

**CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES
FOR
THE GENERATION AND EVALUATION OF
QUALIFICATIONS AND STANDARDS WITHIN
THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (NQF)**

Policy Document (SAQA1340/00: Criteria and Guidelines for the Generation and
Evaluation of Qualifications and Standards within the National Qualifications Framework
(NQF)

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SOUTH AFRICAN QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

CRITERIA FOR THE GENERATION AND EVALUATION OF QUALIFICATIONS AND STANDARDS WITHIN THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (NQF)

INTRODUCTION

Various SAQA documents indicate, to varying extents, the ways in which Qualifications and Unit Standards are to be formatted for submission to the Directorate for Standards Setting and Development for registration on the NQF. They do not, however, specify the substance of those Qualifications or Standards, nor do they suggest the criteria that might be used to evaluate their quality.

This document sets out the criteria which SAQA staff, various SAQA bodies and the SAQA Qualifications and Standards Committee will use to evaluate Qualifications and Standards, and therefore serves as a resource for Standards Generating Bodies (SGBs), consultants, task teams, etc., in the Standards generating process.

The need for the consistent application of a common set of criteria for the generation and evaluation of Qualifications and Standards is largely self-evident. The chief reasons are that:

1. Form and substance are not easily separable in as complex a matter as the formulation of a Qualification and a Unit Standard. To a large extent, the way the Qualification or Standard is written is what the Qualification or Standard *is*.
2. Ready comparison of Qualifications and Unit Standards across sub-fields and fields is greatly facilitated by consistency of formatting.
3. Articulation of Qualifications and Unit Standards with one another is greatly facilitated by consistent formatting; and
4. Consistent formatting allows for the ready capture of the Qualification or Unit Standard on the SAQA database, on the SAQA web site, and in SAQA documentation.

QUALIFICATION TYPES: (QUALIFICATIONS NOT BASED ON UNIT STANDARDS, QUALIFICATIONS BASED ON UNIT STANDARDS, AND UNIT STANDARDS)

SAQA Regulations make allowance for, and distinguish between two kinds of Qualifications, which may be registered on the NQF.

1. Qualifications **based on** Unit Standards
2. Qualifications **not based on** Unit Standards (Exit-Level Outcome Qualifications).

In addition, Unit Standards are also generated and registered on the NQF. Unit Standards should, however, form an integral part of a Qualification registered on the NQF (either in the Fundamental, Core or Elective Components) and should not be generated as stand-alone Unit Standards.

SAQA's mandate is to oversee the development and implementation of a National Qualifications Framework, and to this end **it is Qualifications, not Unit Standards, which is its chief focus.** Qualifications provide the structural and social mobility, which the NQF objectives promote. In this context, Unit Standards will be evaluated as building blocks for Qualifications as well as building blocks for the outcomes-based education and training system for which the NQF stands.

DEPLOYMENT OF THE CRITERIA

The criteria below reflect in particular the *formats* in which Qualifications and Standards should be submitted.

The format of Qualifications and Standards is important, but in order to achieve the objectives of the NQF, the quality of Qualifications and Standards lies in the:

1. fitness and suitability of the Qualification for its intended purpose
2. achievement of the principles of the NQF
3. relationship between the elements of the Qualification and its Unit Standards
4. relationship of a Qualification to others in the Field or Sub-Field and to Qualifications at different levels.

Evaluators should, therefore, exercise discretion in the degree of importance which they attach to format issues. **Merely conforming to the required format does not guarantee quality.**

The ultimate quality of a Qualification or Standard will only become apparent after it has been used and been through the full quality cycle as outlined in "Criteria and Guidelines: ETQAs" (SAQA, 1999). The *continuous improvement process* will result in a better understanding of criteria for evaluating Qualifications and Standards.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN EVALUATING A QUALIFICATION

It should be emphasised that generators and evaluators of Qualifications should exercise caution in attempting to ensure that every criterion is met by every aspect of every Qualification. The criteria embody the *guidelines* for good Qualification generation and evaluation, and should not necessarily be followed to the letter. In this sense, there are no "right answers". What *is* important is to establish:

1. Whether the Qualification is likely to lead to the kind of transformation for which the NQF stands, and which the Critical Cross-Field Outcomes attempt to address – especially the issues of responsible citizenship, cultural and aesthetic sensitivity, and effective use of science and technology;
2. Whether the Qualification not only prepares learners for a particular job, but also facilitates entry to a career path, which opens up opportunities for lifelong learning.

The overarching question is: **"Will the achievement of this Qualification contribute towards the full personal development of the learner and to the social and economic development of the nation at large?"**

QUALIFICATIONS BASED ON UNIT STANDARDS

Section A: Layout and Formatting of the Qualification

1. The Qualification must be submitted in a text format compatible with the format, which will be used to capture the Qualification on the SAQA data-base e.g. ASCII or plain text, Rich Text Format (RTF), HTML, WordPerfect 7. x or below, or Microsoft Word 7.0 or below.
2. The Qualification must be submitted both in hard copy and in an electronic format easily captured by SAQA, but **not** in Zipped file format.
3. The Qualification must contain the following sections:
 - 3.1 *Title*
 - 3.2 *Field and Sub-field*
 - 3.3 *Level*
 - 3.4 *Credits*
 - 3.5 *Rationale for the Qualification*
 - 3.6 *Purpose*
 - 3.7 *Rules of Combination*
 - 3.8 *Access to the Qualification*
 - 3.9 *Learning Assumed to be in Place*
 - 3.10 *Exit level Outcomes and their Associated Assessment Criteria*
 - 3.11 *Critical Cross-Field Outcomes*
 - 3.12 *International Comparability*
 - 3.13 *Integrated Assessment*
 - 3.14 *Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)*
 - 3.15 *Articulation*
 - 3.16 *Moderation Options*
 - 3.17 *Criteria for the Registration of Assessors*
 - 3.18 *Notes (Optional)*
 - 3.19 *Unit Standard Title Matrix*

Section B: The Language of the Qualification

1. The language used in the Qualification should be:
 - 1.1 simple and accessible to the learner for whom it is intended, and
 - 1.2 appropriate to the level at which it is pegged on the Framework.
2. The Qualification should be written in short simple sentences with few dependent clauses and should be in the active voice rather than in the passive voice.
3. The language should be precise and consistent with normal usage in the sector and the use of jargon should be avoided.

Section C: Form and Substance of the Qualification

1. TITLE OF THE QUALIFICATION

- 1.1 The title of the Qualification must be unique at its level on the NQF- i.e., different from any other title registered on the NQF at that level.
- 1.2 The Qualification type must be one of the names approved by SAQA and in accordance with the approved naming conventions e.g. "Certificate", "Diploma", "Bachelors Degree", "Honours", "Masters", "Doctorate" or PhD,.
- 1.3 The title must contain an NQF level indicator.
- 1.4 The title must provide a pointed indication of the contents of the Qualification e.g. *National Certificate: Fabrication: Welding: Level 3*

2. FIELD AND SUB-FIELD OF THE QUALIFICATION

The Qualification should clearly indicate in which Organizing Field and Sub-Field it belongs. The Field and Sub-Field must be one of those already delineated by SAQA

3. LEVEL OF THE QUALIFICATION

The level assigned to the Qualification should be appropriate to the complexity of learning (as described in SAQA's Level Descriptors) embodied in the Specific Outcomes of the Unit Standards and Exit Level Outcomes of the Qualification.

4. RATIONALE FOR THE QUALIFICATION

- 4.1 The Rationale should indicate how the Qualification meets the specific needs in the sector for which it is generated.
- 4.2 The range of typical learners should be clearly identified with an indication of the occupations, jobs or areas of activity in which the qualifying learners will operate.
- 4.3 An indication should be given of the learning pathway into which the Qualification falls, e.g. which Qualifications start and end the learning pathway.
- 4.4 The Rationale should indicate how the Qualification meets the requirements that a Qualification is a planned combination of learning outcomes which have a defined purpose and will provide qualifying learners:
 - with applied competence, and
 - a basis for further learning
- 4.5 The Rationale should give evidence as to how it will provide benefits to society and the economy.
- 4.6 An indication should be given of how the Qualification will help achieve the objectives of the NQF.

5 PURPOSE OF THE QUALIFICATION

- 5.1 The Purpose should outline the contextualised purpose(s) of the Qualification and what it is intended to achieve:
- for the individual,
 - for social and economic transformation.
- 5.2 The Purpose statement should succinctly capture what the qualifying learner will know and be able to do on achievement of the Qualification. This could be a restatement of the Exit Level Outcomes

6. RULES OF COMBINATION INCLUDING LEVEL, CREDITS, MINIMUM CREDITS REQUIRED AT SPECIFIC LEVEL AND LEARNING COMPONENTS ASSIGNED TO THE QUALIFICATION

- 6.1 The Rules of Combination must indicate:
- 6.1.1 The total number of credits for the Qualification.
- 6.1.2 The number of credits in each of the three components: Fundamental, Core and Elective
- 6.1.3 How the credits making up the Elective Component must be chosen
- 6.1.4 A motivation **could** be given of why each component consists of the learning/Unit Standards that are assigned to them.
- 6.2 The following criteria must be adhered to:
- 6.2.1 the minimum number of credits must conform to the minimum number required for the type of Qualification:
- 120 credits for a Certificate
 - 240 credits for a Diploma
 - 360 credits for a Bachelors Degree
 - 480 credits for a B Tech Degree or a professional degree
- 6.2.2 At least 72 credits of the Qualification must be at or above the level of the Qualification.
- 6.3 The following guidelines apply to the NQF level of Standards included in a Qualification:
- 6.3.1 The Standards in a Qualification should not span more than three NQF levels e.g. a level 3 Qualification can consist of Unit Standards at levels 2, 3 and 4 but the Qualification may not include level 1 or level 5 Standards
- 6.3.2** A level 5 Qualification should, if at all possible, not contain Unit Standards at level 4 in the Core Component. They are permissible in the Elective Component. (The Fundamentals must be at level 5 in terms of point **6.5.1 below.**)
- 6.4 All Unit Standards in the Fundamental Component and the Core Component are compulsory. This means that there may not be optional Unit Standards in either the Fundamental or Core Components.

6.5 The Fundamental Component **must** comply with the following:

6.5.1 In all Qualifications, at all levels, the Fundamentals **MUST** be at the level of the Qualification, with the exception of the Communication Standards in the Second Language in FETCs.

QUALIFICATIONS AT LEVELS 1 – 3

- The Fundamental Component **must** consist of the following:
 - Communication: 20 credits at the level of the Qualification
 - Mathematical Literacy: 16 credits at the level of the Qualification.

QUALIFICATIONS AT LEVEL 4 (FETC)

- All Qualifications at level 4 must comply with the requirements for a Further Education and Training Certificate. The Fundamental Component **must** therefore consist of the following:
 - Communication in a First Language: 20 credits at Level 4
 - Communication in a Second Language: 20 credits at Level 3 or higher
 - Mathematical Literacy: 16 credits at Level 4.

QUALIFICATIONS AT LEVEL 5 – 8

- There are no prescriptions regarding the composition of the Fundamental Component except that the Qualification must contain a Fundamental Component with learning **at the level of the Qualification.**
- Unit Standards included in the Fundamental Component should:
 - Facilitate the rest of the learning in the Qualification e.g. literacy skills required for the rest of the learning or accountancy in a financial management Qualification, etc,
 - AND/OR**
 - Be fundamental to the career that the learner will follow on completing the Qualification e.g. ethics for funeral undertakers and insurance brokers.

6.6 Every Qualification must be a Qualification in its own right with its own specific purpose, designed for a specific group of learners. This means that there may be **no more than 40% overlap** with another registered Qualification. In practical terms this means that in a Certificate a maximum of 48 credits, and in a Diploma a maximum of 96 credits may be similar to those in another registered Qualification. The 60% “different” learning does not have to consist of new Unit Standards, but may consist of Standards registered with other Qualifications, but not in the Qualification with which there is the 40% overlap.

7. ACCESS TO THE QUALIFICATION

An indication should be given of which learners may access the Qualification. Such access should not be subjected to any unnecessary restrictions. Any restrictions

should be fully justified. This section **must not** give the conditions that providers apply to learners for access to programmes.

8. LEARNING ASSUMED TO BE IN PLACE

8.1 This section should capture and reflect the “building blocks” of knowledge, skill and understanding which are assumed to be in place and which support the achievement of the Qualification by the learner. It should be simple statements of acquired competencies that will help the learner be successful with the learning involved with the Qualification.

8.2 The competencies given in this section are **not pre-requisites for entry** to a learning programme or an institution.

9. EXIT LEVEL OUTCOMES AND THEIR ASSOCIATED ASSESSMENT CRITERIA.

9.1 The Exit-level Outcomes should indicate what the learner will be able to do and know as a result of completing the Qualification. These competencies relate directly to the competencies required for the job for which the Qualification was designed. In other words, the outcomes should show to what extent and in what ways the outcomes represent the performance of a competent practitioner at this level.

9.2 The phrase, “**the whole is greater than the sum of its constituent parts**”, describes the concept of Exit-Level Outcomes in a Unit Standards-based Qualification. The Exit-Level Outcomes of a Unit Standards-based Qualification indicate what the learner will be able to do, know and understand as a result of completing the Qualification and being competent in all the Specific Outcomes of the Unit Standards contained in the Qualification. The competencies in the individual Unit Standards together form a coherent whole, which result in the learner knowing more and being able to do more than if the competencies in the Unit Standards were achieved in isolation of each other.

An example illustrating this concept would be:

- A learner mastering a Standard dealing with types of fires and how each has to be extinguished and another Standard dealing with the operation of various types of fire fighting equipment, would, as a result of mastering both Standards, be able to operate as a fire fighter in a work environment.

9.3 Exit-Level Outcomes flow from the Purpose of the Qualification and sum up what the Qualification means for the learner as a result of the way it is designed. As a general guide, there should be 5 to 6 of them; probably no more than 8 to 9 per Qualification otherwise the Unit Standards are duplicated. The Exit-Level Outcomes **are not** a restatement of the individual Unit Standards. The Exit-Level Outcomes must be written in point form in the Qualification.

9.4 All Outcomes require Assessment Criteria to enable the learner to demonstrate mastery. Exit-Level Outcomes should, as a general rule, each have 2 to 3 Associated Assessment Criteria. These **should not be** a restatement of Assessment Criteria in the Unit Standards of the Qualification

- 9.5 The Exit-Level Outcomes and their Associated Assessment Criteria should be written in the same format as the Specific Outcomes and Assessment Criteria in the Unit Standards making up the Qualification and in all cases should be assessable and make sense.
- 9.6 The preferred format for Exit-Level Outcomes, Specific Outcomes and Assessment Criteria is:
- **EXIT- LEVEL OUTCOMES & SPECIFIC OUTCOMES:**
 VERB + NOUN + (Possible Modifier)
 e.g. Prioritise claims according to Social Security categories
 - **ASSOCIATED ASSESSMENT CRITERIA & ASSESSMENT CRITERIA:**
 NOUN + VERB + QUALIFIER/MODIFIER
 e.g. Social Security categories are listed in tabular form with examples illustrating which people fall into each category
- 9.7 The Assessment Criteria should require the qualifying learner to apply his/her learning in an integrated way which reflects the acquisition of the required expertise. This expertise should reflect:
- applied competence
 - enhanced theoretical and applied knowledge.
- 9.8 The Assessment Criteria should provide assessors with sufficient guidelines for developing particular assessment tasks at learning programme level (i.e., to develop formative and summative methods of assessment appropriate to the situation and context of the learners.
- 9.9 An indication could be given of any exit points for learners who do not complete the Qualification and what will happen to any Unit Standards completed and credits attained.

10. CRITICAL CROSS-FIELD OUTCOMES

An indication should also be given of how the Critical Cross-Field Outcomes are developed by the Qualification.

11. INTERNATIONAL COMPARABILITY

- 11.1 International Comparability is an important component of a Qualification to ensure that our Qualifications are at least on a par with the best that are on offer internationally. Qualifications registered on the NQF should reflect best practice internationally.
- 11.2 International Comparability should give a clear indication of **how and to what degree** the Qualification compares with what is offered/done internationally. The search should not be restricted to only those countries that have Qualifications Frameworks although they are good sources to start with.

- 11.3 It is particularly important to compare the Qualification and its Unit Standards with:
- Qualifications offered in countries that are leaders in the sector e.g. Malaysia are leaders in the forestry industry and India are leaders in Jewellery Manufacturing
 - Qualifications in SADC countries
 - Qualifications in other developing countries
 - Best Practice in the sector internationally.
- 11.4 The comparison should not be restricted only to other nationally registered Qualifications but should include:
- Programmes offered by higher education institutions
 - In-house training offered by leading organisations/companies
 - Short courses and any other type of legitimate programmes offered by providers in other relevant countries
 - International Best Practice
 - International Accords/Agreements covering training in the sector/field.
- 11.5 An indication must be given of why the particular countries and qualifications used were chosen for the comparison.
- 11.6 A statement such as, “**South Africa is at the cutting edge in this field**” is unacceptable unless it is justified with evidence from what is offered internationally. When the Qualification states that international best practice was used as the benchmark, an indication must be given of the name of those best practices and where they can be found and how this Qualification compares with those practices. An unmotivated statement is not acceptable.
- 11.7 A comparison with other Qualifications offered in South Africa is **not wanted**.
- 11.8 The International Comparability report should list the names of the Qualifications/courses/programmes consulted and their countries of origin and explain how they compare with the SA Qualification in terms of content, approach, duration, etc.
- 11.9 A final conclusion regarding the comparability should be given.

12. INTEGRATED ASSESSMENT

- 12.1 The term ‘Integrated Assessment’ implies that theoretical and practical components should be assessed together. The section should indicate that during integrated assessments, the assessor should make use of formative and summative assessment methods and assess combinations of practical, applied, foundational and reflective competencies.
- 12.2 The integrated assessment must be appropriately incorporated into the Qualification to ensure that the purpose of the Qualification is achieved. In other words, there should be clear relationships between the Purpose

statement(s), the Exit Level Outcomes and the Integrated Assessment statement(s).

- 12.3 The assessment process should indicate adequately how a combination of **formative and summative** assessments is used to assess qualifying learners.
- 12.4 The range of formative and summative assessments should adequately cover a range of assessment approaches and must, amongst other things, adequately assess applied competence.
- 12.5 The assessment process must also be capable of being applied to the Recognition of Prior Learning.
- 12.6 All information given in this section should comply with the SAQA Guideline Document, "**Guidelines for Integrated Assessment** " available on the SAQA website.

13 RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)

- 13.1 There should be an indication that the Qualification may be achieved in whole or in part through the Recognition of Prior learning, which includes learning outcomes achieved through formal, informal and non-formal learning and work experience.
- 13.2 The approach to the Recognition of Prior Learning must reflect the objectives and principles of the NQF and must be in line with the SAQA policy document, "**The Recognition of Prior Learning in the context of the South African NQF**", available on the SAQA website.

14. ARTICULATION POSSIBILITIES WITH RELATED QUALIFICATIONS (EITHER GENERIC OR SPECIFIC ARRANGEMENTS FOR ARTICULATION)

- 14.1 An indication must be given of which Qualifications the Qualification realistically articulates with both vertically and horizontally. This should include any specific arrangements that have been made for articulation with particular Qualifications.
- 14.2 The way in which Qualifications at a lower level articulate with the Qualification is not required.

15. MODERATION OPTIONS

The mechanisms and bodies for internal and external moderation of learner achievements and of institutions providing the learning opportunities must be adequately indicated without reference to specific ETQAs.

16. CRITERIA FOR THE REGISTRATION OF ASSESSORS

- 16.1 The criteria for the registration of assessors assessing this Qualification should be listed. This should include Qualifications required and registration with any ETQA and/or professional or statutory body.

- 16.2 The Qualification required for the assessor and the moderator should be a relevant Qualification at least one level higher on the NQF than that of the Qualification, if possible.

17 NOTES

Any information that is regarded as vital for a complete understanding of the Qualification and which is not included elsewhere in the Qualification may be included as notes. This **must not** include curriculum or subject matter content.

This section should be used circumspectly and notes to a Qualification would be the exception rather than the rule.

18 MATRIX OF UNIT STANDARDS

- 18.1 An indication must be given of the Unit Standards contained in each of the three components of the Qualification, viz. Fundamental, Core and Elective Components.

- 18.2 The Unit Standards must be listed in the matrix to indicate the following:

- The title of each Standard as registered on the NLRD or as given in the new Standard to be registered on the NQF with the Qualification.
- The NLRD ID numbers of registered Unit Standards. This must be left blank in the case of Standards still to be registered with the Qualification.
- The NQF level of the Standards
- The credits allocated to the Standards.

- 18.3 The credit totals for each of the three components must tally with that given in the Rules of Combination and the total credits for the Qualification must tally with that given elsewhere in the Qualification.

QUALIFICATIONS NOT BASED ON UNIT STANDARDS (QUALIFICATIONS BASED ON EXIT LEVEL OUTCOMES)

The same provisions apply for these Qualifications as for a Unit Standards-based Qualification except that:

1. The Exit Level Outcomes of the Qualification have to be written to indicate **all the outcomes** for the Qualification. These outcomes must be listed each with its own Assessment Criteria.
2. An indication should be given of how many credits are allocated as a whole to each of the three Components, viz. Fundamental, Core and Elective.
3. A Unit Standard title matrix **must not** accompany the Qualification, but all other sections as required for a Unit Standards-based Qualification are required. These are:

- 3.1 *Title*
- 3.2 *Field and Sub-field*
- 3.3 *Level*

- 3.4 *Credits*
- 3.5 *Rationale for the Qualification*
- 3.6 *Purpose*
- 3.7 *Rules of Combination*
- 3.8 *Access to the Qualification*
- 3.9 *Learning Assumed to be in Place*
- 3.10 *Exit level Outcomes and their Associated Assessment Criteria*
- 3.11 *Critical Cross-Field Outcomes*
- 3.12 *International Comparability*
- 3.13 *Integrated Assessment*
- 3.14 *Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)*
- 3.15 *Articulation*
- 3.16 *Moderation Options*
- 3.17 *Criteria for the Registration of Assessors*
- 3.18 *Notes (Optional)*

UNIT STANDARDS

Section A: Layout and Formatting of the Unit Standard

1. The Unit Standard must be submitted in a text format compatible with the format, which will be used to capture the Unit Standard on the SAQA data-base e.g. ASCII or plain text, Rich Text Format (RTF), HTML, WordPerfect 7. x or below, or Microsoft Word 7.0 or below.
2. The Unit Standard must be submitted both in hard copy and in an electronic format easily captured by SAQA, but **not** in Zipped file format.
3. The Unit Standard should contain the following sections:
 - 3.1 *Title*
 - 3.2 *Field and Sub-Field*
 - 3.3 *Credits*
 - 3.4 *NQF Level*
 - 3.5 *Purpose*
 - 3.6 *Learning Assumed to be in Place*
 - 3.7 *Specific Outcomes*
 - 3.8 *Assessment Criteria*
 - 3.9 *Accreditation Process, including*
 - *Moderation*
 - 3.10 *Range Statement(s)*
 - 3.11 *Notes including:*
 - *Critical Cross-Field Outcomes*
 - *Embedded Knowledge*
 - 3.12 *Supplementary information, if required*

Section B: The Language of the Unit Standard

1. The language used in the Unit Standard should be:
 - 1.1 simple and accessible to the learner for whom it is intended, and
 - 1.2 appropriate to the level at which it is pegged on the NQF

3. The Unit Standard should be written in short, simple sentences with few dependent clauses and should be in the active voice rather than in the passive voice.
3. The language should be precise and consistent with normal usage in the sector and the use of jargon should be avoided.

Section C: Form and Substance of the Unit Standard

1. UNIT STANDARD TITLE

- 1.1 The title must be unique i.e. totally different from any other registered on the NQF. There may not be a Unit Standard with the same title registered at a different level on the NQF.
- 1.2 The title should provide a concise, yet comprehensive and pointed indication of the contents of the Unit Standard.

2. FIELD AND SUB-FIELD OF THE UNIT STANDARD

The Unit Standard should clearly indicate in which Organizing Field and Sub-Field it belongs. The Field and Sub-Field must be one of those already delineated by SAQA.

3. UNIT STANDARD LEVEL

- 3.1 The level assigned to the Unit Standard must be appropriate in terms of the complexity of learning (as described in SAQA's Level Descriptors), which is embodied in the Specific Outcomes and Assessment Criteria of the Unit Standard.
- 3.2 The level should also be appropriate for the learning pathway within which the Unit Standard is located.

4. CREDITS ATTACHED TO THE UNIT STANDARD

The credit value assigned to the Unit Standard must be appropriate in terms of the definition of a credit (1 credit = 10 notional hours of learning) - i.e., the credits assigned should reflect the average length of time the average qualifying learner would take to master the learning in the Unit Standard.

5. PURPOSE OF THE UNIT STANDARD

- 5.1 The Purpose should contain a concise statement of the contextualised purpose of the Unit Standard and what its usage is intended to achieve,
 - for the individual,
 - for the Field or Sub-Field.
- 5.2. The Purpose statement should succinctly capture what the qualifying learner will know and be able to do on achievement of the Unit Standard.
- 5.3. The Purpose statement should reflect the need for a qualitative improvement in the competence of qualifying learners, in respect of:

- enhanced ability (performance); and
- enhanced learning

(In other words, the Purpose must extend beyond the mechanical completion of tasks within a job, to an enhanced understanding of the processes and the context as preparation for related and subsequent learning.)

6. LEARNING ASSUMED TO BE IN PLACE

- 6.1 This section should capture and reflect the “building blocks” of knowledge, skill and understanding which are assumed to be in place and which support the achievement of the Unit Standard by the learner.
- 6.2 It should be simple statements of acquired competencies that will help the learner be successful with the learning involved in the Unit Standard.
- 6.3 The competencies given in this section **are not pre-requisites for entry to a learning programme or an institution.**

7. SPECIFIC OUTCOMES

- 7.1 The Specific Outcomes are the “things” that the learner will know, understand and be able to do as a result of the learning associated with the Unit Standard. Together they contribute to and indicate competence in the Unit Standard as a whole.
- 7.2 The Specific Outcomes should contribute to the attainment of the Purpose of the Unit Standard. In other words, the Specific Outcomes are the Purpose statement broken down into meaningful components.
- 7.3 The Specific Outcomes **must be** measurable and verifiable.
- 7.4 The Specific Outcome statements must focus on the qualifying learner’s capabilities. In other words, they should avoid simply describing specific procedures, methods or tasks, which are used to demonstrate competence.
- 7.5 The Specific Outcomes should:
- have a broad and inclusive applicability across a range of contexts
 - not require frequent review and overhaul because of changing technology or work practices; and
 - represent competence outcomes for learning and performance, **not descriptions of tasks or jobs.**
- 7.6 There should be four to six Specific Outcomes (More than six may indicate that the Standard is trying to address more than one purpose; fewer than four may indicate that the focus of the Unit Standard is too narrow.)
- 7.7 They should be written in the form:

Verb + noun + possible modifying phrase(s)

8. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

- 8.1 Each Specific Outcome requires its own set of Assessment Criteria, which together, if successfully demonstrated, indicate competence in the Specific Outcome by the learner.
- 8.2 The Assessment Criteria should relate to the full range of learning, including the following:
- Development of Critical Cross-Field Outcomes within the context of the Specific Outcomes
 - Demonstration of the range of embedded and underlying knowledge related to the performance of specific actions; and
 - Reflection on the skills, knowledge and values and their application to a range of contexts.
- 8.3 The Assessment Criteria should capture the requirements for fair, valid and reliable assessment procedures that make use of tools and methods appropriate to the Organizing Field, Sub-Field and Unit Standard level. They should set the *guidelines* for developing particular assessment tasks at learning programme or service level. (This is to ensure that Assessment Criteria are not simply checklists for one or more assessment instruments.)
- 8.4 The Assessment Criteria should contain qualifying statements that enable valid and reliable assessment to be done. These could be such phrases as:
- within Standard time
 - following all safety procedures
 - according to workplace procedures
 - ...including the following elements ...
 - using informal, personal language.
- 8.5 The preferred format is:

Noun + Verb + Qualifying Phrase(s)

9. ACCREDITATION PROCESS (INCLUDING MODERATION)

This section should indicate the mechanisms and bodies for internal and external moderation of learner achievements and of institutions providing the learning opportunities without naming specific bodies. These mechanisms and bodies for internal and external moderation of learner achievements and of institutions providing the learning opportunities must meet the requirements for:

- Transparency
- Affordability; and
- Development of the Field, Sub-Field and the NQF.

10. RANGE STATEMENTS

- 10.1 Range Statements should indicate:
- The typical scope of the Unit Standard
 - The typical context of the Unit Standard.
- 10.2 Range Statements should show clear relationships between the Specific Outcomes and the Assessment Criteria in the Unit Standard.

10.3 They should define the limits, parameters and areas for inclusion and areas for exclusion of the Unit Standard.

10.4 These statements should describe the situations and circumstances in which competence must be demonstrated. Generally they are stated with the Specific Outcome or the Assessment Criteria to which they relate. However, where necessary, range statements that apply to the whole Unit Standard may be listed separately in this section.

11. NOTES

11.1 Critical Cross-Field Outcomes

This section should contain an indication of **which and how** the Critical Cross-Field Outcomes are supported in the Standard.

Example: *“Problem solving”*

Recognize and solve production problems creatively to maximize productivity in an organization.

11.2 Embedded Knowledge

11.2.1 The *Embedded Knowledge* section should describe the knowledge base required for competent performance and achievement of the Unit Standard, representing what the qualifying learner has to:

- Understand; and
- be able to explain in the area (sub-field) at the particular level

Example:

“Integration of information technology and adult basic education and training”

11.2.2 This should not be an ad hoc list of topics but an ordered, classified grouping of knowledge that underpins and is an intrinsic part the competencies in the Unit Standard.

11.2.3 If however, the embedded knowledge forms an integral part of the Assessment Criteria and it is clearly evident from them, then a separate embedded knowledge list need not be given.