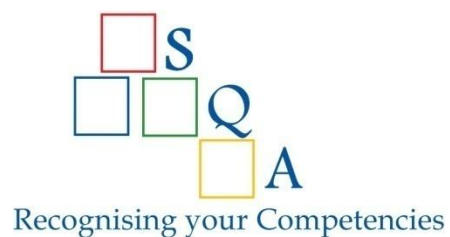


# SEYCHELLES QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

## Policy and Criteria for the Registration of Unit Standards, Qualifications and Part Qualifications on the National Qualifications Framework.

August 2022



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## List of definitions

“Credit” means the amount of learning contained in a qualification or part-qualification whereby one (1) credit is equated to ten (10) notional hours of learning. Credits are generally expressed in whole numbers.

“Elective unit standards” means an additional knowledge, skills, attitudes and values from which a choice may be made to ensure that the purpose of a qualification is achieved.

“Essential unit standards” means generic knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary for all qualifications based on unit standards and includes communication, numeracy, and information communication technology.

“Field of learning” means an organising mechanism for unit standards and qualifications registered on the NQF

“Learner” means a person who is acquiring or has acquired knowledge, skills, attitudes, personal attributes or competencies.

“Learning” means the acquisition of knowledge, skills, attitudes, personal attributes or competencies.

“Learning outcomes” means statements of what the individual knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process. The achievement of learning outcomes has to be assessed by means of procedures based on clear and transparent criteria. Learning outcomes are attributed to individual educational components and to programmes as a whole. They are also used in SADC and national qualifications frameworks to describe the level of the individual qualification.

“Level” means the particular level at which a unit standard or qualification is registered on the NQF

“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.

“National Qualifications Framework” means a comprehensive system approved by the Minister for the development, classification, registration, publication, evaluation and articulation of quality-assured qualifications.

“non-contact time” means time spent on independent study, working on assignments and on other forms of assessment.

“Notional hours of learning” means the estimated learning time taken by the average learner to achieve the specified learning outcomes of the course, unit or programme. They are therefore not a precise measure but provide learners with an indication of the amount of study and degree of commitment expected. Notional learning time includes teaching contact time (lectures, seminars, tutorials, laboratory practical, workshops, fieldwork, etc.), time spent on preparing and carrying out formative and summative assessments (written coursework, oral presentations, exams, etc.) and time spent on private study.

“Part qualification” means an assessed unit of learning that is registered by the Authority as part of a qualification, including a course and a unit standard.

“Performance/Assessment criteria” means the standards used to guide learning and assess learner achievement and/or to evaluate and certify competence.

“Provider” means an entity that intends to offer or is offering education and training in Seychelles, whether public or private, and registered as such by the ministry responsible for education or the Seychelles Qualifications Authority;

“Qualification” means a registered national qualification;

“Qualification type” means the specified nomenclature for qualifications at particular levels set under the National Qualifications Framework Regulations;

“Recognition of Prior Learning” means 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;

“Specific unit standards” means specific knowledge, skills, attitudes and values which forms the grounding or basis needed to undertake the education, training or further learning required in the obtaining of a qualification;

“Unit standard” means a statement of the outcome of any learning assessed, the type and quality of evidence that represents performance worthy of an award of credits and the context in which that evidence should be demonstrated.

## Acronyms

|      |                                     |
|------|-------------------------------------|
| EXCO | Executive Committee                 |
| ID   | Identification                      |
| NQF  | National Qualifications Framework   |
| RPL  | Recognition of Prior Learning       |
| SEC  | Standards Evaluation Committee      |
| SQA  | Seychelles Qualifications Authority |

### 1. Preamble

The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is a comprehensive system approved by the Minister for Education in 2008 and came into effect in January 2009.

The NQF is designed to contribute to the full personal development of each learner and the social and economic development of the nation at large. It has as objectives to:

- ensure comprehensiveness in the recognition of learning and qualifications attained in the country, while ensuring parity for occupational qualifications
- promote and regulate the development of qualifications based on unit standards which are linked to the workplace and society requirements
- promote a more integrated approach to education and training, increased articulation of qualifications, and mobility of learners within a coherent and integrated learning system considering the need for both national and international portability and comparability

The Seychelles Qualifications Authority (SQA) is mandated to provide for the development, implementation and maintenance of a national qualifications framework and the quality assurance of education and training. The NQF is a system that enables communication, co-ordination and collaboration across education, training, development and work. In advancing the NQF objectives, SQA embraces diversity, environmental stability and social justice.

The quality of qualifications and part qualifications resides in the:

- Advancement of the objectives of the NQF;
- Fitness and suitability of the qualification or part qualification for its intended purpose;
- Outcomes of the learning that took place;
- Comparability with similar international qualifications, best practices and standards;
- The relationship between the learning components (modules, courses, subjects) of the qualification; and
- Delivery of the qualification or part-qualification and assessment of learner achievement.

### 2. Purpose

This policy and criteria for qualifications and part qualifications sets out the requirements for registering qualifications and part qualifications. It will be used by SQA to evaluate, register and

publish qualifications and part qualifications on the NQF as recommended by the Executive Committee (EXCO).

### **3. Scope**

This policy and criteria applies to the registration and publication of unit standards, qualifications and part qualifications on the NQF.

### **4. Objectives**

The policy and criteria document is designed to:

- a) Facilitate the registration and publication of qualifications and part qualifications on the NQF;
- b) Ensure that registered unit standards, qualifications and part qualifications are relevant to the world of work, promote responsible citizenship in a democratic society, and advance knowledge and innovation for a prosperous Seychelles;
- c) Promote public understanding of, and trust in, the NQF through the registration of quality assured, nationally relevant and internationally comparable unit standards, qualifications and part-qualifications.

## **5. Registration of Unit Standards, Qualifications and Part Qualifications**

### **5.1 Policy**

This document details the procedures for the registration of qualifications, part qualifications and unit standards on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) taking into account the requirements of the SQA Act 2021 and the Regulations of the National Qualifications Framework 2008. The document applies to the technical staff of the Seychelles Qualifications Authority (SQA) responsible for the development, evaluation and approval of unit standards, qualifications and part qualifications. Once approved by the Executive Committee (EXCO), unit standards, qualifications and part qualifications must be registered on the NQF, where they are made available to the public. Education providers are then able to access and use the unit standards to develop programmes. Individuals are also able to use the unit standards as information to access different qualifications being offered by training providers. It is therefore the responsibility of the SQA to develop and ensure the implementation of this document inclusive of the criteria and guidelines for the registration and publication of qualifications and part qualifications on the NQF.

- a) The SQA will register a unit standard, qualification or part qualification on the NQF if it meets the requirements of this policy and criteria.

- b) The SQA Executive Committee (EXCO) is the final authority that approves unit standards, qualifications and part qualifications for registration on the NQF.
- c) Once registered on the NQF all unit standards, qualifications and part qualifications are published on the SQA website.
- d) All unit standards, qualifications and part qualifications offered by providers in Seychelles must meet the requirements of this policy and criteria.

## 5.2 Criteria

- 5.2.1 The unit standards, qualifications and part qualifications to be registered must be developed in consultation with stakeholders, to ensure that they remain current, and dynamically responsive to emerging trends in educational approaches and the needs of professions and industry.
- 5.2.2 Subject to SQA approval through the EXCO, a unit standard, qualification and part qualification can be registered on the NQF at a specific level. Unit standards, qualifications and part qualifications for registration on the NQF must:
- a) have followed the evaluation process by the Standards Evaluation Committee (SEC)
  - b) have followed the approval process by the Executive Committee (EXCO)
  - c) be submitted in the required format as stipulated by the SQA
  - d) comply with the criteria for registration
  - e) be written in either of the three official languages recognised in Seychelles i.e.: English, French and Creole.
- 5.2.3 SQA will register a unit standard, qualification or part qualification on the NQF on the recommendation of the Executive Committee (EXCO) provided that the criteria for registration on the NQF as set out in the following sections are fulfilled.

| Features                      | Description  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| a) Title of the Qualification | <p>The title of the qualification must be unique at its level on the NQF- i.e. the title must be different from any other title registered on the NQF at that level.</p> <p>The Qualification type must be one of the names approved by the SQA and in accordance with the approved naming conventions e.g. "Certificate", "Advanced Certificate", "Diploma", "Advanced Diploma", "Degree", etc.</p> |

The title must contain the NQF level of the qualification.

The title must provide a clear indication of the contents of the qualification e.g. Advanced Certificate in Carpentry and Joinery: Level 4.

- b) Qualification Type      The primary name is the qualification type (Certificate, Advanced Certificate, Diploma, Advanced Diploma, Degree, Master, etc.). It describes its volume as a full qualification; or a part qualification. Qualification types are prescribed by the NQF.
- c) Qualification Code      The code allocated to a qualification upon registration on the NQF. Each qualification is assigned a unique code which identifies its classification and category. This will be completed using the NQF classification system. Qualifications will be coded according to field, NQF level, year of registration, and sequence.
- d) Level of the Qualification      The level assigned to the qualification should be appropriate to the complexity of learning as described in the NQF Level Descriptors and embodied in the Elements and Performance Criteria of the unit standards. The level of a part qualification may be at the same level as the parent qualification or at a level within the range allowed for in the qualification type.
- e) Allocation of Credits      The allocation of credits in a qualification or part-qualification is guided by the number of notional hours of study needed for a learner to achieve specified learning outcomes.  
The minimum number of notional hours for a qualification is 1200 hours.  
Notional hours comprise the following:
- Contact time (direct teaching time including tutorials and group work)
  - Non-contact time (independent study time including assignments, preparing for examinations, research, Work-based Experience, other forms of attachments, etc.)
- f) Field and Sub-field of the Qualification      The qualification must clearly indicate in which Organizing Field and Sub-field it belongs. The Field and Sub-field must be one of those already delineated by the SQA.
- g) Date of Registration      Registration date is the date that the qualification is approved and registered on the NQF.

- h) Review Date Review date specifies the date by which the qualification will be reviewed.
- i) Purpose of the Qualification The purpose statement should outline what it is intended to achieve for the individual, i.e. what the qualifying learner will know and be able to do on achievement of the qualification.
- j) Rules of Combination Qualifications based on unit standards shall adhere to the rules of combination as stipulated in the SQA Manual for Development, Evaluation and Approval of Qualifications and Unit Standards.
- k) International Comparability Qualifications registered on the NQF should reflect best practice internationally. International comparability should clearly indicate how and to what degree the qualification compares with what is on offer internationally.
- l) Articulation Possibilities with Related Qualifications An indication must be given of which qualifications the qualification in question realistically articulates with, both vertically and horizontally. This should include any specific arrangements that have been made for articulation with particular qualifications.
- m) Recognition of Prior Learning Indicates whether the qualification may be achieved in whole or in part through the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), which includes learning outcomes/ competencies achieved through formal, informal and non-formal learning.
- n) Unit Standards Title Matrix The unit standards contained in each of the three components of the qualification, viz. Specific, Essential and Elective components must be listed in a matrix and must be grouped as such.

The unit standards listed in the matrix must indicate the following:

- The title of each unit standard
- The Identification (ID) number of each unit standard
- The NQF level of each unit standard
- The credits allocated to individual unit standard.

The total credits for each of the three components of the qualification will be given. The credit totals for each of the three components must tally with that given in the Rules of Combination.

The total credits for the qualification will be specified.

- o) Unit Standards

The unit standards contained in each of the three components of

the qualification will be attached to the Unit Standards Title Matrix.

5.2.4 Unit standards must be developed to meet the criteria for registration stipulated in this policy and criteria and must include the following features:

| <b>Features</b>                   | <b>Description</b>  |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| a) Unit Standard Title            | The title of a unit standard accurately and concisely describes an outcome of learning and/or work activity that needs to be achieved and formally recognised for a specific purpose. It expresses the outcome that someone who is credited with the unit standard has demonstrated they know and/or can do.  |
| b) Unit Standard Type             | Unit standard type specifies whether the unit standard is a Specific, Essential or an Elective component of a qualification.  |
| c) Unit Standard ID               | Each unit standard will have a unique numeric identifier. The Seychelles Qualifications Authority will insert this ID number.   |
| d) Number of Credits              | Credits allocated to a unit standard must reflect the notional learning time it is expected for learners to repeatedly meet the outcome and performance requirements in the unit standard (i.e. to master the learning in that unit standard).<br><br>Notional learning time includes time: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ spent in structured tuition and self-directed learning and practice;</li><li>▪ taken to gather and provide evidence for assessment purposes;</li><li>▪ taken for assessment in all the outcomes/Elements and contexts; and</li><li>▪ spent on work-based experience or other forms of work attachment</li></ul><br>A unit standard will carry a minimum of 3 credits (30 notional hours of learning). |
| e) NQF Level of the Unit Standard | Unit standards will be registered at one of the levels of the NQF.<br><br>The level should also be appropriate for the learning pathway within which the unit standard is located.  |

- f) Field and Sub-field of the Unit Standard      The unit standard should clearly indicate in which Organizing Field and Sub-Field it belongs. Fields and Sub-fields are delineated by SQA (*refer to Annexure 3 of the Manual for Development, Evaluation and Approval of Qualifications and Unit Standards*).
- g) Date of Registration      Registration date is the date that the unit standard is approved and registered on the NQF. Registration will be for a period not exceeding five years.
- h) Date of Review      Review date specifies the date by which the unit standard will be reviewed.
- i) Purpose of the Unit Standard      The Purpose statement will succinctly specify what the qualifying learner will know and be able to do on achievement of the unit standard.
- j) Elements (Outcomes)      Elements are outcome statements that describe knowledge, skills and attributes a learner has demonstrated, and the context within which these have been assessed. In order to be credited with the unit standard, a learner must achieve all of the outcomes described in the Element statements.
- k) Performance Criteria (Evidence requirements)      Each Element requires its own set of Performance Criteria which indicate competence in the specific outcome by the learner. Performance Criteria specify the critical evidence required to meet the outcomes/Elements.
- Each Element should contain at least three Performance Criteria.
- l) Range Statements      Range statements specify the context in which the Element can be expected to be achieved.
- Range statements indicate the breadth or limits of performance contexts applicable to any Element or the Title of the Unit Standard. Range statements are limited to the outcomes of learning and/or work activity being assessed (the Title or Elements).
- Range statements must show clear relationship between the Element and its corresponding Performance Criteria.
- Range statements ensure that the same factors are considered for assessment of each learner. These are also used to clarify evidence requirements and/or assessment conditions.

Range statements must be written immediately below the Performance Criteria of an Element/outcome. This means that the Range statements apply to all Performance Criteria in that outcome/Element.

Range statements should indicate:

- the typical scope of the Element;
- the typical context of the Element (including steps, listed items, procedures, tools, etc. stated in the Performance Criteria).

## **6. Review, Re-registration and De-registration of unit standards, qualifications and part-qualifications**

### **6.1 Review of unit standards, qualifications and part qualifications**

6.1.1 Unit standards, qualifications and part qualifications are registered for a specific time period of five years. These must be periodically reviewed (within five (5) years of each period of registration) to ensure that they are fit for purpose, i.e. they continue to specify requirements that reflect the current needs of the sector(s) for which they are applicable. Review will be driven by factors such as the level and type of industry and sector change, legislative requirements and monitoring reports. Review will involve stakeholder consultation.

### **6.2 Revision of Unit Standards**

6.2.1 This occurs when a unit standard requires amendment at any time prior to review. The revision will focus on correcting known defects in the unit standards (such as any inaccuracy in wording, content, format, or punctuation, out-of-date legislations, etc.). The unit standard is issued as a new version.

### **6.3 On-going Quality**

6.3.1 Reviewed and revised unit standards must meet the same quality criteria as new unit standards if they are to be re-registered.

## **7. Roll Over**

7.1 The purpose of rollover of a unit standard is to extend its registration period. If it is nearing its planned review date and there has been insufficient information to inform a review, the standard is rolled over to maintain currency. It is then issued as a new version, but with content unchanged.

## **8. Versions**

8.1 Each time there is a change made to a unit standard, a new version is created. Minor changes to standards may not affect outcomes. When a version of a unit standard has been replaced, the SQA will specify a last date of assessment against the superseded version.

## **9. Review Report**

9.1 The revised unit standards will be accompanied by a Review Report. The report must include the following:

- a) the reason/rationale for the review and a brief outline of the review process;
- b) a summary of the main changes that have been made to the unit standards;
- c) a list of the unit standards, in table format, with the changes to titles, levels or credits shown in bold;
- d) the expiry dates of the revised unit standards;
- e) the transition arrangements from the old to the new unit standards, if any unit standards are replaced or withdrawn.

9.2 The report and the new versions of the unit standards are published on the SQA website.

9.3 SQA will not re-register unit standards, qualifications or part qualifications if they:

- a) are replaced by new unit standards, qualifications and part qualifications
- b) do not comply with the criteria for registration as outlined in this policy and criteria
- c) were not offered by accredited providers within the registration period of the unit standard, qualification or part qualification

9.4 The SQA will issue a new SQA ID where there are significant changes to the title, level, credits and where there are more than 50% changes in the content of the unit standard, qualification and part qualification.

## **10. Database for registered unit standards, qualifications and part qualifications**

There will be established a database of all registered unit standards, qualifications and part qualifications to facilitate access by providers, learners, other stakeholders and the general public. The data base will be accessible through the SQA website and will house all the unit standards, qualifications and part qualifications that have met the criteria for approval and registration.

The SQA database will facilitate the management of information related to unit standards, qualifications and part qualifications. Individuals will be able to search for particular unit standards and qualifications using links provided in the data base.