



SEYCHELLES QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

Policy and Criteria for Recognition and Evaluation of Foreign Qualifications

Revised version 1.0

Approved March 2019

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Glossary of Terms

“Accreditation” means the process followed by a competent recognition authority or quality assurance body to recognise a legally established institution as having the capacity to offer a qualification or part-qualification at the required standard; and/or to approve a learning programme as meeting the required standard.

“Affidavit” means a written and signed of facts made by the qualification holder (deponent), voluntarily and under oath, before a notary public or commissioner for oaths. Unlike a statutory declaration, an affidavit is admitted as evidence by courts in place of a witness appearing in person.

“Appeal” means the formal petitioning, by an appellant, either to the SQA Board against an evaluation/recognition decision by the SQA; or to the Appeal Committee, against an appeal decision taken by the SQA Board.

“Appeal Decision” means the decision taken by the SQA Board or the Appeal Committee, whether to uphold or dismiss an appeal.

“Appellant” means the holder of a foreign qualification evaluated by the SQA, who lodges an appeal against the evaluation decision.

“Awarding body / awarding institution” used interchangeably to mean the body authorised to issue qualifications in the country of origin.

“Certificate of evaluation” means (the official certificate issued by the SQA to certify that the qualification has been duly recognised by the authority, has been pitched at a particular level of the NQF or is equivalent to a particular qualification on the NQF.)

“Certification” means formal recognition of a qualification or part-qualification awarded to a successful learner.

“Certified copy” means a copy of an original qualification certificate or other document that has been certified by an authority, legal entity, or any other authorised body as being a true copy of the original.

“Comparison” means the process which entails comparing foreign qualifications with local and/or other qualifications, considering the structure and outcomes of foreign qualifications and locating them with the NQF.

“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 for the qualification or part-qualification. In the Seychelles educational and training system one credit is equated to ten (10) notional hours of learning.

“Equivalence of qualifications” means a process of formally establishing that two qualifications are of comparable standard or level with a view to access educational and/or employment activities.

“Evaluation” means the process of evaluating and validating qualifications so that the qualifications holder can be considered for further/higher education and/or employment activities.

“Evaluation decision” means an official decision confirming the outcome of an evaluation process

“Evaluation of foreign qualifications” means the process followed by SQA to verify the authenticity of foreign qualifications and to compare foreign qualifications with other (local and international) qualifications registered on the NQF.

“Evaluation outcomes” means the outcome of the evaluation of a foreign qualification conducted in terms of the SQA Policy and Criteria for Recognition and Evaluation of Qualifications within the Seychelles NQF.

“Evaluation process” / “Recognition process” means the assessment of the value of a qualification measured against approved standards and criteria

“Evaluation services” means the services of qualification recognition and evaluation

“Fast track/Fast tracking” means a fee paying qualification evaluation and recognition service in less than the normal processing time

“Foreign qualification” means a qualification that either: (1) forms an intrinsic part of an education and training system other than Seychelles, and is awarded by an institution that is accredited or recognised in that system, in accordance with the relevant laws, policies or

general accepted practice; or (2) meets other specific criteria as determined and published by the SQA.

“Foreign qualification recognition value chain” means the various recognition responsibilities undertaken by key role players in Seychelles, to recognise a foreign qualification for specific purposes.

“Formal learning programme” means a validated or accredited learning programme

“Learning outcomes” means contextually demonstrated end-products of specific learning processes, which include knowledge, skills and values.

“Level” means one of the series of levels of learning achievement, according to which an NQF or other form of education and training system is organised, and to which qualification types are linked. The Seychelles NQF levels are arranged in ascending order from one to ten, contemplated in the SQA Act, 2005 (Act No. 12 of 2005) and NQF Regulations, 2008.

“Level descriptors” means a statement used to describe a hierarchy of learning outcomes in terms of reasoning and problem solving, autonomy and responsibility, knowledge, and degree of complexity of tasks.

“Minister” means the Minister responsible for education.

“National Qualifications Framework (NQF)” means the comprehensive system approved by the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development for the classification, registration, publication and articulation of national qualifications and part-qualifications. (The Seychelles NQF is a single integrated system comprising ten (10) levels and eleven (11) qualification types)

“Notional hours of learning” means the direct contact time of learners with teachers and trainers, as well as non-contact time (specified for a particular programme of learning).

“Professional body” means a body of expert practitioners in an occupational field; this includes an occupational body and statutory council.

“Professional designation” means a title or status conferred by a professional body in recognition of a person’s expertise and/or right to practice in an occupational field.

“Provisional certificate” means an interim certificate of evaluation valid for a specified and limited period

“Qualification award (Award)” means the formal acknowledgement by the relevant authority of achievement or the stated learning outcomes for a qualification.

“Qualifications frameworks” means systems for classification, registration, publication and articulation of quality-assured qualifications.

“Qualification holder” means the person whose qualifications were evaluated by SQA and whose names and date of birth appear on the Certificate of Evaluation.

“Qualifications map” means the most visible part of the National Qualifications Framework that shows the number of levels on the framework, qualification types, the pathways to qualifications, and the notional hours

“Quality assurance” means the processes of ensuring that specified standards or requirements for teaching, learning, education administration, assessment and the recording of achievements have been met.

“Quality assurance body” means a body that is either legally mandated to undertake quality assurance within a national education and training system, or officially recognised within a framework as compliant with agreed quality assurance standards in a geographical area.

“Recognition of a foreign qualification” means the formal acceptance of the appropriateness of a foreign qualification for a specific purpose.

“Recognition agreement” means a formal arrangement, signed between two or more countries at a designated political level, confirming the intent to mutually recognise each other’s qualifications and outlining the agreed mechanisms and responsibilities.

“Recognition decision (regarding a foreign qualification)” means the outcome of the evaluation of a foreign qualification conducted in terms of the SQA Policy and Criteria for Evaluation of Qualifications within the Seychelles NQF, on whether or not to recognise that qualification.

“Revocation” means the withdrawal of a prior decision by the SQA to recognise a foreign qualification and the action taken to invalidate, annul, cancel or rescind an SQA Certificate of Evaluation, to render such certificate to have no legal status and effect.

“Seychelles Qualifications Authority (SQA)” means the statutory authority in terms of SQA Act, 2005 (Act No. 12 of 2005), which oversees the development and implementation of the NQF, the achievement of the objectives of the NQF and the accreditation of local education and training institutions.

“SQA certificate of evaluation” means a certificate issued by the SQA indicating the authenticity of the (foreign) qualification and its location on the NQF.

“Verification of a foreign qualification” means the process followed by the SQA to check the authenticity of a foreign qualification. Verification includes authenticating the status of institutions and the qualifications offered by them, investigating the authenticity of qualification documentation and verifying that the qualification was awarded to the individual in question.

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

CEO	Chief Executive Officer
GOP	Gainful Occupation Permit
NARIC	National Academic Recognition Information Centre
NIN	National Identity Number
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
QA	Quality Assurance
SLA	Seychelles Licensing Authority
SNQF	Seychelles National Qualifications Framework
SQA	Seychelles Qualifications Authority
SCoE	SQA Certificate of Evaluation
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

1.0. Introduction

- 1.1. One of the Seychelles Qualifications Authority's (SQA) mandate under the *Seychelles Qualifications Authority Act, 2005 (Act No. 12 of 2005)*, Part 2, Section 4(1)(f), is “*to evaluate and establish equivalence of foreign qualifications*”. This is an important mandate, in view of the need to facilitate access to higher/tertiary education and training, as well as the need for mobility and progression within education, training and employment systems.
- 1.2. Recognition and evaluation of qualifications, therefore, need to be guided by a clear policy to ensure that evaluation of qualifications is done in a consistent, equitable and transparent manner. Furthermore, after nine (9) years in operation, the ‘Policy Guidelines for Recognition of Foreign Qualifications’ of the SQA needed to be revised for the criteria guiding evaluations to be amended in order to become more inclusive, without compromising the integrity of the SQA’s recognition and evaluation function.
- 1.3. Thus, due to new developments, particularly developments with respect to qualifications recognition and evaluation, the original ‘*Draft Policy Guidelines on Recognition of Foreign Qualifications*’ (2008) has been reviewed and is now being replaced by this **Policy and Criteria for Recognition and Evaluation of Foreign Qualifications (2018)**.
- 1.4. Due to the effects of globalisation, particularly, the increasingly mobile workforce and qualifications which claim to be portable and the need to address issues pertaining to recognition of qualifications, this Policy also provides for the SQA to deliver a NARIC (National Academic Recognition Information Centre) form of service to individuals, educational establishments and other agencies or organisations, both locally and internationally.

2.0. Purpose

- 2.1. This document outlines the principles, criteria and procedures constituting the policy by which the Seychelles Qualifications Authority (SQA) evaluates foreign qualifications within the context of the Seychelles National Qualifications Framework (SNQF).

- 2.2. The purpose of the Policy is to promote consistency and transparency in the evaluation of foreign qualifications towards recognition and mobility and to make the information available to the public.

3.0. Context

- 3.1. The Seychelles Qualifications Authority is a regulatory body established in 2006 under Seychelles Qualifications Authority Act, 2005 (Act No. 12 of 2005) to develop and implement a national qualifications framework. The Seychelles National Qualifications Framework (SNQF) formalises the requirement for both private and public education and training providers throughout the country to deliver quality assured, nationally recognised, consistent standards and qualifications.
- 3.2. The Regulations of the National Qualifications Framework provide the legal basis for the NQF that became operative in January 2009. These define the scope of action for the Authority.
- 3.3. One of the functions of the SQA as stipulated at Part 2, Section 4(1)(f) of its Act of 2005 is '*to evaluate and establish equivalence of foreign qualifications*'. This function is further emphasized as Regulation 10 of The National Qualifications Framework Regulations that states that the Authority shall -

(1) (a) take the overall responsibility for the recognition of foreign qualifications;

(b) develop and implement policy-guidelines for the recognition of foreign qualifications;

(c) inform persons or agencies outside Seychelles of the qualifications offered in the country;

Regulation 10 also stipulates the following:

(2) Application for the recognition of a foreign qualification shall be made in a form and manner as prescribed by the Authority.

(3) The decision of the Authority to recognize a foreign qualification shall be legally binding.

In this regard Section 4(1)(f) of the SQA Act and Regulation 10 of the SNQF require the SQA to provide an evaluation, recognition and advisory service in respect of foreign qualifications.

- 3.4. Just as the SNQF is the recognition instrument for national qualifications, it is also used as the benchmark for recognition and evaluation of foreign qualifications in Seychelles whether held by Seychellois or foreign nationals.
- 3.5. The evaluation and advisory service provided by the SQA forms part of a foreign qualification recognition value chain for specific purposes. The SQA collaborates with other bodies and entities when necessary to recognize and evaluate foreign qualifications. In this context, the foreign qualification recognition responsibilities of key partners include namely:
 - a) Evaluation (verification and comparison) of foreign qualifications to determine authenticity and locate the foreign qualification within the SNQF – the SQA;
 - b) The issuing of visas relating to study and Gainful Occupation Permit (GOP); and addressing the scarce and critical skills needs of the country –Immigration Department;
 - c) Registration and professional licensing – Professional Bodies;
 - d) The issuing of a licence to operate a business – Seychelles Licensing Authority (SLA);
 - e) Employment, promotion and remuneration – Employers;
 - f) Admission to study – Tertiary education institutions.
- 3.6. The SQA issues a Certificate of Evaluation (SCoE) to reflect its recognition decision on the comparability of a foreign qualification and its appropriate location on the SNQF.
- 3.7. The recognition decision on the SCoE does not replace the requirements of each of the contexts of other partners in the value chain (employers, tertiary education institutions, professional bodies, Immigration Department, SLA, etc.).

- 3.8. Globally the recognition of foreign qualifications is guided by a number of legal instruments in particular the *Revised Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Certificates, Diplomas and Degrees and Other Academic Qualifications in Higher Education in African States* (2014) led by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

4.0. Application and Scope

- 4.1. This Policy and Criteria for Recognition and Evaluation of Foreign Qualifications applies to persons, institutions and organizations seeking a determination of the value of a qualification comparable to the SNQF qualification levels.

5.0. Principles

- 5.1. The SQA provides holders of foreign qualifications with a fair and equitable recognition and evaluation service. The SQA's evaluation methodology ensures that evaluation procedures are clear, consistent and transparent.
- 5.2. The SQA recognises the diversity of education traditions and systems of other countries, and is committed to upholding its obligations under relevant international conventions and arrangements.
- 5.3. The SQA recognises that a degree of flexibility may be required in qualifications evaluation in particular circumstances, whilst still ensuring that the core evaluation processes are abided to. It makes provision for foreign workers and learners to have their qualifications evaluated for recognition purposes prior to their arrival in Seychelles as well as for qualification holders to be represented instead of having to report to the SQA personally.
- 5.4. Comparability in the recognition and evaluation process is guided by the SNQF level descriptors and regulations, and international good practice.
- 5.5. All staff involved in qualification recognition and evaluation shall uphold high ethical standards and shall refrain from accepting what would be tantamount to personal benefit to influence the result of evaluation.
- 5.6. In providing the foreign qualifications and advisory service, the SQA considers all SNQF relevant documents, including:

- a) Level Descriptors for the Seychelles National Qualifications Framework;
- b) National Policy for the Implementation of the Recognition of Prior Learning (February 2017).

- 5.7. The SQA values quality information as a cornerstone of effective processes and fair recognition decisions. The SQA takes seriously its responsibility to provide true, clear and accessible information and expects the same of qualification holders and foreign institutions.
- 5.8. The SQA evaluates the foreign qualification underlying a professional designation and not the professional designation itself.
- 5.9. It remains the responsibility of education and training institutions, professional bodies, employers and other relevant organizations to take decisions concerning admission, employment, licensing and registration, and the like as applicable.
- 5.10. In accordance with the rules of administrative justice, a qualification holder has the right to be informed of the rationale underlying a recognition decision and exercise the right to appeal in accordance with the Appeal procedures stated in this Policy and Criteria.
- 5.11. The SQA has a zero tolerance approach to fraudulent and corrupt practices.
- 5.12. The SQA holds the copyright to its Certificate of Evaluation (SCoE).
- 5.13. The SCoE remains the property of the SQA. The SQA reserves the right to revoke the SCoE if any evidence comes to light that compromises its integrity and validity. Revocation takes place in accordance with the revocation procedures of this Policy.
- 5.14. It is illegal to misrepresent a SCoE. Education institutions, professional bodies and employers are encouraged to verify with the SQA the authenticity of the SCoE presented.
- 5.15. Recognition and evaluation of qualifications is a matter between the applicant and the SQA and the SQA shall ensure confidentiality of qualification recognition and evaluation outcomes.

- 5.16. The SQA shall not divulge information about qualification recognition and evaluation outcomes to third parties (other than the applicant if the applicant is not the qualification holder), without the consent in writing of the qualification holder.

6.0. Criteria for Evaluating Foreign Qualifications

- 6.1. To be accepted for evaluation, applications must meet all the requirements as follows:

- a) Applicants must provide the SQA with a complete and credible set of documents to enable evaluation;
- b) Education and training institutions must provide complete and credible qualification documents to qualifying learners; and
- c) The SQA may request the relevant foreign institution to provide additional information to conduct a fair evaluation of a foreign qualification.

- 6.2. Noting that education systems change, the SQA, in the evaluation of a foreign qualification may consider the historical context within which the foreign qualification was issued.

- 6.3. The SQA will recognise a foreign qualification after it has determined that, at the time of enrolment of the qualification holder, all the following verification requirements were met:

- a. The awarding institution was:
 - (i) Recognised, or accredited (whichever term applies) by the relevant authority in the home system/country of origin, in accordance with the relevant laws, policies or generally accepted practice in that country;
 - (ii) Authorised to operate as an education institution in the country of location;
 - (iii) Authorised to offer the qualification;
- b. The qualification was:

- (i) part of the formal education and training system in the country of origin; or
 - (ii) awarded on completion of a programme accredited/recognised by a quality assurance body, that meets the definition herein;
 - c. The qualification holder has successfully completed all the requirements for the award of the qualification as confirmed by the awarding body; and
 - d. The documentation in respect of the foreign qualification submitted to the SQA is authentic, with no evidence of tampering or inconsistency.
- 6.4. A qualification will proceed to the comparison phase of evaluation and qualify for the issuing of a SCoE only if all verification requirements are met.
- 6.5. The foreign qualification will be located within its national system in order to understand how the foreign system compares with the SNQF:
- a. Where the foreign national system is a qualifications framework, the foreign qualifications framework will be compared with the SNQF in order to locate the foreign qualification on the SNQF (SNQF Level and organising field). The recognition decision will be based on learning outcomes, both level descriptors and qualification descriptors;
 - b. Where the country does not have a qualifications framework, the foreign national system will be compared with the SNQF in order to locate the foreign qualification on the SNQF. The recognition decision will be based on qualification descriptors and the comparable level will be inferred; and
 - c. Where the foreign qualification was issued before the introduction of a qualifications framework in the country of origin, the SQA will ascertain whether provision was made for the inclusion of earlier qualifications into the qualifications framework and consider that in the comparison.
- 6.6. Where a qualification is not located within a national system of education and training but meets all the verification criteria outlined in (6.3)(a) and (b) above, the SQA will use appropriate measures to determine comparability in terms of the SNQF.

- 6.7. Where recognition agreements exist between Seychelles and foreign countries, the SQA's recognition decision will reflect the provisions of such agreements consistent with the SNQF.
- 6.8. Policies and criteria governing qualification types in the SNQF shall be considered when conducting comparisons of foreign qualifications with Seychelles qualifications.

7.0. Procedures

Lodging an application

- 7.1. Any person may lodge an application to have their qualification(s) evaluated by the SQA.
- 7.2. An organization or institution may also apply for an evaluation of a qualification by the SQA.
- 7.3. The application must be made on the SQA approved 'Application Form'. In the case of an organization or institution an official letter is acceptable.
- 7.4. The applicant shall complete and deliver the Application Form (or official letter) together with the required documentation and fee payment to the SQA.

Provision of information

- 7.5. The applicant shall submit to the SQA the complete set of documents stipulated by the Authority for the purpose of recognition and evaluation of qualification(s).
- 7.6. It is the applicant's responsibility to provide sufficient information about the qualification(s) gained in a foreign country. It is the SQA's responsibility to make clear in advance what information is required.
- 7.7. The SQA reserves the right to seek more information from third parties if needed, such as further information about the education and qualification system in the country where the qualification was awarded.
- 7.8. Recognition statements are based on the information available to the SQA at the time the evaluation is undertaken.

- 7.9. There may be cases where there is insufficient information available for the SQA to make an informed decision. When such cases arise the SQA will not be in a position to conduct the evaluation.
- 7.10. Information concerning required documents, fees and modes of payment, approximate processing time, outcome of the evaluation and appeal procedures shall be provided by the SQA to the applicants or agencies acting on their behalf.

Consent form for verification purposes

- 7.11. Evaluation of foreign qualifications includes verification of the authenticity of qualification awards.
- 7.12. Verification of the authenticity of qualification awards may require the consent of candidates claiming those awards. Therefore the qualification holder may be required to sign a 'Consent Form' for verification of authenticity of qualification awards (***refer to Annexure 1***).
- 7.13. Where the application is lodged on behalf of the qualification holder, the organization, institution or representative agent shall ensure that the Consent Form is signed by the qualification holder as required by the SQA.

Processing an application

- 7.14. The process of recognition and evaluation begins only after the applicant has submitted all the required documents, the completed Application Form or official letter from the organisation/institution and has paid the relevant fee to the SQA.

Processing timelines

- 7.15. While the SQA aims to complete evaluations within fifteen (15) working days, verification of authenticity brings about a dependency on external responses, which often causes delays. Thus, the entire verification, recognition and evaluation process may take up to sixty (60) working days, depending on the specificity of each case.

- 7.16. A fast track option at additional cost is available for selected countries, as specified by the SQA. The Authority aims to complete Fast Track Evaluations within ten (10) working days after all supporting documents have been submitted.

Documents required

- 7.17. The completed application shall be accompanied by the following documents:

- a) Each original certificate/qualification for which the applicant seeks an evaluation for verification. A copy will be done by the SQA and the original returned to the applicant;
- b) A copy of a qualification shall be accepted only when it is legible and certified by the awarding institution, a diplomatic mission or by a competent/recognition authority of the qualification's country of origin as being a "true copy of the original";
- c) A complete and original academic record/transcript for each qualification issued by the awarding institution;
- d) A copy of the academic record/transcript shall be accepted only when it is legible and certified by the awarding institution, a diplomatic mission or by a competent/recognition authority of the qualification's country of origin as being a "true copy of the original";
- e) Proof of change of name, if applicable;
- f) Identity document: National Identity Card, valid passport or valid driving licence;
- g) Accompanied by certified copies of the following if available:
 - (i) Statement of notional hours of the programme or credits;
 - (ii) A syllabus or programme prescription for each qualification.

- 7.18. If the qualification is in a language other than English or French, a certified translation of the qualification into one of the two languages mentioned must be provided with the original qualification. In addition, a certified translation of all

supporting documents that are in a language other than English or French must be provided with the original documents.

- 7.19. The SQA shall only accept translations certified by an authorised body such as a legal body (attorney, judge and commissioner of oath) or institution awarding the qualification.
- 7.20. In case of loss of original qualification and/or supporting documents, the qualification holder shall produce an official statement from the awarding institution or authorised national or international body to the effect that the qualification was awarded to the person claiming loss of qualification and/or supporting documents.
- 7.21. The above shall be accompanied by payment of a non-refundable fee as specified in the SQA approved schedule of fees.
- 7.22. The SQA shall retain copies of all documents submitted.

Documents not acceptable

- 7.23. The following shall not be accepted as documents for the purpose of qualification recognition and evaluation:
- Illegible documents;
 - Testimonials or attestations;
 - Copies of certified copies;
 - Forged, altered or falsified documents;
 - Certificates of attendance or participation;
 - Certificates of proficiency (if they do not also include formal learning programmes);
 - Letters of commendation;
 - Special awards certificates (e.g. Best performer award);
 - Letters or certificates of work experience.
- 7.24. From time to time the SQA may specify country-specific documentation requirements in relation to applications for recognition and evaluation of qualifications.

Steps in recognition and evaluation

7.25. An evaluation involves the following:

- a) a check of the authenticity and legitimacy of submitted documents;
- b) verification that the qualification has been approved by a recognized quality assurance body in the country of origin;
- c) verification that the issuing institution has a credible and verifiable status conferred by a recognized quality assurance body in the country of origin.

7.26. The SQA shall consider the qualification system of the country of origin of the qualification when making decisions about the level of the qualification. It shall then compare the level descriptors of the country's qualification framework/system against the descriptors of the SNQF to establish comparability of the qualification to a qualification level on the SNQF. The SQA may need to liaise with other national and international competent authorities to obtain information, as required.

7.27. The SQA shall establish that the qualification issuing institution is recognized by the education and training system and/or a recognized quality assurance body in the country of origin. The SQA shall not recognize qualifications issued by non-accredited/non-recognised bodies.

7.28. The programme of study leading to the qualification shall be considered: minimum entry requirements; credit transfer; date of completion of programme and date of issue of the qualification; programme duration (years, notional hours and/or credits).

7.29. Qualification recognition and evaluation shall be based on the qualification submitted and all official and available information. The outcome may be affected by decisions made by the quality assurance/recognition body of the country of origin. The SQA shall not revoke a decision on the level of a qualification taken by a national or international competent body prior to the SQA's establishment. Therefore, where the status of a foreign qualification has already been established by a competent authority prior to the SQA's establishment, the SQA will recognise and evaluate the qualification at the level at which it was set by the competent authority.

- 7.30. In processing an application, the SQA may request additional information and/or documents from the applicant, particularly if the qualification being evaluated specifies prerequisite qualifications or other requirements.
- 7.31. If all requirements are complied with, an evaluation decision shall be made that shall establish:
- a) that the qualification / part qualification submitted is comparable to a type of SNQF qualification at a specified SNQF Level in a specified field of study;
 - b) that the qualification submitted is comparable to a specified volume of SNQF credits at a specified SNQF Level.

8.0. The SQA Certificate of Evaluation

- 8.1. The relevant SQA Officer shall upon completion of an evaluation submit the outcome together with all documentation to the CEO, who shall, if satisfied that all requirements have been complied with, authorise the issue of an SQA Certificate of Evaluation (SCoE).
- 8.2. In the event of a lost SCoE, a duplicate SCoE shall be issued by the SQA to the applicant attesting to the loss or damage of an original version of the SCoE upon receipt of the payment of a fee specified in the SQA fee schedule.
- 8.3. The SQA Certificate of Evaluation (SCoE) shall have a standard format and shall contain the following:
- a) *Personal details about the qualification holder*
 - Name of the qualification holder including previous name(s) if any
 - Date of birth
 - National Identity Number (if applicable)
 - b) *Description of the Qualification or Period of Study*
 - Name and country of awarding institution
 - Original name of the qualification and field of study
 - Date of award

c) *Recognition Level*

- Seychelles NQF Level

d) *Security Features of the SCoE*

- The SQA logo
- Two signatures: one from the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the other from the SQA Principal Officer for Qualifications Evaluation, authenticated by the SQA seal.
- Date of issue of the Certificate
- Reference number

Provisional Certificate of Evaluation

8.4. In the event that a potential certificate holder has successfully completed a programme of study and provided that the awarding institution has issued a formal notification to that effect, stating that the person is waiting for the official award of the qualification (e.g. during a forthcoming Graduation Ceremony) or a provisional certificate and the applicant is in need of an evaluation of the qualification for employment and/or remuneration purposes, the applicant may be issued with a Provisional Certificate of Evaluation (SCoE) subject to the following conditions:

- a) Submission of course/programme transcript, all other required documents and payment of the appropriate fee(s)
- b) The qualification is provisionally evaluated at a level on the SNQF
- c) Submission of the original qualification by a specified date

8.5. The Provisional SCoE shall be valid for twelve months and shall lapse automatically at the end of the twelve months from the date of issue.

9.0. Appeal

Right to appeal

9.1. The appeal process confers on qualification holders the right to appeal against recognition and evaluation decisions of the SQA.

- 9.2. Qualification holders have the right to be informed of the rationale underlying decisions to recognise their qualifications at particular levels, or not to recognise their qualifications.
- 9.3. Qualification holders must personally lodge the appeal, as the right to appeal does not confer on the appellant the right for legal representation at any stage of the appeal process.
- 9.4. The SQA will make information on the procedures for appeals available to all applicants for the recognition/evaluation service, as well as specifically to appellants.

Grounds for appeal against the recognition/evaluation decision

- 9.5. The recognition/evaluation decision can be disputed on one or more of the following grounds:
 - a) The facts underlying the decision not to recognise a qualification are incorrect. These facts can pertain to one or more of the following:
 - (i) Issuing body not recognised as part of the national system in country of origin
 - (ii) Issuing body recognised, but not authorised to offer the qualification or the qualification does not have recognition status in the country of origin
 - (iii) Documents not authentic (inconsistencies identified)
 - (iv) Award not made to individual (as confirmed by the issuing body);
- 9.6. The evidence underlying the level at which a qualification is recognised is incomplete, incorrect or irrelevant; or the interpretation thereof is flawed;
- 9.7. The evaluation principles, criteria and procedures as per this policy appear to have not been applied or have been applied inconsistently;
- 9.8. The evaluation outcome appears to be inconsistent with SCoEs provided for the same qualification.

Lodging an appeal

- 9.9. The appellant (qualification holder) must lodge the appeal in writing within thirty (30) working days of the date of issue of the SQA Certificate of Evaluation, or the letter advising of the non-recognition of the qualification. The SQA Application to Appeal a Qualification Evaluation Form will be used for this purpose (***refer to Annexure 2***).
- 9.10. The appeal must be addressed to the Chairperson of the Board of the SQA.
- 9.11. In addition, the appellant must include the following as part of the appeal submission:
- (i) If the appeal is against the level of recognition, the original SQA Certificate of Evaluation (SCoE) to which the appeal refers;
 - (ii) Relevant substantiating documentation in addition to what was submitted before, if applicable; and
 - (iii) An appeal fee as determined by the SQA fee schedule. If the outcome of the appeal is in favour of the appellant and leads to the amendment of the original recognition decision, then the appeal fee will be refunded.
- 9.12. No oral submissions shall be entertained.

Appeal Panel

- 9.13. The Chairperson of the Board of the SQA shall within ten (10) working days of receipt of an appeal constitute an Appeal Panel (Qualifications Evaluation Appeal Panel) to study the appeal case. The Panel shall consist of:
- The Chairperson of the Board of the SQA (Chairperson)
 - The SQA Principal Officer for Qualifications Evaluation (Secretary)
 - Two co-opted persons other than SQA staff members who will be appointed by the Chairperson of the Panel. Co-opted members must have relevant knowledge of the NQF, particularly the processes of qualifications evaluation, classification, registration and recognition.

- An expert in the relevant field may be called in by the Chairperson of the Panel as necessary.

9.14. The Panel shall meet as and when required.

9.15. Once in receipt of an appeal, the Appeal Panel shall within fifteen (15) working days assess the appeal and make a decision. The response time may extend if there is a need for further external consultation. Appellants will be informed of such delays.

9.16. Under normal circumstances, the outcome of appeal shall be conveyed to the appellant in writing within twenty-one (21) working days.

9.17. The decision of the Appeal Panel shall be final.

Monitoring of appeals

9.18. The SQA will register all appeals on the Appeals Register maintained by the Authority.

9.19. Progress on the processing of appeals and appeal outcomes will be reported to the SQA Board on a regular basis.

10.0. Revocation of the SQA Certificate of Evaluation (SCoE)

10.1. The recognition and evaluation of foreign qualifications by the SQA entails a process that is guided by criteria that are transparent, coherent, reliable and applied consistently, and which results in a decision whether or not to recognise a qualification.

10.2. Upon completion of an evaluation, the SQA issues an official Certificate of Evaluation to indicate that the qualification has been recognised by the Authority and located within the SNQF and/or how its equivalence to a particular qualification on the SNQF has been established. The Certificate also confirms that the SQA verified the status of institution and qualification in the home system and took all reasonable steps to ensure that the qualification is authentic.

10.3. The SQA is totally against misrepresentation and in its endeavour to eliminate instances of fraud the SQA reserves the right to revoke Certificates of Evaluation.

- 10.4. The SQA holds the copyright to its Certificates of Evaluation, which remains the property of the Authority and may be revoked when evidence comes to light that compromises their integrity and validity.
- 10.5. Revocation of Certificates shall apply in all cases where new information has come to light that contradicts the information on which evaluation outcomes were based.
- 10.6. Revocation of an SQA Certificate of Evaluation (SCoE) issued will thus annul decisions made regarding the recognition of a foreign qualification, as well as the rights and obligations of the qualification holder in the event of such a revocation.
- 10.7. The SQA reserves the right to revoke SCoEs any time after they have been issued.

Grounds for revocation

- 10.8. The SQA will revoke a SCoE it issued when one or more qualifications appearing on that Certificate are found to have been:
 - (i) Misrepresented by the qualification holder, or any other party, in any way;
 - (ii) Issued by an institution that at the time of enrolment of the qualification holder was not recognised in the home system according to relevant laws, policy or standard practice; or issued by an institution outside of the relevant laws, policy or standard practice applicable in that system at the time;
 - (iii) Incorrectly located within the SNQF by the SQA due to the lack, or misinterpretation of, available information at the time of the evaluation. In the case of an erroneous evaluation outcome, and where applicable, the SQA will replace the Certificate with one reflecting the correct outcome.

Process for and principles guiding revocation

- 10.9. When new information comes to light which contradicts the information on which the evaluation outcomes were based, the SQA will conduct a thorough investigation to validate the new evidence before a decision to revoke is taken.
- 10.10. The SQA will first inform qualification holders of its intention to revoke and provide reasons for this.

- 10.11. The SQA may allow an opportunity for the qualification holder to respond and make representation as to why a SCoE should not be revoked. Such representation may be made by a representative on behalf of the qualification holder and must be received by the SQA within thirty (30) working days from the date of the letter of intent. In exceptional circumstances and for reasons acceptable to the SQA, the Authority may condone the late submission of representations.
- 10.12. Representation received within the stipulated period will be considered by the Foreign Qualifications Appeal Panel and a final decision will be taken whether or not to revoke. This decision will be communicated to the qualification holder or his/her representative, as may be applicable, in writing.
- 10.13. In the absence of a response and representation within thirty (30) working days of the notification of its intention to revoke, the SQA will confirm the revocation in writing.
- 10.14. Original SCoEs must be returned to the SQA within thirty (30) working days of the effective date of the revocation, failing which the SQA will take further action. Loss of the original SCoE must be declared in an affidavit, which must reach the SQA within the same period of time and under the same conditions.
- 10.15. Neither the original SCoE, nor any copies of it may be used after revocation.
- 10.16. Where a SCoE is revoked on the ground contemplated in Section 10.8 (i) above, the SQA may follow the proper channels to initiate legal action.
- 10.17. The SQA will maintain a register of revoked SCoEs and where necessary publish the revocation information in relevant and appropriate ways.

11.0. Fees

- 11.1. Applicants will be informed in advance of fees that will be charged. The fees are set to cover administrative costs for the service and are specified in the SQA fee schedule.

12.0. SQA as a National Academic Recognition Information Centre (NARIC)

12.1. The increased mobility of citizens of Seychelles has created a greater need to provide information externally (to foreign governments, institutions, quality assurance agencies and authorities) and locally (to institutions, organisations, government departments and members of the public) pertaining to local and foreign qualifications. This has given rise to a need for the SQA to assume NARIC-like functions. The following are services that the SQA needs to perform as a NARIC:

- **Providing** accurate information on education and training in Seychelles
- **Facilitating** access to information on tertiary education and training of other countries
- **Providing** information on recognition status of foreign institutions and their qualifications

12.2. To ensure that the SQA effectively delivers a high standard of service as a NARIC it needs to:

- (i) maintain a database/inventory of local qualifications
- (ii) maintain a database/inventory of foreign qualifications and foreign institutions
- (iii) safeguard standards so that local qualifications are recognised internationally.

13.0. Implementation of the Policy

This Policy and Criteria for Recognition and Evaluation of Foreign Qualifications within the Seychelles NQF comes into effect on the date of its approval by the SQA Board. It replaces the Draft Policy Guidelines on Recognition of Foreign Qualifications of 2008.

14.0. Review of the Policy

This Policy and Criteria for Recognition and Evaluation of Foreign Qualifications will be reviewed procedurally after five years, or earlier if necessary.

Annexures

Annexure 1: Consent Form for Verification of Authenticity of Qualification Awards

SEYCHELLES QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY



Consent Form for Release of Information

I, the undersigned, hereby give my consent that:

- (1) Information regarding my enrolment, academic records and/or awards may be released to the Seychelles Qualifications Authority (SQA) as per my personal details below:

Surname	
First Name(s)	
Previous Surname (if applicable)	
Date of Birth	
ID or Passport No.	

Qualification	Institution	Date of enrolment/ Award	Student Number
1.			
2.			
3.			

I understand that the purpose of the disclosure of the information is to assist the SQA to process an official request for evaluation, including verification of the authenticity of the above-mentioned qualification(s).

Signature of Qualification Holder

Date

SQA is a statutory body established through the SQA Act of 2005. Amongst other functions, the SQA evaluates qualifications to determine their status authenticity and comparability with relevant qualifications recognised on the Seychelles National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

Annexure 2: Application to Appeal a Qualification Evaluation Form

SEYCHELLES QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

APPLICATION TO APPEAL A QUALIFICATION EVALUATION

Applicant Details

Surname	
First Name	
ID or Passport No.	
Date of Birth	
Mailing Address	
Country	
Contact Phone	
Contact Email	

Detail of Evaluation being disputed

Full Name of Qualification Evaluated			
Issue Date of Evaluation Certificate (Date/month/year)	Reference Number		
Reason for Appeal (<i>Tick ONE box</i>)			
Not informed of process			☐
Process not followed			☐
Decision inconsistent with other decisions			☐
Other			☐
Additional information to support the appeal (if any)			

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- (1) The Appeal must be lodged in writing to the Chairperson of the SQA Board using the *Application To Appeal A Qualification Evaluation* Form of the SQA within thirty (30) working days of the date of issue of the SQA Certificate of Evaluation, or the letter advising of the non-recognition of the qualification.

The Appellant has to submit the following:

- The original SQA Certificate of Evaluation to which the appeal refers if the appeal is against the level of recognition
 - Relevant substantiating documentation in addition to what was submitted before, if applicable
 - An appeal fee as determined by the SQA fee schedule
- (2) The SQA will notify the appellant of the outcome of the appeal. If the outcome is in favour of the appellant and leads to the amendment of the original recognition decision, then the appeal fee will be refunded.

Declaration

I declare that the information contained in this Appeal Application is a true representation of the facts as shown to me.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

SQA CONTACT DETAILS

P.O. Box 1017 Victoria

Official Use Only

Date Application Received	
Date of Payment	
Receipt Number	
Officer's Signature	

Date Appeal checked for Grounds	
Date Re-Evaluation Completed	
Outcome of Appeal	
Date Appellant Notified	
Appeal Panel Chairperson's Signature	
Date	



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Seychelles Qualifications Authority
P.O Box 1017
Mont Fleuri
Mahé, Seychelles
Phone: (248) 4324055
Email: sga@seychelles.net
Website: www.sga.sc

ISBN: 978-99931-840-6-5