

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Why providers shouldn't be worried about re-registration of qualifications

29 June 2018

In March 2018, the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Board announced its [decision](#) to re-register qualifications and part-qualifications that are currently registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). Since then, SAQA has received numerous inquiries regarding the implications of this decision on education and training providers.

Firstly, this decision has to be understood within the context of a system which was designed to: 1) broaden the quality of education in South Africa; 2) respond to the diverse needs of South Africans; and 3) create confidence in the quality of education in South Africa. In order to achieve this, registered qualifications need to be relevant for the South African context.

Secondly, the decision is part of a three-year cyclical process wherein SAQA cleans the NQF to get rid of qualifications that have been developed but have not had any learner uptake. This process presents an opportunity for all key players in the education and training system to relook at their qualifications and ensure that they meet the diverse needs of the country.

Thirdly, the decision was made following consultation with the three Quality Councils, that is, the Council on Higher Education (CHE), the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) and the Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training (Umalusi). These Quality Councils are each responsible for their Qualifications Sub-Framework.

In particular, the CHE is responsible for the higher education, while the QCTO is responsible for work-based education and Umalusi is responsible for general and further education.

It is in this context that the SAQA Board made the decision to re-register qualifications and part-qualifications currently registered on the NQF as follows:

- Higher education qualifications will be re-registered for three years from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2021;
- Work-based qualifications will be re-registered for five years from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2023; and
- General and further education qualifications will be re-registered for three years from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2021.

There is however a caveat to the re-registration of these qualifications and part-qualifications, which is that it excludes those qualifications that:

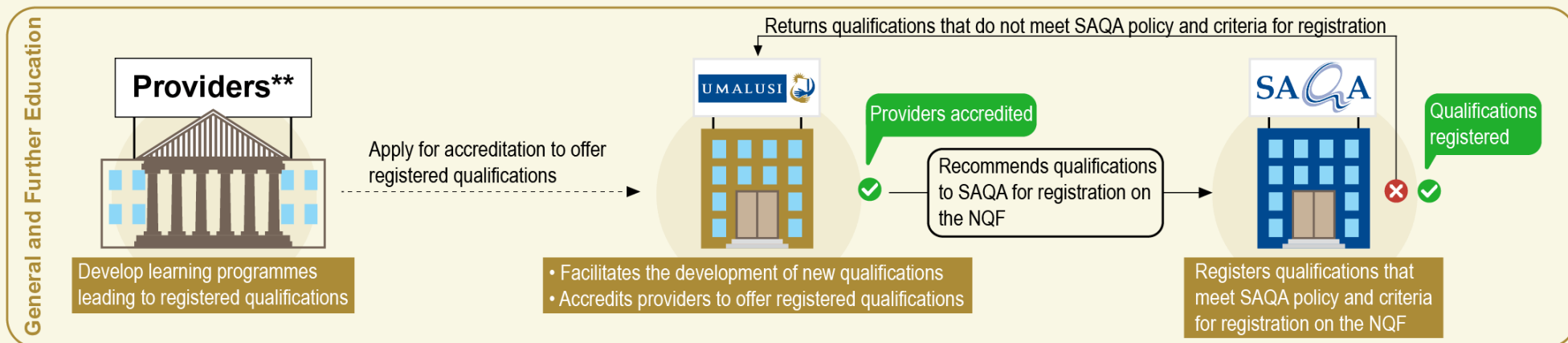
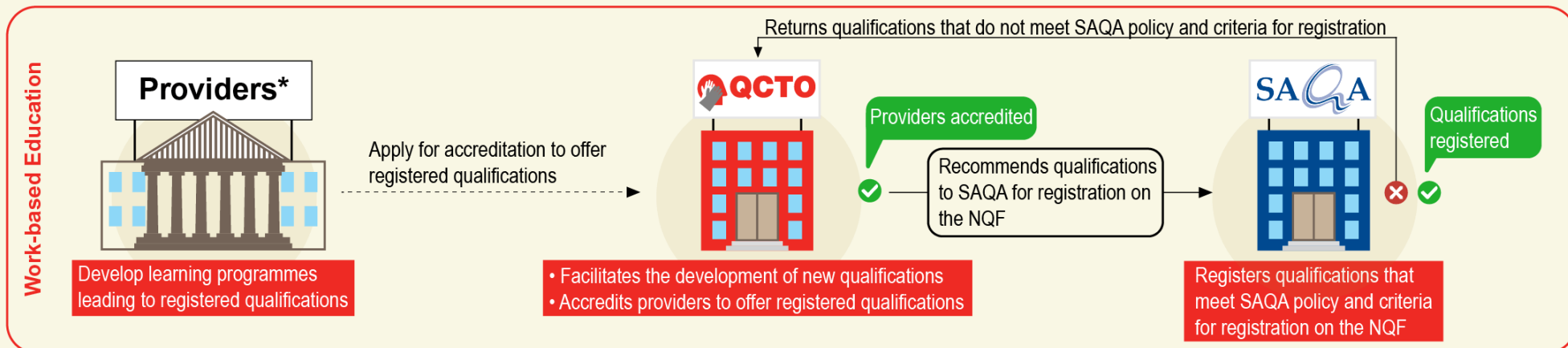
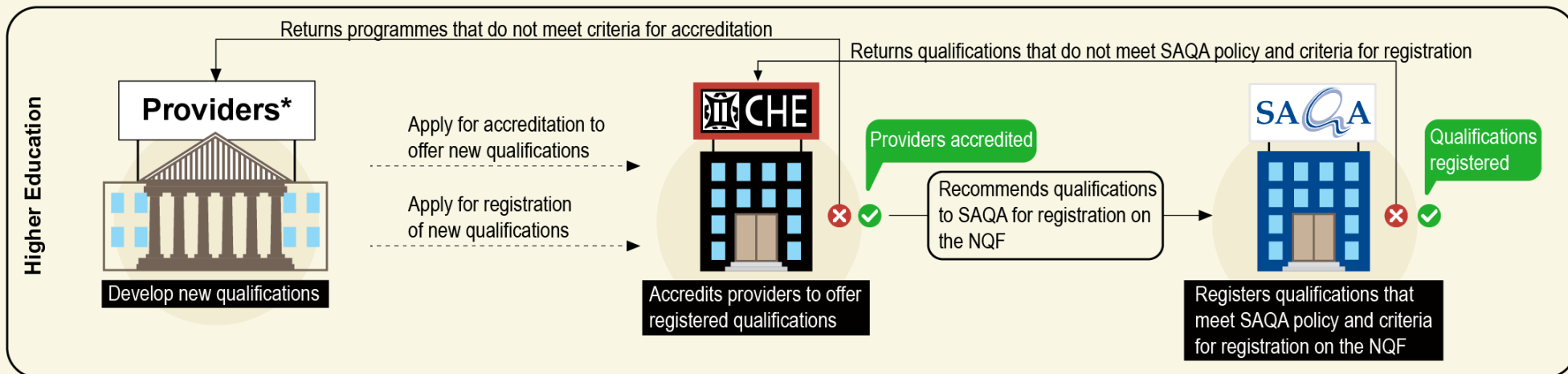
- Do not meet Quality Council requirements for registration;
- Have been reviewed and replaced by new qualifications;
- Are not quality-assured or accredited by the Quality Councils; and
- Do not meet the SAQA requirements as per the *Policy and Criteria for the Registration of Qualifications and Part-qualifications*.

So what does this mean for education and training providers? Well, in practical terms, the decision has already been made so at midnight on 30 June 2018 all the qualifications that meet criteria for re-registration will be rolled over into the new cycle.

All qualifications whose registration ends on 30 June 2018 have a teach-out period, which consists of the last date of enrolment and the last date of achievement. In this case, the last date of enrolment is 30 June 2019 and the last date of achievement is two years after the time it takes to complete the qualification from the last day of enrolment. In other words, the last day of achievement for a three-year degree will be 30 June 2024.

This means that currently enrolled learners will have time to complete their qualifications and providers will also have time to phase out such qualifications and develop new qualifications, which are relevant for the future.

Accreditation of Providers and Registration of Qualifications



*Need to register with DHET

**Independent schools must be registered with provincial departments

In terms of registration of qualifications, the NQF Act is very clear about the roles and responsibilities of various actors. The Quality Councils are the interface between SAQA and providers. SAQA only registers qualifications on the NQF upon recommendation from the Quality Councils as shown on the graphic above.

Our legislation was designed to ensure that SAQA does not deal directly with providers for the simple reason that SAQA cannot be both the referee and the player in the development, quality assurance and registration of qualifications. That Quality Councils recommend qualifications for registration is testament to the separation of powers envisaged in our legislation. This also increases credibility and trust in the quality of our qualifications.

Obviously, the process of registration may span over several months. However, when SAQA receives qualifications that meet all the criteria for registration from the Quality Councils, it registers them within a period of five months or less. In fact, in the 2017/18 financial year, SAQA processed 100% of all qualifications recommended by the Quality Councils. SAQA will always work on improving its processes to ensure that all our qualifications meet clearly defined quality criteria, are of acceptable quality, internationally comparable and competitive.

Issued by: SAQA

Enquiries: Joe Samuels, SAQA CEO

Contact details: 012 431 5001 or 082 833 1271 or jsamuels@saqa.co.za

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Note: The re-registration of qualifications does not affect learners who have already achieved qualifications that will be phased out or do not meet criteria for re-registration.