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## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

NO. 1011

8 October 2021

Quality Council for General and Further  
Education and Training

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**THE QUALITY COUNCIL FOR GENERAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

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In terms of Section 24 of the National Qualifications Framework Act, Act 67 of 2008, as amended, Umalusi is the Quality Council for General and Further Education and Training.

Section 27(h)(i) provides for Umalusi, in its pursuit to ensure the development of qualifications for its Sub-Framework, to develop and implement policy and criteria, taking into account the policy and criteria contemplated in section 13(1)(h)(i), for the development, registration and publication of qualifications. Umalusi has developed the *Policy and Criteria for the development, registration and publication of qualifications for the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-Framework* in fulfilment of that requirement and herewith publish it for implementation by stakeholders in education and training.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Volmink".

Prof. John Volmink  
**CHAIRPERSON: UMALUSI COUNCIL**



Quality Council for General and Further  
Education and Training

**Policy and Criteria for the development, registration and  
publication of qualifications for the General and Further  
Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework**

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## CHAPTER 1

### 1. Definitions

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

**Accreditation** means the outcome of a quality assurance process of evaluating-

- a) a private assessment body, to determine whether its capacity, systems, processes and products are of the appropriate quality to deliver valid, reliable, fair and credible assessments and examinations; and
- b) an independent school / private college, to determine whether it has, in accordance with the policy and criteria for quality assurance as set out in the policy/regulations, the capacity to offer a qualification or programmes leading to a qualification on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework.

**Articulation** means the process of forming systemic, specific and individual possibilities of connection between qualifications and/or part-qualifications to allow for the horizontal/lateral, vertical and diagonal movement of learners through the formal education and training system and its linkages with the world of work:

- a) Horizontal articulation is articulation within and between NQF Sub-frameworks, on the same NQF level;
- b) Vertical articulation is articulation across NQF levels within an NQF Sub-framework;
- c) Diagonal articulation is articulation across NQF levels and across NQF Sub-frameworks;
- d) Systemic articulation is a 'joined up' system including qualifications, professional designations, policies and various other official elements that support learning and work pathways;
- e) Specific articulation means aligning qualifications through inter- or intra-institutional agreements such as memoranda of understanding, credit accumulation and transfer and other mechanisms;
- f) Individual articulation refers to learners being supported in their learning and work pathways through flexible admission, curriculum, learning and teaching, and learner

support systems such as the quality of qualifications and learning, career development services, and other mechanisms.

**Assessment** means the process to identify, gather and interpret information against the required competencies in a qualification or part-qualification in order to make a judgement about a learner's achievement in order to-

- i. assist the learner's development and improve the process of learning and teaching; and
- ii. evaluate and certify competence in order to ensure qualification credibility.

**Assessment body** means a juristic body accredited by Umalusi Council to quality assure internal assessment and conduct external examinations, and includes a department of education.

**Assessment Criteria** means the standards used to guide learning and assess learner achievement and/or to evaluate and certify competence.

**Council** means Umalusi, the Quality Council for General and Further Education and Training; as contemplated in the National Qualifications Framework Act (Act No. 67 of 2008) and the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, (Act No. 58 of 2001).

**Certification** means the formal recognition of a qualification or part-qualification awarded to a successful learner.

**Credit** means a measure of the volume of learning required for a qualification or part-qualification, quantified as the number of notional study hours required for achieving the learning outcomes specified.

**Credit Accumulation and Transfer** means an arrangement whereby the diverse features of both credit accumulation and credit transfer are combined to facilitate lifelong learning and access to the workplace.

**Credit transfer** means the vertical, horizontal or diagonal relocation of credits towards a qualification or part-qualification registered on the same or different Sub-framework for the qualification or part-qualification. One (1) credit is equated to ten (10) notional hours of learning.

**Curriculum** means a statement of the training structure and expected methods of learning and teaching that underpin a qualification or part-qualification to facilitate a more general understanding of its implementation in an education system. The curriculum encompasses three components:

- a) The intended curriculum: the documented curriculum for a qualification that provides a more detailed description in terms of the depth, breadth and level of difficulty and cognitive demand of what is required for the purpose of the qualification to be fulfilled. Syllabi for the necessary subjects form an integral part of the curriculum.
- b) The enacted curriculum: the delivery of the curriculum in an institution which includes leadership and management, the ethos and values, teaching and learning, extra-curricular activities, learner support, institutional performance and the management of quality towards improvement.
- c) The assessed curriculum: the internal assessment and the external examination of the intended curriculum.

The curriculum policy and its syllabi provide the information necessary for the enactment of the curriculum in the institution and the necessary framework for assessment.

**Exit Level Outcomes** means the knowledge, skills and attitudes that a learner should have obtained or mastered on completion of a qualification or part-qualification and against which the learner is assessed for competence.

**Exit point** means a point in General and Further Education and Training at which a learner is required to demonstrate competence with a view to obtaining documentary proof of proficiency.

**External assessment** means any assessment conducted by an assessment body, the outcomes of which count towards the achievement of a qualification.

**General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework** means the Sub-framework of qualifications developed and managed by Umalusi, the Quality Council for NOF Levels 1-4 as envisioned in sections 4 – 7 of the *National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008 (Act No. 67 of 2008)*

**International comparability** means an outcome of an analysis of how a qualification compares with- and relates to- similar international qualifications offered by accredited institutions or



organisations in other parts of the world. This includes best practices or standards in other parts of the world.

**Level descriptors** a statement describing learning achievement at a particular level of the NQF that provides a broad indication of the types of learning outcomes and assessment criteria that are appropriate to a qualification at that level.

**Lifelong learning** means learning that takes place in all contexts in life from a life-wide, life deep and lifelong perspective. It includes learning behaviours and obtaining knowledge, understanding, attitudes, values and competences for personal growth, social and economic well-being, democratic citizenship, cultural identity and employability.

**National Qualifications Framework** means the South African ten-level framework provided for the registration of national qualifications.

**Notional hours** means the agreed estimate of the learning time that it would take an average learner to meet the defined outcomes, it includes consideration of contact time, research, completion of assignments, time spent in structured learning in the workplace, individual learning. Ten (10) notional hours equate to one (1) credit.

**Part-qualification** means an assessed unit of learning that is registered as part of a qualification.

**Programme** means the same as curriculum.

**Provider** means a legally established institution (public or private) that has been recognised, usually for a particular period of time, by a Quality Council (QC) or its appointed agent, as having the capacity or provisional capacity to offer a qualification or part-qualification registered on the NQF at the required standard.

**Qualification** means a registered national qualification.

**Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)** means the principles and processes through which the prior knowledge and skills of a person are made visible, mediated and assessed for the purposes of alternative access and admission, recognition and certification, or further learning and development.

**Registered** means a qualification registered on the National Qualifications Framework by SAQA in

terms of *section 13(1)(h) of the National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008 (Act No. 67 of 2008)*.

**Outcomes** means the contextually demonstrated end-products of specific learning processes, which include knowledge, skills and values. Outcomes could be generic or specific.

**South African Qualifications Authority** means the statutory authority established in terms of the SAQA Act (Act No. 58 of 1995) and continuing in terms of the NQF Act (Act No. 67 of 2008), which oversees the further development and implementation of the NQF, the achievement of the objectives of the NQF, and the co-ordination of the three Sub-frameworks.

**Standard** means a statement of the level of proficiency or attainment required.

**Umalusi** means the Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training established in terms of Section 4 of the *General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act No.58 of 2001*.

## 2. Acronyms and Abbreviations

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| CHE      | Council on Higher Education   |
| CAT      | Credit Accumulation and Transfer  |
| DBE      | Department of Basic Education   |
| DHET     | Department of Higher Education and Training                             |
| ELO      | Exit-Level Outcome  |
| GENFETQA | General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance            |
| GFETQSF  | General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework |
| FET      | Further Education and Training  |
| NC(V)    | National Certificate (Vocational)                                       |
| NQF      | National Qualifications Framework                                       |
| NLRD     | National Learners' Records Database                                     |

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| QC    | Quality Council                                 |
| QCTO  | Quality Council for Trades and Occupations      |
| QRG   | Qualifications Reference Group                  |
| QSC   | Qualifications Standards Committee              |
| RPL   | Recognition of Prior Learning                   |
| SAQA  | South African Qualifications Authority          |
| SEIAS | Social and Economic Impact Assessment System    |
| TVET  | Technical and Vocational Education and Training |
| USAf  | Universities South Africa                       |

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## CHAPTER 2

### 3. Legislative context

- (1) In 2001 Umalusi, the Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training was mandated by Parliament, in its founding Act, the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance (GENFETQA) Act, [Act No. 58 of 2001], as amended, as the quality assurance body for Levels 1 – 4 of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). In terms of the 2008 amendment of the GENFETQA Act, and further explicated in Council policy, Umalusi's responsibilities are identified as the development and management of a Sub-framework of qualifications, quality assurance of assessment (both internal and external) at exit points, certification of learner achievements, the accreditation of private assessment bodies and the monitoring of public assessment bodies, as well as the quality assurance of education institutions that offer qualifications on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework (GFETQSF).
  
- (2) The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act [Act No. 67 of 2008], constituted Umalusi as the Quality Council for GFETQSF, as provided for in the GENFETQA Act. Umalusi now serves as one of three Quality Councils (QCs), alongside the Council on Higher Education (CHE) and the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) and is required to collaborate with the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) and the other QCs. In terms of Section 27 (a)-(k) of the NQF Act, each QC is responsible for the development and management of its Sub-framework.

### 4. Legislative and regulatory framework

- (1) This policy framework must be read in conjunction with the following legislation:
  - (a) *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*
  - (b) *The National Education Policy Act, [Act no 27 of 1999]*
  - (c) *The National Qualifications Framework, Act [Act No. 67 of 2008], as amended*
  - (d) *The General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, [Act No. 58 of 2001], as amended.*

- (e) *Skills Development Act [Act No. 97 of 1998].*
- (f) *Continuing Education and Training Act [Act No. 16 of 2006].*
- (g) *The South African Schools Act [Act No. 84 of 1996].*
- (h) *Higher Education Act [Act No. 101 of 1997], as amended.*

- (2) In addition to the various Acts already cited, this policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- (a) *Ministerial Articulation Policy for the Post-School Education and Training System of South Africa*
- (b) *National Policy and Criteria for Designing and Implementing Assessment for NQF Qualifications and Part-Qualifications and Professional Designations in South Africa*
- (c) *National Policy and Criteria for the Implementation of Recognition of Prior Learning [as amended, 2018]*
- (d) *SAQA Policy for Credit Accumulation and Transfer within the National Qualifications Framework*
- (e) *SAQA Policy and Criteria for the Registration of Qualifications and Part-qualifications on the NQF [as amended, 2020]*
- (f) *Level Descriptors for the South African National Qualifications Framework*
- (g) *The Policy for the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework [2014]*
- (h) *Policy pertaining to standards, standard setting and quality assurance of qualifications on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework*
- (i) Any other relevant policies and directives issued by Umalusi Council.

## 5. Purpose

- (1) This policy provides direction to Umalusi and its stakeholders in respect of the responsibilities associated with the development, registration and publication of

qualifications for the GFETQSF. This is in keeping with Umalusi mandate to ensure the development of qualifications for its Sub-framework as laid out in Section 27(h) of the NQF Act.

- (2) This policy addresses responsibilities associated with the development of new, and the review of existing qualifications and their associated curricula for the GFETQSF.

## **6. Objective**

- (1) The objective of this policy is to determine the criteria for the development, registration and publication of qualifications on the GFETQSF, taking into account the relevant legislation, policy and criteria as contemplated in the NQF Act.

## **7. Scope and application**

- (1) This policy applies to Umalusi, the Department of Basic Education, the Department of Higher Education and Training, the SAQA, the CHE and the QCTO, assessment bodies, institutions that are accredited and those seeking accreditation, and other stakeholders with an interest in qualifications in the GFETQSF context.

**CHAPTER 3****8. Development of qualifications**

- (1) In accordance with the requirements laid out in the *Policy for the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework*, Umalusi oversees and quality-assures the development of qualifications and recommends qualifications to the SAQA for registration on the NQF.
- (2) New qualifications developed for the GFETQSF need to align with one of four levels of the NQF (viz. Levels 1 – 4) and must be named in accordance with the qualification type associated with the NQF Level:  
  
Level 4: National Certificate  
Level 3: Intermediate Certificate  
Level 2: Elementary Certificate  
Level 1: General Certificate
- (3) The appropriate NQF Level of the qualification is determined by:
  - (a) Using the NQF Level Descriptors published by the SAQA,
  - (b) Umalusi's own standard-setting requirements, which include an analysis of the qualification structure and design, and
  - (c) other qualification-related documents such as curricula and assessment requirements.
- (4) A new qualification is one which has not existed before, *or* one which has, during a review process, been significantly changed in terms of its purpose and/or target group and/or institutional location and design.
- (5) The qualification under development needs to be a new variant at the NQF Level. In other words, the proposed qualification needs to have a purpose distinct from the variants already on the Sub-framework, and that distinctiveness may well be reflected in a novel qualification structure.

## 9. Criteria for the development of qualifications

- (1) The Departments of Education accredited private assessment bodies and private education providers are eligible to propose the development of new qualifications for the GFETQSF. The party proposing the development of a new qualification must submit a written proposal to the Chair of Umalusi Council for consideration. The submission must include at least the following information:
  - (a) Details of the proposer and those persons selected by it to assist with the development of the proposed new qualification.
  - (b) The unique purpose to be served by the new qualification, and a motivation for its establishment in the form of a completed feasibility study.
  - (c) The feasibility study is required to provide information on at least the following:
    - i. Justifiable need for the development of a new qualification
    - ii. Mapping that has been done against existing qualifications on the GFETQSF, and if need be, on both/ either of the other Higher Education Qualifications Sub-framework [HEQSF] and the Occupational Qualifications Sub-framework [OQSF], which will provide information on the purpose of the proposed qualification; how the purpose of the proposed qualification differs from those of existing qualifications, and how the proposed qualification would articulate with other qualifications on the GFETQSF (and/or qualifications in the HEQSF and the OQSF), and its relationship to existing qualifications on the GFETQSF;
    - iii. The number of learners who are likely to enroll for the qualification annually and their institutional location (schools, colleges, community learning centres, etc.)
    - iv. A draft implementation plan for the qualification proposed, and
    - v. If the proposer is not a Department of Education, the accredited assessment body that will assess the proposed qualification.
- (2) In addition, the proposer is required to submit the qualification of detailed information of the following:
  - (a) The qualification title
  - (b) NQF level of the qualification (the SAQA published NQF Level Descriptors must be used to determine the level of the qualification)



- (c) Its credits (the credits must be calculated on the basis of one (1) credit is equal to ten (10) notional hours of learning)
  - (d) The Sub-framework into which it fits
  - (e) Overview of the qualification
  - (f) The purpose of the qualification
  - (g) The rationale (need) for the qualification
  - (h) Target group identity
  - (i) Duration, general enrolment and registration requirements
  - (j) Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
  - (k) Exit level outcomes (ELOs) and Associated Assessment Criteria (AACs)
  - (l) Specific post qualification articulation as approved by the Quality Council overseeing the NQF Sub-framework in which the post-qualifications lie
  - (m) Qualification structure and design
  - (n) Qualification requirements, including rules of combination and provisos
  - (o) Concessions
  - (p) Promotion and certification requirements
  - (q) Curriculum review
  - (r) Assessment structure
  - (s) Recording and reporting
  - (t) Rating scale
  - (u) Minimum accreditation requirements for offering the qualification
  - (v) Critical Cross-Field Outcomes
  - (w) Transitional arrangements
  - (x) A statement indicating international comparability.
- (3) Umalusi Council approves or rejects qualifications for recommendation to the SAQA for registration in line with the *SAQA Policy and Criteria for the registration of qualifications and part-qualifications on the NQF*. Umalusi's approval of a qualification is dependent on the qualification providing an educational opportunity distinct from those provided by existing qualifications on the GFETQSF. Such a distinction should be

evident from the purpose, structure and design of the qualification and the curricula associated with the qualification.

- (4) In fulfilling its mandate in respect of the development and maintenance of the GFETQSF, Council is required to advise the relevant Minister(s) of Education of its intention to amend the GFETQSF by introducing a new qualification, and/or its intention no longer to quality assure an existing qualification when Umalusi considers the qualification to be too poorly served by the assessment body/-ies.
- (5) Qualifications included on the GFETQSF will have an inception date, which will coincide with the date that the qualification is placed on the NQF by being included in the SAQA's National Learners' Records Database (NLRD). The inception date of the qualification precedes the implementation date.
- (6) Qualifications placed on the GFETQSF will not have an expiry date unless transitional arrangements for the cessation of a qualification have been determined.
- (7) Even qualifications which have ceased to be offered remain on the GFETQSF as a part of the historical record, since the value of the qualification remains even if the qualification is no longer offered.
- (8) In order to advise and assist the process of qualification development, Umalusi appoints a Qualifications Reference Group (QRG) under the auspices of the Qualifications Standards Committee (QSC), a committee of the Umalusi Council that advises Council with respect to the development and maintenance of the GFETQSF. Such a reference group will be appointed taking into consideration both the expertise of the members and the need for a wide range of possible stakeholder representation in the group.
- (9) Qualifications proposed by bodies other than the Departments of Education for inclusion on the GFETQSF must be submitted in accordance with the requirements laid down in this policy. These requirements will form the basis for the appraisal of the qualification being submitted.
- (10) The Ministers of Education provide for norms and standards for education offered in South Africa and could therefore direct or initiate the development of a new qualification or introduction of a new curriculum in the education system as deemed necessary. The proposal for the introduction of new qualification or curriculum must

always be done in consultation with Umalusi and follow the prescribed criteria outlined in this policy.

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**CHAPTER 4****10. Criteria for the registration of qualifications on the NQF**

- (1) In terms of Section 13 (1) h (ii) of the NQF Act, the registration of qualifications on the Sub-frameworks of the NQF is a SAQA function, and to that end the Quality Councils cooperate in the formulation of the policy and criteria for the registration of qualifications as required.
- (2) The purpose of registering a qualification serves as a formal recognition on the NQF of South Africa.
- (3) Qualifications recommended to the SAQA for registration are required to comply with the *SAQA Policy and Criteria for the registration of qualifications and part-qualifications on the National Qualifications Framework*, and the requirements of the *Policy for the General and Further and Training Qualifications Sub-framework*.
- (4) Council must consider that one of the requirements of the NQF is that the qualifications registered on the NQF will be subject to the quality assurance processes of the relevant Quality Council.
- (5) All qualifications on the GFETQSF are audited and reviewed every three (3) years for re-registration with the SAQA on the NQF to ensure their uptake and currency.
- (6) A qualification cannot be offered until it is registered on the NQF.

**11. Criteria for the recommendation of qualifications for registration to SAQA**

- (1) In approving the proposed qualification for registration on the NQF, Umalusi must consider whether the qualification fulfills the requirements and criteria established for qualifications on the GFETQSF, as laid out in this policy.
- (2) In approving a qualification for registration, Council must satisfy itself that:

- (a) Umalusi has consulted widely before submitting a qualification for approval for registration;
  - (b) The qualification conforms to the requirements of this policy, and Chapter 3 (9)(2) in particular;
  - (c) The qualification is necessary for and complementary to the overall functioning of the national education and training system;
  - (d) The qualification does not have the potential to prejudice the value of existing registered qualifications;
  - (e) Its articulation with other qualifications, within and across the NQF Sub-frameworks, has been identified and established in principle;
  - (f) The qualification meets or exceeds the legislated minimum standards for comparable qualifications on the Sub-framework;
  - (g) The qualification will be offered in public and/or accredited private education institutions and assessed by a recognized assessment body/ies.
  - (h) The qualification is sustainable, flexible and caters for diverse modes of delivery.
- (3) Council is not obliged to recommend a proposed qualification as additional to the existing qualifications registered on the Sub-framework if, in its judgement, the registration of such a qualification has the potential to impact negatively on the existing qualifications it quality assures and certifies.
- (4) After Umalusi approval of a qualification, the qualification is:
- (a) submitted to the SEIAS for vetting and compliance,
  - (b) gazetted for public comment,
  - (c) submitted to the legal services of the relevant Department of Education or the proposer to scrutinise the policy for constitutionality, legality and conflict with existing legislation,
  - (d) submitted as advice to the relevant Minister and
  - (e) recommended to the SAQA for registration on the NQF.
- (5) Where a qualification approved by Council is required to have effect in law, Umalusi advises the relevant Minister that it has approved the qualification. Once approved, the qualification is enacted through a government gazette as national policy.

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**CHAPTER 5****12. Criteria for inclusion of qualifications on the GFETQSF**

- (1) Umalusi must consider qualifications submitted to it for possible inclusion on the Sub-framework.
- (2) Council is required to consider the request for approval of a new qualification, the fairness of the processes of evaluation and recommendations of the QSC, and then decide whether the request of the proposed qualification is:
  - (a) in the interests of the education system as a whole, and does not have the potential to devalue existing qualifications or contribute to the proliferation of qualifications on the GFETQSF,
  - (b) in the interests of a group or groups of learners whose needs are not serviced by existing qualifications and
  - (c) designed to meet the specific needs of the sector for which it is established.
- (3) Any qualification submitted to Umalusi for inclusion on the GFETQSF must conform to the requirements expressed in the *Policy for the GFETQSF*, and further explicated in this policy.
- (4) The submission of a request for the inclusion of a qualification is undertaken on the understanding that one of the requirements of the NQF Act, set out in section 27 (h) (i)-(iii), is that the Quality Council is required to ensure that such quality assurance as is necessary for the Sub-framework is undertaken.
- (5) Should the qualification so submitted be considered as potentially in accordance with the requirements set out in this policy, the proposer may need to demonstrate, at their cost and to the satisfaction of Umalusi, that:

- (a) The qualification meets or exceeds the legislated minimum standards of a qualification (or qualifications) to be regarded as comparable, and
  - (b) Articulation relationships, as set out in the *Ministerial Policy on Articulation*, have been (or are being) established, for example, through negotiation with Universities South Africa (USAf) and/or the relevant QC.
- (6) The proposer of such a qualification would need to be willing to work with (or establish) an accredited assessment body capable of offering assessment in accordance with Umalusi's quality assurance expectations and the necessary directives, guidelines and requirements that would need to be developed for the proposed qualification, and any other relevant policies.
- (7) The proposer would also need to be able to identify or establish accredited education institutions prepared to offer the qualification.
- (8) Should the qualification and its supporting documents not fulfill the necessary criteria, the qualification may be returned to the proposer for amendment or rejected.
- (9) The costs of considering a qualification for inclusion on the Sub-framework shall be borne by the proposer. Council annually determines tariffs based on the processes required for this work.

### 13. Review process

- (1) Should Council decide that a qualification presented for its consideration should not be included on the Sub-framework, it informs the proposer within thirty (30) calendar days of its decision.
- (2) The proposer, in turn, has thirty (30) days in which to request for a review in writing to Umalusi Council.
- (3) Council will submit the request for a review to the relevant structures for adjudication and pronounce on the outcome.
- (4) The Council's decision will be regarded as final.

**14. Criteria for the publication of qualifications on the National Qualifications Framework**

- (1) The publication of qualifications on the NQF is recognized as a SAQA function and is governed by the SAQA's *Policy and Criteria for registration of qualifications and part-qualifications on the NQF*. Quality Councils are led by, and collaborate with the SAQA in this qualification registration and publication process.
- (2) The purpose of publication serves as public acknowledgement of the acceptance of a qualification as an integral part of the NQF.
- (3) Once the qualification is registered by the SAQA, the qualification will be published on the SAQA website as part of the NQF and on the Umalusi website.
- (4) A qualification registered on the NQF is a national qualification and can be offered by anyone with the right credentials in accordance with applicable legislation, policies and directives.
- (5) Umalusi is the custodian of all qualifications on the GFETQSF; hence, no qualification may be amended or terminated without Umalusi's recommendation.



**CHAPTER 6****15. Criteria for introducing a new subject within a qualification and reviewing existing curriculum for qualifications on the GFETQSF**

- (1) All qualifications on the GFETQSF are specified at the level of a curriculum for the subjects within each qualification. The design specifications of the qualification, as well as the quality of its supporting curriculum, and the nature of its assessment (site-based assessment and examinations) provide insight into the standard of education required.
- (2) The development of a new qualification for consideration by Umalusi must be followed by the development of its underpinning curricula.
- (3) A Department of Education (DBE or DHET) or any assessment body or organization or member of the public, may propose the introduction of a new subject or a review of an existing subject for a qualification on the GFETQSF.
- (4) The proposer of a new subject must apply to Umalusi in writing, to introduce a new subject or to review an existing subject. The development of a new curriculum for an existing qualification may occur if there is a need to include another subject into the national curriculum.
- (5) The proposer shall provide a motivation for its proposal in the form of a completed feasibility study. The motivation must include the level and credit and its impact on the credits of the qualification. Consideration should be made on its impact on the Exit Level Outcomes (ELOs) and Associated Assessment Criteria (AACs).
- (6) The feasibility study is required to provide information on at least the following:
  - (a) Justifiable need for the development of a new curriculum or review of an existing curriculum.
  - (b) The gap that the new curriculum or the revised curriculum will fill in the system.
  - (c) A mapping that has been done against existing curricula (on the sub- framework, and if need be, on both/ either of the other two sub- frameworks), which will provide information on;

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- i. the purpose of the proposed curriculum,
  - ii. how the purpose of the proposed curriculum differs from those of existing curricula,
  - iii. fitness for purpose and the relevance of the proposed curriculum in relation to the envisaged learner group,
  - iv. how the curriculum will articulate with other qualifications on the GFETQSF and/or the QCTO and CHE , and its relationship to existing curricula on the Sub-framework,
  - v. the reasons existing curricula cannot fulfil the purpose of the proposed curriculum.
- (d) The type of education institution that is envisaged to provide the curriculum,
- (e) The number of learners that are likely to take the curriculum annually, and their institutional location (schools/colleges/ community learning centres)
- (f) A draft comprehensive and coherent implementation plan for the proposed curriculum
- (g) If the proposer is not one of the Departments of Education, the assessment body that will assess the proposed curriculum must be identified.
- (7) Umalusi will evaluate the proposal and inform the proposer, within six months, of the acceptance or rejection of the proposal to introduce a curriculum for a new subject or to review an existing subject underpinning a qualification on the GFETQSF.
- (8) Should the proposal be accepted, the proposer will be advised to proceed with the development of the proposed curriculum or with the review of existing one.
- (9) Umalusi will give guidance to curriculum developers or reviewers on curriculum dimensions to be considered during the evaluation process.

**16. Roles and responsibilities associated with the introduction of a new curriculum or a review of an existing curriculum**

**(1) Proposer's responsibilities**

- (a) The proposer takes responsibility for submitting the intended curriculum documents to Umalusi for appraisal in line with this policy and its criteria. Umalusi may request additional documents where needed.
- (b) The proposer accepts financial responsibility for the appraisal of the curriculum.
- (c) Where recommendations for strengthening the curriculum are needed, it is the responsibility of the proposer to resubmit the curriculum with necessary refinements required.
- (d) The evaluation process for the refined aspects will fall outside the eighteen (18) month period referred to in **Section (2)(d)** below.
- (e) It is the responsibility of the proposer to ensure that the curriculum is not implemented until the appraisal process has been completed and the Minister responsible has gazetted it. The gazette will include the implementation date.

**(2) Umalusi's responsibilities**

- (a) Umalusi is responsible for informing the proposer, in writing, within six (6) months, of the acceptance or rejection of the proposal to introduce a new subject.
- (b) In the event that the proposal is rejected, Umalusi must provide reasons for the rejection.
- (c) In the event that the proposal is accepted, Umalusi's response must include the financial implications of the intended appraisal.
- (d) On a written acceptance of the financial implications by the proposer, and submission of curriculum documents, Umalusi must complete the appraisal within eighteen (18) months.

(e) Umalusi must submit the curriculum to the relevant Minister as advice.

**(3) The Minister's responsibilities**

(a) The relevant Minister determines the implementation date.

(b) The relevant Minister will regulate the new curriculum through a gazette.

**17. Short Title**

This Policy may be cited as the *Policy and Criteria for the development, registration and publication of qualifications for the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework* and will commence on the day of its promulgation in the Government Gazette.

## Annexure A

### Criteria for the development and format of qualifications registered on the General and Further Education Training Qualifications Sub-framework

#### 1) *The title of the qualification*

The qualification has a title which accords with the qualification type at the level on which the qualification is to be registered. So, for example, a qualification to be registered at Level 1 on the Sub-framework will be a General Certificate, while one on Level 4 will be named a National Certificate. (It should be noted, however, that there are some historical anomalies in the naming conventions: the NC(V) Levels 2 and 3 are cases in point. These names are recognized as not conforming, but have been allowed to remain.)

- *Is the proposed qualification named in accordance with the qualification type for the level at which it is to be registered?*
- *Is the proposed name distinctive, and therefore not to be confused with other qualifications on the Sub-framework?*

#### 2) *The NQF Level of the qualification on the Sub-framework*

The level of the qualification is informed by the level descriptors.

The qualification type selected for the development of the qualification determines its level. Qualifications submitted for consideration for inclusion on the Sub-framework must, by law, conform to the qualification type identified at that level for the particular Sub-framework.

The level on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework at which the qualification will be located is determined by establishing (or investigating) its standing relative to other qualifications on the Sub-framework at the NQF Level in question. An explanation should be provided for the location of the qualification at the level where it is (to be) registered. Thus, while the position of the qualification on a specific NQF Level is determined in part with reference to the level descriptors developed by the SAQA, it is primarily established with reference to Umalusi's own quality assurance requirements.

- *From the information available, does the qualification accord with the requirements of the qualification type associated with the identified level on the Sub-framework?*
- *Is the qualification policy accompanied by an account of the relationship to existing qualifications at the same NQF Level which demonstrates its comparability to the other qualifications in terms of the NQF Level, curriculum- and assessment requirements?*

### **3) The number of credits**

All qualifications registered on the Sub-framework have a minimum of 120 credits, but may be registered with more than 120 credits. SAQA registers a qualification according to the minimum credits for the qualification type. The rules of combination will indicate the total credits for the qualification.

- *Does the policy identify the number of credits allocated to the qualification and to the component subjects which constitute the qualification? Does the policy conform to the required minimum for a qualification on the Sub-framework?*

### **4) The policy framework into which the qualification fits**

All existing legislative policies that have an effect on the new qualification need to be acknowledged. Both internal Umalusi policies and externally developed policies, for example, by the relevant department of education or an accredited assessment body may have reference.

- *Has the qualification policy identified all the existing legislation that has a bearing on its formulation, implementation, quality assurance and certification?*
- *Has the qualification policy identified and considered the necessary Umalusi policies that have a bearing on the development and delivery of the qualification?*

### 5) *Qualification overview*

This section provides a brief description of the whole qualification in order to locate the subsequent descriptions of aspects of the qualification meaningfully.

- *Has the policy provided a succinct overview of the proposed qualification that illuminates the nature of the qualification in simple language? Is this overview useful in interpreting the subsequent description of the qualification?*

### 6) *The rationale for the qualification*

The qualification policy must provide a rationale for its contribution to the education and training environment, and hence its proposed presence on the Sub-framework. The rationale for the qualification is distinct from its purpose, and is considered in terms of how well the existence of and need for the qualification is motivated. In order to be considered for registration, the qualification needs to be able to serve sufficient learners to be sustainable. A qualification for small numbers of learners is not able to support the costs associated with quality assuring, assessing and certifying the qualification, and cannot therefore be considered for approval.

- *Does the rationale offered for the proposed qualification identify its role as distinctive in the education and training system?*
- *Does the rationale motivate for a long term, sustainable role for the qualification, one that fulfils a specific national need?*
- *Does the motivation for the presence of the proposed qualification argue for servicing a particular need/set of needs and/or a particular group of learners not serviced otherwise?*
- *Is the rationale serviced by the structure and design of the proposed qualification?*

### 7) *The stated qualification purpose*

The stated purpose of the qualification is explained in terms of what its intent is in respect of learner achievement. The purpose makes reference to the highest level outcomes envisaged for successful achievement of the qualification as a whole. The purpose is evaluated in terms of its description of what possible career and

employment opportunities may become available on successful completion of the qualification, as well as its indication of the prospects of a candidate who has successfully completed the qualification in terms of progressing to further education or higher education. The high level outcomes will influence the structure and design of the qualification, guiding the combinations and choices of subjects on offer in the particular qualification.

- *Is the purpose for the proposed qualification identifiably different from that of other qualifications on the Sub-framework? (Qualifications that serve an almost identical function to existing qualifications on the Sub-framework, and which may compete with existing national qualifications, are regarded as problematic.)*
- *Is the purpose for the qualification in keeping with the nature of the qualifications registered on the Sub-framework?*
- *Is the purpose of the qualification supported by its structure and design?*

#### **8) The Exit Level Outcomes and Associated Assessment Criteria**

The Exit Level Outcomes (ELOs) and the Associated Assessment Criteria (AAC) express the intent which informs the teaching, learning and assessment for all the constituent elements of the qualification. They represent, in generic form, the capacities, skills and competencies to be developed and acquired by successful candidates in the course of their learning. The success of a qualification is measured against the extent to which qualifying candidates have internalized and are able to express the capacities expressed in the ELOs and AAC.

This section of the qualification policy also provides an explanation of horizontal and post-qualification articulation possibilities. The articulation possibilities must relate meaningfully to the exit level achievements associated with the qualification being described. The qualification should be designed to facilitate horizontal, vertical and diagonal progression of credits and qualifications into another qualification or related qualification within the Sub-framework and across different Sub-frameworks if learners meet the minimum admission requirements.



- *Do the ELOs and AAC identified for the qualification conform in general terms with the requirements of the relevant NQF level descriptor?*
- *Are the ELOs and AAC linked to competencies and skills to be acquired and comparable with but distinct from those expressed in the qualifications most proximate to the proposed qualifications?*
- *Does the policy identify both horizontal and post-qualification articulation possibilities with corresponding articulation pathway maps?*

#### **9) *The entry requirements and entry articulation options***

The qualification policy must explain and briefly motivate for the minimum learning requirements, if any, that allow candidates to enroll for the qualification. The requirements for prospective candidates must have been considered both in terms of inclusion in, and exclusion from, study. A description of the articulation of other qualifications on the NQF which could provide access—both horizontally and vertically—to the qualification under consideration, is included.

- *Has the proposed qualification identified and explained the minimum entry requirements, where such exist?*
- *Does the policy identify other qualifications on the NQF that would provide access to the new qualification? Are these access routes proposed reasonable, considering the receiving qualification?*

#### **10. *The identity of the particular target group for the qualification***

The policy requires a generic description the identity of the group of candidates for whom this qualification is intended. This identity should be clearly explained in general terms such as typical age cohort, previous educational experience and future educational and/or employment expectations. In addition, for an established qualification, its uptake in the education system is considered in terms of learner numbers that have previously been and /or are currently registered for the qualification.

- *Is the identity of the learner group targeted for the qualification well explained in terms of age, previous educational experience, current learning needs and future prospects?*
- *What other qualifications on the Sub-framework (and the NQF as a whole) are seen also to target this particular learning group? Is there a potential for conflict or confusion as a result of the possible introduction of this new qualification?*

### **11) The duration of the qualification**

In terms of this criterion, the qualification is considered in terms of:

- a. how the minimum and the maximum lengths of time required for completion are compatible with the characteristics of the targeted learner group;
- b. whether the time constraints (if any) may cause a learner not to complete the qualification in the maximum set duration; and finally,
- c. the chances of the target learner group completing the qualification within the determined minimum and maximum duration of the qualification.

- *Is the duration proposed for learning for the qualification reasonable? If not, how should the duration be re-considered?*
- *What purpose is served by the identification of a duration?*

### **12) The qualification structure and design**

In terms of this criterion, the qualification describes how its credit value is assigned to its component parts, and, in doing so, identifies the size and nature of the units of learning/subjects in the qualification itself. These decisions will influence the duration of learning required for the various components which comprise the qualification.

- *Does the qualification structure and design accord with critical other elements in the qualification such as rationale, purpose, ELOs, target group?*
- *Is the structure and design of the qualification laid out in such a way that prevents ambiguity?*
- *Given the structure and design of the qualification, is the time-frame identified a reasonable one?*

### **13) The rules of combination**

The rules of combination identify the subjects/areas of learning that are offered to fulfill the requirements for the qualification. Where applicable, the rules identify which subjects are compulsory to the structure, and which subjects – or combinations of subjects – are a matter of candidate choice. In assessing the usefulness of the new proposed qualification, the categories and rules are evaluated in terms of how useful these are in the qualification design.

- *Are the rules of combination which identify the requirements for the fulfilment of the qualification clearly explained?*
- *Is there clarity about compulsory vs optional subjects? About possible provisos?*

### **14) The certification requirements**

The certification requirements explain the various achievement levels determined for the award of the qualification, and are evaluated in terms of how suitable these requirements are in terms of the stated purpose of the qualification and its ELOs.

- *Does the policy fully explain the conditions under which the qualification is (not) awarded?*
- *Do these certification requirements align well with the purpose of the qualifications and the ELOs identified?*

### **15) Curriculum overview**

This criterion determines whether any curriculum summaries/ frameworks have been submitted with the qualification. Information regarding the curriculum framework, the approach to the development and implementation of the curricula needs to have been developed by the time the qualification is submitted for registration. Such a document is used to guide subsequent curriculum development, the protocols for assessment, advocacy for the qualification, planning for teacher development, support funding proposals and influence the development of the systems required to implement the qualification etc. Such material does not need to be submitted for registration, but needs to have been developed by that time.

- *Has the proposer provided supplementary information regarding the nature of the curricula associated with the subjects identified in the structure and design of the qualification?*
- *Is the information regarding curriculum consonant with the approach Umalusi takes as articulated in Chapter 2 of this policy?*

### **16) Assessment**

This requirement stipulates the mandatory weighting requirements and descriptions for external and internal assessments for the proposed qualification.

In terms of Umalusi requirements, the external component of assessment should comprise no less than 50% of the total marks awarded. The weighting for mandatory practical/workplace assessment requirements for vocational qualifications learning areas/ subjects with a practical component should be specified where applicable. Both summative and formative assessment should make provision for the development of a range of cognitive abilities.

- *Does the qualification fulfil the requirement that at least 50% of the final marks awarded to the candidate are derived from external assessments that are duly monitored by the relevant assessment body and moderated and/or verified by Umalusi?*
- *Is explicit guidance provided that supports a sufficiently demanding assessment, whether this is a written or a practical examination? If not, how should this guidance be strengthened?*
- *Is the assessment guidance available and useful to examiners, moderators and to teachers? Will it be?*

**17) Recording and reporting**

The qualification outlines the requirements around recording and reporting achievement within the qualification.

- *Does the proposed qualification policy provide suitable guidance regarding the recording and reporting of learner performance?*

**18) The minimum accreditation requirements for offering the qualification**

Information pertaining to the requirements for provision of the qualification must be provided. These requirements are evaluated when the educational institution or assessment body undergoes the accreditation process in order to offer the qualification.

- *Have minimum accreditation requirements been identified for the offering of the qualification? Do these synergise with Umalusi's established approach to accreditation. These requirements must especially be spelled out for subjects (and programmes) which have a strong practical element.*

**19) Critical Cross-field Outcomes (CCFOs)**

In terms of this criterion, the development (or evaluation) of the qualification considers the relationship between the CCFOs and the type of knowledge and skills to be mastered by the candidate upon successful completion of the qualification.

- *Is there evidence in the construction of the qualification and in the curriculum overview that the CCFOs have been considered as an element in the development of the qualification?*

**20) Transitional arrangements**

Where required, a qualification policy must indicate the necessary transitional

arrangements, providing information about special measures needed for the implementation of the qualification.

- *Considering the context into which the proposed qualification is to be inserted, has thought been given to the measures needed to introduce and implement the qualification and, if need be to phase out one or more existing qualifications.*

### **21) International Comparability**

- This section of the policy provides information on how the qualification compares with and relates to similar international qualifications offered by accredited institutions or organizations in other parts of the world. This description will not necessarily be an in-depth comparison but provides sufficient information to highlight similarities and differences in approach to qualifications with similar purposes and on comparable levels of learning. The comparability should include a paragraph that summarizes the lessons drawn from the study of the selected countries and a conclusion that states why a particular approach/model should be followed or applied.

- *Has some form of preliminary comparison been attempted during the development of the qualification?*
- *Is this information such that a benchmarking activity could be undertaken once the qualification has been implemented?*

### **22) The proposer of the qualification**

The proposer of the qualification is considered in terms of its interest in the qualification as well as in terms of the assessment body or professional body nominated to conduct and regulate the external assessment for the qualification. The proposer of a qualification may be a department of education, an assessment body or a consortium of interested parties.

- *Has the proposer identified itself fully as well as its interest in the qualification proposed?*
- *Has the proposer identified all the expertise involved in the development of the proposed qualification?*