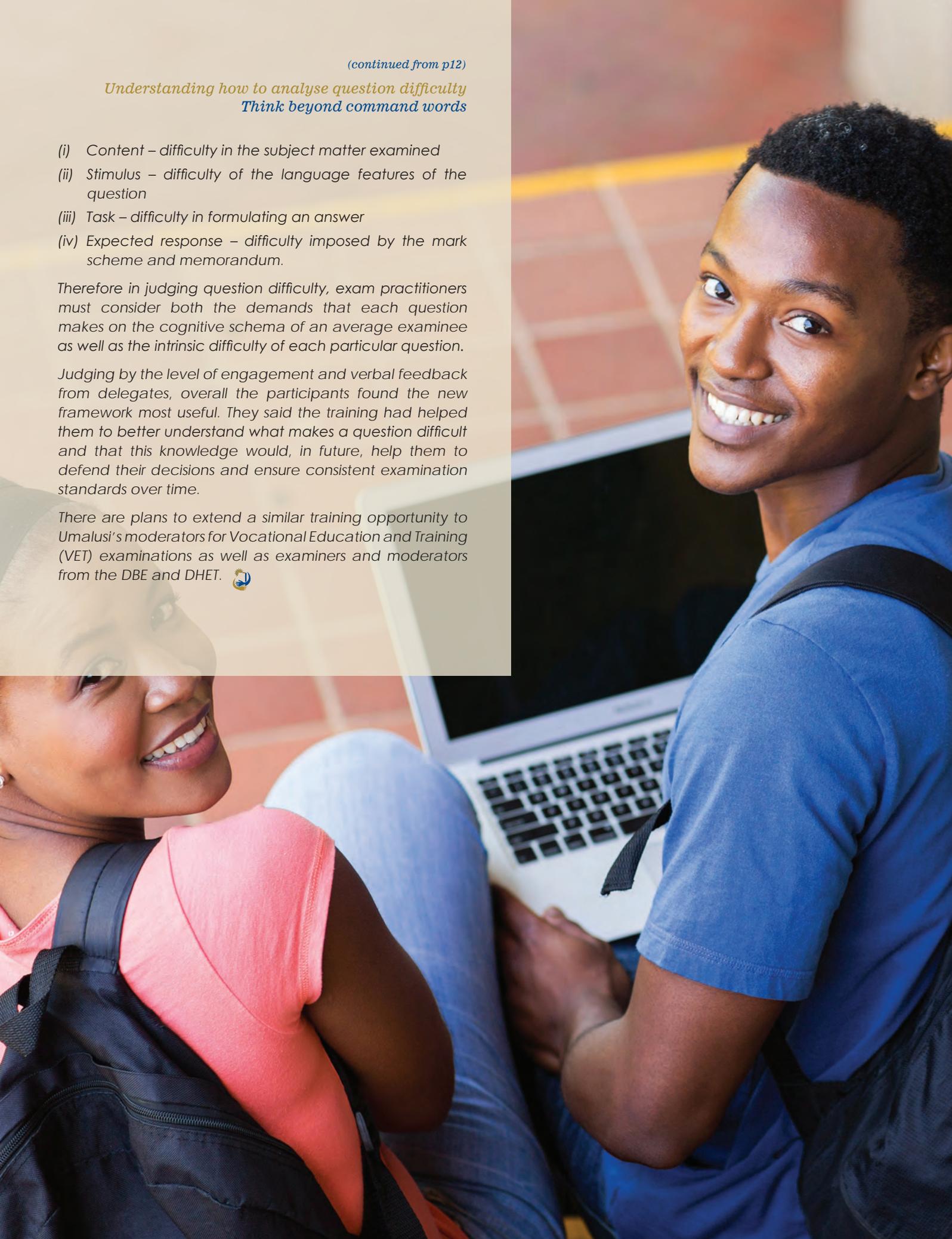
*Understanding how to analyse question difficulty*  
*Think beyond command words*

- (i) Content – difficulty in the subject matter examined
- (ii) Stimulus – difficulty of the language features of the question
- (iii) Task – difficulty in formulating an answer
- (iv) Expected response – difficulty imposed by the mark scheme and memorandum.

Therefore in judging question difficulty, exam practitioners must consider both the demands that each question makes on the cognitive schema of an average examinee as well as the intrinsic difficulty of each particular question.

Judging by the level of engagement and verbal feedback from delegates, overall the participants found the new framework most useful. They said the training had helped them to better understand what makes a question difficult and that this knowledge would, in future, help them to defend their decisions and ensure consistent examination standards over time.

There are plans to extend a similar training opportunity to Umalusi's moderators for Vocational Education and Training (VET) examinations as well as examiners and moderators from the DBE and DHET. 



# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS' INFORMATION AND QUALITY PROMOTION WORKSHOPS WELL RECEIVED

By Nombuyiselo Mabitsela

*In line with its quality assurance mandate, Umalusi accredits private education institutions that offer, or intend offering, qualifications registered on its sub-framework of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).*

## **Brief background**

*In June 2013 Umalusi informed schools of changes relating to its accreditation decision-making process since the publication of the Policy and Criteria for the Quality Assurance, Accreditation and Monitoring of Independent Schools and Private Assessment Bodies by the Minister of Basic Education on 29 October 2012, through Government Gazette 35830. The new accreditation system was launched in June 2013 and implemented from 15 June 2013.*

*In a letter dated 25 June 2013, independent schools were told that education institutions that fall within Umalusi's quality assurance scope had to apply for accreditation before 31 October 2013; and that Umalusi could only accept accreditation applications in accordance with the new process. It was therefore critical for all prospective applicants to understand the new process and requirements.*

In terms of the new process, independent schools must submit an online expression of intent to apply for accreditation within two months of registering as an independent school; and thereafter they must submit a self-evaluation report. A team of evaluators contracted by Umalusi evaluates the self-evaluation reports and produces detailed desktop evaluation reports. Umalusi then conducts a site visit to verify that the evidence contained in the self-evaluation report is in place.

To help independent schools manage the accreditation process, Umalusi conducts information sessions in September / October each year, and quality promotion workshops between January and March of each year. The information sessions are intended to:

- a) Update independent schools on any national or Umalusi policy changes and developments that relate to the evaluation and accreditation of independent schools
- b) Provide feedback to independent schools on the findings of analysis of the data and processes during the year
- c) Provide an opportunity for independent schools to comment on Umalusi's evaluation and accreditation processes, including areas for Umalusi's improvement
- d) Outline Umalusi's evaluation and accreditation requirements for the following year.

The annual quality promotion workshops are arranged so independent schools at different levels of the accreditation



Ms Nombuyiso Mabitsela

process can receive in-depth information on instruments, guidelines and processes that relate to them. The workshops are intended to not only assist independent schools to meet the gazetted accreditation criteria, but also to aid ongoing school improvement through evaluation and accreditation.

Between January and March 2015 quality promotion workshops were held in all nine provinces. Umalusi carried out a comprehensive, step-by-step guide on how to complete the evaluation instruments for both self-evaluation and site visit processes. The post-accreditation monitoring instrument and process were also discussed at length. To accommodate vast provinces, two workshops were held in the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Free State. A total of 12 quality promotion workshops were therefore conducted at the beginning of 2015.

The following important issues were discussed at these provincial workshops:

- a) The accreditation decision making process, including decision-making structures
- b) The on-line application process
- c) Quality assurance of alternate curricula
- d) Quality assurance of special needs schools
- e) Quality assurance of matric rewrite centres
- f) Post-accreditation monitoring of independent schools
- g) The accreditation criteria against which the eligibility of institutions for accreditation are evaluated
- h) Self-evaluation and site verification instruments.

PROVINCE	INFORMATION SESSIONS SEPT-OCT 2014	QUALITY PROMOTION WORKSHOPS JANUARY-MARCH 2015
	ACTUAL ATTENDANCE	
Eastern Cape (East London)	80	59
Eastern Cape (Umtata)		65
Free State (Bethlehem)	34	25
Free State (Bloemfontein)		70
Northern Cape		23
Gauteng	351	181
North West		86
KZN (Midlands)	89	32
KZN (Coastal)		75
Limpopo	108	110
Mpumalanga	35	57
Western Cape	77	100
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>774</b>	<b>883</b>

The workshops also enhanced understanding of Umalusi's approach to its quality assurance and accreditation mandate; updated independent schools about quality assurance and accreditation developments that affect them; outlined Umalusi's plans for the next quality assurance and accreditation cycle; and provided an opportunity for independent schools to comment on Umalusi's quality assurance approach and implementation of the new evaluation and accreditation approach.

Attendance at information sessions and workshops was as shown in the table above.

### Key issues raised by delegates

Feedback received from the delegates was generally positive. Most comments in the feedback forms commended Umalusi for the manner in which the workshops were conducted and the standard of workshop material. The latter was intended to help delegates prepare for accreditation. Many delegates were pleased workshops were held in more convenient locations for many schools.

Many new schools said they were much more confident about starting the accreditation process after attending a quality promotion workshop.

Areas of particular concern noted in the feedback forms were:

- Umalusi's requirement that at least 80% of teachers must be professionally qualified and registered with the South African Council for Educators (SACE)
- Challenges in obtaining health and safety certificates every two years from local municipalities
- Online-related challenges, such as the time it takes applicants to upload the required evidence for the self-evaluation report; and that some independent schools, particularly smaller schools with few staff members, find the process overwhelming.

Umalusi would like to thank all the delegates for attending its information sessions and quality promotion workshops. More importantly, Umalusi has taken note of the areas of concern that were raised by delegates and has begun addressing some of these. 

# Umalusi welcomes new executive manager

By Lucky Ditaunyane

Umalusi recently welcomed Ms Zodwa Modimakwane as the new Executive Manager: Quality Assurance and Monitoring. Ms Modimakwane brings with her a wealth of experience in quality assurance at provincial and national level. She was previously employed as Director: Assessment Management in the Western Cape Education Department. She also has vast experience in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector.

*The PR and Communications Unit spoke to Ms Modimakwane about her new job at Umalusi, and her views on other matters of life:*



Ms Zodwa Modimakwane

**Q:** Where were you born and how many siblings do you have?

**A:** I was born and raised in Port Elizabeth (Ibhayi) and I have two sisters. I also happen to be the last born. Interestingly enough, my name, Zodwa, denotes the fact that ours was a girls-only family, with three girls and no boys.

**Q:** Where did you go to school?

**A:** After completing my matric at Ithembelihle High School in PE, I went on to register for a BSocSc degree at Rhodes University in Grahamstown, followed by a Higher Diploma in Education. I then did my BEd (Hons) and MEd at the then University of Port Elizabeth, now the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU).

**Q:** What does your new job entail?

**A:** I manage and provide leadership for the two units that are key in ensuring quality assurance of education provision, Quality Assurance of Assessment, and Evaluation and Accreditation.

**Q:** What is on your wish list for the next five years at Umalusi?

**A:** To answer your question I would like to cite a powerful quotation I heard recently: "We teach 21st century skills using 20th century methods while measuring with 19th century metrics." My dream is to see the entire system of education aligning the three elements, i.e. learning skills, teaching methods and our approach to assessment.

**Q:** How do you balance your career at Umalusi with family?

**A:** The job I did prior to joining Umalusi was equally demanding and one finds a way to balance the demands of work and family. Fortunately, all my children are now old enough and independent and I don't have to worry about taking care of them. So, you could say I am now officially an empty-nester – it's only my husband and me at home.

**Q:** What is your favourite book?

**A:** 'The Purpose Driven Life', by Rick Warren. I like it because it promotes certain values and principles that I personally espouse.

**Q:** Do you have a favourite quote?

**A:** Yes, it is from the Bible: "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28.

**Q:** If given a chance, what would you like to achieve, apart from work?

**A:** I would really like to be involved with the youth, and youth development in particular. And, because my mother passed away before my children were born – which meant that my children never had the experience of having a grandmother – I would like to be the best grandmother to my grandchildren.

# NEW STAFF MEMBERS



**Clifford Hlungwani: OAA Unit:**  
Assistant Manager: VET



**Dennis Twala: QCC Unit:**  
Assistant Manager: Curriculum



**Kgaugelo Sekokotla:**  
Assistant Manager: Events &  
Publications



**Takalani Tshivhenga: E&A Unit:**  
Schools Admin Assistant

# NEW STAFF MEMBERS



**Tebogo Mmako: OCC Unit:**  
*Assistant Manager: Qualifications*



**Gugulethu Nkambule: E&A Unit:**  
*Primary Evaluator*



**Sibahle Mbatha: E&A Unit:**  
*Accreditation and Coordination  
Admin Assistant*



**Tony Nyatlo: E&A Unit:**  
*E&A Primary Evaluator*



**Winile Ndebele: E&A Unit:**  
*E&A unit Evaluator High Schools*

## Free Hotline Number

Umalusi has subscribed to a service that will enable all stakeholders to report anonymously on incidents of fraud and corruption.

Anyone can contact the Umalusi Fraud and Ethics Line by dialling and using the dedicated FreeCall telephone number, e-mail and website.

Trained operators using sophisticated contact centre equipment will respond to calls in English 24/7, and Afrikaans, Zulu, Sotho or Xhosa between 7:00 and 21:00, 365 days a year.

**Umalusi FreeCall:** 0800 000 889

**Email:** [umalusi@tip-offs.com](mailto:umalusi@tip-offs.com)

**FreeFax:** 0800 00 77 88

**Website:** [www.tip-offs.com](http://www.tip-offs.com)

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### Social Media

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/UmalusiSA](http://www.facebook.com/UmalusiSA)

Twitter: @UmalusiSA

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Council for Quality Assurance in  
General and Further Education and Training