

Seychelles Qualifications Authority



Recognising your Competencies

Induction Manual 2023 Edition

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Acronyms

AO:	Administrative Officer
CEO:	Chief Executive Officer
EQA:	External Quality Assurance
MOE:	Ministry of Education
NQF:	National Qualifications Framework
QA:	Quality Assurance
RPL:	Recognition of Prior Learning
SIP:	School Improvement Programme
SQA:	Seychelles Qualifications Authority

1. Introduction

1.1 Rationale

An induction programme is an important process for bringing staff into an organisation. It provides an introduction to the working environment and specifies the role of the employee within the organisation.

An effective induction programme is a vital foundation for continuous learning. It supports and ensures the continuous professional development of the employee. It is a process which starts at the initial stage of enrolment and beyond; a process which aims to increase the efficiency of the employee by ensuring that they understand the policies and expectations of the organisation. Induction also ensures that new staff are productive as quickly as possible and reduces short-term turnover of staff. Induction programmes can also play a critical role in terms of performance, attitudes and organisational commitment.

Induction training should include development of theoretical and practical skills. The process is intended to enable the new employee to become a useful, integrated member of the team, rather than being "thrown in at the deep end" without understanding how to do their job, or how their role fits in with the rest of the organisation.

The process has been designed to enable all employees to play an active role in the induction programme.

1.2 The purpose of the induction process is to:

- ◆ Contribute to improving and developing the overall effectiveness of the Seychelles Qualifications Authority (SQA).
- ◆ Contribute to job satisfaction, personal achievement, individual and team effort, thus providing for effective work performance.
- ◆ Ensure new staff have the best start in their career and have the relevant support.
- ◆ Ensure new staff understand what is expected of them and gain support to achieve those expectations.
- ◆ Ensure that staff are valued and recognised as the Authority's most important asset.

1.3 SQA's Vision

A credible, valued and efficient organisation which, as custodian of a high quality national qualifications framework, puts the needs of learners at the centre of an open, responsive and integrated qualifications system which recognises their competencies and enables them to develop to their fullest potential.

1.4 Mission

The SQA's mission is to develop and enhance a national qualifications framework that elevates and recognises competencies whilst promoting quality education and training.

1.5 The SQA values:

The SQA is committed to ensuring quality of education through sustained efforts to achieve excellence, efficiency, competence and high standards. It believes that providers are dynamic, forward thinking, positive, proactive, and responsive to the realities of an ever changing world. Based on this premise, the following are the core values of the Authority, derived from the principles of transparency, accountability and good governance that we will uphold in our actions and behaviours.

Partnership: We recognize that providers need to be guided to meet the requirements of the NQF and stand ready to provide that assistance and support, with due deference to the roles, responsibilities and autonomy of the provider. We will engage with the community and provide frank, impartial and timely feedback to the Government, stakeholders and partners.

Respect: We accept our customers for who they are. We actively listen to them, we go above and beyond to solve their problems quickly and efficiently.

Integrity: We recognise our duty, as regulator, to operate with transparency, openness and impartiality in our engagement with stakeholders, observe strict standards of confidentiality in handling client information, and use power responsibly while striving to earn and sustain a high level of public trust.

Accountability: We recognize that we have a responsibility to protect learners and to ensure the credibility of the education and training that is on offer. Therefore, we hold providers accountable to the requirements of the National Qualifications Framework and expect them to commit to nationally agreed standards and to deliver to those standards within agreed time frames. We will work towards clear objectives in a transparent manner and accept responsibility for decisions and actions.

Service Excellence: We recognize that quality is integral both to the National Qualifications Framework and to the way we approach our work. Therefore, we commit ourselves to the highest standards of service delivery, with due regard to best management practice, including capacity building and the creation of a climate that is conducive to team work and high levels of productivity.

Teamwork: We value the contribution of each individual with whom we work; building highly effective relationships with other people to achieve a common goal; participating in activities to ultimately ensure the success of the entire organisation.

Commitment to international best practice: We strive to ensure that all our work processes comply with international good practices.

Reflective Practice: We recognize the need for our work to be informed by evidence, research and evaluation. Therefore, we commit to engaging with local and international research in the field of qualifications and quality assurance and revisiting our policies and procedures accordingly.

2. The Seychelles Qualifications Authority (SQA)

2.1 Background



The Seychelles Qualifications Authority (SQA) is a legal entity established by an Act to develop, implement and maintain a National Qualifications Framework and to provide for quality assurance of education and training. The SQA Act 2021 replaces the initial Act of 2005 which first established the SQA.

As an Authority the SQA is governed by a board that oversees the implementation of its activities, and its operations are undertaken by a secretariat headed by a Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

The SQA has as its mandate the responsibility of regulating the quality of education and training from general education up to university level. The purpose of having a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is to ensure that all providers of education and training leading to a qualification, a part qualification or a recognised micro-credential are well equipped to offer quality programmes and courses and learners receive quality education and training. It is not enough that a qualification is accepted locally or nationally; therefore, the NQF aims to ensure that a learner's qualification is also internationally comparable.

2.2 Seychelles National Qualifications Framework

The Seychelles National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is a framework for the development, recognition and award of qualifications based on standards of knowledge, skills and competences to be acquired by learners. It is designed to provide:

-  Quality assured, nationally recognized consistent training standards and qualifications
-  Recognition and credit for knowledge and skills acquired.

2.2.1 The Seychelles NQF aims 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
- Increase articulation of qualifications and mobility of learners within a coherent learning system, considering the need for both national and international portability and comparability.

2.2.2 Levels of the Seychelles NQF

The NQF comprises ten (10) learning achievement levels. The levels ascend from elementary literacy, numeracy and cognition required to perform simple tasks up to the most advanced production of knowledge achieved through individual, independent research, together with the level descriptors (the required learning achievements) appropriate to each level.

Each qualification type must be assigned a specified level on the NQF.

2.2.3 Level Descriptors of the Seychelles NQF

The level descriptors apply to all qualification types on the NQF.

The Seychelles NQF Regulations provide for periodic review by SQA of the level descriptors and their associated components, to ensure that they remain current, and dynamically responsive to emerging trends in educational approaches and the needs of professions and industry.



3. The structure of the Seychelles Qualifications Authority

3.1 The organigram of the Authority

The organigram of the Seychelles Qualifications Authority shows the structure of the organisation and the relationships between the different units. *The current organigram of the Authority is at Annex I.*

3.2 Accreditation Unit (Schools)

The Quality Assurance (QA) service was first established in 1999 to ensure the further development of schools through a process of external evaluation that supported the School Improvement Programme (SIP). Standards linked to the SIP goals were developed to provide a framework for school improvement, to help schools establish targets for themselves and for the evaluation of schools' progress towards achieving these targets as well as national goals.

The QA process as conceived in 1999 was meant to be supportive rather than inspectorial in orientation. Standards of expected performance were set in consultation with schools and in line with the aims of the SIP. The external evaluation was made on the basis of the related performance indicators and the process culminated in mutually agreed further actions for improvement over a fixed period of time. The standards and performance indicators were elaborated in a QA Handbook accessible to all schools in printed format.

Since the year 2000, all schools have been evaluated at least once and most of them received further visits to check on agreed progress. On average the QA teams carried out four to five evaluations per year. Reports of all visits were documented according to an agreed format and they were held by the External Quality Assurance (EQA) office, Schools Division as well as the office of the Principal Secretary and Minister for Education.

As part of the SIP, schools carried out a whole school evaluation (called an audit) every three years, and on the basis of that they developed a three-year school development plan. At the end of each year they checked on progress made and adjusted the plan accordingly. A progress report was produced and was copied to the Schools' Division which monitored further progress and provided support to schools as necessary.

In the context of the educational reforms in 2009 and considering the outcomes of the situation analysis carried out, it became necessary to review the roles of the QA service, especially in the light of the desire of the Ministry of Education to enhance the autonomy of schools and the establishment of effective accountability procedures.

A new School Inspection model was introduced to replace the former Quality Assurance Service. Its processes built on existing practices (auditing, planning and reporting mechanisms) to identify the strengths and weaknesses of individual schools, so that the best means of support and impetus for improvement could be provided quickly. The Ministry also strengthened existing mechanisms to ensure greater accountability from schools.

The unit was named the External Quality Assessment Unit which was later changed to Inspectorate Unit. The Standards for Effective Schools established in the framework *Looking*

at Our School were adopted in 2010 after consultation with public primary and secondary schools as well as educators within the Ministry of Education.

The former Inspectorate Unit of the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development (MEHRD) was transferred to the SQA at the beginning of 2019 and renamed Accreditation Unit (Schools). The model of inspection was therefore revised to fit into the SQA as the new unit adopted a more regulatory function. Notwithstanding its regulatory function, the Unit still necessarily works in partnership with certain sections of the Ministry of Education.

3.3 Institutional Accreditation Unit

The SQA is responsible for assuring the quality and standards of education and training in Seychelles; and protecting the interests of learners enrolled in education and training programmes. The Seychelles Qualifications Authority is authorised to fulfil these functions through its system of Accreditation and Quality Assurance

Institutional Accreditation means "recognition status granted to a provider by the Authority for a stipulated period of time after an evaluation through self-assessment and external review indicates that it meets or exceeds established standards for educational quality set by the Authority" as per the SQA Act 2021. Institutional Accreditation is both an opportunity to demonstrate compliance with the national quality assurance criteria for accountability purposes and an opportunity for quality improvement.

The main purpose of the quality assurance system is to assure stakeholders that the established or registered institution is providing good quality education. The concept 'quality' includes value for money, sustainability, fitness for purpose, compliance with standards, consistency, effectiveness, efficiency, and excellence.

3.4 Programme Accreditation Unit

The Quality Assurance Unit for programme accreditation is responsible for the accreditation of programmes prior to them being offered by a provider. Programme Accreditation means recognition status granted to a programme by the Authority for a stipulated period of time after an evaluation by the Authority indicates that it meets standards of quality.

A provisionally accredited programme meets the majority of the requirements of the Seychelles NQF to be offered to learners but minor changes are required to achieve full accreditation status.

By accrediting a programme or credit bearing course, the SQA has ensured that the programme or course has met certain national quality assurance criteria which enable it to be registered on the framework at a specific level of the NQF.

A programme / course registered on the NQF means that there can be confidence that the programme / course is at the level at which the provider has pitched it.

3.5 Recognition and Evaluation of Qualifications Unit

The Recognition and Evaluation of Qualifications Unit is responsible for the recognition and evaluation of qualifications. The unit is also responsible for certifying true copy of qualifications.

Recognition and evaluation of qualification is the process followed by the Authority to verify the authenticity of qualifications and to compare foreign qualifications with national and international qualifications. Recognition of foreign qualifications means the formal acceptance of the appropriateness of a foreign qualification for a specific purpose. The process of recognition and evaluation of qualifications therefore enables the SQA to establish the level of the qualifications on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

For this service, it is required that applicants submit original qualifications, academic transcript and proof of identity. Information is sought from awarding institutions and from relevant quality assurance bodies in the country of origin. SQA will issue a Certificate of Evaluation to the applicant when the qualification submitted for recognition and evaluation has satisfied all requirements as specified in the revised Policy and Criteria for the Recognition and Evaluation of Foreign Qualifications approved in March 2019.

For the Certify True Copy service, the SQA's stamp and seal are put on the copy of the qualification which attests that SQA as the national quality assurance body has certified true copy the qualification or the certificate. This service is widely used by learners enrolling in overseas education and training institutions to further their studies.

The Recognition and Evaluation Unit also assist learners and the general public with information on the recognition and accreditation status of overseas education and training institutions. The Unit conducts research and liaises with quality assurance agencies and providers overseas to establish the authenticity of programmes and the accreditation status of Providers. This is to ensure that learners make informed decisions before they embark on a programme of study in an overseas institution.

The Unit also provides information on the status of local providers and programmes to overseas education and training providers and quality assurance bodies as and when required.

3.6 Recognition of Prior Learning Unit

The SQA is responsible for co-ordinating and monitoring the implementation of the Recognition of Prior Learning process. Recognition of prior learning is a process by which prior learning is formally identified, assessed and acknowledged regardless of where the learning was achieved.

As is aptly captured in the Seychelles Qualifications Authority Act, 2021 (Act 57 of 2021) 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”.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) therefore recognises and validates knowledge, skills and competencies obtained inside and outside the formal education and training systems. It recognises learning acquired formally, non-formally and informally; assesses it against standards or learning outcomes, and gives formal recognition, which may be used to grant credits towards a particular qualification.

RPL is a systematic, rigorous and consistent process to evaluate all types of learning acquired by an individual. The qualification or the credits achieved through the RPL process have the same value as the qualifications and credits obtained through the formal education process. In other words, there is no distinction between a qualification obtained through the RPL process and that obtained through the formal education process. RPL is one of the several pathways for obtaining a qualification or formal credits, for gaining employment, or for entry into further studies among other benefits.

3.7 Standards Setting Unit

The Standards Setting Unit of the Seychelles Qualifications Authority is responsible for the development, approval and registration of unit standards, learning outcomes, qualifications and part qualifications on the NQF Seychelles National Qualifications Framework. Standards setting is an important pillar in the work of quality assurance; as it provides the benchmark for qualifications especially those ranging from level 3 to level 6 of the NQF. Unit standards and learning outcomes serve as a guide for programme developers, giving them the level of content and scope which a qualification must cover at a specific level on the NQF.

Unit standards are registered statements of desired education and training competencies and their associated performance criteria together with administrative and other information (e.g. standard and level numbers, number of credits etc.).

A unit standard according to the NQF regulations can be referred to as a component of learning comprising Credits, Formal assessment and a minimum of 30 notional hours

The work of standards setting requires extensive research and communication both with local stakeholders and with other qualifications authorities to ensure that the outcome will benefit everyone concerned. A well-developed Unit standard must meet the needs of the field or industry for which it is designed and must be fit for purpose.

Standards development is not limited to education and training providers, but other sectors that want to regulate their practice are also being identified.

4.0 Induction Programme for New Staff

The induction programme lists suggest activities to be covered over the course of twelve weeks. Notwithstanding this, a specific timetable, based on the programme below, will be drawn up for each new session.

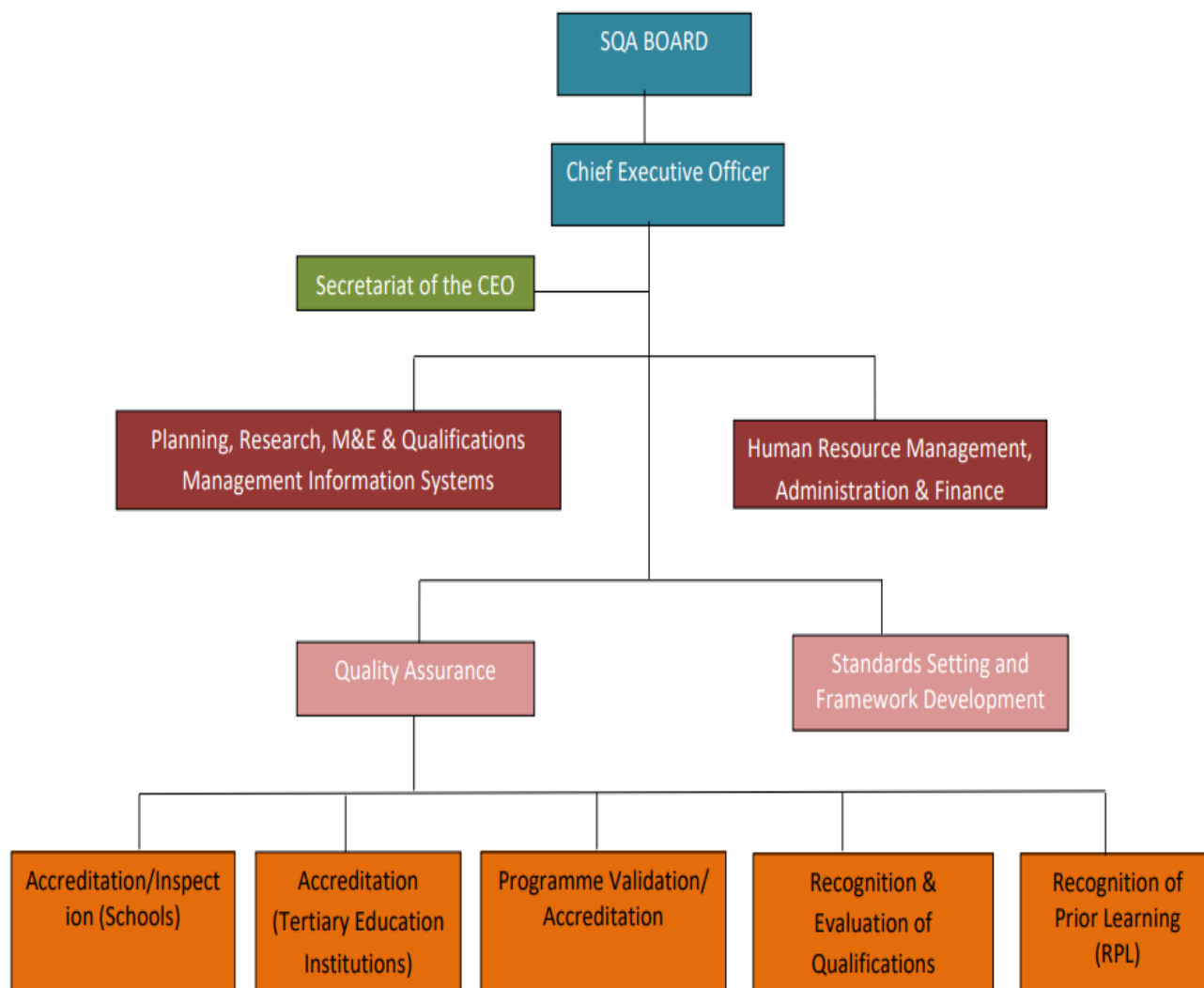
ACTIVITY	SUGGESTED CONTENT	Time line
<i>Welcome by SQA Management</i> <i>Introduction to other members of staff</i> <i>Person Responsible: CEO</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with SQA Management • Introduction to members of staff • Tour of the offices and facilities 	Week 1
Presentation of the SQA internal procedures <i>Person Responsible: CEO (or delegated person)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of job description • Familiarisation with the Manual of Internal procedures. 	Week 1

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of the Code of Ethics with emphasis on confidentiality, tolerance, respect. • Requirements of staff when conducting their respective duties • Familiarisation with office procedures • Communication procedures and chain of command. • Familiarisation with administrative procedures 	
<p>Introduction to the SQA and its functions</p> <p><i>Person Responsible: delegated person</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission, Vision and Structure • The SQA Act • The National Qualifications Framework. • Presentation on the work of the SQA and the National Qualifications Framework 	Week 2
Induction in the respective work area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the Unit • Relevant information is shared with the new staff (such as Policy, Manual, Guidelines) • Work procedures, work schedule and committees • Familiarisation with work documents 	Week 2-3
Meeting with immediate supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assign and guide the new staff with work activities • Discussion or clarification on induction process so far 	Week 3 - 11
Meeting with immediate supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback at the end of three months 	Week 12
Meeting with immediate supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of performance and consideration of appointment in post 	Week 24



Annex I

SQA organigram



Annex II

Reference documents

- SQA Act, 2021
- Regulations of the NQF
- Level descriptors
- National Qualifications Framework- An Introduction
- SQA Strategic Plan 2022-2026
- Manual of Internal Procedures
- List of Board Members

Accreditation Unit Schools

- Looking at Our School Framework 2nd Edition, revised in 2015.
- Inspection Manual
- Self-Evaluation Template and Guidelines
- Code of Ethics for Inspectors

Institutional Accreditation

- SQA Institutional Accreditation Manual
- Framework of Institutional Accreditation: Standards and Criteria V7

Programme Accreditation

- Programme Accreditation Manual
- Application for Programme Validation
- Programme Accreditation: Guide for Providers
- Result sheet

Recognition and Evaluation of Qualifications

- Policy and Criteria for Recognition and Evaluation of Foreign Qualifications
- Application Form - Qualification Recognition Evaluation
- Consent Form for Release of Information

Recognition of Prior Learning

- Guidelines on Fees for Recognition of Prior Learning
- National Guidelines for the Implementation of RPL
- National Policy for RPL
- Schedule of allowances for RPL Practitioners

Standards Setting

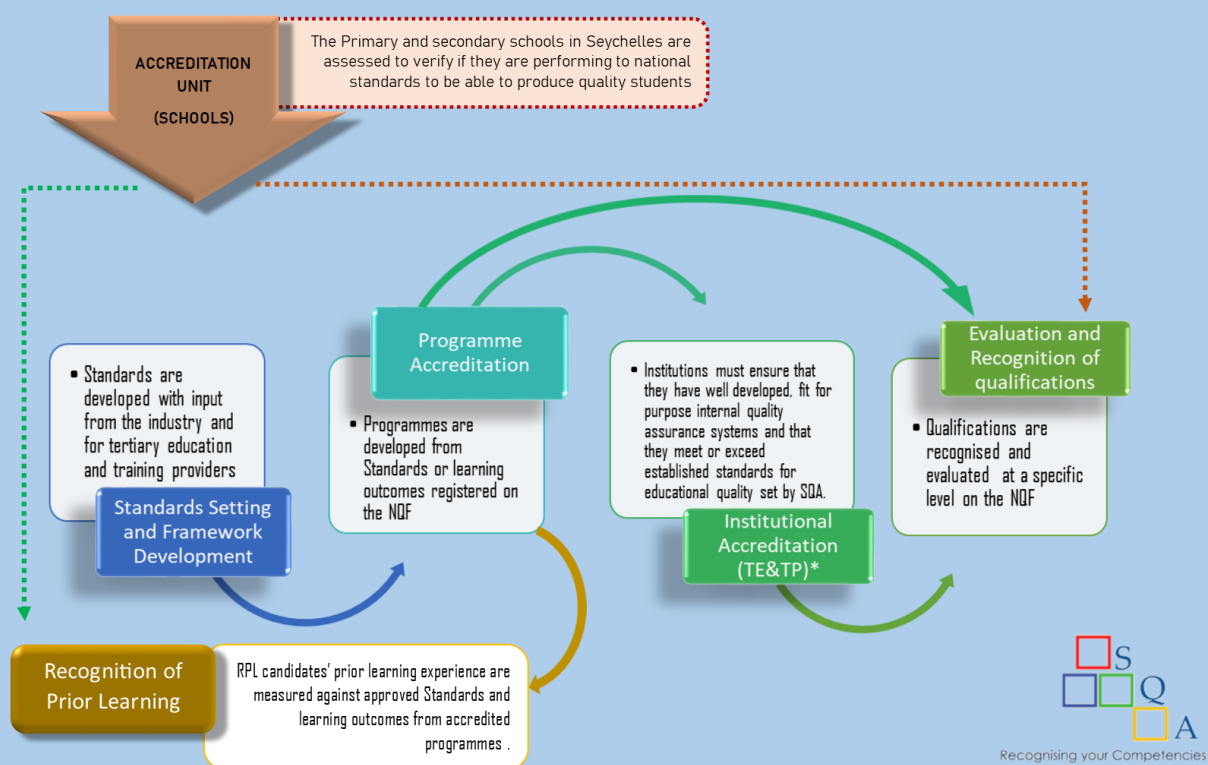
- Manual for Development, Evaluation and Approval of Qualifications and Unit Standards
- Policy and Criteria for the Registration of Unit Standards, Qualifications and Part Qualifications on the National Qualifications Framework

Annex III

Board Members

Mr Selby Dora	Chairperson
Mr. Jean-Michel Domingue	Vice Chairperson
Mr. Benjamin Choppy	Member
Mr. Brian Hoareau	Member
Ms. Astride Tamatave	Member
Mrs Nadia Lauricourt	Member
Dr. Bernard Valentin	Member
Ms. Margaret Moumou	Member
Ms. Fiona Ernesta	Chief Executive Officer (ex-officio member)
Ms. Dazielle Laporte	Secretary

The interconnectivity of Units in the Seychelles Qualifications Authority



*TE & TP – Tertiary Education and Training providers