UMALUSI

Council for Quality Assurance in
General and Further Education and Training

STRATEGIC PLAN
2020 - 2024

Accounting Authority Statement

I am truly honoured to write the preamble to this important document, which outlines the strategic direction that Umalusi intends to take in the coming five years. The next Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) provides Umalusi with another opportunity to redefine its role as a quality council in its quest to remain relevant in the ever-changing education landscape. To this end, Umalusi Council will continue to discharge its fiduciary responsibility in supporting management as it delivers on the organisation's legislative mandate.

It is my sincere and humble view that Umalusi occupies a very important space in the education sector in South Africa. Umalusi, as the Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training, is entrusted with the mammoth task of assuring the quality of basic education consistent with the priorities outlined by His Excellency President Cyril Ramaphosa at the advent of his administration. Therefore, Umalusi needs to position itself as a respected thought leader on issues of quality in education.

The processes leading to the development of this plan have revealed critical issues that Council needs to focus on to support the work of the organisation. This Strategic Plan, therefore, outlines the impact the organisation intends to have on the system.

Furthermore, the plan outlines priorities that will be implemented to ensure the realisation of Umalusi's outcomes and impact. In addition, through successful implementation of this plan, Umalusi will ensure that it remains relevant as a key stakeholder in education. I have no doubt that the management of Umalusi, together with Umalusi staff, have the requisite competencies and determination to implement this Strategic Plan effectively.

As we cast our vision to the next MTSF, it is clear from Council and management that it is not going to be business as usual. As a result, the entity will strive to become more innovative, proactive, efficient and effective in performing its legislative function as a quality council. To achieve this, Council will ensure that all allocated resources are managed judiciously and are aligned to the priorities. The Annual Performance Plan will be developed in keeping with these priorities.

Council endorses the 2020/21 - 2024/25 Strategic Plan, and commits to supporting the Chief Executive Officer and his team in fulfilling the mandate of the organisation.

Professor John D Volmink
Umalusi Council Chairperson

Signature:

Accounting Officer Statement

Umalusi, as the Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training, continues to play a key role in the education sector. This plan maps out the strategic direction that the organisation intends to take in its Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF), from 2020/21 to 2024/25. The plan is a product of a series of review sessions during which Umalusi staff worked with members of Council, reflected on the work of the organisation in the past five years and charted a new path for the next MTSF.

When we look back, there is no doubt that the organisation has done well in achieving its 2015/16 - 2019/20 vision. It is my considered view, as the accounting officer, that the activities of the organisation must be driven by a realistic vision that seeks to harness the resources that government has entrusted to us. These include human, financial and physical resources. I am delighted to report that the organisation has improved its achievement of annual targets over the five-year period, from 68% in 2015/16 to 89% in 2018/19.

Furthermore, the organisational structure has been enhanced to strengthen administration and governance units in the organisation during this term. Credit must be given to Umalusi Council for supporting management by diligently exercising its oversight role to ensure the successful implementation of the Strategic Plan in the last five years. The new five-year priorities of government, as articulated in the new MTSF, place a huge responsibility on Umalusi to ensure quality education that addresses priority No. 2. In line with these priorities, Umalusi has conceptualised a new vision: to become a trusted authority in fostering best standards in general and further education and training.

This Strategic Plan outlines the intended outcomes and impacts that the organisation aims to achieve through the next MTSF. It, further, outlines the following key priorities, which will be implemented to realise the outcomes:
i.   review the quality assurance of assessment approach so as to accommodate new qualifications and improve the status quo;
ii.   evaluate and appraise new and reviewed qualifications;
iii. amend the founding Acts to accommodate new qualifications and desired extensions in the mandate of quality assurance;
iv.   intensify research on educational developments to innovate and advise the Ministers of Education; and
v.   intensify advocacy on qualifications within the sub-framework.

My executive management and I have made a commitment to implement these priorities, with the support of Umalusi staff. Therefore, we look forward to Council's oversight role in holding management accountable.

Dr Mafu S Rakometsi   Signature:
Chief Executive Officer

Official sign-off

It is hereby certified that this Strategic Plan:

- was developed by Umalusi management under the guidance of the Umalusi Council;
- takes into account all relevant policies, legislation and other mandates for which Umalusi is responsible; and
- accurately reflects the impact, outcomes and outputs that Umalusi will endeavour to achieve in the period 2020/21 - 2024/25.

Mr Emmanuel Sibanda
Executive Manager: Qualifications and Research

Signature:

Mrs Zodwa Modimakwane
Executive Manager: Quality Assurance and Monitoring

Signature:

Mr Mahomed Chowan
Chief Financial Officer

Signature:

Mrs Stella B Mosimege
Senior Manager: Strategy and Governance

Signature:
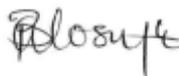
Dr Mafu S Rakometsi
Chief Executive Officer

Signature:

Prof John D Volmink
Umalusi Council Chairperson

Signature:

Approved by:

Mrs AM Motshekga: MP
Minister of Basic Education

Signature:

Contents

Abbreviations and Acronyms

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
APP	Annual Performance Plan
BAA	Benchmark Assessment Agency
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CGITCPF	Corporate Governance of Information Technology and Communication Policy Framework
CHE	Council on Higher Education
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECM	Enterprise Content Management
EES	Enhanced Education Standard
ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning
E&A	Evaluation and Accreditation
FET	Further Education and Training
F&SCM	Finance and Supply Chain Management
GEC	General Education Certificate
GENFETQA	General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance
GETCA	General Education and Training Certificate for Adults
GETC	General Education and Training Certificate
GFET	General Further Education and Training
GFETQSF	General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework
HCM	Human Capital Management
IEB	Independent Examinations Board
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
MIS	Management Information Systems
MTSF	Medium-Term Strategic Framework
NASCA	National Senior Certificate for Adults
NATED	National Education Report (190/191)
NDP	National Development Plan
NC(V)	National Certificate (Vocational)
NEPA	National Education Policy Act
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSC	National Senior Certificate
OQSF	Occupational Qualifications Sub-framework
PFMA	Public Finance Management Act

PR&COMMS	Public Relations and Communications
QAA	Quality Assurance of Assessment
QAA-PSQ	Quality Assurance of Assessment for Post-School Qualifications
QAA-SQ	Quality Assurance of Assessment for School Qualifications
QAM	Quality Assurance and Monitoring
QCC	Qualifications, Curriculum and Certification
QCTO	Quality Council for Trades and Occupations
Q&R	Qualifications and Research
SACAI	South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute
SAFCERT	South African Certification Council
SASA	South African Schools Act
SASL	South African Sign Language
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SC	Senior Certificate
SC(a)	Senior Certificate (amended)
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SITA	State Information Technology Agency
SIR	Statistical Information and Research
S&G	Strategy and Governance
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
URS	User Requirements Specification

PART A
Our Mandate

PART A: Our Mandate

1.   Constitutional Mandate

Umalusi is the Quality Council for general and further education and training. It is obliged to embrace the provisions of Chapter 2 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996. In terms of section 29(1), everyone has a right to a basic education, including adult basic and further education and training. In relation to this section, Umalusi is obligated to ensure the quality assurance of the provision of education within the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework (GFETQSF) to citizens. This obligation is fulfilled to ensure the realisation of the requirements stipulated in section 29(3), which promotes the establishment of private education institutions that:
   a.   do not discriminate on the basis of race;
   b.   are registered with the state; and
   c.   maintain standards that are not inferior to standards at comparable public education institutions.

2.   Legislative and Policy Mandates

2.1   Founding Legislation

i.   National Qualifications Framework (NQF) (Act No. 67 of 2008)

The NQF Act, 2008 provides for the establishment of Umalusi as a quality council that is responsible for the development and management of a sub-framework of qualifications at levels 1 - 4 of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and related quality assurance processes. In terms of paragraph 27 of the NQF Act, Umalusi must do the following in respect of quality assurance:
   a.   develop and implement policy for quality assurance;
   b.   ensure the integrity and credibility of quality assurance; and
   c.   ensure that quality assurance as is necessary for the sub-framework is undertaken.

ii.   The General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance (GENFETQA) (Act No. 58 of 2001), as amended in 2008

The GENFETQA Act, as amended, assigns Umalusi responsibility for quality assurance of general and further education and training. Umalusi was established with the purpose of maintaining norms and standards in general and further education and training. Its mandate is confirmed as follows:
   a.   developing and maintaining a sub-framework of qualifications for general and further education and training;
   b.   quality assurance of all exit-point assessments of such qualifications;
   c.   certification of learner achievements;
   d.   quality assurance of private education institutions; and
   e.   accreditation of private assessment bodies.

Further, the Act assigns responsibility to Umalusi for the quality assurance of independent schools, through Chapter 3, 23 (2) (a). With respect to private provision, Umalusi is required to undertake the following accreditation responsibilities:

a. develop policy, which must be regulated by the Minister, for the accreditation of private assessment bodies other than departments of education, and accredit assessment bodies accordingly;

b. develop policy and criteria for the quality assurance of private education institutions including independent schools, private colleges and private adult education and training (AET) centres;

c. ensure that any institution required to register as an independent school, private further education and training (FET) college and private adult basic education and training (ABET) centre complies with the quality assurance policy and criteria determined by Umalusi; and

d. affirm, or withdraw, accreditation status of the private education institution concerned.

2.2   Other Legislation

• National Education Policy (NEPA) (Act No. 27 of 1996);
• The South African Schools (SASA) (Act No. 84 of 1996), as amended; and
• Continuing Education and Training (Act No. 16 of 2006), as amended.

3.   Institutional Policies and Strategies over the Five-Year Period

Umalusi's qualifications' sub-framework must be read in conjunction with the following policy documents:

• Guidelines on Strategy and Priorities for the NQF 2011/2012: Minister of Higher Education and Training;
• national policies governing existing qualifications (including their assessment) that are currently certificated by Umalusi;
• Standard Setting and Quality Assurance of the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework: Umalusi, 2014;
• policy documents and guidelines pertaining to the National Senior Certificate (NSC), Senior Certificate (amended) (SC(a)), General Education and Training Certificate (GETC), National Certificate (Vocational) (NC(V)), National Education Report 190/191 (NATED) and the National Curriculum Statements (NCS); and any other qualification on the GFETQSF, as applicable;
• Council policies and directives on the conduct, administration and management of the assessments for qualifications on the GFETQSF;
• the regulations pertaining to qualifications on the GFETQSF developed by the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and gazetted by the Minister on assessment and certification, including those promulgated by provincial legislatures, as well as the policy framework that applies to all TVET colleges declared or established by the Minister in terms of the Continuing Education and Training Act No. 16 of 2006; Treasury Regulations; and
• any other related legislation as appropriate to the various education and training sectors Umalusi is mandated to work in.

4.   Relevant Court Rulings

None.

PART B
Our Strategic Focus
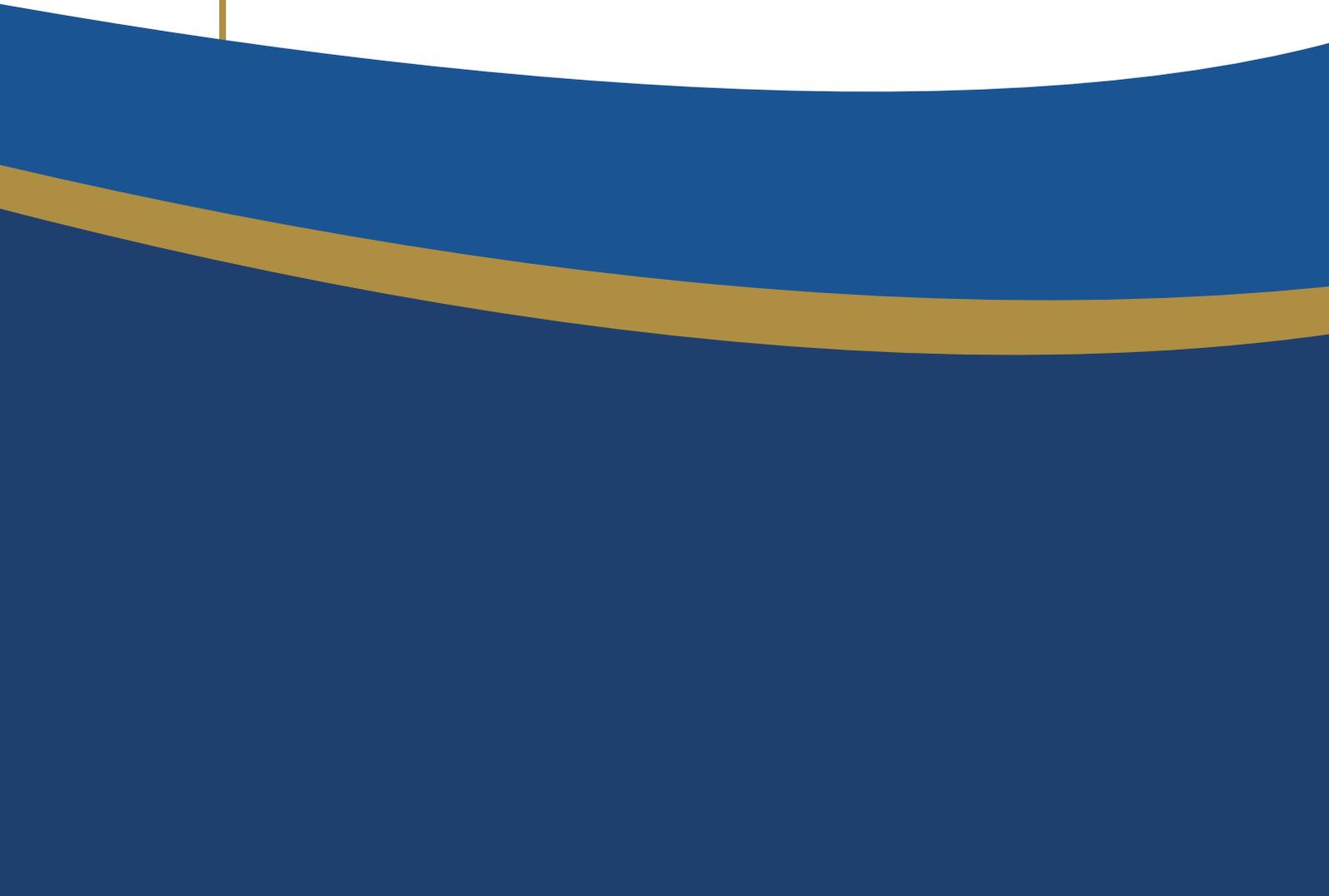
PART B: OUR STRATEGIC FOCUS

Introduction

Umalusi is a listed Schedule 3A public entity in terms of the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA), (Act No. 1 of 1999) as amended. The entity intends to be a thought leader in general and further education and training. This intention will be realised through the accomplishment of the organisational mandates and outcomes in its 2020 - 2024 Strategic Plan. This plan outlines the impact, outcomes, indicators and targets that Umalusi will accomplish in the five-year period. In addition, the plan provides a pathway that the entity will embark on to fulfil its mandate. It also responds to the government's educational priority, in terms of the Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) 2019 - 2024. Through this plan, Umalusi will continue to combine efforts with the departments of education to implement the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030, to eradicate the triple challenges of poverty, inequality and unemployment.

The Strategic Plan takes into consideration the goals outlined in the DBE's Action Plan to 2024.

1.   Vision

A trusted authority in fostering high education standards in general and further education and training.

2.   Mission

We are the quality council that assures education standards in the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework.

3.   Values

Transparency   Our processes are available for public scrutiny.
Professionalism   Umalusi employees provide services and interact with stakeholders with great rapport.
Integrity   Umalusi conducts its operations honestly and ethically.
Reliability   Umalusi uses consistent procedures in its quality assurance processes.
Impartiality   We maintain equal treatment of standards for all stakeholders.

4.   Situational Analysis

This situational analysis reflects information gathered from the organisation's stakeholders using different analytical tools. The SWOT and PESTLE analysis tools were combined to identify organisational strategy enablers and impediments as influenced by various factors within and outside the organisation. This approach enabled an understanding of the context within which the organisation is operating from different angles.   The situational analysis therefore, covers a description of internal and external experiences, successes and challenges.

5. External Environment Analysis

5.1. Roles and Responsibilities

There is a lack of clarity about certain of its roles and responsibilities since its establishment as a quality council. This stems from the organisation having carried over the role of the South African Certification Council (SAFCERT), which focused on assessment; not the critical functions of managing qualifications and corresponding curricula. One of the key focus areas for the ensuing five-year term is, therefore, to make sure that Umalusi and its critical stakeholders clarify this aspect of its mandate. This is imperative if Umalusi is to have its intended impact within the education system. Despite this, Umalusi has made significant progress in enhancing the quality of education in the GFETQSF since its inception. It has played a critical role in the education sector and conquered educational challenges in the GFETQSF, such as improving quality assurance standards, managing examination irregularities, re-issuing and replacing certificates issued by its predecessor, the SAFCERT, and addressing perceptions of declining standards in the NSC examinations.

5.2 Policy Performance

Umalusi's policy and performance environment is informed by changes in the education landscape, its needs and challenges. Being the quality council largely responsible for basic education, the focus of Umalusi demands a constant and clear understanding of different education needs. Strategically, Umalusi uses research to understand education indices of quality, empowering itself to seek ways of ensuring that quality becomes the thread that permeates education delivery in South Africa. This is critical to ensure that qualifications in general and further education and training remain relevant and competitive in both the region and at international level. Hence, one of Umalusi's strengths is ensuring ongoing policy development to guide the organisation and assessment bodies that offer qualifications in this sub-framework. The policy landscape, which is elaborated upon in section 2.3, reflects policies, directives and guidelines that are used in the system to ascertain quality assurance of education delivery and assessment practices.

5.3 Implementation of Mandates in the MTSF 2014 - 2019

During the first phase of implementing the NDP (i.e. MTSF 2014 - 2019), Umalusi performed numerous functions in an attempt to ensure that quality education was achieved within the GFETQSF. During this term, 50 research reports on issues affecting basic education and post-school education in the education sector were completed and disseminated to relevant stakeholders. A minimum of four articles were contributed annually to the DHET research bulletin. Five curricula were appraised. In ensuring that quality assurance standards were maintained, Umalusi developed and reviewed policies that guided its mandates during this period. Private education institutions were assessed and granted accreditation accordingly; and certificates of accreditation were issued. The certificates of results were issued to qualifying candidates. The quality assurance of standards was consistently implemented through monitoring the conduct of examinations, auditing assessment bodies for their state of readiness to conduct examinations and the management of examination irregularities, in collaboration with assessment bodies. In total, 68 quality assurance of assessment reports were compiled and published, detailing all processes completed in ensuring the credibility of examinations.

5.3.1   Accreditation

The figure below indicates the accreditation outcomes Umalusi has granted to private education institutions over the past four financial years. In terms of Figure 1, the majority of private education institutions have been granted accreditation or provisional accreditation. In line with the volume of applications per sector, the Independent Schools (IS) were the most accredited institutions during this period. The second highest is the private Further Education and Training (FET) institutions. This growth illustrates the mammoth task of monitoring which Umalusi has to undertake in the biennial anniversary of the accreditation of these institutions. The entity has to increase its staff capacity in the area of monitoring to ensure that the accredited institutions continue to comply with the accreditation standards.
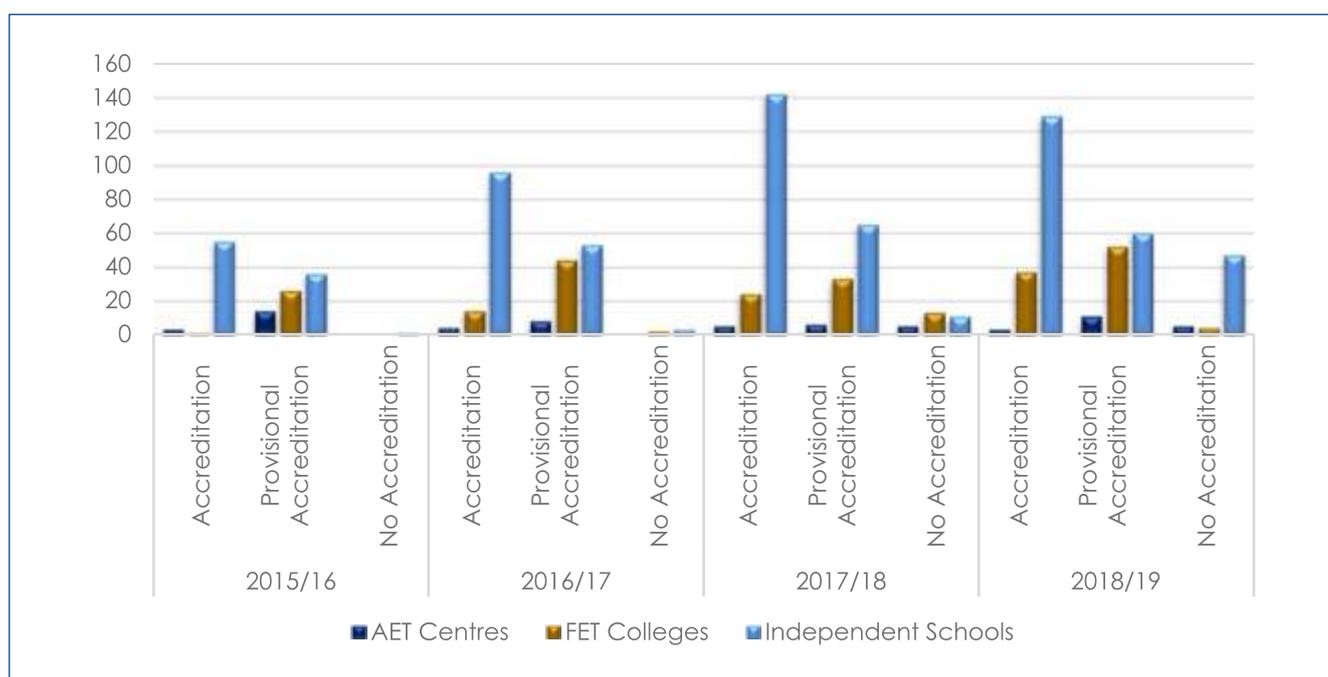

Figure 1: Accreditation outcomes 2015/16 - 2018/19

5.3.2   Certification

A critical function of the organisation is to certify all deserving learners who complete Umalusi qualifications. Over the last five years the organisation has been able to issue certificates for five qualifications, viz. NSC, NC(V), GETC: ABET, SC(a) and NATED Report 190/191, as reflected in Figure 2. The NSC forms the largest percentage, 58%, of certificates awarded. The number of certificates includes first issues, subject statements, learning area certificates, replacements, duplicates, re-issues and combinations.
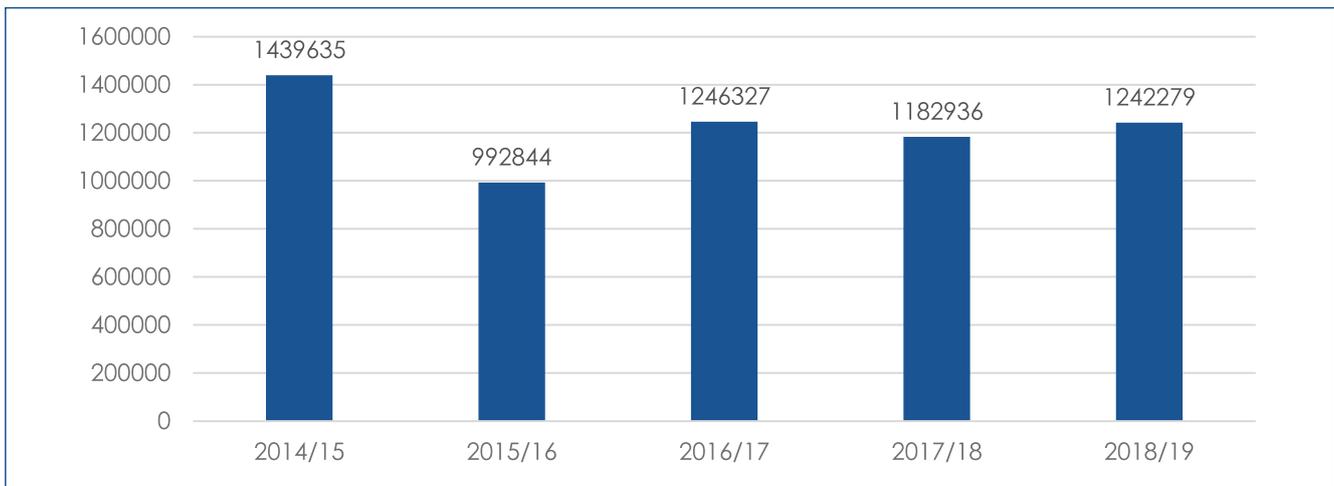
Figure 2: Certification numbers 2014/15 - 2018/19

5.3.3   Verification

Umalusi provides the very important service to the public of verifying qualifications of individuals, as requested by different organisations. Most verifications are e-verifications, compared to manual and full verifications. As shown in Figure 3, in the last five years Umalusi's verification outputs were fairly constant between 2014/15 and 2016/17, but declined slightly between 2017/18 and 2018/19. This was a result of some clients using the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) for verification, in line with the revised NQF Act. If there is no intervention and the Act is implemented as is, Umalusi will experience revenue loss in the long term. This service protects institutions of higher learning and employers and ensures that opportunities are provided to deserving citizens. It also promotes the attainment of proper qualifications from accredited institutions, for the betterment of society.
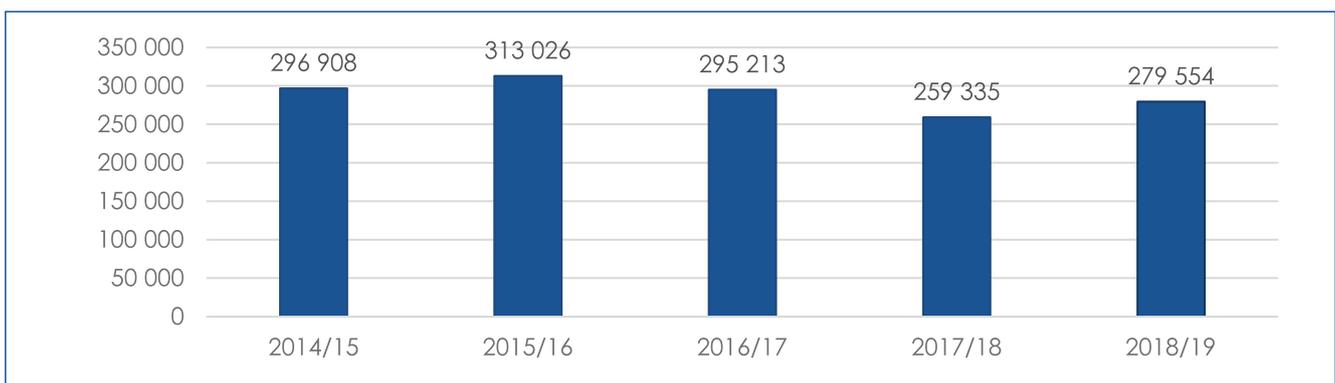
Figure 3: Verification 2014/15 - 2018/19

5.4   Demand for Services

a.   General Education Certificate

The DBE is in the process of developing a qualification for the end-of-senior-phase (Grades 7 - 9), the General Education Certificate (GEC). The qualification will assist learners in choosing learning pathways. The three streams model provides for learners to follow three streams of learning: academic, technical vocational and technical occupational. Umalusi has a

mammoth task ahead in evaluating the curricula of the proposed 26 subjects. This is necessary to make sure that the standards of the NCS are complied with. The implications for Umalusi in the coming five-year term is the need to have capacity to assess and review these curricula and perform all quality assurance of assessment processes for the GEC qualification. These initiatives have serious budgetary implications for Umalusi in terms of providing for personnel to do the work and expanding the systems for quality assurance work. The organisation intends to explore using ICT systems to automate some processes and reduce the workload that requires more human resources. In addition, the entity will present its budgetary needs to the DBE in order to secure additional funds for ICT.

b. Alternate Curricula

In 2018/19 Umalusi undertook a pilot process of evaluating an alternate curriculum, Waldorf. This exercise assisted Umalusi to gather information on the Waldorf curriculum in relation to the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). The organisation must now carefully consider the ramifications of allowing alternative curricula in the GFETQSF. Other considerations relate to the potential impact on the NSC qualification.

c. High Demand of the NSC

A number of neighbouring countries have had access to the NSC qualification through private assessment bodies such as the Independent Examinations Board (IEB). In some instances, these were the result of undefined arrangements between Ministers of Education. The challenge for the quality council is that Umalusi has not been able to perform any quality assurance processes in these countries. This must be corrected through regulations or policy.

d. Credible Qualifications

A large part of managing the GFETQSF is ensuring that South African qualifications remain internationally competitive. Consequently, there is constant benchmarking, research and evaluation of qualifications to ensure that they remain relevant. In the previous term, the National Certificate (Vocational) (NC(V)) was reviewed and evaluated and the recommendations were provided to the Minister of Higher Education and Training. Another key issue has been that of the NATED 1-3 programmes, some of which have become redundant in today's labour market. There is pressure on providing relevance of these programmes. The latest intervention was to have their curricula updated to make them more relevant and current, and in due course, phase out of the system.

e. South African Sign Language (SASL) Home Language

The NSC is a qualification that opens doors for career development in the country. However, this qualification, which is at NQF level 4, has for a very long time excluded learners whose home language is Sign Language. The DBE introduced Sign Language as a Home Language in 2016 at Grade 10 and Umalusi conducted research to inform its quality assurance processes. As a result, in 2018 the language was examined in Grade 12 for the first time, and Umalusi's quality processes were in place. This was a landmark achievement for Umalusi and the entire basic education sector.

5.5   Stakeholders

It is important to acknowledge that improving the quality of education in South Africa requires the participation of all key stakeholders in the education sector. Umalusi is an essential role player in ensuring that quality education is realised in the country. Legislation requires Umalusi to develop and manage qualifications and maintain education standards in the GFETQSF. As a result, the organisation has a very broad spectrum of stakeholders. In the quality sphere, collaboration with all quality councils, namely the Council on Higher Education (CHE), Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) and SAQA, as the umbrella body, is critical for articulation of the different qualifications registered on the NQF. Hence the four bodies collaborate through research, task teams as instituted by the Minister of Higher Education and Training and representation on the Council structures of these institutions.

Umalusi works with public assessment bodies—the DBE and DHET—and private assessment bodies—the IEB, the South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI) and the Benchmark Assessment Agency (BAA). These assessment bodies offer and/or assess qualifications on the GFETQSF and Umalusi connects with them through quality assurance of assessment processes, evaluation of qualifications, appraisal of curricula and certification of the qualifications they offer. It is important to note that Umalusi also accredits all private assessment bodies, as mentioned above. For the DBE and DHET, stakeholder support involves the implementation of qualifications on the Umalusi sub-framework. Through compliance and adherence to quality assurance policies, implementation of Umalusi directives and recommendations, assessment bodies are key in ensuring that educational standards are enhanced.

Other stakeholders include private education institutions, which Umalusi accredits, and higher education institutions, which Umalusi collaborates with on matters of education research. There are numerous verification clients who depend on Umalusi to verify attained qualifications. The media is a crucial partner in providing a platform to inform the public about Umalusi's work at all times. Members of the public, which includes parents and learners, depend on Umalusi for the enhancement of quality education in the country. Through the various communication platforms, Umalusi receives feedback from all its stakeholders, which enables the organisation to improve on its services.

5.6   Challenges

Like other organisations, Umalusi has had its fair share of challenges and limitations in accomplishing its five-year goals. One of the critical challenges that needs to be addressed is ensuring that the functions of the departments are clearly delineated from Umalusi's role of quality assurance. Often these boundaries become fluid, which complicates the work of Umalusi in performing its prescribed duties. Ongoing engagements with these stakeholders are necessary to clarify aspects of legislation that may be confusing to the parties.

The critical challenges faced during this term included dealing with the unlawful sale of NSC certification by fraudsters. The National Treasury instituted budget cuts, which crippled the execution of critical services within the mandate. Umalusi was challenged to release blocked results, which had been prompted by identified irregularities. The organisation had to contend with non-adherence to schedules of submission of candidates' records by assessment bodies, which delayed the certification of some learners. In the last few years, Umalusi has seen an

increase in the number of institutions seeking accreditation. Many have already been accredited, which opened another focus area: that of monitoring such institutions, with limited resources. Umalusi ensured that solutions were sought to each challenge encountered. In some instances, collaboration was established with other stakeholders who helped in addressing these.

5.7   Strategic Focus for the New Term

The United Nation's Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) number 4 asserts that quality and inclusive education are significant for sustainable development. Like any other country, South Africa strives to ensure that every citizen has access to education and training of the highest quality by 2030. In his State of the Nation Address on 20 June 2019, the President of the Republic of South Africa, Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, confirmed that education is rated priority number 2 in government's key priorities for the new MTSF (i.e. 2019 - 2024).   This is an indication that the country intends to invest in education to ensure that its economy is inclusive and progressive. The NDP affirms that quality and inclusive education, training and innovation are critical in addressing the triple challenges of poverty, inequality and unemployment. In that vein, Umalusi will prioritise its resources to ensure improvement and relevance of the qualifications in its sub-framework.

In this MTSF period Umalusi must devote time and resources to the quality assurance of two newly registered qualifications, the General Education and Training Certificate for Adults (GETCA) and the National Senior Certificate for Adults (NASCA). These qualifications have been designed with adults' needs in mind; hence, they afford adults an opportunity to eventually access higher education. In addition, DBE has developed a new qualification, GEC, which provides an opportunity for quality assurance of general education and training. Early Childhood Development (ECD) is being transferred from the Department of Social Development to the DBE, which may require a new quality assurance approach for Umalusi. Based on the new qualification initiatives within the sector, Umalusi's strategic focus will mainly be on the reconceptualisation of quality assurance, which may demand a re-engineering of business processes and a possible realignment of functions to cope with the new demands.

New qualifications on the sub-framework automatically require the evaluation and appraisal of new curricula to ensure that all qualifications' standards are met and maintained, but mainly to ensure that these qualifications prepare recipients to acquire lifelong skills. Efforts will also be directed to the amendment of the founding Act to desired extensions in the mandate. The current education landscape demands that Umalusi intensifies research for evidence-based decision-making and advice in the education sector.

6.   Internal Environment Analysis

6.1   Organisational Structure

Umalusi is a Schedule 3A entity with a staff establishment of 140. The management structure is comprised of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), three executive managers including the Chief Financial Officer (CFO), and 10 senior managers. The organisation is divided into three branches: Administration, Qualifications and Research, and Quality Assurance and Monitoring. This structure was augmented in the last three years of the term by adding five new senior management positions: Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Finance and Supply Chain Management (F&SCM), Human Capital Management (HCM), Strategy and

Governance (S&G) and Quality Assurance of Assessment for Post-School Qualifications (QAA: PSQ). Figure 4 depicts the configuration of the organisation.
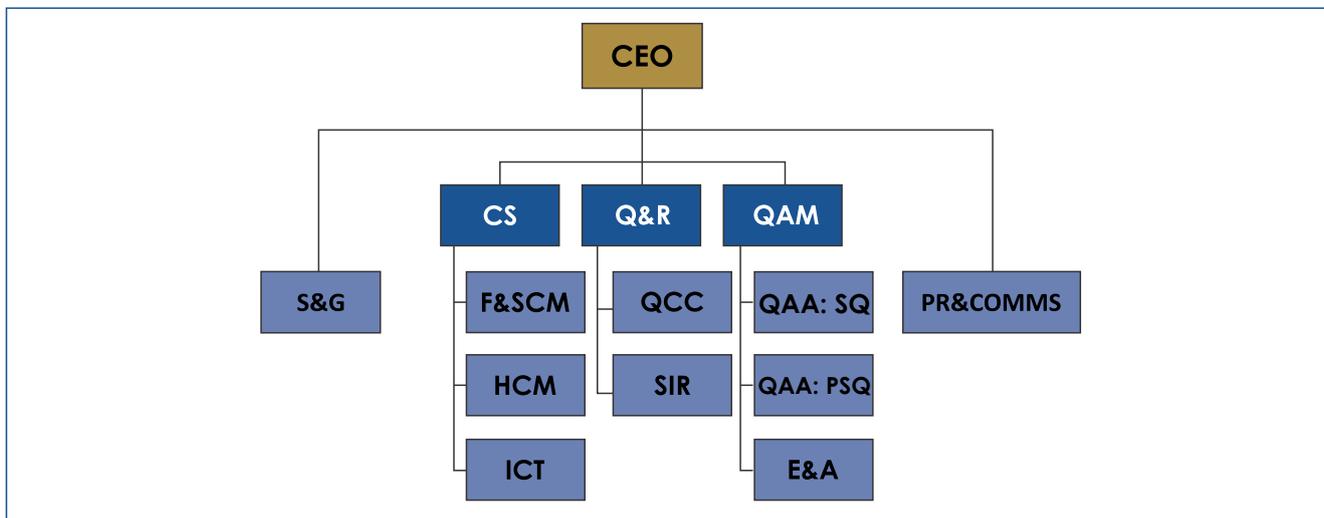

Figure 4: Umalusi structure

The new units have increased the capacity of the organisation to comply with public administrative requirements, improve service delivery and to drive organisational efficiency, including corporate governance, to improve service delivery. The organisation has obtained consecutive unqualified audit reports during the 2015 - 2019 five-year term. The expansion of the organisational structure's corporate services is anticipated to enable the organisation to achieve clean audit reports in the new five-year term.

6.2   Human Resource Capacity of the Organisation to Achieve its Mandate

In terms of human capital management, Umalusi set a target of maintaining its vacancy rate below 10% annually. The organisation was successful in reducing its vacancy rate, in the third year of the MTSF. Figure 5 below reflects a vacancy rate decrease of 16% in a period of four years (2015/16 to 2018/19). The organisation depends on human resources to provide services to the nation.
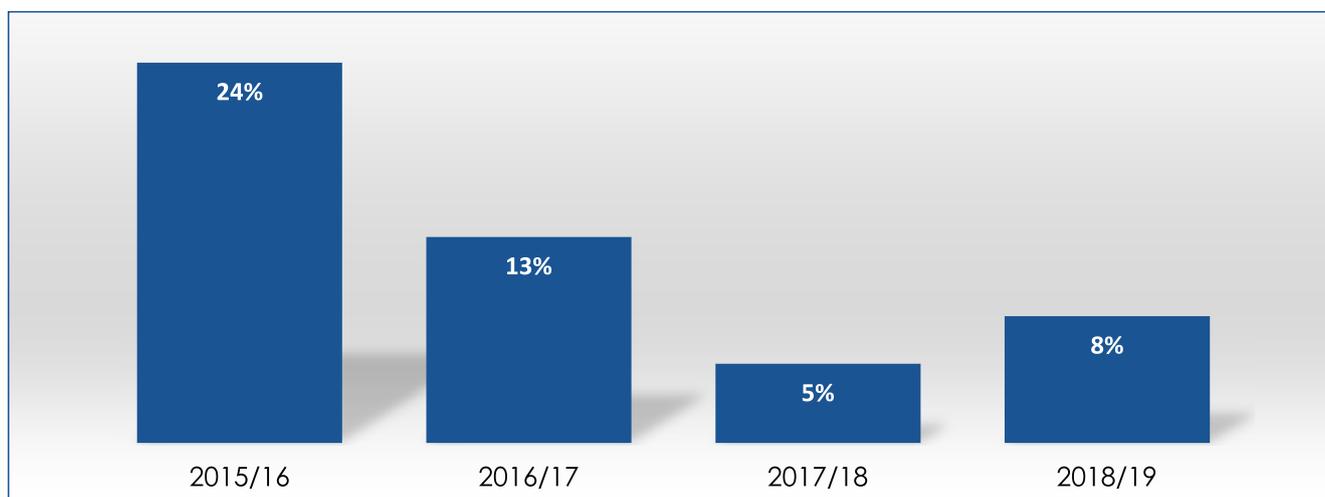

Figure 5: Organisational vacancy rate over four years

Although the organisation's vacancy rate appears positive, Umalusi has lost a number of middle managers who hold education qualifications to other employers. This loss of staff has been temporarily averted by matching educators' salaries to that offered by education departments. A cash injection into the organisation is important to ensure that the staff establishment is optimally maintained. Given the changing mandate of the organisation, some employees have become overloaded with work and, as a result, are leaving the organisation. Umalusi, therefore, needs to critically assess its capacity to deliver on its mandate. A work-study was recommended during 2019; however, the project had to be halted until funding is secured for the implementation of its recommendations.

The expanding mandate of Umalusi requires that business units that provide direct services to clients be adequately established. The ratio of employee compensation to goods and services, in terms of expenditure, is almost 1:1. This is very different from most organisations, where compensation accounts for up to 80% of the budget. At Umalusi, the second largest cost-driver is the payment of more than 300 contracted moderators, monitors and evaluators, who perform Umalusi services in the areas of accreditation, monitoring, moderation and other quality assurance services. The downside of this arrangement, for example in the accreditation processes, is that work done by these many people cascades down to just a few employees in the organisation. There is, therefore, a growing concern that employees are overloaded, something that is likely to worsen in the new term, given that Umalusi must evaluate and quality assure newly registered qualifications on its sub-framework.

6.3   Facilities

The establishment and expansion of four additional business units has led to an increase in the number of employees. Consequently, there is limited office space to accommodate 140 employees in Umalusi Building 37 (the old building). This crowded working environment compromises the confidentiality of organisational information and productivity; however, the organisation has put in place a plan to address the findings of the Occupational Health and Safety report. In addition, the plan to refurbish Umalusi 41 (the new building) is under way. In the interim, arrangements have been made to move two business units to occupy the available office space in the second Umalusi building. This will ease the pressure on the organisation on the issue of office space.

6.4   Financial Resource Capacity

There has been a significant improvement in the financial management of the organisation over the past years. The F&SCM policies and processes have been continually reviewed to align with the requirements of the PFMA and Treasury Regulations.

In this term, the budget will be spent on funding activities performed by the core function business units, as highlighted in the Annual Performance Plans. In addition, the budget will also accommodate improvement of support functions. The economic landscape is not positive internationally and cost containment measures are being enforced nationally. Umalusi services will, therefore, be offered within very limited financial resources, since it is not self-sustaining. The insufficient financial resources will have an impact on funding of internal processes such as ICT and human capital management that are key in the execution of Umalusi's core business. The credibility of Umalusi qualifications is on the line if the organisation cannot attract sufficient funding in the upcoming Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) budget allocations to increase its staff establishment and fund the five-year term initiatives. Therefore, during the term,

the organisation will focus on devising additional means to collect revenue to augment the allocation from the DBE.

6.5   Information and Communication Technology

During the past five-year term Umalusi needed to develop and implement the requirements of the Corporate Governance of Information Technology and Communication Policy Framework (CGITCPF). The organisation's ICT Network health score was maintained at 95% to ensure smooth operations and to secure organisational information. The entity has faced the challenge of executing its functions using an outdated Management Information System (MIS) in the past five years. However, the organisation has been able to continually maintain the system to support established organisational processes, while at the same time developing a system to support new developments in the organisation. In collaboration with the State Information Technology Agency (SITA), the organisation embarked on a process of acquiring Enterprise Content Management (ECM) to complete User Requirements Specification (URS). A challenge that led to slow progress in organisational ICT was a high vacancy rate in the ICT Unit, which led to delays in developing ICT strategies, policies, procedures, systems and guidelines.

In this term the focus of the organisation will be on upgrading its MIS and the automation of business processes to institutionalise a paperless environment. In an attempt to match global technological advancements, a Cloud solution is being considered as one of the organisation's major projects.

6.6   Communication Management

Umalusi enjoys the advantage of technological advancement by using common social networks and communication platforms to communicate with stakeholders. The organisation uses both traditional and new communication platforms to communicate organisational mandates to the public. Eight platforms are in use; namely, promotional material, a hotline, bulk emails, radio stations, videos, the website, social networks and newsletters. In addition, public awareness workshops are conducted through the CEO's roadshows, research forums and other advocacy programmes. The communication strategy of the organisation guides the use of all these platforms.

During the MTSF 2014 - 2019, the organisational platforms were useful in addressing the following key matters: informing the public about established websites selling fraudulent certificates; providing clarity on standardisation processes; updating on the state of readiness of assessment bodies to administer examinations; educating the public on security features of the certificates issued for the NSC examination and on certification processes. These communication platforms enabled Umalusi to source information from stakeholders so as to align its processes of service delivery with stakeholder needs.

In this five-year planning cycle, the organisation will continue to increase its repertoire of communication platforms to reach more stakeholders.

PART C
Measuring our Performance
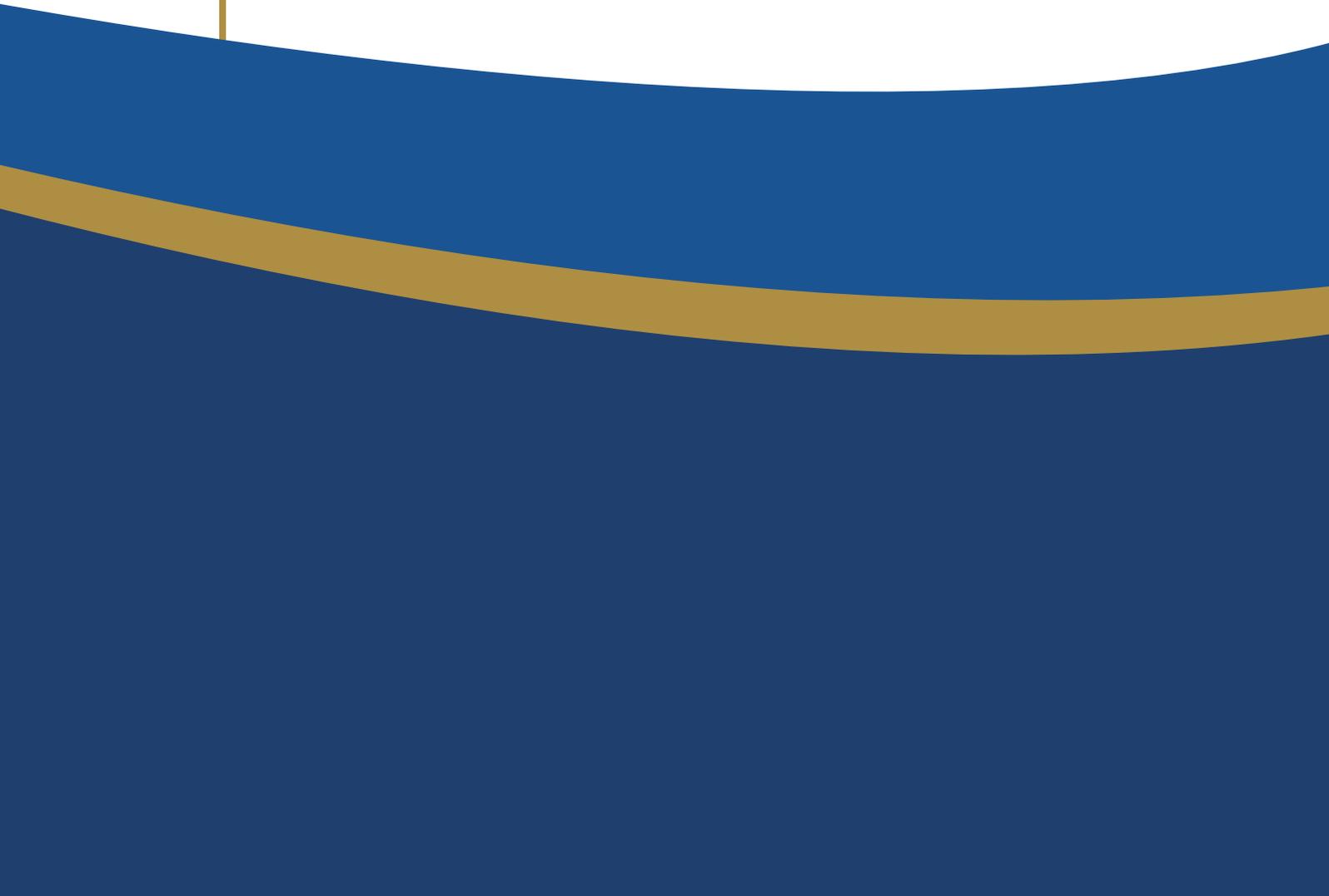
PART C: MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE

1.   Institutional Performance Information

Umalusi intends to improve general and further education and training standards to ensure that qualifications are credible and relevant for South Africa's economic needs. For the 2020/21 - 2024/25 planning period, the entity has developed statements that will guide its operations towards making a change in, and having an impact on, the South African education system.

2.   Measuring the Impact

Umalusi conducted a situational analysis to identify gaps within its area of operation in the education sector. The results revealed an urgent need to define Umalusi's role in very clear terms in the context of its function as a quality council. This would, in turn, mobilise the organisation to make sure that its qualifications are relevant to the economic needs of the country. In this regard, the entity's impact statement reflects the changes to the South African education system that are required, which must at all times be built on principles of quality and relevance. The impact statement takes into consideration the provisions of international and national policies, such as the United Nations' Sustainable Goals, National Development Plan 2030 and the MTSF 2019 - 2024, which vouch for inclusive and quality education.

A Theory of Change approach was applied to arrive at the required change in the sector. With the key priorities outlined in this plan, Umalusi is determined to ensure "credible and relevant qualifications" within the sub-framework. By this, the impact statement means that learners and students completing qualifications on the GFETQSF will have been equipped with the requisite skills and competencies to determine their own destiny and become active participants in growing the South African economy.

Impact statement	Relevant and credible qualifications

3.   Measuring Outcomes

By following the Theory of Change and Logical Framework models, the entity arrived at the two outcomes shown below:

Outcomes	Efficient and effective administrative systems Enhanced educational standards

The first outcome relates to the consequence of Programme 1 (Administration) outputs, which are crucial in driving day-to-day operational processes that facilitate service delivery in the organisation. The second outcome relates to the core business of Umalusi: it reflects the consequence of effectively managing the GFETQSF as mandated by the founding Acts. These outcomes will be realised through accomplishing the outputs that are outlined in the Annual Performance Plans of Umalusi during the five-year term.

MTSF Priority	Priority 2: Education, skills and health		
Outcome	Outcome indicator	Baseline	Five-year target
1. Efficient and effective administrative systems	1.1 Improved audit outcomes	Unqualified audit opinions	Unqualified audit opinions with no material findings
2. Enhanced educational standards	2.1 Percentage compliance with prescribed requirements to deliver and assess qualifications in the GFETQSF	-	95%

Figure 6 below shows a partial representation of Umalusi's results chain.
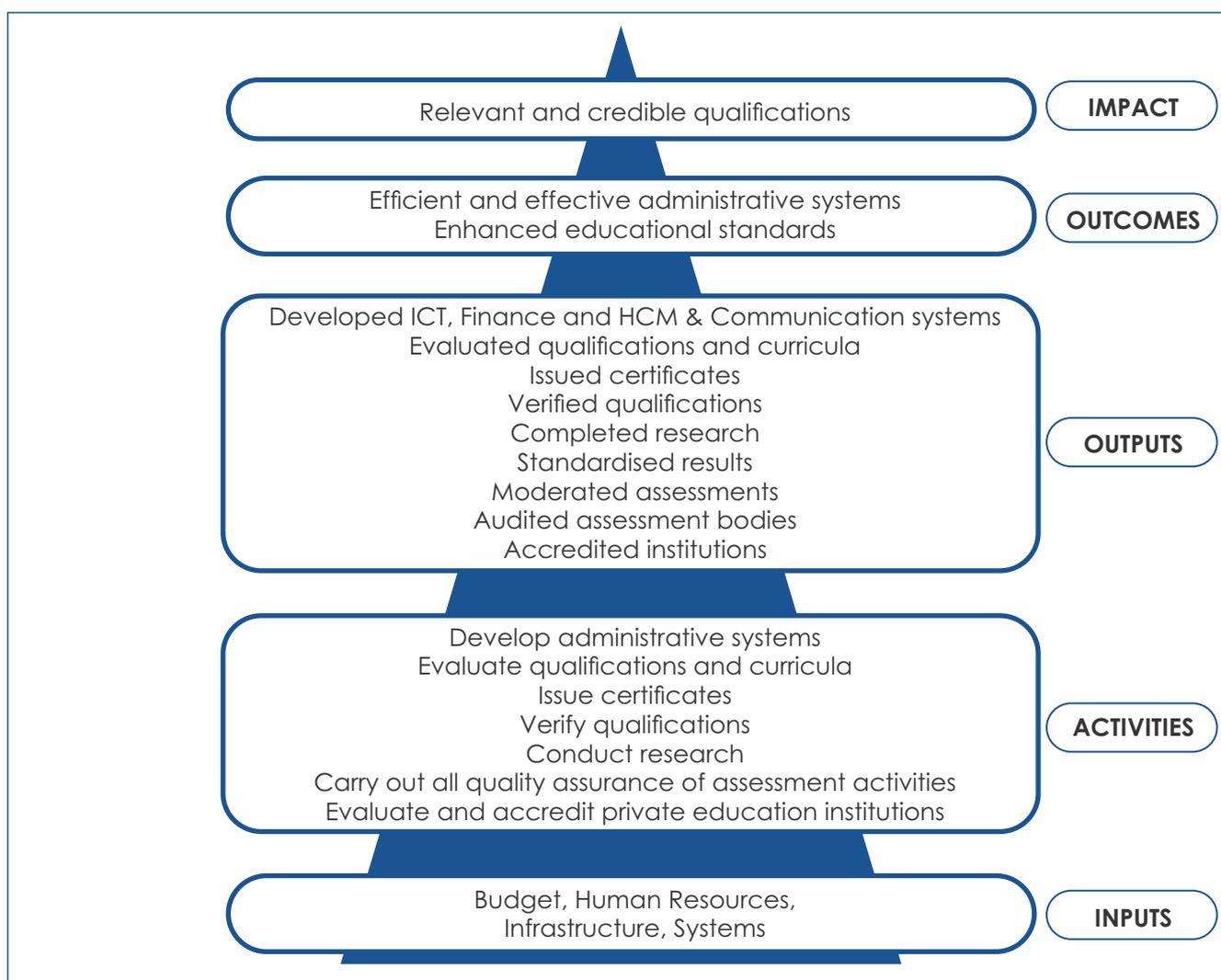
Figure 6: The Umalusi Logical Framework

3.1 Explanation of Planned Performance over the Five-Year Planning Period

South Africa is experiencing economic difficulties, partly due to a lack of skills to innovate and create jobs that would drive economic activity. As a result, unemployment has grown tremendously over the years, especially among the youth. Among the unemployed are those who hold Umalusi's qualifications. This illustrates the need for education that empowers its citizens to thrive, through utilisation of acquired skills. The country requires an education system that responds to the economic needs of the country. The ability of the country to produce graduates who will contribute to job creation and participate in growing the economy lies in its quality councils, which are responsible for managing the qualifications on the NQF.

Umalusi's outcomes are intended to provide education solutions within its sub-framework, towards addressing the NDP targets. Such targets include the DBE being able to increase the number of learners passing Mathematics and Physical Science; and increasing the number of learners eligible for Bachelor's degree entry programmes with the NSC qualification. As Umalusi is responsible for this qualification, the organisation's quality assurance work will focus on making sure that these numbers are not reached by compromising quality.

The first outcome, "Efficient and effective administrative systems", will be achieved by implementing functions performed by the Administration programme. This programme provides leadership, management and administrative services to the entity. Functions performed include human capital management, ICT management, financial management, strategic management, corporate governance and communications management. On an annual basis, the programme will outline key focus areas in the Annual Performance Plan (APP) for implementation. Such focus areas include innovation in the systems created by these units so that all other units are able to perform their core functions effortlessly.

The second outcome, "Enhanced educational standards", is aligned to the two core programmes: Qualifications and Research, and Quality Assurance and Monitoring. These two programmes are responsible for the development, management and assessment of qualifications registered in the sub-framework. The functions of these programmes include quality assurance of assessment, approval of results, accreditation and monitoring of private education institutions, development and management of qualifications on the GFETQSF, appraisal of curricula and certification of candidates. In addition, research is conducted in various formats to inform decision-making in the education sector with respect to Umalusi's qualifications. Outputs aligned to these outcomes are stipulated in the APP. Achievement of the outputs under this outcome directly leads to the credibility of qualifications in the GFET sub-framework.

3.2 Service Delivery Focus Areas

Umalusi carries out its work with the intention of an impact in the quality of education as articulated in the NDP. The organisation has seven service delivery focus areas, namely accreditation of private education institutions, certification, curriculum, development and management of qualifications in the GFETQSF, monitoring of private education institutions, quality assurance of assessment and conducting research.

During the five-year period, Umalusi will improve its administrative system to ensure that proper support is provided to the core business. In addition, it will continue to establish and maintain strategic relationships with other stakeholders to share valuable information, which will see the accomplishment of the organisational mandate. The Table below outlines all organisational service delivery focus areas.

Service delivery focus areas	Functions
1. Accreditation of private education institutions and assessment bodies	• Accreditation of private providers of education and training to enact tuition, and private assessment bodies to assess, qualification(s) registered on the GFETQSF • Accredited institutions include the following: I. Independent Schools ii. Private FET colleges iii. Private AET colleges iv. Private assessment bodies that assess the qualifications Umalusi certifies • Monitoring the private education institutions to ensure compliance with the criteria and standards of accreditation
2. Management of qualifications in the GFETQSF	• Development and review of qualifications in the GFETQSF
3. Curriculum	• Evaluation and appraisal of curricula
4. Certification	• Issuing of certificates for the following qualifications: i. SC(a); ii. NSC; iii. N3; iv. NC(V) v. GETC: ABET vi. GETCA vii. NASCA • Re-issue of certificates in case of loss or mark changes
5. Verification	• Verification of qualifications in the GFETQSF
6. Quality assurance of assessment	• Development and implementation of assessment policies and directives • Moderation of the standards of examination question papers • Moderation of the standards of internal assessment • Monitoring the administration of national examinations and marking processes • Monitoring and verification of resulting • Standardisation of results • Audit of assessment bodies for their state of readiness to conduct examinations
7. Research	• Conduct research and produce articles on matters relating to the sub-framework

4.   Key Risks

Outcome	Key risk(s)	Risk mitigation
Efficient and effective administrative systems	a. Unreliable MIS data	• Phase out MIS and replace it with Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solution
	b. High staff turnover rate/ human resource constraints	• Combination of appointment of short-term contractors • Job evaluation • Benchmarking and work-study investigation • Restructure the business units
	c. Lack of alternative funding model	• Full cost recovery from private education institutions
Enhanced educational standards	a. Limited budget to carry out ad hoc activities	• Ring-fence the budget • Put systems in place to minimise debt and maximise revenue
	b. Reliance on independent contractors for execution and reporting on processes may compromise the confidentiality of organisational information	• The contracts with the independent contractors must clearly detail issues of confidentiality and consequences for lack of confidentiality • Deploy staff to conduct quality assurance processes • Deploy staff to monitor the contract staff when conducting quality assurance processes
	c. Non-availability of independent contractors to perform the duties when needed	• Increase the pool of independent contractors
	d. Institutions offering qualifications without being accredited	• Work closely with the relevant departments to ensure that private education institutions offering qualifications registered on the GFETQSF are accredited
	e. Examination irregularities	• Strengthen the state of readiness verification processes to identify centres with potential risk for committing irregularities.

5.   Public Entities

None.

PART D
Technical Indicator Descriptions

PART D: TECHNICAL INDICATOR DESCRIPTIONS

Indicator title	1.1: Improved audit outcomes
Definition	Umalusi intends to satisfy the requirements of unqualified audit opinions with no material findings (clean), passed by external auditors. This indicator refers to the organisation having no material findings in its governance, compliance with legislation, pre-determined objectives and financial management, annually. The external auditor passes the opinion after having audited the organisation's annual report
Source of data	Annual reports (external auditor's opinion in the annual report)
Method of calculation/ assessment	Simple count of annual reports with unqualified audit opinion with no material findings (clean audit)
Assumptions	Systems are in place There are clear standard operating procedures for all administrative systems
Desired performance	Improved systems and processes to manage compliance with legislation
Indicator responsibility	Chief Financial Officer

Indicator title	2.1: Percentage compliance with prescribed requirements to deliver and assess qualifications in the GFETQSF
Definition	This indicator measures the compliance of assessment bodies to the following GFETQSF qualification standards: • Registration requirements • Accreditation requirements • Question paper requirements • State of readiness to conduct examinations • Standardisation and resulting The standards are outlined in various policies and qualification guidelines. Umalusi monitors assessment bodies on their compliance to standards to ensure that educational standards set in each qualification are maintained and improved on an ongoing basis. If these standards are compromised, the credibility of these qualifications will be affected. The following qualifications are in the GFETQSF: NSC, SC(a), N3, NC(V), GETC: ABET, GETCA, NASCA
Source of data	**Registration requirements:** QCC: Registration databases from Provinces **Accreditation requirements:** Accreditation guidelines/criteria, Green list **Question paper requirements:** QP guidelines, external moderators' reports, QAA reports **State of readiness to conduct examinations:** Guidelines, SOR reports, QAA reports **Standardisation and resulting:** Standardisation guidelines, standardisation reports
Method of calculation/assessment	Assessment bodies are assessed for compliance with each criterion **Level 1 calculation:** Numerator: Number of assessment bodies that comply Denominator: Total number of assessment bodies Calculation: Number of assessment bodies that comply/total number of assessment bodies x 100 **Level 2:** Calculate the overall percentage by adding up all the percentages and divide them by the number of criteria assessed
Assumptions	• Assessment bodies are fully compliant with all standards • Umalusi has the capacity to monitor and assess the level of compliance
Desired performance	Full compliance to GFETQSF policies, regulations, guidelines and criteria
Indicator responsibility	Executive Manager: Qualifications and Research Executive Manager: Quality Assurance and Monitoring

NOTES