



## SAQA Board Statement of Deliberations 2 of 2019

In fulfilment of its mandate, the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Board met on 25 July 2019 to facilitate the offering of effective services, which result in improved social outcomes for the people of South Africa. To this end, the SAQA Board made decisions with far reaching effects for South Africa. These decisions include speeding up the registration of higher education qualifications, registering qualifications with learner achievements that were not previously registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and addressing the proliferation of qualifications. To demonstrate SAQA's commitment to serving the public, it achieved 96% of its performance targets for 2018/19 and received a clean audit.



### Approval of External Audit Opinion and Audited Annual Financial Statements as at 31 March 2019

As the Accounting Authority in terms of the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA), the SAQA Board approved the External Audit Opinion for the 2018/19 financial year. The Audit Opinion raised no material findings on both performance information and compliance. This means that SAQA complied fully with the PFMA with no irregular and fruitless expenditure. Since this is the 23<sup>rd</sup> consecutive time that SAQA received an unqualified audit opinion it adds to SAQA's long and illustrious history as a model statutory body that executes its mandate in a responsible and accountable manner. The Board also approved SAQA's Audited Annual Financial Statements as at 31 March 2019. The Audited Financial Statements reveal that SAQA is in a good financial position and is a going concern.



### Approval of Annual Integrated Report for the year ended 31 March 2019

The SAQA Board also approved SAQA's Annual Integrated Report for the year ended 31 March 2019. The Report reveals that SAQA achieved 50 of its 52 targets set for the year. The other two targets were partially achieved. That SAQA achieved 96% of its targets together with full compliance with the PFMA shows that indeed SAQA serves the public effectively and accountably. The Report together with the Audited Annual Financial Statements will be submitted to the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Higher Education and Training at the end of August 2019.



### Speeding up the Registration of Higher Education Qualifications on the NQF

In the interest to serve the public, the SAQA Board set up a special committee for the sole purpose to review and approve the registration of higher education qualifications that must be registered by 31 December 2019. This comes as a result of the realignment of qualifications, which was necessitated by the move from an 8-level to a 10-level NQF. When the NQF Act 67 of 2008 was promulgated, a process began to align all higher education qualifications with new 10-level NQF. In that process, qualifications were put into the following categories:

- Category A: Require minor changes;
- Category B: Require less than 50% changes; and
- Category C: Require major amendments.

With the 31 December 2019 deadline approaching, the SAQA Board is prepared to review and register all outstanding qualifications. This means that if all the outstanding qualifications are recommended by the Council on Higher Education (CHE) to SAQA for registration on the NQF, the SAQA Board has the mechanism to register all the qualifications, without compromising quality. This will ensure that higher education institutions and learners will not be prejudiced for advertising and taking up these qualifications, respectively.



### Registration of Qualifications with Learner Achievements that were not registered on the NQF

When the South African NQF was established 21 years ago, all institutions were given the opportunity to submit existing qualifications to SAQA for registration on the NQF. Most institutions complied with this requirement but others did not. As a result, there are learner achievements that are recorded against qualifications that were never registered on the NQF. The consequences for learners who have achieved such qualifications are serious because once the NQF Amendment Bill is signed into law, these qualifications would be classified as misrepresented. This means they will be placed on the Register of Misrepresented Qualifications and the institutions that offered them would be reported, and imprisonment and/or fines will be imposed. To protect learners and safeguard the quality of our education system, the SAQA Board will register all such qualifications with the provision that institutions will provide content for all those qualifications that do not currently have content and take them through the quality-assurance process.



### Providing Foreign Institutions Advisory Service at no cost to the Public

The SAQA Board ratified the decision not to charge a fee for the advice SAQA gives to the public on the accreditation and legal status of foreign institutions. SAQA will continue to offer this very important service for free until such time the SAQA Board sees the need to charge for this service. Learners who want to study abroad should check the status of foreign institutions with SAQA before they enrol. They can do so by visiting the SAQA [website](#) and following the on-screen instructions. This will ensure that their qualifications will be recognised by SAQA at the end of their studies.



## Criteria for Verification of Foreign Qualifications

In fulfilling its mandate as prescribed by the NQF Act, SAQA recognises a foreign qualification after it has determined that at the time of enrolment of the qualification holder:

- a) The awarding institution was recognised or accredited by the relevant authority;
- b) The qualification was part of the formal education and training system in the country of origin;
- c) The institution was authorised to offer the qualification;
- d) The qualification holder successfully completed all the requirements; and
- e) The documents submitted to SAQA were authentic with no evidence of tempering.

For the full criteria please refer to the [Policy and Criteria for Evaluating Foreign Qualifications within the South African NQF](#).

In light of the above-mentioned criteria, the Board decided that:

- If SAQA has determined beyond reasonable doubt that an institution meets the first criterion, it will recognise the qualification provided it meets all the other verification criteria;
- If SAQA has determined beyond reasonable doubt that an institution does not meet the first criterion, it will not recognise the qualification; and
- If SAQA could not determine beyond reasonable doubt what the status of an institution is and whether it does or does not meet the first criterion, it will not recognise the qualification until such time it has determined the status of the institution beyond reasonable doubt.

The implication of this decision is that in such cases, formal applications will be closed without refunds.



## Suspension of the De-registration of the CFAD Qualification

At its 123<sup>rd</sup> meeting held on 07 December 2018, after considering the recommendation from the CHE, the SAQA Board de-registered the Diploma in Integrated Fine Art in Animation and Design offered by the Centre for Fine and Art Animation & Design (CFAD) from the NQF. Subsequent to the de-registration, new information came to the Board's attention, that is, the CHE's decision to de-accredit the CFAD and the Department of Higher Education and Training's decision to de-register CFAD were suspended by the Court, pending the hearing of arguments. It is on this basis, that the SAQA Board suspended the de-registration of the Diploma in Integrated Fine Art in Animation and Design offered by the CFAD, pending the Court decision.



## Registration of Qualifications and Part-Registrations on the NQF

The SAQA Board always strives to offer effective public service. To this end, the Board registered 106 qualifications that were recommended by the CHE to SAQA for registration on the NQF. All these qualifications were registered between 2 and 4 months, which is within the required 5 months. In addition, the SAQA Board, after consideration of the recommendation from the CHE, transferred 75 registered qualifications from the University of Limpopo to Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University. These qualifications were previously offered by the former Medunsa Campus of the University of Limpopo. The implications are that learners can be assured that these qualifications are genuine and have gone through a rigorous quality-assurance process. These qualifications can be accessed [here](#).



## Registration of Qualifications and Recording of Learning Programmes on the NQF

The SAQA Board observed that between 2012 and 2018, there has been an increase in the number of qualifications recommended to SAQA for registration on the NQF by the CHE. These qualifications are submitted by providers to the CHE for accreditation and subsequent registration by SAQA. Ordinarily, an increase in the number of qualifications offered in the country is not necessarily a bad thing as it increases the pool from which learners can choose. However, these qualifications contain similar titles, credits and in most instances similar content, which if registered will create duplicates. To address this problem, the SAQA Board decided that:

- a) As from 2 January 2020, the CHE must ensure that it recommends the registration of a qualification to SAQA if a qualification has never been registered on the NQF;
- b) If a qualification is already registered on the NQF, the CHE must recommend the recording of a learning programme against the registered qualification on the NQF; and
- c) If the qualification is already registered on the NQF and the institution wishes to add a specialisation on the registered qualification, the CHE must submit a recommendation to add a specialisation to SAQA not to register another qualification.



## De-recognition of the Direct Marketing Association of South Africa

The SAQA Board de-recognised the Direct Marketing Association of South Africa (DMASA) and de-registered its three professional designations on the NQF, namely:

- Interactive and Direct Marketing Practitioner;
- Interactive and Direct Marketing Professional; and
- Master of Interactive and Direct Marketing.

DMASA's de-recognition was necessitated by its failure to comply with SAQA's recognition requirements. SAQA recognises a professional body if it:

- a) Complies with, and adheres to, good corporate governance practices;
- b) Protects the public interest in relation to services provided by its members;
- c) Promotes professional development of its members to meet their relevant designation requirements;
- d) Has a code of conduct for its members to adhere to; and
- e) Does not apply unfair exclusionary practices in terms of membership admission.

Once a professional body has been recognised, SAQA monitors continuous adherence to ensure that the public is protected. In this case, DMASA could not meet SAQA's requirements, which means that the public may choose to associate with DMASA knowing that it is no longer a SAQA-recognised professional body. A list of all SAQA-recognised professional bodies and their registered professional designations is available [here](#).

The SAQA Board believes that good governance is not an end in itself, rather it is a means to good management, good performance, good stewardship of public money, good public engagement and, ultimately, good outcomes. Therefore, its conduct through the decisions it makes and the guidance it provides, shows the Board's determination to achieve good outcomes for the people of South Africa.

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**Date:** 05 August 2019