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APPENDIX 1: INDICATIVE FINDINGS FROM CYCLE 1

a) Impact Indicator-related observations

- Movement in qualification development towards NQF levels four and five is notable.
- Portability of qualifications remains a significant issue to be addressed. Employers were concerned about multiplicity of qualifications and complexity of the system. Providers thought that the qualifications themselves were conducive to portability. The biggest barriers to portability were the continuing divide between education and training and the continued existence of pre-NQF structures.
- Qualifications themselves can do little about redress. The most significant factor in redress is Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), for which there is huge support. Data on RPL uptake is available; numbers are small but growing.
- Employers were positive about the relevance of NQF qualifications, especially Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) and learnerships. Providers were very positive about relevance, citing the usefulness of unit standards in developing learning and assessment tools and the focus on the skills needs of industry.
- Admissions practices and learner support systems have been developing since the introduction of the NQF, although there are differing views on the extent to which there is a link with the NQF.
- There is little learner achievement data available. There are many learners currently in the system who have not yet completed their qualifications. This indicative finding supports the common perception amongst stakeholders that it may be too soon to measure the impact of the NQF.
- Most providers indicated strong support for outcomes-based approaches. While there were some examples of involuntary compliance, others felt that outcome-based approaches had enhanced teaching and learning.
- There is evidence of significant socio-cultural impact on the way people and organisations think and talk about and act upon lifelong learning.

b) General observations

- Support for the NQF remains strong, especially among employers and many providers. It is not yet clear what learner experience is or what their views are, as many are still operating within the old system. Many new qualifications and associated developments such as learnerships are seen positively. There has been a beneficial impact on teaching, learning and assessment practices. Integration of education and training remains problematic. Disparity of esteem continues to be seen as a barrier to portability and access.
- There is a widespread belief that RPL is completely central to the goals of redress and access but that, despite some encouraging examples of good practice, progress is too slow.
- Many respondents make little or no distinction between the NQF and SAQA. This could be taken to mean either that SAQA's effectiveness is significant or that SAQA has too dominant a role in NQF construction.
- There were clear warning signs about a build up of frustrations about the NQF relating to blockages in the system and to the pressures of ongoing systemic change.

APPENDIX 2: FINDINGS INTENDED TO INFORM THE CONDUCT OF FUTURE CYCLES

The findings from Cycle 1 of the NQF Impact Study were:

- Impact Indicators should continue to form the nucleus of the research design.
- The 17 revised Impact Indicators can be used over time to measure the impact of the NQF with minor adjustments during each application.
- The links between Set 4 of the revised Impact Indicators and Impact Indicators 16 and 17 will have to be made more explicit.
- The main point of reference for the Impact Indicators, as well as the Study in general, must remain the five NQF objectives.
- The research design (contextualisation, indicator-based data gathering and the presentation of findings and recommendations in a report format) has been sufficiently piloted to be duplicated with minor improvements in subsequent cycles.
- The continued importance of contextualisation must not be underestimated. A wider selection of references and less reliance on the Study Team Report and Consultative Document will improve future contextualisation.
- The role of SAQA forms an important part of the contextualisation of the Study, but can be broadened to include the roles of other key stakeholders.
- The specification and piloting of research instruments are a priority for the next cycle of the NQF Impact Study.
- The interview schedules used in the first cycle of the Study worked effectively and could be used as the basis for interview specifications for the next cycle.
- Analysis of data on the NLRD should be investigated further to ensure that useful data can be gathered timeously. The role of Critical Cross-Field Outcomes (CCFOs) in qualifications should also be investigated in more detail.
- The baseline study (Cycle 2) should incorporate the use of questionnaire surveys as well as interviews and quantitative data from the NLRD and other sources. The piloting of such questionnaires should be an early priority for the next cycle of the NQF Impact Study.
- Consideration should be given to the length of intervals between studies. Two- to four-year intervals are suggested.
- The Study will also have to consider the methodological implications of measuring impact over time. On the one hand, comparisons are most easily achieved by repeated use of the same Impact Indicators and research instruments. This would argue for constancy of Impact Indicators and this should be the general principle. On the other hand, new issues and factors may emerge and it will be important to ensure that the Impact Study retains relevance.
- Representative sampling must form part of subsequent cycles of the Impact Study.
- Inclusion of a wide range of stakeholders, including providers, employers, learners, unions and government departments, mainly Department of Education (DoE) and Department of Labour (DoL), must be maintained and broadened to include more small-, medium-and micro enterprises (SMMEs) and professional bodies.
- The allocation of 'levels of impact' to each Impact Indicator (Table 4.7) is a first step towards reporting the impact of the NQF, but will need to be refined during the baseline study (Cycle 2).
- Although the first cycle of the Study was conducted by SAQA, the research design allows for an external agency to conduct subsequent cycles. Even so, it is suggested that Cycle 2 (Establishing a baseline against which to measure progress) remains within the SAQA ambit with minimum outsourcing. On the other hand, outsourcing of further cycles (Cycles 3, 4, and so forth) of the Study may improve acceptance of the research results in the wider stakeholder community.

APPENDIX 3: CODES USED DURING QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS

The extent to which qualifications address the education and training needs of learners and the South African society (Q)		
1. Number of qualifications (N)	**Q: N: number**	The interviews may offer limited info on this indicator but it has been included nonetheless
2. Effectiveness of qualifications design (ED)	**Q: ED: access**	Race, gender and disability
	Q: ED: mobility	Between providers and levels
	Q: ED: progression	Particularly recognition of qualifications in the workplace
	Q: ED: fit-for-purpose	Addresses contrextual needs
	Q: ED: increased-employability	Employees with NQF quals are more employable
3. Portability of qualifications (P)	**Q: P: horizontal**	Portability of qualifications across vocational, professional and academic streams
	Q: P: diagonal	Portability of qualifications across streams including change in level
	Q: P: vertical	Portability of qualifications across levels within one stream
	Q: P: awareness	Awareness of portability options
	Q: P: parity-of-esteem	Qualifications offered by different institutions
	Q: P: comparability	NQF qualifications and non-NQF qualifications (e.g. non-aligned training)
	Q: P: credit-transfer	Recognition is given for incomplete qualifications (non-RPL) including the ability to move between institutions
4. Relevance of qualifications (R)	**Q: R: workplace**	Relevance to the workplace and industry
	Q: R: society	Relevance to society in particular - much more general than workplace
	Q: R: availibility	The availability of relevant qualifications
	Q: R: new	Qualifications in new and emerging field of learning
	Q: R: internationality	International comparability of NQF qualifications
	Q: R: skills-shortage	Qualifications (through learnerships and skills programmes)
5. Qualifications uptake and achievement (UA)	**Q: UA: cost-quals**	The cost of completing NQF qualifications
	Q: UA: provider-distribution	Distribution of accredited providers across South Africa including availability and variety
	Q: UA: employees	New and prospective employees having completed NQF qualifications
	Q: UA: learners	Extent in general in which learners in general complete NQF qualifications
6. Integrative approach (IA)	**Q: IA: articulation**	Movement of learners betwẽen vocational and academic streams
	Q: IA: co-operation	Co-operation between formal education and world of work
	Q: IA: value	The comparative value of educational and vocational qualifications
	Q: IA: theory-and-practice	The inclusion of both theory and practice in NQF qualifications
	Q: IA: unification	Extent to which SA has adopted a unified approach - i.e. Integrated
	Q: IA: pathing	Influence of integration on career and learning path

The extent to which the delivery of learning programmes addresses the education and training needs of learners and the South African society (LP)		
7. Equity of access (EA)	**LP: EA: disabilities**	Access of learners (particularly those previously excluded) to NQF qualifications
	LP: EA: gender	
	LP: EA: age	
	LP: EA: race	
	LP: EA: non-traditional-learners	
	LP: EA: admission-requirements	Influence of institutional admission requirements on learner entry
	LP: EA: RPL-availability	Availability of RPL systems and procedures to learners
8. Redress practices (RP)	**LP: RP: credits-through-RPL**	Learners obtain credits towards NQF qualifications through RPL
	LP: RP: access-without-requirements	Learners are granted access to FET and HE institutions whether or not they have a matriculation certificate
	LP: RP: promotion-without-requirements	Employees are promoted whether or not they have a matriculation certificate
	LP: RP: redress-measures	Education and training institutions implement measures to facilitate the redress of past unfair practices
9. Nature of learning programmes (N)	**LP: N: demand**	Demand for learning programmes based on NQF qualifications
	LP: N: redesign	The implementation of the NQF has led to the redesign of courses (to adopt an outcomes-based format)
	LP: N: quality-through-OBA	The quality of learning programmes is improved by using an outcomes-based approach (OBA)
	LP: N: curriculum-development	NQF qualifications enable effective curriculum development
10. Quality of learning and teaching (QLT)	**LP: QLT: learner -needs**	NQF has led to improved learning and teaching practices that address the needs of learners
	LP: QLT: learner -support	New and improved learner support systems have been introduced
	LP: QLT: employer -support	Employers have introduced measures to support employees studying towards NQF qualifications
	LP: QLT: quality -through-OBA	The quality of learning and teaching is improved by using an outcomes-based approach (OBA)
	LP: QLT: responsiveness	Learning and teaching practices are responsive to the needs of the learners
	LP: QLT: professional -development	The professional development of education and training practitioners has received increased attention
11. Assessment practices (AP)	**LP: AP: fairness**	The assessment of learning towards NQF qualifications is fair (unbiased)
	LP: AP: validity	The assessment of learning towards NQF qualifications is valid (measures what it is supposed to measure)
	LP: AP: reliability	The assessment of learning towards NQF qualifications is reliable (dependable and consistent)
	LP: AP: implementability	The assessment of learning towards NQF qualifications can be implemented with/without undue difficulty
	LP: AP: changes	Significant (positive/negative) changes to assessment practices over the past few years
	LP: AP: quality	The quality of assessment practices over time
	LP: AP: workload	Workload associated with the assessment of NQF qualifications
	LP: AP: feedback-and-appeal	Feedback and appeal mechanisms have become more accessible to learners and employees
	LP: AP: cost-assessment	The cost of assessing learning towards NQF qualifications
12. Career and learning pathing (CLP)	**LP: CLP: learner-awareness**	Learners awareness of career opportunities associated with NQF qualifications
	LP: CLP: employers -support	Employers encourage employees to improve their qualifications by providing learning pathways
	LP: CLP: CCFOs	Learning programmes include CCFOs

The extent to which quality assurance arrangements enhance the effectiveness of education and training (QA)		
13. Number of registered assessors and moderators (NAM)	**QA: NAM: assessors**	The interviews may offer limited info on this indicator
14. Number of accredited providers (NAP)	**QA: NAP: providers**	The interviews may offer limited info on this indicator
15. Quality assurance practices (P)	**QA: P: new-learning**	New forms of learning, teaching and assessment developed as a result of the introduction of QA practices
	QA: P: quality	Has the quality assurance improved?
	QA: P: problems	Admin and bureaucratic problems
	QA: P: agreed-standards	Quality assurance ensures that qualifications are offered against agreed standards
	QA: P: provider-quality	Quality assurance practices have improved quality of education and training providers
	QA: P: accreditation	Accreditation as QA measure
	QA: P: standards-setting	Standards-setting as QA measure

The extent to which the NQF has had a wider social, economic and po litical impact in building a lifelong learning culture (SEP)		
16. Organisational, economic and societal benefits (OS)	**SEP: OS: employers-support-LLL**	Employers support LLL
	SEP: OS: providers- support-LLL	Providers support LLL
	SEP: OS: institutional-policies	Changes in institutional policies and practice as a result of the NQF
	SEP: OS: RPL	Overarching comments on RPL
	SEP: OS: hope	Learning pathways offer hope for a better future
	SEP: OS: self-esteem	Achievement of qualifications contributes to self-esteem
	SEP: OS: NQF-awareness	General awareness of NQF and NQF-related issues
17. Contribution to other national strategies (ONS)	**SEP: ONS: HRD**	Awareness and links to the HRD (through the NQF)
	SEP: ONS: unemployment	NQF and a decrease in unemployment
	SEP: ONS: economic-growth	NQF and the development of new economic opportunities
	SEP: ONS: illiteracy	NQF and reducing illiteracy
	SEP: ONS: upskilling	NQF and upskilling of the labour force
	SEP: ONS: lifeskills	Life skills incorporated into qualifications, e.g. HIV/AIDS awareness
	SEP: ONS: regional-collaboration	SADC/African collaboration
	SEP: ONS: employability	Employability and sustainable livelihoods
	SEP: ONS: socio-economic-situations	Enables communities to take control of their socio-eco situations
	SEP: ONS: NSDS	Awareness and links to the NSDS (through the NQF)
	SEP: ONS: SMME	Self-employed/small businesses
	SEP: ONS: Tirisano	Awareness and links to the DoEs Tirisano Strategy (through the NQF)
	SEP: ONS: formal-education	NQF quals have made the formal edu system more relevant to the needs of learners

APPENDIX 4: PROJECT TEAM AND ADVISORY GROUP

The NQF Impact Study Project Team

Ron Tuck (Scotland)

Ron Tuck has been working in the field of education and training qualifications for 29 years. Following a period as a technical college teacher, he joined the Inspectorate in Scotland where he was responsible for professional advice to the Minister of Education on vocational education and training. He was involved in the development in Scotland of the world's first outcomes-based modular qualifications system. As HM Chief Inspector of Schools he led the process of policy development and implementation to integrate vocational and school qualifications with the introduction of the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework, which created a single qualifications framework, and also included higher education. As Chief Executive of the Scottish Qualifications Authority from 1997 to 2000, he led the implementation of the integrated school and vocational qualifications system. He was a member of the Ministerial Study Team that conducted a review of the NQF in South Africa. He is currently involved in supporting NQF developments in Botswana and Turkey.

Ronel Heyns (SAQA)

Ronel Heyns is the head of the Research Unit of SAQA and is based in Pretoria. She is a teacher by profession, with 15 years teaching experience. During that time she taught primary and high school children, as well as adult learners. She also developed courseware and tutor manuals and prior to her joining SAQA in November 2002, was the head of the academic department of the Technical College of South Africa. Since joining SAQA, she has been involved in and responsible for the research and development of policy documents for this organisation, including the most recent publications: *The Criteria and Guidelines for the Implementation of the Recognition of Prior Learning (2004)*, *The Criteria and Guidelines for Short Courses and Skills Programmes (2004)* and *The Guidelines for Integrated Assessment (2005).* She has also published work on quality assurance, including co-authoring a chapter in *Quality in the Classroom* (Heineman), as well as published articles in education journals. In addition, she teaches, on a part time basis at the University of Pretoria, specialising in assessment and quality assurance. Her MEd dealt with finding sustainable mechanisms for the implementation of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in South Africa. She is currently completing her PhD at the University of Pretoria, focusing on understanding an Integrated Framework for education and training in South Africa.

James Keevy (SAQA)

James Keevy has been based in Pretoria at the SAQA Head Office since 2002 and is the Assistant Director: Research. He has been responsible for the research and development of the Education and Training Quality Assurance Body (ETQA) guidelines to support small-, medium- and micro enterprise (SMME) development: *Equitable Accreditation for SMME Providers of Education and Training* (2004) and the bi-annual publication of the *SAQA Bulletin* (a journal published by SAQA to encourage the academic community to contribute to the development of the NQF-discourse). Prior to this he taught high school learners, lectured in Physics at the South African College for Teacher Education and was responsible for managing in-service education and training at UNISA. He has been involved with a UNESCO initiative to develop south-to-south collaboration in education and training between SADC countries (2003-2004). James has a Masters Degree in Education and is currently completing his DEd at UNISA. This investigates the way in which power is exercised in the South African NQF-discourse.

Seamus Needham (SAQA)

Seamus Needham is based at the Southern Regional Office in Cape Town and is a Regional Coordinator: Research and Planning. Prior to this he worked for the National Access Consortium Western Cape and co-produced a research report *Towards a Centre for Extended Learning A feasibility study on public institutions readiness to engage in workplace learning at a regional level*, which was published by Creda Press in 2003. He has been involved in adult education and training since 1993 and has extensive experience of service learning and workplace learning within a South African context.

The NQF Impact Study Advisory Group
Samuel BA Isaacs (SAQA Executive Officer)
Anne Oberholzer (SAQA Deputy Executive Officer)
Shirley Walters (SAQA Chairperson)
Ken Hall (SAQA Member)
Wally Morrow (SAQA Member)
Rooksana Rajab (SAQA Member)
Palesa Tyobeka (SAQA Member)

APPENDIX 5: OVERARCHING ISSUES THAT REQUIRE FURTHER INVESTIGATION

The following issues emerged from Cycle 2 of the NQF Impact Study. Due to a lack of sufficient evidence it was not possible to make substantial findings on each of these. They are nonetheless regarded as important.

1. Turn-around time of the registration of unit standards and qualifications;
2. Possible overlapping unit standards and qualifications;
3. Balance between the need for stringent requirements and the need for capacity building of SMME providers;
4. Uncertainties created by the ongoing review of the NQF as to who is responsible for what;
5. Alignment of short courses to NQF unit standards;
6. Difficulties around the matriculation certificate, particularly with regard to RPL;
7. Misconceptions around skills levy claims;
8. Learners that don't care if they get credits or not they just want the skills; and
9. Quality of registered assessors.

It is suggested that SAQA commissions a series of occasional papers to explore the issues in more detail.

GLOSSARY

Name	Acronym	Description
Education and Training Quality Assurance Bodies	ETQA	These bodies are responsible for monitoring and quality assuring delivery of standards and qualifications registered on the NQF. They also accredit education and training providers.
Human Resources Development strategy	HRD Strategy	This strategy has five strategic objectives covering all aspects of human development so as to improve the quality of life and build South Africa's economy
Impact Indicator		A policy-relevant, quantitative and/or qualitative statistic designed to provide a profile about the current condition, the stability or change, the functioning, and/or the effect of the NQF on the transformation of education and training in South Africa.
National Learners' Records Database	NLRD	SAQA's information management system that captures data, *inter alia* on standard setting, quality assurance and learner records, including all qualifications registered on the NQF.
National Qualifications Framework	NQF	The NQF is a set of principles and guidelines by which records of learner achievements are registered to enable recognition of acquired skills and knowledge. This is an integrated system that encourages lifelong learning. The NQF is premised on five objectives and is structured into eight levels and three bands.
NQF Impact Study		A longitudinal comparative study, commissioned by SAQA, that aims to achieve the effective measurement of the impact of the NQF on the transformation of education and training in South Africa.
National Skills Development Strategy	NSDS	The NSDS seeks to address two priorities: (1) The increase of skills within the country so as to improve productivity and the competitiveness of South Africa's industry, business, commerce and services; (2) The inequalities in our society so as to make it more inclusive and to encourage greater cohesion.
National Standards Body	NSB	SAQA has established 12 NSBs, one for each organising field of the NQF. NSBs are made up of subject and sector experts. The NSBs recommend standards and qualifications to SAQA for registration on the NQF.
Sector Education and Training Authority	SETA	25 SETAs were established by the Minister of Labour to serve a discrete sector of the economy. SETAs are, among other things, responsible to prepare sector skills plans, promote learnerships, quality assure education and training providers and administer the levy grants system.

South African Qualifications Authority	SAQA	Established to implement the NQF, SAQA is a statutory body subject to the joint ministerial authority of the Departments of Education and Labour. The key functions of SAQA are to oversee the development and implementation of the NQF. The three key deliverable areas of SAQA are standards setting (qualifications design), quality assurance and the NLRD.
Standards Generating Body	SGB	Registered bodies responsible for the generation of standards and qualifications in sub-fields, SGBs consist of key education and training stakeholders in the sub-field, drawn from interest groups and specialists.

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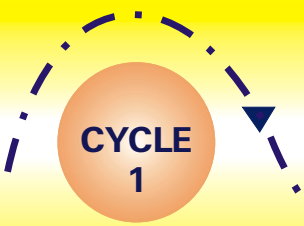
This report is the outcome of the second cycle of the National Qualifications Framework Impact Study commissioned by the South African Qualifications Authority. The Study, envisaged as a long-term continuous exercise, aims to achieve the effective measurement of the impact of the National Qualifications Framework on the transformation of education and training in South Africa.



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STRATEGIC SUPPORT
SAQA POSTNET SUITE 248, PRIVATE BAG X06, WATERKLOOF, 0145
TELEPHONE: 012 431 5000
FAX NUMBER: 012 431 5147
WEBSITE: www.saqa.org.za
EMAIL: saqainfo@saqa.org.za
HELPDESK: 086 010 3188