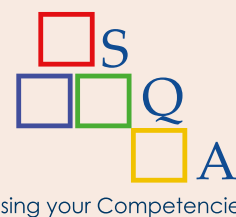


# Seychelles Qualifications Authority



Newsletter Issue 28

January – December 2021



“True education comes from  
a passion for learning”  
– Debasish Mridha

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## Editorial

Dear esteemed readers and stakeholders,

Happy New Year! I wish you all a safe, healthy, happy and prosperous 2022.

On behalf of the Board and staff of the Seychelles Qualifications Authority (SQA), I convey our gratitude for your unfailing support throughout 2021 and I welcome you to our Newsletter for the year. The Newsletter provides one of the platforms that the SQA makes use of to engage its clients, stakeholders and the public and keep them updated about its work and developments.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continued unabated to challenge the whole globe throughout 2021, the SQA resorted to more creative and innovative strategies in order to adapt to changing circumstances and ensure the highest quality services to its clients. This was particularly evidenced in its extensive use of the virtual platform to facilitate Institutional Accreditation exercises and Programme Validation. The Authority also conducted most of its group meetings virtually, including meetings of the SQA Board. We also made more extensive use of our website to convey information to the public. In this sense, we can say that the pandemic, as terrible as it is, presented an opportunity for improvement.

The SQA made significant strides in terms of accomplishments. These are highlighted in the various articles of this edition of our Newsletter.

The pandemic related restrictions did not deter the SQA from ensuring that its staff continue to engage in activities for their continuing professional development and for capacity building. This was achieved through participation in various relevant online/virtual activities, such as webinars and virtual conferences, some of which are featured in this Newsletter.

We hope that you enjoy reading this issue of our Newsletter and that you let us know what you think.

Thank you for your continued support and engagement with us. We look forward to a fruitful year of collaboration and achievement.

With appreciation.

**Fiona Ernesta**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**Seychelles Qualifications Authority**

## Programme Validation

Programme validation approves, for a specified period of time, a specific education and training programme or course, offered by an education and training provider or institution, leading to the award of a specific qualification or part of a qualification to be registered on the Seychelles National Qualification Framework (NQF).

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

By validating 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 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 or institution has pitched it.

Since the beginning of 2021 eleven (11) new programmes have been validated making a total of 103 programmes and twelve credit bearing short courses that have reached the standards to be awarded full validation status. The programmes validated this year are as follows:

Institution	Programme
Seychelles Institute of Art and Design (SIAD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Diploma in Fine Art</li><li>• Diploma Soft Furnishing and Upholstery for Interior Design</li><li>• Sewing Skills for Beginners (short course)</li></ul>
Seychelles Business Studies Academy (SBSA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Certificate in Administrative Skills</li></ul>
The Guy Morel Institute (TGMI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Diploma in Office and Records Management</li><li>• Diploma in Banking in the Digital Age</li><li>• Certificate in Public Procurement</li></ul>
The University of Seychelles (UniSey)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• MA in Peace and Conflict Resolution</li></ul>
Seychelles Institute of Technology (SIT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• National Diploma in Motor Vehicle Engineering</li></ul>
Seychelles Maritime Academy (SMA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Preparatory Skipper Course for Artisanal Fishing Techniques (short course)</li></ul>
Seychelles Institute of Teacher Education (SITE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Diploma in Education –Early Childhood</li></ul>



Some programmes have reached the stage for review and so far 8 programmes have been reviewed and revalidated where as others have gone through major changes and been upgraded thus emerging as new programmes.

Following the demerger of TGMI and UniSey, TGMI has now finalised the validation of all its own programmes.

## **Institutional Accreditation**

For the year 2021, the SQA scheduled three Institutional Accreditation Visits at three institutions in the third and fourth quarter of 2021. In view of that, the Accreditation Section prepared for the same in the first and second quarter 2021. Preparations included setting appropriate timelines for the Institutional Accreditation process for the year for each institution, conducting initiation meetings with institutions, and liaising with the liaison person of each institution in preparation for the visits.

The Section has faced a number challenges in carrying out these activities amid the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the Section sought innovative ways to ensure that the activities planned were executed. For instance, the Section made use of virtual platforms such as zoom to conduct meetings.

Through joint effort between the SQA and the institutions, the Institutional Accreditation Visits were all materialised.

### **University of Seychelles Institutional Accreditation Visit**





The Seychelles Qualifications Authority (SQA) conducted an accreditation review of the University of Seychelles (UniSey) from 12-16 July 2021. The scope of the accreditation included five of the six performance areas of the SQA Evaluation Framework.

The five-day visit comprised of a tour of the campus, virtual presentation of the self-evaluation report, virtual group and individual interviews and documentary analysis. The Accreditation Visit ended with a virtual verbal report of the findings to UniSey.

Based on the findings and recommendations detailed in the 2021 Accreditation Visit Report, the Seychelles Qualifications Authority accorded the UniSey the status of Accreditation.

It is to be noted that UniSey had previously been accredited and that its accreditation status lapsed in July 2021, necessitating a review for purpose of re-accreditation or otherwise.

The SQA wishes UniSey all the very best in its endeavour for continuous improvement.

## SQA's Vision

A credible, valued and efficient organization 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 recognizes their competencies and enables them to develop to their fullest potential.

***We present below an article contributed by UniSey that encapsulates the process leading to Reaccreditation.***

## **University of Seychelles (UniSey) Reaccreditation 2021**

In August 2020, the University of Seychelles (UniSey) was due for its Reaccreditation process after its first five-years cycle. Unfortunately, this was postponed to July 2021 due to COVID-19 pandemic. However, in 2021 the pandemic did not subside and it proved that the Reaccreditation process could not be undertaken the traditional way. Consequently, UniSey underwent its Reaccreditation process through a blended mode to adapt with the COVID-19 restrictions, such as the social distancing and international travel ban. The blended mode encompassed both face-to-face interactions (limited) with minimum participants and virtual interactions through the Microsoft Teams 365 platform (MS Team).

The process for reaccreditation was steered by the SQA Reaccreditation Team in close collaboration with the UniSey internal Self-Evaluation Team (SET). The former was led by Professor David Woodhouse, who was based in Australia and Ms. Jacqueline Gertrude, Mr. Ebrahim Ali, Mrs. Cynthia Renaud, Mrs. Zelda Julie and Ms. Verna Leon the local team members who were based in Seychelles. The latter was led by the Vice-Chancellor, Ms. Joëlle Perreau and other members from both the Academic and Support Sections: Mrs. Diana Ithier, Mrs. Eugenie Khani, Dr. Daniel Etongo, Dr. Olga Klymenko, Mrs. Elvina Amelie, Mrs. Kelly Hoareau, Mrs. Prema Servina, Mr. Christian Servina, Mrs. Betty-Mai Sofa, Mrs. Marie-Andrée Sally, Ms. Natacha Rose, Ms. Malshini Senaratne; and three students' representatives: Ms. Nassirah Dorby, Ms. Melanie Sinon and Mr. Shamad Japha. The Chair ensured that all the different stages of the process were being dully followed through and deadlines respected. Submission of documents as e-copy was done through the UniSey and SQA MS Teams account created specifically for the reaccreditation process. The MS Teams platform enabled the Reaccreditation Team to access and view the documents remotely and at their own time.

Moreover, for the Reaccreditation visit, all meetings with the relevant stakeholders were planned accordingly and executed successfully through the whole week while still respecting all the health regulations. While the Reaccreditation Team attended virtually, the participants were located physically at the UniSey main campus in different rooms (2-3 persons per room). As for the campus tour, UniSey recorded a campus tour video and uploaded it to MS Teams where Professor Woodhouse could view the video at the same time that the local members physically conducted the tour. To ensure the smooth-running of the visit, the UniSey SET was assisted by the UniSey Reaccreditation Logistics Team.

The manner that the Reaccreditation process was conducted was a first for both UniSey and the SQA and seemingly first of its kind in the world. This was made possible through the excellent collaboration between UniSey and the SQA. Conducting the Reaccreditation through the blended mode had not been without its setbacks, notably internet connectivity, but it has proven possible and financially beneficial. All the targets set for the Reaccreditation process were successfully attained and, on the 22nd November 2021, UniSey was granted Full Accreditation until November 2026.



## Seychelles Tourism Academy Institutional Accreditation Visit



The Seychelles Qualifications Authority (SQA) conducted an accreditation review of the Seychelles Tourism Academy (STA) from 30 August to 3 September 2021. The review focused on the three areas that had been identified as needing significant improvement as per the report of the last Accreditation Visit, notably 'Leadership and Management', 'Management of Resources and the Environment', and 'Management of Quality'. In addition to these three areas, progress made towards the achievement of the 21 recommendations from the 2016 review was further addressed.

The five-day visit comprised of a tour of the campus, presentation of the self-evaluation report, group and individual interviews and documentary analysis. The Accreditation Visit ended with a verbal report of the findings to STA.

Based on the findings and recommendations detailed in the 2021 Accreditation Report, the Seychelles Qualifications Authority accorded the STA the status of Accreditation with a proviso that within six (6) months of formal approval of the recommendation for accreditation, the STA has demonstrated concrete evidence that the six highest priority recommendations have been addressed and has a plan of action to address the other recommendations of the Accreditation Visit Report.



## Seychelles Institute of Technology Institutional Accreditation Visit



The Seychelles Qualifications Authority (SQA) conducted an accreditation visit at Seychelles Institute of Technology (SIT) from the 11-15 October 2021. The scope of the accreditation included five of the six performance areas of the SQA Evaluation Framework.

The visit comprised a tour of the campus, group and individual interviews and documentary analysis. The visit ended with a verbal report of the findings to SIT. Generally, the accreditation went well. The SIT staff and all other stakeholders were open in their dialogue and contributed positively to the accreditation process.

Based on the findings and recommendations detailed in the 2021 Accreditation Report, the Seychelles Qualifications Authority accorded the SIT Provisional Accreditation status for a period of one year.

### SQA's Mission

To develop and enhance a national qualifications framework that elevates and recognises competencies whilst promoting quality education and training.

## Accreditation Unit (Schools) Activities

The Accreditation Unit for schools started the year 2021 as it usually does by reviewing the Self Evaluation Reports sent by schools at the end of 2021. The aim of the analysis is to ascertain the level of progress made by each school during the year. It also provides information which enables the unit to prioritise inspection visits.

During school closure, Unit members took the opportunity to carry out research to ensure that the process of inspection was on a par with international best practice and to review and update the tools and procedures for inspection. The professional induction of two new school inspectors, which also served as a refresher for other officers, was conducted over a week. It included a thorough look at all the procedures and tools of the school inspection process, from preparation to the publication of the inspection report. The Framework Document “Looking at Our School” and the “School Inspection Induction Manual” were the main documents employed for this important activity.

The Unit was unable to conduct any inspections until August 2021 due to school closures and pandemic related restrictions in place. In the period August to December the Accreditation Unit (Schools) carried out return visits at Bel Ombre Primary, Pointe Laure Primary and Plaisance Primary schools to assess the level of progress made in relation to recommendations from previous whole school inspections. In general, these schools had made good progress in addressing the recommendations.

A whole school inspection was conducted at Praslin Secondary School and the Inspection Team found that the school had substantially met the established standards as set out in its Framework Looking at Our School and had no major concerns.

The Unit also conducted monitoring visits to La Digue (combined) School and Baie Lazare Primary School as it was unable to carry out return visits due to the restrictions and time constraints. The Team was pleased to note that both schools had made good progress in addressing inspection recommendations. The formal Return Visit will be carried out in 2022.

The Unit also conducted an unannounced investigative visit at one school at the request of the Ministry of Education. The report was written and sent to the Minister for Education.

The Unit would like to thank the staff, students, parents and School Councils of the respective schools for their active participation and collaboration which allowed the Inspection Teams to conduct the inspection successfully.



*Accreditation Unit (Schools)  
team members at work*



*Officers of the Accreditation Unit  
(Schools) access information  
resources as part of the inspection*

## Recognition of Prior Learning

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a process whereby prior learning acquired formally, non-formally and informally is assessed against standards, and is given recognition in the form of awards of part qualifications or full qualifications. It recognises and validates competencies obtained inside and outside the formal education and training system, for purposes of certification.

The SQA received 58 new applications for RPL during the year 2021. This makes a total number of 150 enrolments on the RPL proces.

Over the course of the year, 17 candidates successfully completed the RPL process and were awarded with a full qualification.

Out of the 58 applications for the year 2021, 30 are child-minders who are currently going through the process. This is in line with a national project planned by Institute of Early Childhood and Development (IECD). Most of the child-minders have completed the compilation of their portfolio, and it is anticipated that by the beginning of February their portfolio would have already reached the Seychelles Institute of Teacher Education (SITE) for the second phase of the RPL process.

Table 1: which follows shows statistics on the RPL process from July 2018 to the end of December 2021.

**Table 1: Statistics on the RPL process**

No. of candidates who discontinued the process	17
No. of Applications in process	4
No. of candidates awarded with a full qualification (including those on the pilot project)	55
No. of candidates gap bridging at the respective Institution	1
No. of candidates in Phase 1	66
No. of candidates in Phase 2	2
Successful completion (awaiting to be awarded)	5

Table 2 below shows the areas in which the RPL process was implemented in 2021 and the number of candidates enrolled.

**Table 2: Areas in which the RPL process was implemented in 2021**

Areas	No. of candidates
Certificate in Fashion and Textiles	1
Advanced Certificate in Mechanical Engineering	1
Diploma in Human Resource Management	1
Diploma in Biomedical and Laboratory Services	2
Diploma in Emergency Medical Care	4
Certificate in Childcare and Development	30
Diploma in Occupational Therapy	4
Diploma in Business Management and Administration	1
Certificate in Accounting and Finance	1
Certificate Business Management and Administration	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>46</b>

## Training for RPL Co-ordinators

A training on RPL portfolio development and assessment was organised for RPL Co-ordinators. The training was held on Thursday 15th April and Friday 16th April 2021, at the SQA conference room, Victoria.

Seven new RPL practitioners were trained for them to be able to practice RPL. The training was facilitated by Ms. Dazielle Laporte, Principal Quality Assurance Officer for RPL at the SQA.



*Participants during the training session*



The presentations and discussions focussed also on the National Policy for RPL, the National Guidelines for the Implementation of RPL, Guidelines for Fees for RPL, and Schedule of Allowances for RPL Practitioners.



—Francis Keppel

# Evaluation and Certification of Qualifications

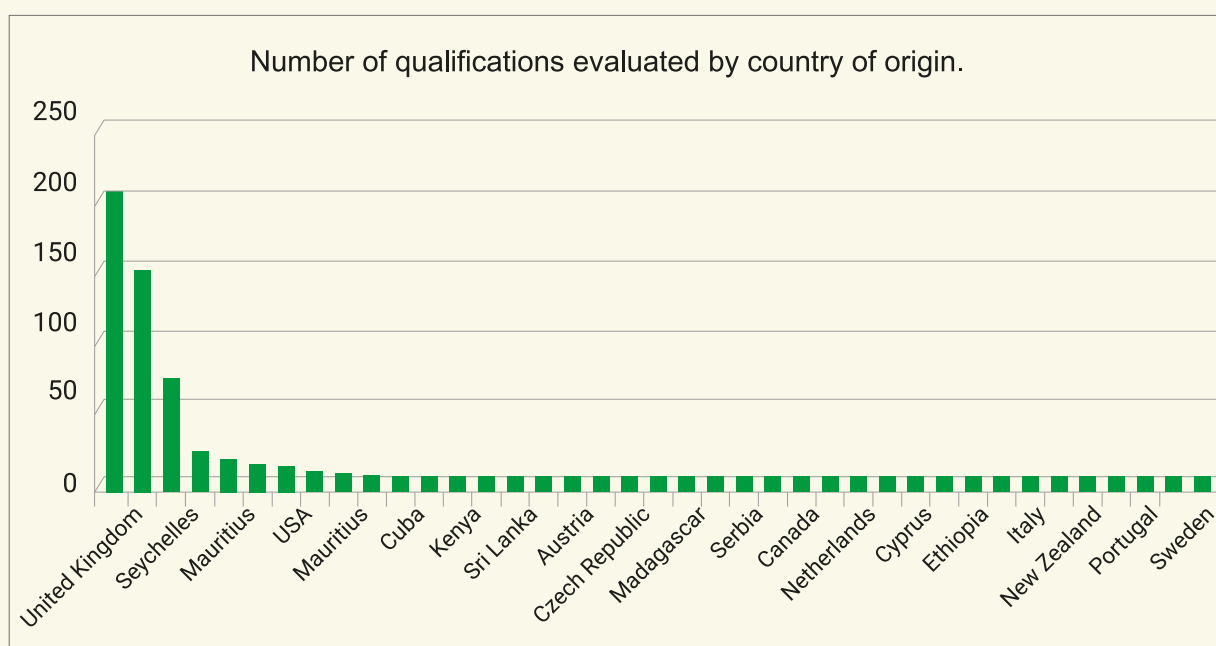
## Evaluation of qualifications

The process of evaluation of qualifications verifies the authenticity of qualifications and compares foreign qualifications with national and international qualifications registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). A total of 585 qualifications were evaluated from January to December 2021. The UK is the country with the highest number of qualifications evaluated (205), followed by India (150) and Seychelles (72). A lot of requests for this service have come from graduates who have completed their studies overseas and at the University of Seychelles as well as foreign nationals for Gainful Occupation Permit. The distribution of qualifications evaluated by country of origin from January to December 2021 is shown in table 3 and graph 1 below.

**Table 3: Distribution of qualifications evaluated by country of origin from January to December 2021**

Countries	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Country Total
United Kingdom	10	10	16	23	40	14	26	13	13	19	10	11	205
India	3	13	17	10	5	4	13	19	22	25	10	9	150
Seychelles			5	9	7	14	9	8	6	8	4	2	72
France				1		2	9	2	2		1	1	18
Mauritius		1			2		4	1		3	2		13
Malaysia			1	1	1			1	3	1	2	2	12
USA		2	1			1		1	4		2		11
Botswana			2	1			1	1		1	2	2	10
China		2		1	1		1	1	1	1		1	9
South Africa		1	2		2	1	1				1		8
Cuba		2	1	4									7
Ireland			1	2		1	1				1	1	7
Kenya		1			1			2	2				6
Australia		1	1					1	1		1		5
Sri Lanka		1			1			1		1	1		5
Switzerland		1		1	1					1			4
Austria									3				3
Cameroun				2	1								3
Czech Republic	1								2				3
Germany			1		1			1					3
Madagascar							2		1				3
Nigeria								1			2		3
Serbia												3	3
Zambia											3		3
Canada				1								1	2
Pakistan	1										1		2
Ukraine				1								1	2
Cyprus	1												1
Djibouti			1										1
Ethiopia						1							1
Ghana					1								1
Italy									1				1
Malta									1				1
New Zealand									1				1
Philippines				1									1
Portugal					1								1
Scotland		1											1
Sweden									1				1
Monthly Total	16	36	49	60	65	38	68	53	64	60	41	36	
<b>Grand Total</b>													<b>585</b>

**Graph 1: Distribution of qualifications evaluated by country of origin from January to December 2021**



## Certification of qualifications

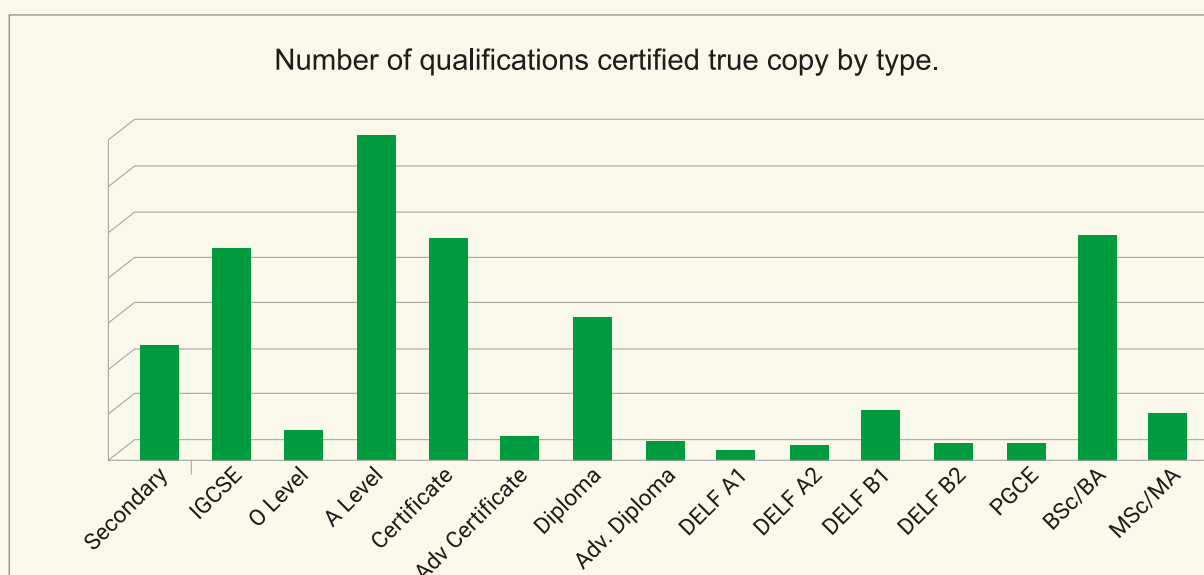
A total of 583 qualifications have been certified true copy from January to December 2021. The most popular qualifications certified are the Advanced Level certificates (136), BSc/BA (93) and Certificates (92). A lot of requests for this service have come from Seychellois learners enrolling for further education, and from foreign nationals.

Table 4 and graph 2 below show the number of qualifications certified true copy by type from January to December 2021.

**Table 4: Qualifications certified true copy by type from January to December 2021**

Qualification	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Secondary		5	1	1	0	1	6	8	6	8	4	6	46
IGCSE	2	4	7	29	16	14	7	3		1		5	88
O Level	1		1			2		3	1			2	10
A Level	2	4	6	34	14	14	10	10	13	10	7	12	136
Certificate	1	3	18	2	12		7	9	11	9	6	14	92
Adv.Certificate				3	1				1		1		7
Diploma		3	5	5	4	1	3	14	2	10	5	6	58
Adv. Diploma			1		1			1				1	5
DELTA A1												1	1
DELTA A2			2	2									4
DELTA B1		1		8	1	3	3	1				1	18
DELTA B2				1	1	2							4
PGCE					1					1	2		4
BSc/BA		6	4	6	5		7	18	7	17	7	16	93
MSc/MA		2	3					4	3	2		3	17
Monthly Total	6	28	48	91	56	37	43	71	44	58	32	69	
Grand Total													583

**Graph 2: Distribution of qualifications certified true copy  
by type from January to December 2021**



“ Who questions much, shall learn  
much and retain much ”

*-Francis Bacon*



# Training Activities

## IQA-4 From Pan-African Policy to Practice

CEO-SQA received an invitation from German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) on behalf of “Harmonisation of African Higher Education Quality Assurance and Accreditation” Initiative Phase Two (HAQAA 2) to nominate a maximum of four eligible candidates responsible for managing quality assurance at higher education institutions in Seychelles for the ‘Training Course on Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) in Higher Education’ under the title “IQA-4-Africa – From Pan-African Policy to Practice”. From the four candidates, two nominees were selected and they were Dr Sherley Marie from The Guy Morel Institute (TGMI) and Mrs. Diana Ithier from the University of Seychelles (UniSey). The online training course was held from the 18th November to the 3rd of December 2021.

The training is part of HAQAA (Harmonisation of African Higher Education Quality Assurance and Accreditation) which is an initiative which was established to support the development of a harmonized quality assurance and accreditation system at the institutional, national, regional and Pan-African levels. It is funded by the European Union Commission, of the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership. Phase one (HAQAA1) was implemented from 2016-2018. HAQAA 2 (2019 – 2022) is intended to build upon, upscale and promote the results of HAQAA1 (<https://haqaa2.obsglob.org/about-us/>).

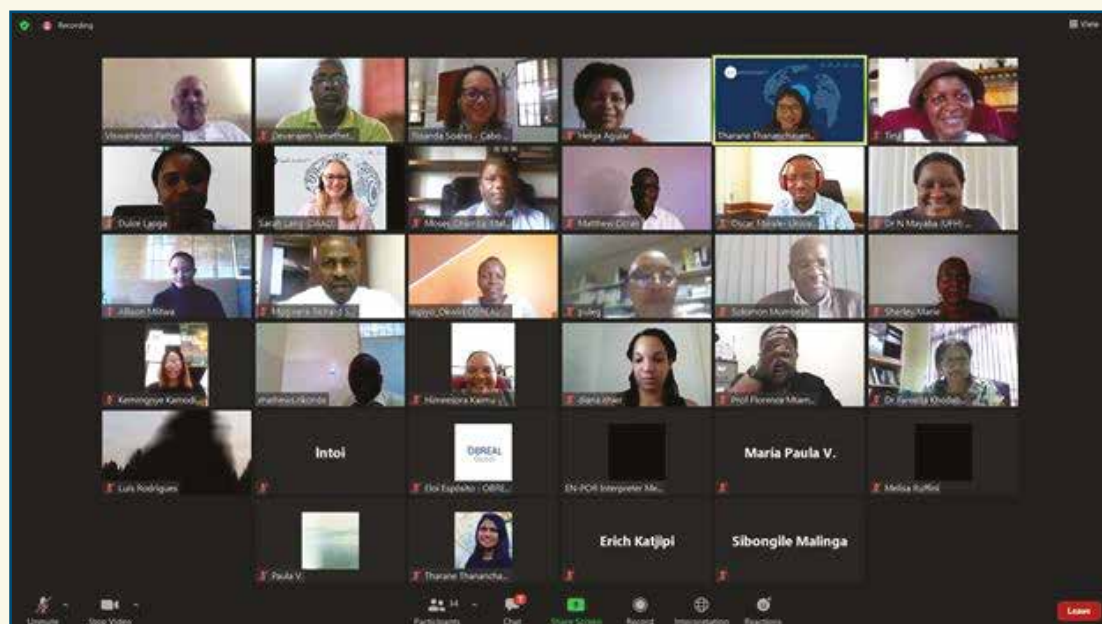


*Participants attending the sessions online*

The course consisted of six modules where participants had the opportunity to know about the HAQQA2 initiative, the policy framework and education strategies that exist in the Eastern and Southern Africa, Quality Assurance in Higher Education Institutions focusing on internal and external quality assurance. The presentations were lively and showcased examples from many countries in the African region. Furthermore, it provided participants the opportunity to share their experiences on how Higher Education Institutions were able to construct projects and ensure continuity of teaching, learning and assessment during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The training though very intensive has been very insightful and Dr Marie and Mrs. Ithier would like to thank the Seychelles Qualifications Authority (SQA), TGMI and UniSeY for their support in enabling the two participants to apply for the training, time to attend and gain the knowledge which they will share with other QA Officers and implement new initiatives in their respective institutions.

Last but not least, we extend our sincere appreciation to the DAAD and HAQAA-2 team for their excellent organisation of the training and ongoing support.



*(Article contributed by Diana Ithier and Sherley Marie)*

# Professional Development and Capacity Building Activities

## ACQF Peer Learning Webinars

The webinars are part of the Capacity Development Programme of the project “Developing the ACQF”.

The African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF) development project started in September 2019 and will be completed in September 2022. The SQA is an active participant in this development process.

Main objective of the project: lay the foundations for the ACQF as a sustainable policy instrument - a reference qualifications framework, connecting regional and national qualifications frameworks, supporting comparability transparency and contributing to relevant policies for continental integration.

Main Output:

- ACQF Policy and Technical Document with Action Plan and a package of 10 ACQF Guidelines
- Capacity development programme and networking
- Analysis and evidence: Mapping study, Feasibility study, other research

The ACQF Peer Learning Webinars foster knowledge circulation, sharing of good practice and mutual trust. In 2020 the seven Peer Learning Webinars shared 22 cases - 17 National Qualifications Frameworks and 5 Regional Qualifications Frameworks. In 2021 the five Peer Learning Webinars added new cases of African Qualifications Frameworks, RPL systems and experiences, Qualifications Registers, Learning Outcomes approach, Quality Assurance and Recognition in higher education, Referencing between frameworks and others.

Officers of the SQA participated in all the five Peer Learning Webinars for 2021 and gained valuable knowledge for their continued professional development.

Visit the ACQF Website at: <https://acqf.africa>

## Assuring the Quality of Higher Education: The case of AQU Catalunya, 08 February 2021



The webinar was organized by National Assessment and Accreditation Council in India to see how organizations are coping with COVID-19, for instance how Programme and Institutional Accreditation visits are being conducted. The webinar constituted of a powerpoint presentation followed by Questions and Answers. Topics included an overview on Catalan University system, AQU Catalunya: the agency responsible for quality assurance in Catalan, European standards and guidelines and AQU Catalunya Programme Accreditation, Assessment of teaching and research and creating knowledge. Strong points duly noted were that AQU Catalunya coped with the COVID-19 challenges in various innovative ways. Procedures were reviewed, time limits were revised, online visits were conducted and interviews were limited to 5-8 participants. This webinar came timely as the Seychelles Qualifications Authority seeks to explore innovative ways to carry out Institutional Accreditation activities amid the COVID-19 pandemic in order to keep the staff and stakeholders safe but at the same time carry on with the usual activities. The experiences and case of AQU Catalunya is well noted and is a point of reference as we pave our way forward.

### **Digitalization of Quality Assurance in Higher Education, 17 February 2021**



The Turkish Higher Education Quality Council (THEQC) organized a webinar under the theme: Digitalization of Quality Assurance in Higher Education. It featured experts from leading European Quality Assurance Institutions. The meeting constituted of presentations on Institutional Accreditation and Digital Processes. Topics included COVID-19 and quality assurance, experiences of online visitation and quality assurance and online education. Takeaways from the webinar was how COVID-19 pandemic brought about a mixture of on campus and online education, switching physical site visits to online visitation, online preparation of the panel, arrangement for institutions to request for a delay with maximum a year to conduct Programme Accreditation and Institutional Accreditation, more intensive and earlier preparation of panel, adoption of clear adoption rules, etc. The experiences show quite a number of challenges of Digitalization of Quality Assurance in Higher Education



## 16<sup>th</sup> FICCI Higher Education Summit 2021, 25-27 February 2021



The Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) jointly with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India organised the 16th Higher Education Summit, by virtual mode, from the 25 to the 27 February, 2021, on the theme “Higher Education @ 2030: R.I.S.E (Resilience, Innovation, Sustainability, Enterprise,)”. The Conference aimed at encouraging universities and higher education institutions (HEIs) to develop an ecosystem that instils resilience, encourages innovation, promotes sustainability, and enables the future workforce to be enterprising and be ready to face the disruptive future. This also applies to other stakeholders including the Government, industry, and society to work towards making systemic changes and build a robust, resilient, student-centric, and futuristic higher education system. The Summit had the participation of 450 foreign delegates from 75 countries. The topics of discussion were as follows: Future of Universities, Diversity and Inclusion in Higher Education, Transformation in Higher Education - Risk Lens an inevitable imperative, Integrating Skills within Higher Education Framework, Building a Global Higher Education Ecosystem, New Financing Models in Higher Education, Digital Education: What’s next? And Quality Benchmarking: The Fulcrum of Higher Education Reforms. The conference ended with an online exhibition.

## The DNA of Quality Assurance: The 10 ‘Es’ and Beyond, 17 March 2021



The webinar was organized by International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) to coincide with its 30th anniversary. It constituted of panel discussions on the DNA of Quality Assurance with its building blocks evolving around the 10 “Es”: Emergence, Economics, Evaluation, Enhancement, Excellence, Effectiveness, Engagement,

Essence, Efficiency, and Exceptional. The webinar also gave an insight on the potential ways to tackle these important concepts related to the system specific needs throughout its emergence, evolution, and sustainable enhancement. The webinar included the participation of universities, higher education institutions (HEIs) and other stakeholders.

### **Quality Assurance of Flexible Learning: Micro-Credentials and Digital Badges, 31 March 2021**



The Turkish Higher Education Quality Council (THEQC) organized a webinar under the theme: Quality Assurance of Flexible Learning: Micro-Credentials and Digital Badges. The webinar featured experts from leading European Quality Assurance Institutions. One major takeaway from the webinar was that the post pandemic future is more likely to bring about flexibility, portability and collaboration between the Institutions. Micro credentials, which are basically mini qualifications that demonstrate skills, knowledge and experience in a given subject, is a great example that will benefit from such. It was emphasized that quality assurance procedures and regulatory frameworks be adapted to micro-credentials and that national quality assurance agencies should include micro-credentials in external review procedures.

### **Bridging Asia-Pacific and Europe: New Qualifications and Competencies in TVET**

A virtual conference entitled: “Bridging Asia-Pacific and European - New Qualifications and Competencies in TVET” was organized by the BILT (Bridging Innovation and Learning in TVET) Project, on the 27<sup>th</sup> and the 28<sup>th</sup> of April 2021.

The aim was to connect Asia, the Pacific and Europe within the BILT project and provide a platform to explore the challenges and practical solutions with regards to new qualifications and competencies in the fields of digitalization, entrepreneurship, greening and migration. The discussions evolved around qualifications development of the four thematic areas, their impacts on the TVET sector, and offered an understanding on the major trends impacting the world of work within the three regional economy.

The presentations offered an insight on innovative measures taken by different countries and organisations in order to face the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. In many cases, the initiatives enabled the training to remain relevant, innovative, and applicable in the different context. The challenges faced by these countries were used as opportunities in order to bring about changes. These resulted into new innovations to equip learners to adapt to the fast changing world and to prepare learners for the unknown future as well.

The graphic representation of the three other presentations are shown below taken from [https://unevoc.unesco.org/bilt/asia-event/Day\\_1\\_Plenary\\_2.jpg](https://unevoc.unesco.org/bilt/asia-event/Day_1_Plenary_2.jpg)



## Application:

The application of digitalization, entrepreneurship, greening and migration into the curricula were developed around what is known as “The three I’s” process developed by BILT groups: Identification, Integration and Implementation of new qualifications and competencies within TVET.

In view of the worldwide changes due to the pandemic, it is becoming increasingly important to use digital means to facilitate learning. One way to do this is to transfer the needs of the workplace into curricula and vice versa in order to predict future jobs. The basic way of translating work into new qualifications through the 3I’s process is:

- Identification of digital technology
- Integrated into outreach curriculum
- Implementation into teaching and learning

The discussions by different speakers shed light on the possible solutions for countries to make TVET qualifications more attractive.

The new global developments have introduced new qualifications and competencies which resulted into new curricula for TVET and also the development of new platforms to ensure accessibility. In order to remain relevant and successful, TVET is required to be agile, scalable, flexible and sustainable.

## **Lessons learnt**

Because many people have to look for new employment, there is a need to shorten the line of sight between identification of new qualifications and competencies and their implementation. TVET staff must remain closely familiar with the latest industry trends to ensure instruction is up to date resulting in the provision of agile credentials that industry can trust.

## **Bridging Africa and Europe: New Qualifications and Competencies in TVET (Conference 2)**

The second conference organised by BILT was centred on Bridging Africa and Europe. The conference was held on the 15th and 16th of June 2021 and was co-hosted by the University of Cape Coast Ghana. Similar to the first conference, the objective of the second conference was to bridge the gap and share experiences between Africa and Europe. Kenya shared its experiences on entrepreneurship; Ghana shared its experiences on Migration; Sierra Leone shared its experiences on Greening, and Mali shared its experiences on Digitalisation.

It was interesting to note that from both Asia and Africa some similar trials had been done to bring about the new training skills and adapt to the changes. From the presentations it was apparent that both regions shared similar challenges. One strong message that came out from the presentations is that TVET is 'the corner stone' of any country's economy and there is a need to make people believe in TVET.

Africa has a clear vision for TVET to take its rightful place in the global community and the knowledge economy as well as to bridge the gap between institutions and industry in order provide skills for people to become entrepreneurs as well as skills to obtain a suitable job.

Industries need the right people to be able to make the changes and institutions should be able to provide the right training. Where instructors lack the new skills in the field of work, apprenticeship training can be used to bring the qualified personnel within the institutions to provide hands on training to learners. The use of technology and early introduction of TVET training at secondary school level were also portrayed as good practices to provide learners with the right setting to learn new skills.



A summary of ways to identify qualifications is shown below:



In conclusion, TVET needs to be well supported in order to assure good workforce development in the country.

## SQA holds Induction Meeting for New Staff Members

On Thursday 19 August 2021 SQA staff gathered at the Ministry of Education for the first time for an induction session. The session was not merely to explain the work of the different Units, but it was also a time to get to know one another better and clarify any issues or questions from staff. The SQA greatly values the concept of teamwork and strives to ensure that everyone is working at the same pace so that the work of the Authority progresses smoothly and without hindrance.

The induction had been an item on the agenda since the merging of the Inspectorate Unit originally a unit under the Ministry of Education, with the SQA.

The programme started with an opening statement by the CEO to formally welcome everyone present and launch the session. This was followed by a presentation on the National Qualifications Framework after which individual staff proceeded to present the work of their respective Units.



*The CEO makes an introduction and explains the aim of the Induction Meeting*

The meeting was indeed a fruitful one as it allowed staff to get to know one another better, to better understand the work of our different Units and also share our experiences. At the end of the session the CEO thanked all members of staff for their contributions and encouraged everyone to continue to work together to ensure the success of the SQA.



*Respective staff presenting the work of their Section*



*Officers interact during the presentations*

## Inside SQA

### Incoming staff

The Seychelles Qualifications Authority is glad to welcome Ms. Noella Baker who is occupying the post of Principal Standards Setting Officer since July 2021.

Ms Baker completed her primary and secondary education at Anse Boileau school and went on to join the National Institute of Education. Upon completion of her Diploma in Secondary Education she was offered a joint scholarship by the Government of Seychelles and Government of France to pursue her undergraduate studies overseas.

After leaving the teaching profession several years later, Ms. Baker was employed at the Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation as a Producer/Presenter on Paradise FM. She then went on to join the Agency for National Human Resources Development where she worked in the Scholarship Section as well as the Supports Section; in both sections she worked very closely with primary, secondary and post-secondary schools. Aside from the SBC, Ms. Baker has also worked in other media houses in various roles, such as Journalist, Editor and Head of Human Resources. Ms. Baker is also a member of the Management Committee of the Alliance Française des Seychelles since November 2020.

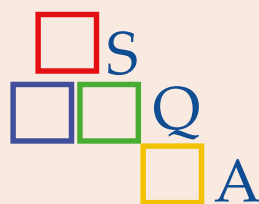
“I am happy to be part of the SQA team and I look forward to also contributing to the great work that SQA is doing. I have always wanted to do more to help raise the quality and standards of education in Seychelles and it gives me great pleasure to support the SQA in executing this function, alongside its other important roles”

Ms. Baker has taken up this post at the right time in view that for the year 2021 the SQA will intensify its work of standards development with the aim of ensuring that the majority of qualifications from the professional centres are standardized and registered on the NQF.

We would like to take the opportunity to wish Ms. Baker the very best in her new post.

“ It is as impossible to withhold education from the receptive mind, as it is impossible to force it upon the unreasoning. ”

*-Agnes Repplier*



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