



SAQA Board Statement of Deliberations 1 of 2019

The South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) Board met on 8 March 2019 and agreed on the strategic direction of SAQA for the period 2020 to 2025. The Board also approved documents for submission to the Minister of Higher Education and Training (Minister: HET). It also approved the Addendum to Recognise Qualifications of Asylum Seekers and Refugees as well as the revised National Policy and Criteria for the Implementation of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). As far as the registration of qualifications and the recognition of professional bodies are concerned, the Board registered 43 qualifications on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and renewed the recognition of one professional body. With regard to financial matters, the Board approved the new accounting policy for non-statutory professional bodies' fees, increased tariffs for verification of qualifications and revised SAQA's budget for 2019/20 to 2021/22. All these decisions have an impact on the entire system for education, training, development and work as outlined below.



SAQA Strategy for 2020 to 2025

The SAQA Board agreed that for the period 2020 to 2025, SAQA would promote registered quality qualifications, coordinate articulation and RPL initiatives, lobby to strengthen and align relevant laws and further simplify the NQF. This will enable the full realisation of the objectives of the NQF. The Board reached these strategic focus areas after analysing the environment and trends in education and training. In doing this, the Board took into consideration the NQF Amendment Bill, the NQF Act Implementation Evaluation and Improvement Plan, the 2017 NQF Impact Study, the White Paper on Post-School Education and Training, the National Plan for Post-School Education and Training, Ministerial Guidelines, the National Development Plan, the Kgalema Motlante High Level Report and various political party manifestos. In order to implement its strategy, the Board outlined the different scenarios SAQA may find itself in and identified what it would do to perform optimally in whatever scenario. Ultimately, the SAQA Board is committed to make its contribution to the alleviation of poverty, inequality and unemployment in South Africa.



Documents for Submission to the Minister: HET

Compliance to the Annual Performance Plans (APP) is an important aspect especially for a public entity like SAQA. As such, the SAQA Board approved a number of documents for submission to the Minister: HET. These documents include the:

- Report on progress made with the Simplification of the NQF Action Plan;
- Report on progress against Ministerial Guidelines to address priorities for the NQF;
- 2017 NQF Impact Study;
- Articulation Action Plan for 2019-2025;
- SAQA's Compliance with Legislation for 2019; and
- External Audit Strategy.

These documents do not only show SAQA as a model statutory body that complies with legislation but also reveal SAQA's contribution to the further development and implementation of the NQF for the benefit of the people.



Addendum to Recognise Qualifications of Asylum Seekers and Refugees

Following a public consultative process, the SAQA Board approved the Addendum to Recognise Qualifications of Asylum Seekers and Refugees. The Addendum will assist in the recognition of qualifications held by refugees and asylum seekers so that they could be considered for further study and employment in South Africa. In doing this, SAQA will consider the relevant South African legislation that protects refugees and asylum seekers, the challenges faced by these individuals, appropriate procedures for recognising their qualifications and the costs involved. After the Board approval, the Addendum was gazetted on 19 March 2019 and is available on the SAQA [website](#).



Revisions to the National Policy and Criteria for the Implementation of RPL

After considering comments from public and private higher education institutions and other interested parties, the SAQA Board approved the Revised National Policy and Criteria for the Implementation of RPL. The revisions aligned the National Policy and Criteria for the Implementation of RPL to the Ministerial RPL Coordination Policy that was gazetted by then Minister: HET, Dr Blade Nzimande, on 31 March 2016. On the one hand, the Ministerial RPL Coordination Policy provides for the co-ordination and funding of RPL, and strengthens the policy environment for the implementation of RPL across the entire system for education, training, development and work. It also clarifies roles of key stakeholders and provides a high-level framework for RPL implementation. On the other hand, the National Policy and Criteria for the Implementation of RPL provides for the implementation of RPL within the context of the NQF Act and positions RPL in relation to the overarching principles and priorities of the NQF in South Africa. Put differently, the Ministerial RPL Coordination Policy elaborates and holds SAQA and the Quality Councils (QCs) accountable to perform their roles in relation to RPL as stated in the NQF Act. It is for this reason that SAQA had to align its policy with the Minister's policy. Similarly, QCs and other institutions must align their RPL policies with the Revised National Policy and Criteria for the Implementation of RPL, which was gazetted on 19 March 2019 and is available on the SAQA [website](#).



Registration of Qualifications on the NQF

The SAQA Board registered 43 new qualifications on the NQF, of which 42 were recommended by the Council on Higher Education to SAQA for registration and one was recommended by the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations. These qualifications were evaluated against the [Policy and Criteria](#) for the Registration of Qualifications and Part-Qualifications on the NQF. Some of the qualifications were registered without changes and others with minor amendments. All 43 qualifications were registered in less than the required 5 months proving that SAQA is taking its targets seriously. These qualifications are available on the SAQA [website](#) and add to the more than 10 000 quality-assured qualifications already registered on the NQF, which should be offered to learners by registered and [accredited](#) providers.



Recognition of Professional Bodies

In line with the [Policy and Criteria](#) for Recognising a Professional Body and Registering a Professional Designation for the Purposes of the NQF Act, the SAQA Board renewed the recognition of one professional body, that is, the Employee Assistance Professionals Association of South Africa and registered its respective professional designations. The Board also approved the title change of one of the Financial Planning Institute of Southern Africa's professional designations from Registered Financial Planner to Registered Financial Practitioner. This title change is aimed at protecting the terms "financial planning" and "financial planner" as the underlying qualification for a Certified Financial Planner is at NQF Level 8 while the underlying qualification for a Registered Financial Planner is at NQF Level 5.



Accounting Policy for Non-Statutory Professional Bodies' Fees

Following the SAQA Board [decision](#) on 9 March 2018 to charge professional bodies cost recovery-related fees for all services rendered as well as the SAQA Board [approval](#) of the recommendations from the Professional Body Fees Task Team on 25 October 2019, the SAQA Board approved the Accounting Policy for Non-Statutory Professional Bodies' Fees. This Accounting Policy applies to non-statutory professional bodies and takes into consideration the different accounting frameworks they use. The fees will be calculated as "a percentage of 0,27% of the non-statutory professional body's total revenue (total income) minus income from donations and sponsorships with a minimum fee of R 10 000 and maximum fee of R 200 000 payable per year."



Tariff Increase for Verification of South African Qualifications

The SAQA Board approved the new tariffs for the verification of South African qualifications and part-qualifications for the 2019/20 financial year. This annual tariff increase is effective from 1 April 2019 and is in line with the Consumer Price Index of 5,4%. These new tariffs are available on the SAQA [website](#).



Budget for 2019/20 to 2021/22

The SAQA Board also approved the revised baseline allocation for the period 2019/20 to 2021/22. The revised allocation adds to the decline in voted funds, which means that SAQA has to rely on self-funding mechanisms for sustainability.

The SAQA Board continued to make decisions that affect the entire system for education, training, development and work. These included mapping the strategic direction of SAQA, developing and reviewing policies on evaluation of foreign qualifications and RPL as well as registering qualifications, recognising professional bodies and verifying South African qualifications. The SAQA Board will continue to provide leadership and guidance as SAQA prepares to implement the amendments to the NQF Act.

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