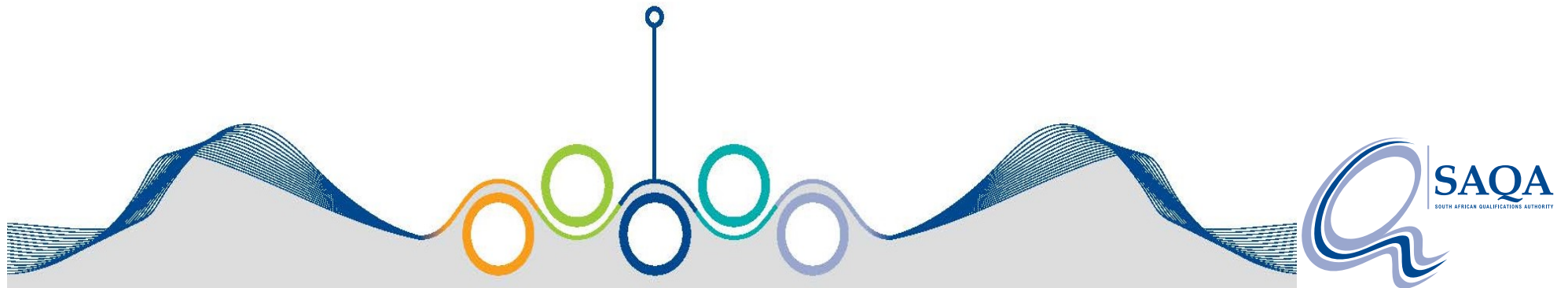


SOUTH AFRICAN QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

REVISED ANNUAL STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE PLAN PLAN

2020/21-2024/25

2022/23



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SOUTH AFRICAN QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

Revised Strategic Plan for 2020/21 – 2024/25

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APPROVED BY THE SAQA BOARD ON
24 OCTOBER 2019 (SAQA 02126/19)

REVISED ON 29 JANUARY 2021 AND 29 JULY 2021

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Executive Authority Statement

Dr Blade Nzimande

Executive Authority: The South African Qualifications Authority

Accounting Officer Statement

SAQA, a section 3A public entity, has an unbroken record of unqualified audit opinions in its twenty-three-year history. During the last five years, SAQA reported to three different Ministers and saw two Board members resign. The Minister replaced one Board member in December 2018 and the second in April 2020. Nevertheless, the organisation continued to strive towards achieving a world-class National Qualifications Framework for South Africa. This period focused on implementing the NQF policies and consolidating SAQA's international footprint. Some of the highlights during this period included the reinstatement of the NQF Forum in 2018 and the establishment of the first NQF Stakeholder Forum. The latter event coincided with the National Qualifications Framework marking its twenty-first anniversary. SAQA also continued to show leadership internationally through its efforts to embed the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) into the NQF and to introduce a framework for recognising the achievements of refugees and asylum seekers.

During the last five years, the DPME led the process to evaluate the implementation of the NQF Act, 2008. The NQF Act Implementation Evaluation took place, in 2017 and the President signed the NQF Amendment Act in August 2019 and published it for information. SAQA expects the President to proclaim this Act during these five years. The President also signed the Addis Convention and deposited it with UNESCO. The Addis Convention came into effect on 15 December 2019.

SAQA worked closely with the Council on Higher Education (CHE) on the NQF Alignment Project. This project entailed aligning all registered qualifications to the ten-level NQF established by the NQF Act, 2008 from the old eight-level NQF under the SAQA Act, 1995. This project ended in March 2020. SAQA also undertook to "clean" the records on the National Learners' Records Database (NLRD) in preparation for implementing the NQF Act 2008, as amended.

SAQA's focus for the 2020/25 Planning Cycle is on streamlining and automating its processes to become more efficient in its service provision. The NQF Act 2008, as amended, gives SAQA more responsibility and authority. SAQA must ensure that it is ready to implement the Act as soon as the President proclaims it. It is also essential for SAQA to strengthen its leadership role.

SAQA is also focusing on ensuring its financial sustainability through its paid-services. Furthermore, SAQA is consolidating its relationships with counterparts in SADC, on the African continent and globally.

The Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdown had severely hampered SAQA's ability to generate funding through its paid-services. Closure of South Africa's borders resulted in SAQA not receiving requests for the evaluation of foreign qualifications. National and provincial departments had also slowed down recruitment during this period, and therefore did not make use of SAQA's verification services. Professional bodies, like many organisations, suffered financial difficulties, and early indications were that SAQA would not receive professional body fees in 2020/21. Many professional bodies requested to be de-recognised so that they were not liable for the fee.

SAQA received forty-four percent of its funding from the fiscus in 2020/21. The Department of Higher Education and Training imposed a further budget cut of one million, two hundred and eighteen thousand rand (R 1,218 million). This cut, coupled with SAQA's inability to generate funding, resulted in SAQA not being able to balance its budget, and not being able to pay staff salaries from November 2020. SAQA faced the daunting possibility of staff retrenchments.

The current Board's term of office ends on 31 December 2020. I thank the Board for its leadership and look forward to the handover to the new Board.

Recruitment for a new CEO is underway. I take this opportunity to thank SAQA's staff for their continuous efforts in ensuring that SAQA meets its commitments. Despite the financial challenges and frozen posts, staff have taken on more responsibility to ensure that SAQA continues to contribute to the further development and implementation of the NQF.



Dr J Reddy

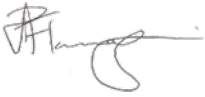


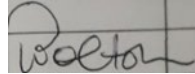

Acting Accounting Officer

The South African Qualifications Authority

Official Sign-Off

It is hereby certified that this Strategic Plan:

- Was developed by the Management of SAQA under the guidance of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology;
- Takes into account all the relevant policies, legislation and other mandates for which SAQA is responsible; and
- Accurately reflects the Impact, Outcomes and Outputs which SAQA will endeavour to achieve over the period 2020/21 – 2024/25.

People Management Senior Manager	Registration & Recognition Senior Manager	Authentication Services Senior Manager	Research Senior Manager	ICT Senior Manager
				
Ms P Flanagan	Mr J Nel	Mr W Radu	Dr H Bolton	Mr J Ntsioa

Governance, People & Strategy Executive		Chief Finance Officer		Accounting Officer	
Ms N Naidoo		Ms S Netili		Dr J Reddy	

Approved by:

Dr B Nzimande

Minister: Higher Education,
Science and Innovation

SOUTH AFRICAN QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY



Revised Strategic Plan for 2020/21 to 2024/2025

Part A: Our Mandate

1. Constitutional Mandate

1.1 The Bill of Rights, in Section 29 of the **Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996**, provides for Education:

1. Everyone has the right
 - a) to a basic education, including adult basic education; and
 - b) to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible.
2. Everyone has the right to receive education in the official language or languages of their choice in public educational institutions where that education is reasonably practicable. To ensure the effective access to, and implementation of, this right, the state must consider all reasonable educational alternatives, including single medium institutions, taking into account
 - a) equity;
 - b) practicability; and
 - c) the need to redress the results of past racially discriminatory laws and practices.
3. Everyone has the right to establish and maintain, at their own expense, independent educational institutions that
 - a) do not discriminate based on race;
 - b) are registered with the state, and
 - c) maintain standards that are not inferior to standards at comparable public educational institutions.
4. Subsection (3) does not preclude state subsidies for independent educational institutions.
5. The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act, No. 67 of 2008 (as amended by the Higher Education Laws Amendment Acts 26 of 2010), provides for the NQF as follows:
 - (1) The objectives of the NQF are to—
 - (a) Create a single integrated national framework for learning achievements;
 - (b) Facilitate access to, and mobility and progression within, education, training and career paths;
 - (c) Enhance the quality of education and training; and
 - (d) Accelerate the redress of past unfair discrimination in education, training and employment opportunities.

- (2) The objectives of the NQF are designed to contribute to the full personal development of each learner and the social and economic development of the nation at large.
- (3) SAQA and the Quality Councils (QCs) must seek to achieve the objectives of the NQF by—
 - (a) Developing, fostering and maintaining an integrated and transparent national framework for the recognition of learning achievements;
 - (b) Ensuring that South African qualifications meet appropriate criteria, determined by the Minister as contemplated in section 8, and are internationally comparable; and
 - (c) Ensuring that South African qualifications are of acceptable quality.

2. Legislative and Policy Mandates

2.1 National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008 (Act 67 of 2008 as amended)

SAQA was established under the SAQA Act, No. 58 of 1995 and continues to exist under the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act, No. 67 of 2008 (as amended by the Higher Education Laws Amendment Acts 26 of 2010 and the NQF Amendment Act, No 12 of 2019). The functions of SAQA are set out in sections 5(3) and 13 of the NQF Act, which became effective on 1 June 2009. It positions SAQA as the oversight body of the NQF and the custodian of its values. In summary, SAQA must:

- ✳ Advise the relevant Ministers and decision-makers on NQF matters, oversee the implementation of the NQF, liaise and consult with the QCs on issues relating to the implementation of the NQF;
- ✳ Develop policies and criteria for the registration of qualifications, assessment, recognition of prior learning and credit accumulation and transfer, recognising a professional body and registering a professional designation, and develop level descriptors;
- ✳ Maintain a National Learners' Records Database (NLRD), to ensure that South African qualifications are of acceptable quality, to provide an evaluation and advisory service with respect to foreign qualifications; and
- ✳ Conduct or commission research into NQF related matters, to collaborate with international counterparts, and to initiate and drive a clear, coordinated communication and advocacy strategy to assist providers, learners and the public at large in knowing, understanding and valuing the NQF architecture, and how it benefits them.

The NQF Amendment Act, No 12 of 2019 that was signed by the President on 13 August 2019 and published for information, further adds to SAQA's mandate.

"The purpose of the NQF Amendment Act is:

- › To amend the National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008, so as to amend and insert certain definitions;
- › to provide for the verification of all qualifications or part-qualifications by the SAQA;
- › to provide for the formulation of criteria for evaluating foreign qualifications;
- › to provide for the establishment and maintenance of separate registers of misrepresented or fraudulent qualifications or part-qualifications;
- › to provide for a separate register for professional designations;
- › to provide for the referral of qualifications or part-qualifications to the SAQA for verification and evaluation;
- › to provide for offences and penalties which have a bearing on fraudulent qualifications; and
- › to provide for matters connected therewith.

Source: NQF Amendment Act, 2019

The NQF Amendment Act “seeks to create an enabling mechanism for the South African Qualifications Authority (“SAQA”) and the three Quality Councils (“QCs”) to have legislative competence to address challenges with regard to fraudulent or misrepresented qualifications or part-qualifications. In this regard, a provision is made for the referral of all qualifications or part-qualifications presented for study, employment or appointment to the SAQA for verification or evaluation. Furthermore, a provision is also made for the referral of fraudulent qualifications or part-qualifications to the relevant professional body. A provision has also been made for offences in respect of fraudulent qualifications or part-qualifications.

The SAQA is also empowered to establish and maintain separate registers for professional designations, misrepresented qualifications and part-qualifications, and fraudulent qualifications and part-qualifications. The SAQA is also empowered to evaluate foreign qualifications or part-qualifications and to formulate and publish criteria for evaluating foreign qualifications or part-qualifications.

A provision has also been made to allow the SAQA, as the body with overall responsibility for the National Qualifications Framework (“NQF”) and for the coordination of the sub-frameworks, to be consulted when the QCs advise the Minister on matters relating to their sub-frameworks. The rationale for this amendment is to mitigate the current situation where QCs do not consult with the SAQA about issues pertaining to the development and management of their sub-frameworks and other matters related to their quality assurance role. This situation creates a risk for the enduring public credibility of the NQF and the quality assurance regime.”

Source: MEMORANDUM ON THE OBJECTS OF NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK AMENDMENT BILL, 2018 presented to Parliament.

The Public Finance Management Act (1999)

SAQA commits to sound corporate governance, integrity, efficiency, and compliance. This Strategic Plan considers section 30.1 of the Treasury Regulations, 2005, promulgated under the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (PFMA) as well as the Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans, issued by the DPME in June 2019.

2.2 Policy Mandates

SAQA has direct responsibility for implementing, managing or overseeing the following Policy mandates:

- The White Paper on Post- School Education and Training (November 2013)
- Priorities and Guidelines for the NQF and other directives issued by the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology

Concerning the White Paper on Post-School Education and Training (2013): the implementation of this document finds expression in the Draft National Plan for Post-School Education and Training discussed below.

In terms of the Ministerial Guidelines: The Minister: Higher Education, Science and Technology, may publish guidelines that highlight priorities that SAQA and the QCs must consider. The Minister did not publish Guidelines in 2019 as the NQF Act Implementation Evaluation Improvement Plan replaced the 2019 Guidelines. SAQA considered the contents of the latter in the development of this Strategic Plan.

3 Institutional Policies and Strategies over the Five-Year Planning Period

3.1 National Development Plan 2030

Chapter 9 of the National Development Plan (NDP) deals with IMPROVING EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INNOVATION. In its focus on the **Youth and Education**, the NDP lists the following targets:

- (i) Improve the school system, including increasing the number of students achieving above 50 per cent in literacy and mathematics, increasing learner retention rates to 90 per cent and bolstering teacher training.
- (ii) Strengthen youth service programmes and introduce new, community-based programmes to offer young people life-skills training, entrepreneurship training and opportunities to participate in community development programmes.

- (iii) Strengthen and expand the number of FET colleges to increase the participation rate to 25 per cent.
- (iv) Increase the graduation rate of FET colleges to 75 per cent.
- (v) Provide full funding assistance covering tuition, books, accommodation and living allowance to students from poor families.
- (vi) Provide a tax incentive to employers to reduce the initial cost of hiring young labour-market entrants.
- (vii) Subsidise the placement sector to identify, prepare and place matric graduates into work. The subsidy will be paid upon successful placement.
- (viii) Expand learnerships and make training vouchers directly available to job seekers.
- (ix) Formalise the graduate recruitment scheme for the public service to attract highly skilled people.
- (x) Expand the role of state-owned enterprises in training artisans and technical professionals.

Enabling milestones

- (i) Increase the quality of education so that all children have at least two years of preschool education, and all children in grade 3 can read and write.
- (ii) Broaden social cohesion and unity while redressing the inequities of the past.

Critical actions

An education accountability chain, with lines of responsibility from the state to the classroom.

In line with the priorities of the plan, **people with disabilities** must have enhanced access to quality education and employment. Efforts to ensure relevant and accessible skills development programmes for people with disabilities, coupled with equal opportunities for their productive and gainful employment, must be prioritised.

3.2 National Development Plan Five-Year Implementation Plan

Government has identified seven priorities derived from the Electoral Mandate and the 2019 State of the Nation Address:

- Priority 1: Economic Transformation and Job Creation
- **Priority 2: Education, Skills and Health**
- Priority 3: Consolidating the Social Wage through Reliable and Quality Basic Services
- Priority 4: Spatial Integration, Human Settlements and Local Government
- Priority 5: Social Cohesion and Safe Communities
- Priority 6: A Capable, Ethical and Developmental State
- Priority 7: A better Africa and World

Priority 2, namely, *Education, Skills and Health*, is relevant to the Department of Higher Education and Training. This priority contributes to pillar 2 of the 3 NDP pillars, which is *Capabilities of South Africans*.

The DHET's NDP five-year Implementation Plan does not specify any direct contribution from SAQA.

3.3 Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF)

DHET's five-year MTSF refers to the following outcomes:

- Access;
- Quality;
- Responsiveness;
- Success; and
- Efficiency.

DHET has recommended that SAQA and the QCs consider the following three outcomes in their Strategic Plans:

- Improved quality;
- Expanded access (RPL and Articulation); and
- Improved efficiency.

3.4 National Spatial Development Plan

SAQA awaits the publication of this document.

3.5 Draft National Plan for Post-School Education and Training

The White Paper for Post-School Education and Training of 2013 sets out a vision for a post-school education system that enriches lives, promotes social justice and overcomes historical inequalities. This Draft National Plan for Post-School Education and Training (the Plan) gives effect to that vision.

The post-school education and training (PSET) system provide for three main types of public education and training institutions: community education and training (CET) colleges, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) colleges and higher education institutions, each with an important role to play in the system. The Plan provides for an expanded and differentiated public system, in which the TVET and the CET sectors should enrol 3.5 million students by 2030 or well over two-thirds of all public PSET students. All colleges and universities that provide post-school education and training opportunities across the sector will work closely with skills development providers, as identified in the National Skills Development Strategy (2030).

The sections of the Plan that are relevant to SAQA are detailed below.

Goal	Objective	Outcomes	Strategies
Goal 1: An integrated and coordinated PSET system	To build a PSET system that is integrated and coordinated to achieve efficiencies and improve the effectiveness	1.1 Clear and streamlined roles and responsibilities of all key stakeholders and role players	1.1 The roles, responsibilities, functions and funding frameworks of the quality councils, the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) are being refined to reduce duplication and improve efficiency.
		1.3 A simplified National Qualifications Framework (NQF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The DHET will work with SAQA and the Quality Councils to address all NQF-related issues, including, among other things, simplifying occupational qualification nomenclature and developing policies on NQF matters. The quality councils and SAQA will simplify accreditation and registration processes. The sub-frameworks, in particular, the higher education qualifications sub-framework (HEQSF) and the occupational qualifications sub-framework (OQSF), should be reviewed to ensure alignment and reduce the proliferation of programmes leading to qualifications. NQF-related policies will be reviewed to eliminate contradictions.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NQF Act will be reviewed, considering the recommendations of the report of the NQF evaluation undertaken by the Department in collaboration with the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME).
		1.4 Increased articulation for students between and within the NQF sub-frameworks, and between and within institutions	Unnecessary and unfair barriers to student articulation between programmes and NQF levels will be addressed through a joined-up planning process between the DHET, Department of Basic Education (DBE), Council on Higher Education (CHE), QCTO and Umalusi.
		1.5 Aligned policy and legislation	Policy and legislation will be reviewed to consider the implications of this Plan.
Goal 3: A responsive PSET system	To provide qualifications, programmes and curricula that are responsive to the needs of the world of work, society and students	3.1 A diverse range of programmes relevant to the aspirations and needs of the locality and responsive to community needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CET colleges will offer skills/occupational programmes, community education programmes, general or academic programmes (particularly the General Education and Training Certificate for Adults [GETCA] and the National Senior Certificate for Adults [NASCA]) and foundational learning programmes. By 2030, TVET colleges will offer general vocational programmes (particularly the National Certificate Vocational [NCV]), skills/occupational certificate programmes, foundational learning programmes, higher certificate programmes (initially in partnership with universities), advanced certificate programmes, and, beyond that, those with capacity will offer diplomas. Higher education colleges will offer a range of undergraduate certificate, diploma and degree programmes in specific niche areas. Universities will offer general formative programmes, professional programmes and career-focused programmes at the undergraduate level, all of which may be offered through extended curriculum programmes, as well as a range of postgraduate professional and research-oriented programmes. Universities will be supported to develop engagement policies and strategies (with the CHE advising on policy, reporting, monitoring and sharing of good practice) and to integrate these into teaching, learning and research.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through the Internationalisation Policy Framework, outbound scholarship and academic exchange opportunities will be broadened, and foreign postgraduate enrolments encouraged.
		3.2 A diverse range of programmes responsive to the world of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CET colleges will analyse municipal local economic development plans and Labour Market Intelligence Unit (LMIU) data to assess demand and develop programmes, including programmes which articulate with TVET studies, and skills development programmes where needed by other government departments. SAQA and the QCTO will review all NQF Level 2 and 3 occupational certificates and NQF Level 4 National Occupational Certificates (NOCs) with particular regard to the possibility of simulated workplace-based experience components, as there are limitations currently with placements for WPBL. TVET Centres of Specialisation will initially focus on 13 priority trades in demand and will extend to other trades as identified in the pilot review. University enrolment and Programme Qualification Mix (PQM) planning will be reviewed to ensure that they are clear and responsive to the changing national and global contexts. Occupational programmes will be responsive to global technological advancements.

3.6 NQF Act Implementation Evaluation Improvement Plan, 2018

DPME evaluated the implementation of the NQF Act in 2016. The findings of the evaluation resulted in the development of the NQF Act Implementation Evaluation Improvement Plan, 2018. The purpose of the Improvement Plan is to ensure that the relevant stakeholders address the evaluation findings. SAQA has included its commitments from the Improvement Plan for this planning period, in the Strategic Plan.

Below is an extract of the Improvement Plan highlighting SAQA's deliverables.

Recommendation	Outputs to achieve the objective	Activity to produce output	Deadline	Target
Specify the roles and responsibilities of the NQF Forum, [CEO Committee] and Inter-Departmental NQF Steering Committee in greater detail. Particular emphasis should	SAQA, after consultation, strengthens the System of Collaboration:	Review the System of Collaboration	31 December 2020	Amendments to the NQF Act are taken into account when the

Recommendation	Outputs to achieve the objective	Activity to produce output	Deadline	Target
be placed on defining the scope and authority for a decision of each structure, their accountability and reporting lines.	R4.1 - Roles and responsibilities specified in the NQF Act to strengthen the System of Collaboration.			review of the System of Collaboration is done.
Ensure that the NQF Forum is again held on at least an annual basis. For this to happen, SAQA will require the support from the M: HET and DG: HET. It is important to note that for the forum to achieve its goals, it needs to be attended by the right policymakers who have the authority to address the complex issues being raised.	A dedicated channel created for CEO Committee to engage DHET and DBE on policy issues	Amend System of Collaboration, and in particular the Terms of Reference of the CEO Committee	31 December 2020	Amendments to the NQF Act are taken into account when a review of the System of Collaboration is done.
The DHET should clarify and document the role of the NQF Directorate in the policy framework, and review its location within the department.	Establish monitoring mechanisms and report on the functioning of the System of Collaboration	Use DHET's Guidelines on M&E to establish a monitoring and evaluation protocol for the System of Collaboration	1 April 2021	The new M&E protocol is ready for implementation in the next financial year
There is currently no implementation of the registered qualifications designed for adults, i.e. the NASCA and the GETC. In this regard, Umalusi, DHET and the DBE must clarify the status of the NASCA and the GETC, in terms of where in the system the qualifications are to be offered, how they will be funded and what upwards	Provide advice to the Minister about the transfer of the quality assurance of N1-N3 qualifications	SAQA will coordinate meetings between the QCTO and Umalusi to draft a proposal on the transfer of the quality assurance of N1-N3 qualifications to the QCTO	31 March 2021	Develop a project plan on the transitional transfer arrangements

Recommendation	Outputs to achieve the objective	Activity to produce output	Deadline	Target
<p>articulation possibilities exist for those completing the NASCA and the GETC.</p> <p>SAQA, after consultation with the QCTO and Umalusi, will advise the Minister about the transfer of the quality assurance of N1-N3 qualifications to the QCTO.</p>				
Based on the theories of change, DHET in collaboration with the DBE, SAQA and Quality Councils, must develop a detailed implementation plan that outlines the key activities, outputs and outcomes that the NQF is expected to achieve over a five-year period.	Analyses and reporting on trends in data relating to key policy initiatives, in terms of the indicators and performance metrics	SAQA reports on the analyses on trends in data relating to key policy initiatives.	31 March 2021	NLRD trends reporting on analyses relating to key policy initiatives
SAQA after consultation with the Quality Councils must issue guidelines clarifying what a part-qualification is in the context of their sub-framework and specify what is allowable or not in terms of a part-qualification (e.g. will a part-qualification require a workplace component in the OQSF).	Guidelines issued on registration of part-qualifications in line with policy and criteria requirements	Guidelines published	30 September 2020	Guidelines published
SAQA must use the data from the NLRD to track and monitor policy changes and developments across the NQF. The indicators and performance metrics could be defined by the CEO Committee, after consultation with the Inter-Departmental NQF Steering Committee.	Establish an NQF-wide workflow system to track and monitor the status of qualifications and part-qualifications submitted to the	Develop and implement the MIS tracking system for qualifications and part-qualifications submitted to the QCs for accreditation	31 March 2020	MIS tracking system developed and implemented (subject to budget availability)

Recommendation	Outputs to achieve the objective	Activity to produce output	Deadline	Target
	QCs for accreditation and to SAQA for registration on the NQF	and to SAQA for registration on the NQF		

3.7 Policy Initiatives

SAQA, the apex organisation responsible for overseeing the further development and implementation of the NQF, will work with its NQF Partners to ensure implementation of the following NQF-related Policies and Criteria:

- National Qualifications Framework(NQF) Level Descriptors;
- Policy and Criteria for Recognising a Professional Body and Registering a Professional Designation for the purpose of the National Qualification Framework Act, Act 67 of 2008;
- Policy and Criteria for the Registration of Qualifications and Part- Qualifications on the National Qualifications Framework;
- National Policy and Criteria for Designing and Implementing Assessment for NQF Qualifications and Part-Qualifications and Professional Designations in South Africa;
- National Policy for the Implementation of the Recognition of Prior Learning (amended);
- National Policy for Credit Accumulation and Transfer(CAT) within the National Qualifications Framework(NQF);
- Amended Policy and Criteria for Evaluating Foreign Qualifications within the South African NQF;
- Addendum on the Recognition of Qualifications of Refugees and Asylum Seekers;
- NQF Implementation Framework 2020-2025;
- The Articulation Policy for the Post-School Education and Training System of South Africa; and
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Coordination Policy.

SAQA reviews its policies periodically to ensure currency and alignment to legislation. During this period, SAQA will finalise its Policy on the Misrepresentation of Qualifications, which will be in line with the latest amendments to the NQF Act, 2008.

4 Relevant Court Rulings

In the matter between *Accelerated Christian Education South Africa* (ACE) (Applicant) and *South African Qualifications Authority* (SAQA) (1st respondent); *Council for Further Education and Training Quality Assurance* (Umalusi) (2nd respondent):

ACE provides education programmes through many schools known as the Schools of Tomorrow (SOT). ACE lodged an urgent application against SAQA and Umalusi on 3 March 2017. The essence of the application was to restrain SAQA and Umalusi from informing the public that the SOT Grade 12 College Entrance Certificate (ACE Certificate):

- a. Has not been registered on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework (GENFETQSF);
- b. That the ACE certificate has been de-registered; and
- c. That the qualification is invalid.

SAQA, supported by Umalusi, launched a counter application that sought declaratory orders that:

- a. The provisional accreditation granted by Umalusi to ACE has been terminated;
- b. ACE has been operating unlawfully as an assessment body of qualifications;
- c. ACE be prohibited from acting as an assessment body;
- d. ACE be ordered to inform ACE students that it may not enrol new students until it has been accredited by Umalusi;
- e. It is declared that ACE has been operating unlawfully since 15 September 2016 and continues to operate unlawfully, in that it has been acting as an assessment body of certain identified qualifications without having been accredited as an assessment body by Umalusi.

Final Order:

- (i) It is declared that the ACE Grade 12 qualification awarded by independent schools to learners at any date prior to this order is registered and is a valid qualification;
- (ii) It is declared that the ACE qualification presently being offered by independent schools to learners who had enrolled for the learning programme leading to the qualification before 30 June 2016, is a qualification registered on the NQF as a qualification that has passed its end date, i.e. with the last date of enrolment is 30 June 2016 and the last date for achievement being 30 June 2019;
- (iii) SAQA is interdicted and restrained from informing the public anything different than what is provided for in (i) and (ii) above; and
- (iv) It is declared that ACE's Grade 12 qualification offered through independent schools has never been assessed by Umalusi or an accredited assessment body, and ACE's qualifications, therefore, do not comply with the 2012 and 2017 Umalusi Policies, which fact does not impact on the validity or registration of the qualifications, and consequently, the qualifications already obtained and to be awarded to learners who had enrolled for the learning programmes leading to qualifications before 30 June 2016, will have the same status as the qualifications had before 30 June 2015, and should be treated accordingly.

Part B: Our Strategic Focus

5 Vision

A world-class National Qualifications Framework that works for the People in South Africa

6 Mission

Oversee the further development and implementation of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and advance its objectives, which contribute to the full development of each lifelong learner and to the social and economic development of the nation at large

7 Values

SAQA regards the NQF as a framework for communication, coordination and collaboration across education, training, development and work. SAQA's staff commitment expressed in the SAQA Staff Declaration underpins its work. SAQA staff commits to serve the life-long learner by:

- Building a dynamic, responsive, internationally respected and living NQF;
- Developing a visionary, influential and reflective leadership who cares;
- Registering quality qualifications and professional designations that articulate;
- Building a competent, skilled and caring staff component; and
- Increasing the visibility, understanding and appreciation of the NQF through advocacy and communication over the next five years.

"We also commit to being more accountable, listen more attentively, and to be more respectful and accepting of one another. We pledge to be more aware of the work that we do as an organisation and to appreciate how each of us contributes to serving all people, particularly the poor, rural and marginalised".

“We commit to creating a sustainable environment, where new ideas are encouraged and given due consideration. We commit to reflect on our practices and strive to communicate without fear, favour or prejudice.”

Extracts from the Staff Declaration 2019

8 Situational Analysis

The Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdown had severely hampered SAQA’s ability to generate funding through its paid-services. Closure of South Africa’s borders resulted in SAQA not receiving requests for the evaluation of foreign qualifications. National and provincial departments have also slowed down recruitment during this period, and therefore did not make use of SAQA’s verification services. Professional bodies, like many organisations, suffered financial difficulties, and early indications were that SAQA would not receive professional body fees in 2020/21. Many professional bodies had requested to be de-recognised so that they are not liable for the fee.

SAQA received forty-four percent of its funding from the fiscus for 2020/21. The Department of Higher Education and Training imposed a further budget cut of one million, two hundred and eighteen thousand rand (R 1,218 million). This cut, coupled with SAQA’s inability to generate funding, resulted in SAQA not being able to balance its budget and not being able to pay staff salaries from November 2020. SAQA faced the daunting possibility of staff retrenchments.

The environment in which SAQA operates is below.

a) The strategic focus over the five-year planning period

SAQA, as the custodian of the NQF and its values, strives for:

 A dynamic NQF that is responsive, adapts to, and supports the changing needs of life-long learning;

 Visionary and influential leadership that drives a clear, evidence-based NQF Agenda;

 Well-articulated quality-assured-qualifications and relevant professional designations that instil trust and meet the needs of the people;

 A competent and capable team, dedicated and resourced to develop and maintain the NQF; and

 Stakeholders and role-players who are aligned to deliver on the NQF.

SAQA has incorporated DHET’s outcomes as follows:

SAQA's Outcome Statements	DHET's Outcome Statements
A dynamic NQF that is responsive, adapts to, and supports the changing needs of life-long learning	Expanded Access
Visionary and influential leadership that drives a clear, evidence-based NQF Agenda	Improved Quality; Improved Efficiency; Expanded Access
Well-articulated quality-assured-qualifications and relevant professional designations that instil trust and meet the needs of the people	Improved Quality; Expanded Access
A competent and capable team, dedicated and resourced to develop and maintain the NQF	Improved Efficiency
Stakeholders and role-players who are aligned to deliver on the NQF	Improved Efficiency

In light of these priorities, SAQA will ensure that it:

- Registers **quality** qualifications;
- Coordinates **Articulation and RPL** initiatives;
- Lobbies to strengthen and align relevant **legislation**; and
- Continues to **Simplify** the NQF.

b) The medium and long term policy environment

The President signed the NQF Amendment Act in August 2019 but has not proclaimed it yet. The NQF Amendment Act, No. 12 of 2019 gives SAQA additional responsibilities in terms of verifying national qualifications, reporting on misrepresented and fraudulent qualifications, and advising the Minister on the sub-frameworks.

The NQF Act will change further within these five years. The NQF Act Implementation Evaluation identified the need for further changes to the Act, and the NQF Act Implementation Evaluation Improvement Plan captures this recommendation.

The recommendations state: "The DHET, the Department of Basic Education (DBE), SAQA and the Quality Councils must, as a matter of priority, revise the objectives of the NQF set out in the Act to ensure that they describe the specific contribution of the NQF to the systemic goals. To do this, the DHET, SAQA and Quality Councils must consider the following actions. SAQA, DHET and the Quality Councils must create theories of change or log frames as tools to clarify the following:

- (a) The aims and objectives of the NQF, and how these will contribute to the broader goals of the education and training system, and
 - (b) How implementers will achieve the specific NQF objectives.
- This will inform the required changes to the objectives of the NQF Act.”

Another area for proposed amendments is on the roles and responsibilities of the NQF structures. Proposed changes include strengthening SAQA’s position as the apex body within the NQF space.

A change in the NQF Act will probably result in a shift in SAQA’s strategy.

c) Challenges experienced by the institution in the performance environment and mechanisms to address the challenges over the planning period

SAQA’s biggest challenge is **financial sustainability**. Its allocation of voted funds comprise less than half (44%) of its conservative budget.

The lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic had severely affected SAQA’s ability to generate revenue for services rendered. SAQA has three sources of revenue generation:

- ✱ The evaluation of foreign qualifications;
- ✱ The verification of national qualifications; and
- ✱ Services offered to recognised professional bodies.

With South Africa’s borders closed, SAQA had not received any requests for the evaluation of foreign qualifications in the first quarter. There is uncertainty over when travel into South Africa for work or study purposes will resume. SAQA verifies national qualifications mainly for national and provincial departments. There has been little demand for this service in the first quarter, and with further budget cuts in the public service, SAQA does not expect to match the number of requests for this service in 2019/20. Professional bodies find themselves experiencing financial difficulties, and many had indicated that they are unable to pay SAQA their annual fee.

This leaves SAQA facing serious financial challenges. The unbudgeted costs of preparing the workplace for staff to return to work under tightly regulated and controlled lockdown measures had cost SAQA over one million rand and DHET had cut SAQA’s budget further by one million, two hundred and eighteen thousand rand. Despite SAQA’s best efforts, it could not balance the revised budget. Early indications are that SAQA will not be in a position to continue as a financially viable entity. To mitigate its dire financial situation, SAQA has already imposed a freeze on filling non-essential vacancies and is considering a retrenchment plan as it goes through a re-structure process.

Many of SAQA's processes are manual, outdated and time-consuming. With adequate resources, we will be able to automate and streamline processes; employ artificial intelligence to repetitive processes; improve our productivity; and develop innovative and effective solutions to complex problems. .

In the period, SAQA will continue to look for alternative sources of funding for specific projects and will continue to charge for services rendered, where possible.

The second challenge is SAQA's ability to manage the **transition** to the NQF Act. The NQF Act passed in 2008 and came into effect in June 2009. SAQA is still dealing with some of the transitional issues from the SAQA Act, 1995 to the NQF Act, 2008. This challenge exists because of SAQA's limited resources to deal with the problems and the differences in understandings of the NQF Act among entities in the NQF family. The amendments to the NQF Act worsens this problem and further changes expected in the next five-year period will compound this further.

SAQA's approach will be to phase in the implementation of the amendments to the NQF Act and only to take on funded-functions.

d) Emerging priorities and opportunities implemented during the planning period

The latest amendments to the NQF Act, 2008 adds to SAQA's mandate. Implementation of these amendments will be phased in during the planning period. In addition to this, SAQA plans to do the following:

- ✳ Develop a Strategy and **Plan for SAQA's sustainability**;
- ✳ In its efforts to improve efficiency: develop a **plan for automating processes** across SAQA; and
- ✳ Develop an **Organisational Development Plan** that will include the re-configuration of SAQA's structure in light of the amendments to the NQF Act and planned automation.

Despite having these plans in place, SAQA will not be able to implement its automation plan, without funding

e) Information on the capacity of the institution to deliver on its mandate

The SAQA Board approved SAQA's new microstructure for implementation, in January 2021. Only once the microstructure has been implemented, monitoring and evaluation completed to identify and fill gaps, will the Board approve the final microstructure. The Board expects to approve this microstructure by March 2022.

At this stage, it seems that the new structure accommodates eighty-two posts.

SAQA has a staff complement of **82** members. The distribution of staff is as follows:

CEO plus support = 3

Programme 1: Governance, Strategy, Legal, People, Communications & Stakeholder Relations: 16

Programme 1: Finance and Administration: 15

Programmes 2 – 5: NQF Operations: 48

The current capacity is the minimum structure required to carry out SAQA's functions. SAQA's approach to managing unexpected and short-term crises, is to make use of short-term contract staff. Also, SAQA will be considering ways to automate processes so that capacity is available to deal with more complex functions.

SAQA's new structure was implemented on 1 April 2021, and may change following monitoring and evaluation. The SAQA Board is expected to approve the final structure in March 2022.

f) Relevant stakeholders that contribute to the institution's achievement of its outcomes

SAQA has a Board that is appointed by the Minister: Higher Education, Science and Technology. The Board delegates some of its work to various committees, but maintains overall responsibility. The Board sets the strategy and monitors its implementation. The current Board's term of office ends on 31 December 2020.

The NQF family (SAQA, the QCs, DHET and DBE) are the primary stakeholders responsible for implementing the NQF Act. The SETAs, private education and training providers, professional bodies, universities, TVET and community colleges, and private and public schools, indirectly contribute to SAQA's achievements through their association with SAQA and members of the NQF family.

The Departments of Justice, Home Affairs and International Relations also play a role in SAQA's achievements by contributing to SAQA's evaluation of foreign qualifications role and in SAQA's ability to create and maintain the Register of Fraudulent Qualifications. The South African Police Services play their part by investigating cases of misrepresented qualifications.

8.1 External Environment Analysis

SAQA operates in a complex and challenging environment. A description of the external environment follows.

a) Background information on factors contributing to the performance of policy and regulatory institutions

SAQA is a Schedule 3A public entity. Approximately half of its funding comes from the state coffers. SAQA is expected to raise the balance of funds through the provision of paid services. This impacts on SAQA's ability to fully deliver on its mandate as the funds generated through paid services are limited. The services offered by SAQA arise from SAQA's mandate described in the NQF Act. The activities in which SAQA engages also align with the functions and powers given to SAQA by this Act.

In addition to the NQF and Public Finance Management Acts, SAQA also subscribes to the King Code on Good Corporate Governance (King IV) and has sound governance practices. SAQA has had unqualified audit opinions from the Auditor-General throughout its twenty-three-year history.

b) Background information on the demand for services and other factors that inform this Strategic Plan

At the heart of SAQA is a directorate that is responsible for registering qualifications and part-qualifications, recognising professional bodies and registering professional designations. The demand for these services continues to grow as the learning and work environments change. An institution should not offer a qualification if SAQA did not register it on the NQF. No person may use a designation registered with SAQA if s/he is not a member of the respective professional body that registered the designation. SAQA recognises professional bodies for five years. If they no longer comply with SAQA's Policy and Criteria, the professional bodies are de-recognised and their designations de-registered. A recognised professional body, among other criteria, must ensure that they load records of all members who have achieved professional designations on the National Learners' Records Database (NLRD).

The NLRD is a national treasure in that it is the largest and only official database for all records of learning in the country. The NQF Act requires the QCs to maintain a database of learner achievement and submit that data to the NLRD. In terms of the Amendment Act, QCs are expected to load learner records onto the NLRD within 30 days of the data being quality assured. The NLRD also contains registers of all registered qualifications and part-qualifications, providers who are accredited to offer these qualifications and a separate register for professional designations. Separate databases also exist for all foreign qualification holders and their qualifications if they used SAQA's Evaluation service; and all national qualifications that were verified by SAQA, but are not currently on the main NLRD database. The Registers of Misrepresented and Fraudulent Qualifications are new additions to the NLRD. SAQA must establish the Registers in these five years. All the registers of the NLRD that comply with the Protection of Personal Information (POPI) Act are available to the public through SAQA's website.

The latest amendments to the NQF Act provide for the referral of all qualifications or part-qualifications presented for study, employment or appointment to SAQA for verification or evaluation. Learner achievements on the NLRD are used to verify national qualification achievements.

The NQF Act 2008, as amended also provides for the QCs to consult SAQA when the QCs advise the Minister on matters relating to their sub-frameworks. This provision makes sense because SAQA is the body with overall responsibility for the National Qualifications Framework and the coordination of the sub-frameworks. The amendment responds to the current situation where QCs advise the Minister about their sub-frameworks and other matters related to their quality assurance role independently of SAQA. The advice does not necessarily take into account its effect across the system. SAQA must be responsive and quickly act when QCs request advice.

SAQA also has a responsibility to provide the public with information about the NQF. To this end, SAQA makes use of its website and social media platforms to communicate with the public. SAQA also provides printed information to policymakers and implementers at its various seminars, workshops, conferences and information-sharing events.

c) Identify challenges and provide interventions

Registration of qualifications: One of the reasons for delays in the registration process is that SAQA does not receive all the required information or SAQA receives incorrect information. The root cause of this problem is that SAQA and the QCs use independent systems with which to carry out their work. The NQF Act Implementation Evaluation highlighted the problem and recommended remedial action in the accompanying Improvement Plan. The Improvement Plan lists as a deliverable, the development and implementation of an end-to-end workflow system that will allow providers to load information once for both SAQA and the QCs. This intervention requires additional funding that DHET has committed to secure. In light of SAQA's financial situation, this project will be delayed until funding becomes available.

Professional bodies: the most significant challenge is to resolve the issue of old legislation that governs statutory professional bodies, which conflicts with the NQF Act. The risk to SAQA is that statutory bodies encroach on SAQA's role or are in conflict with the Quality Councils, and these matters require the courts to resolve them. As a result, SAQA becomes embroiled in unnecessary litigation. At the NQF Stakeholders Forum held on 2 March 2019, the previous Minister of Higher Education and Training, recommended setting up a Ministerial Task Team to resolve this matter. SAQA hopes that the current Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology, takes up this baton.

The NQF MIS incorporating the NLRD: the most significant challenge is the incomplete or missing data sets on the NLRD. Since the NLRD is the official management information system of the NQF, it is critical to ensure that the NLRD has a complete set of all learner achievements. SAQA will meet this objective if:

- (i) SAQA ensures that the QCs, through their data suppliers, load information onto the NLRD timeously; and
- (ii) SAQA locates historical records, digitises these records and loads them onto the NLRD.

The digitisation process requires additional resources. . Amendments to the NQF Act, once enforced, will hopefully ensure that data is provided to SAQA timeously. In light of SAQA's current financial situation, the Digitisation Project will be put on hold.

The verification and evaluation of qualifications: While SAQA currently verifies national and evaluates foreign qualifications, the NQF Act, 2008, as amended is expected to increase demand for these services. These are paid-services, and SAQA uses this revenue to supplement its government funding. SAQA does not have the resources to increase head-count any further in these areas. It is therefore essential to automate and streamline processes as far as funding permits so that these services are offered timeously and in line with service standards. In light of SAQA's serious financial predicament, some staff in these areas may be retrenched. The demand for these services is very low, but will increase once the economy fully opens. This would be an ideal time to automate systems so as to offer a streamlined and more efficient service when the demand increases. Unfortunately, SAQA has to place this project on hold, until funds become available.

The QCs must consult SAQA whenever they advise the Minister on matters relating to their sub-frameworks: The QCs are not happy with this clause in the amendments to the NQF Act, 2008. Their reluctance to give up their right to communicate directly with the Minister: Higher Education, Science and Technology, could prove challenging. SAQA must strengthen its relationships with the leadership of the QCs and be more responsive when asked to comment on advice for the Minister. In time, SAQA hopes to resolve this impasse.

SAQA provides information about the NQF to the public: it is the responsibility of the NQF family to provide information to the public. The challenge is that at times, institutions convey conflicting messages to the public. The public is also confused about which organisation is responsible for what services. It is therefore crucial for SAQA to drive the advocacy and communication strategy and ensure that the NQF family communicates with one voice. There should be one portal with information about all the entities, and some planned joint campaigns.

d) Findings of internal or external evaluations

The NQF Act Implementation Evaluation study, undertaken by DHET in collaboration with the DPME, was concluded in 2017. Subsequently, the NQF Act Implementation Evaluation Improvement Plan was developed to address the findings of the Evaluation. The Improvement Plan is a critical document used in compiling this Strategic Plan.

e) Information from the political environment which may impact on the implementation of the Strategic Plan

SAQA had three Ministers in the last five-year period. With political uncertainty comes uncertainty in the implementation of policies, notably if a new Minister does not support its entities current plans. The current Minister was a previous Minister of Higher Education and Training, so SAQA does not envisage any policy shift that may affect SAQA's strategy.

8.2 Internal Environment Analysis

SAQA's structure and its configuration to deliver on its mandate

A board governs SAQA. The 6th Board's term of office ends on 31 December 2020, and the Minister appointed a new Board on 1 January 2021.

Functions of the Board and Corporate Governance

According to Section 14 (3) (a) of the NQF Act, the SAQA Board is appointed by the Minister (Higher Education, Science and Technology) following a public nomination process. The functions of the Board are set out in sections 5(3), 11, and 13 of the NQF Act.

SAQA is a National Public Entity listed under Schedule 3(a) of PFMA. Therefore, in addition to its responsibilities as set out in the NQF Act, the Board also fulfils the role of the Accounting Authority in terms of section 49 of the PFMA.

As the Accounting Authority, the Board acts in a fiduciary capacity and is responsible for ensuring that:

- ✱ Effective, efficient and transparent systems of financial and risk management and internal control, internal audit and procurement are in place;
- ✱ Steps are taken to collect outstanding debts; prevent irregular, fruitless and wasteful expenditure; and recoup losses from criminal conduct and spending resulting from non-compliance with operational policies;
- ✱ Effective and efficient management is in place which will include ensuring the safeguarding of the assets of SAQA and controlling its liabilities, revenues and expenditures;
- ✱ SAQA complies with applicable legislation and regulations;
- ✱ An effective and appropriate disciplinary system is in place to deal with failures to comply with the PFMA and the internal control system;
- ✱ Budgets, significant contracts and other commitments are approved;
- ✱ Finances are well-controlled; and
- ✱ SAQA operates ethically.

The SAQA Board sets strategy and policy. Management formulates strategy and makes policy proposals for the Board's consideration. Management also implements the decisions made by the Board and maintains systems of internal control as well as accounting and information systems. The Board monitors Management's performance.

Section 16 (1) of the NQF Act allows the Board to establish committees to assist in the execution of its fiduciary responsibilities. The SAQA Board utilises the following committee structures:

- ✧ Executive Committee
- ✧ Audit and Risk Committee
- ✧ Information and Information Technology Committee
- ✧ NQF Qualifications Committee
- ✧ Professional Bodies Committee
- ✧ National and Foreign Qualifications Appeals Committee
- ✧ Professional Body Appeals Committee

Each of these committees operates within Board-approved Terms of Reference. The Board assesses the responsibilities of all committees and evaluates their performance annually. The committees also self-evaluate their performance each year. The Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Committee is not a Board member. Board members chair all other Committees, and at least one other Board member is a member of each committee. Twelve of the sixteen Board members are independent non-executive members. Three Board members are the CEO's of the QCs, and the last Board member is the CEO of SAQA. At least 2 Board members come from organised labour.

SAQA's Board has committed to the principles of openness, integrity, efficiency, accountability and compliance reflected in the King Code of Governance Principles 2009 (King IV). SAQA, even though it is not a private corporation, subscribes to the principles of King IV and continuously works towards the further enhancement of its excellent governance processes.

a) SAQA's capacity to deliver on its mandate

Human Resources

The SAQA Board approved SAQA's new microstructure for implementation, in January 2021. Only once the microstructure has been implemented, monitoring and evaluation completed to identify and fill gaps, will the Board approve the final microstructure. The Board expects to approve this microstructure by March 2022.

At this stage, it seems that the new structure accommodates eighty-one posts. The areas most impacted are the following:

- NQF Advisory Services – closure of this service
- Foreign Qualifications Walk-in Centre – closure of this service
- Advocacy, Communications and Advisory Services – closure of this Directorate and a more streamlined function focusing on the media and communication with stakeholders via social media platforms will emerge.

- NLRD – closure of this Directorate. The database itself will be managed by IT, and the MIS unit will have minimal staff to ensure the integrity of the information on the database.
- International Relations – closure of this Directorate and a more streamlined function is considered under Stakeholder Relations.
- Combining the Verifications Project (Programme 3) with the Foreign Qualifications Evaluations and Advisory Service (Programme 4) for a more streamlined service provision with less staff and an investment in automation if funding allows.

Information Technology

The IT Directorate focuses mainly on managing the various service level agreements with suppliers and ensuring that staff have the necessary tools to perform their job functions. SAQA conforms to the Government-Wide ICT Strategy and relevant Cobit standards. IT is an area of deficiency within SAQA. SAQA's strategy is to remain current and relevant by employing ICT to streamline processes and to automate where possible. Human and financial resources to implement this strategy fully is lacking. In light of SAQA's current financial situation, this project has been put on hold.

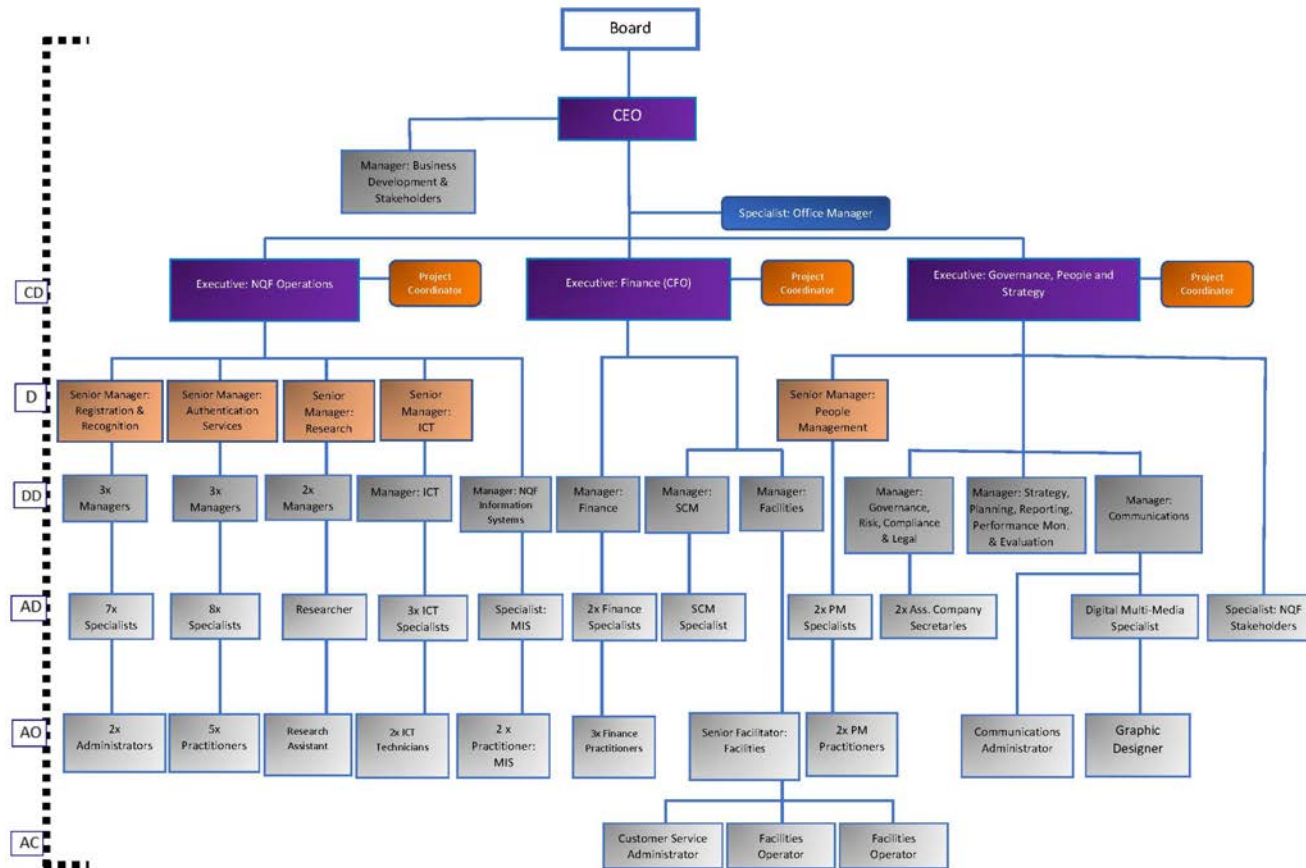
Finance and Administration

This Directorate manages all SAQA's contracts, ensures that staff comply with SCM regulations, manages SAQA's financial resources and maintains the building. SAQA fully complies with the PFMA, and the twenty-three years of consecutive unqualified audit opinions bear testimony to this. SAQA has established a realistic baseline budget in line with the MTEF. Previously several donors and sponsors provided the necessary resources. The primary sources of income currently are:

- ✧ Voted funds through the Department of Higher Education and Training; and
- ✧ Self-funded projects through paid services

SAQA has an old building that requires significant maintenance. This matter must be a priority during these five years.

Below is SAQA's new microstructure. This microstructure will be implemented on 1 April 2021. The microstructure currently accommodates eighty-one posts. This may change during implementation. Approximately eighty-nine employees will be retrenched during this process.



b) The status of the institution regarding compliance with the BBBEE Act

SAQA's subscribes to the Employment Equity Act.

Below is the SAQA EMPLOYMENT EQUITY statistics as of 30 June 2019.

Notes to the table below: **The Employment Equity Plan (Target) is based on the National EAP for Top, Senior and Professional levels. The provincial EAP is applicable for Skilled, Semi-Skilled and Unskilled levels, according to Statistics SA.

c) The status of the institution regarding women, youth and people with disabilities

Occupational Categories	Male				Female				Foreign Nationals		Total SAQA Actual Status	Total Approved Positions*	Total Vacant Positions	Persons with Disabilities ***		
	A	C	I	W	A	C	I	W	M	F				M	F	Total
Target %	35,1%	5,3%	1,8%	4,2%	40,8%	4,5%	4%	5,3%	0	0	100%					
Top Management (CEO & DCEO)	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	2	0			
Senior Management (Directors)	1	0	0	1	3	1	1	3	1	0	11	11	0	1		1
Professionally Qualified/experienced specialist/mid-management (DD)	6	1	0	1	5	1	2	0	1	1	18	21	3			
Total SAQA Actual Status	8	1	0	2	8	2	4	3	2	1	31	34	3			
% SAQA Actual Status	26%	3%	0%	6%	26%	6%	13%	10%	6%	3%	91%		9%			
Target %	35,2%	1,3%	1,1%	6,3%	44,8%	1,7%	1,8%	7,9%	0%	0%	100%					
Approved Positions	69	2	2	12	56	2	1	9	0	0	153					
Skilled technically and academically qualified workers, junior management/supervisors (AD,AO)	37	1	1	3	48	2	1	5	0	2	100	103	3	0	2	2
Semi-skilled and discretionary decision-making(,AC,Secretary)	12	0	0	0	40	1	0	0	1	0	54	57	3	1		1
Total Actual Status (AD & Below)	49	1	1	3	88	3	1	5	1	2	154	160	6	2	2	4
% Actual status (AD and Below)	32%	1%	1%	2%	57%	2%	1%	3%	1%	1%	96%		5%	1%	1%	2,06%
Total Approved Positions & Total Vacancies												194	9			
Total Filled Positions & SAQA % Vacancy Rate											185		4,64%			
Learners and Interns	6	1	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	14					
GRAND TOTAL											14					

63% of staff are women. 2% of the team are people with disabilities. The youth (35 years old and below) represent 45% of staff.

Part C: Measuring Our Performance

9 Institutional Performance Information

9.1 Measuring the Impact

Impact Statement	An integrated and transparent national qualifications framework that facilitates access to, and mobility and progression within education, training and career paths
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9.2 Measuring Outcomes

Outcome	Outcome Indicator	Baseline	Five-year Target
We have a dynamic NQF that is responsive, adapts to, and supports the changing needs of life-long learning	1. NQF Policies that support the changing needs of life-long learning	Amended the Policy and Criteria for Evaluating Foreign Qualifications within the SA NQF	Review five NQF Policies and amend them as required
	2. Amended NQF Policies are implemented	Amended the Policy and Criteria for Recognising Professional Bodies and Registering Professional Designations Developed and implemented the Addendum on Refugees and Asylum Seekers	Monitor the implementation of the reviewed NQF Policies

Outcome	Outcome Indicator	Baseline	Five-year Target
		Amended the RPL Policy	
We have visionary and influential leadership that drives a well-researched and clearly formulated NQF agenda	3. SAQA influences and shapes national and international discourses	SAQA aligned the SA NQF to the SADC Qualifications Framework. SAQA participated in the development of the Addis Convention and the Global Convention.	Align the SA NQF to the proposed African Continental Qualifications Framework. Implement the Addis Convention.
	4. SAQA's work through the CEO Committee shows the results of a well-researched and clearly formulated NQF agenda	SAQA addressed all transitional arrangements listed in section 36 except: 36(c) "the regulations made under the SAQA Act continue to exist to the extent that they are consistent with this Act until they are repealed by the Minister by notice in the Gazette." SAQA performs its oversight role through a Tracking Grid. The current System of Collaboration only includes SAQA and the QCs.	Conclude all transitional arrangements listed in section 36 of the NQF Act, 2008 Strengthen the System of Collaboration and NQF structures.
	5. SAQA's activities promote a world-class NQF that is well	Stakeholders interact with information about the NQF.	SAQA reaches 5 000 000 people through its advocacy and communication initiatives.

Outcome	Outcome Indicator	Baseline	Five-year Target
	understood and benefits all stakeholders	2 000 000 impressions are currently made on SAQA's online and social media platforms	
		There are 19 million learner achievements on the NLRD. The NLRD aims to have all national learner achievement records on the database. This is a slow and tedious process as missing records are identified, located, digitised and loaded on the NLRD.	The NLRD reflects 24 million learners with achievements
We have well-articulated quality-assured qualifications and relevant professional designations that instil trust and meet the needs of the people	6. There are well-defined systemic, specific or individual Articulation pathways within and across Sub-Frameworks	SAQA published the Policy and Criteria for the Registration of Qualifications and Part- Qualifications on the National Qualifications Framework in March 2013 and amended it in March 2020. SAQA registered 13 179 qualifications since 1 April 2014. Of these, 2 143 (16%) do not have articulation options.	All qualifications registered on the NQF after 1 January 2014 have at least one Articulation pathway within or across Sub-Frameworks
	7. There is a clear understanding of the types of professional	SAQA recognises 17 statutory professional bodies and 89 non-statutory	Clearly define the roles of statutory and non-statutory professional

Outcome	Outcome Indicator	Baseline	Five-year Target
	bodies, their designations and their value-add in the changing NQF landscape	professional bodies. There is a need to refine SAQA's understanding of the different types of professional bodies and what they do within the changing context.	bodies and use the research findings to amend the Policy and Criteria for Recognising a Professional Body and Registering a Professional Designation.
We have a competent and capable team, dedicated and resourced to further develop and maintain the NQF	8. SAQA's structure is aligned to deliver on its strategy	There is currently an uneven spread of workload across the organisation. There is a duplication of functions in some directorates. With the introduction of automation across the organisation, SAQA must look at a more streamlined organisational design to support delivery on its strategy.	Re-design SAQA's structure to better suit delivery on its strategy.
	9. SAQA develops and trains its staff	Every staff member has at least one learning intervention per year.	Every staff member has at least two learning interventions per year.
We have stakeholders and role-players who are aligned to deliver on the NQF	10. The NQF value chain works efficiently	SAQA returns approximately 30% of qualifications recommended by QCs for registration that do not meet all SAQA's criteria. This delays the registration process. If the QCs provided all the information required, the registration process could be faster.	Develop a functional system that allows for the efficient registration of qualifications within 3 weeks.

Outcome	Outcome Indicator	Baseline	Five-year Target
		Approximately 75% of learner achievements verified against registered qualifications and part-qualifications appear on the NLRD.	SAQA identifies all historical (legacy) datasets that are not on the NLRD, secures and loads it on the NLRD. 90% of national learner achievements submitted for verification appear on the NLRD.
		SAQA only just began monitoring professional bodies for their data loads. Going forward, all professional bodies that fail to load professional designation information annually will be de-recognised.	All recognised professional bodies load information about their members with professional designations on the NLRD annually

9.3 Explanation of Planned Performance over the Five-Year Planning Period

SAQA plans to refine further South Africa's integrated and transparent national qualifications framework that facilitates access to, and mobility and progression within education, training and career paths. The Board identified five outcomes that contribute to the desired impact.

SAQA's vision is: A world-class National Qualifications Framework that works for the People in South Africa

a) The contribution of outcomes towards the achievement of the NDP Five-Year Implementation Plan

Priority 2, namely, Education, Skills and Health, is relevant to the Department of Higher Education and Training and SAQA. This priority contributes to pillar 2 of the 3 NDP pillars, which is 'Capabilities of South Africans'. DHET did not include any specific deliverables for SAQA in the NDP Five-Year Implementation Plan. However, DHET lists Outcome 4 in the NDP Implementation Plan as *a responsive PSET system*. Target 7 is to *improve the responsiveness of the PSET System to the world of work by 2024*. The planned interventions are to *develop a Critical Skills List for the Department of Home Affairs* and to *develop a Priority Skills Plan*. SAQA can assist DHET with these interventions by providing information about registered qualifications and learner achievements from the NLRD and from holders of foreign qualifications who apply to SAQA to evaluate their qualifications.

b) The rationale for the choice of the Outcome Indicators relevant to the respective Outcomes

Outcome	Outcome Indicator	Rationale
We have a dynamic NQF that is responsive, adapts to, and supports the changing needs of life-long learning	NQF Policies that support the changing needs of life-long learning Amended NQF Policies are implemented	NQF policies drive the implementation of the NQF. By conducting research, and reviewing and updating its policies regularly, it will be supporting the changing needs of life-long learning. It is not enough for SAQA to publish policies. SAQA must also ensure that stakeholders implement these policies.
We have visionary and influential leadership that drives a well-researched and clearly formulated NQF agenda	SAQA influences and shapes national and international discourses	The NQF Amendment Act gives SAQA more powers than the NQF Act, 2008. SAQA must work within its mandate to influence both national and international agendas for the benefit of all the people in South Africa. It is important for South Africa's NQF to be benchmarked against regional NQFs so that we are assured of internationally accepted qualifications. The benchmarking also allows SAQA to compare international qualifications to qualifications registered on the SA NQF.

Outcome	Outcome Indicator	Rationale
	SAQA's work through the CEO Committee shows the results of a well-researched and clearly formulated NQF agenda	The CEO Committee is an important NQF structure comprising the CEOs of SAQA and the QCs. Members of DHET and the DBE attend on invitation. This forum drives the NQF agenda and ensures that the stakeholder value chain works efficiently. SAQA uses this forum to oversee implementation of NQF priorities. The System of Collaboration describes how members of the CEO Committee work together and how they will handle disputes, if they occur. It is important to strengthen the System of Collaboration to align to further amendments to the NQF Act 2008, as amended. This Committee also has the power to recommend to the Minister: HEST that he ends the transitional arrangements.
	SAQA's activities promote a world-class NQF that is well understood and benefits all stakeholders	SAQA's challenge is to simplify the NQF and to explain the NQF simply so that stakeholders understand and know how to use information about the NQF. It is important for SAQA to work with NQF partners so that everyone provides similar messaging that do not contradict one another. Ideally, SAQA, DHET and the QCs should have one common portal for all information about the NQF. SAQA measures the success of its activities and campaigns through impressions on its electronic and social media

Outcome	Outcome Indicator	Rationale
		<p>platforms. If stakeholders are seen to be interacting with information about the NQF, then it can be assumed that they know, understand and value the information.</p> <p>The NLRD is the largest database of learner achievements in the country and the official management information system of the NQF. It is important for learners to have their information on the NLRD so that it can be quickly verified for work and study opportunities. If SAQA wants a world-class NQF, then its management information system should contain <u>all</u> the information related to the NQF. The NLRD is an indicator of learners' benefitting from the NQF.</p>
We have well-articulated quality-assured qualifications and relevant professional designations that instil trust and meet the needs of the people	There are well-defined systemic, specific or individual Articulation pathways within and across Sub-Frameworks	The Minister's Articulation Policy supports the idea of systemic, specific and individual Articulation pathways. SAQA will not register a qualification that does not have clear horizontal and vertical Articulation pathways. SAQA published the Policy and Criteria for registering a Qualification and Part-Qualification on the NQF in March 2013. SAQA will now monitor implementation of this Policy by identifying qualifications that it registered from 1 January 2014, that do not have Articulation pathways and requesting the missing information from the QCs.
	There is a clear understanding of the types of professional bodies,	SAQA and other NQF entities do not fully understand the differences between statutory and non-statutory professional bodies in the changing NQF context. This impacts on SAQA's

Outcome	Outcome Indicator	Rationale
	their designations and their value-add in the changing NQF landscape	ability to recognise professional bodies, register their designations and provide services to them. If SAQA is clear about this, then it will better market its services to professional bodies and ensure that the registered designations meet the needs of the people.
We have a competent and capable team, dedicated and resourced to further develop and maintain the NQF	SAQA's structure is aligned to deliver on its strategy	SAQA has a new five-year strategy. The amendments to the NQF Act, 2008 gives SAQA more responsibility. SAQA is also planning on automating repetitive processes throughout the organisation. Budgetary constraints are also putting pressure on SAQA to re-look at its organisational design.
	SAQA develops and trains its staff	SAQA relies on the intellectual capital of its staff. It takes years to build the depth of knowledge required to make a real difference. SAQA has, therefore prioritised its talent attraction and retention strategy. Every staff member must have at least two learning interventions each year.
We have stakeholders and role-players who are aligned to deliver on the NQF	The NQF value chain works efficiently	Many stakeholders are involved in implementing the NQF. If the NQF value chain works efficiently, then it would mean that the stakeholders and role-players are aligned to deliver on the NQF.

Outcome	Outcome Indicator	Rationale
		There are definite gaps in the NQF's management information system, the NLRD. Stakeholders must provide this information to SAQA timeously. A complete set of information on the NLRD will allow beneficiaries to use the information to gain access to work and further study opportunities.

c) Explanation of enablers to achieve the five-year targets

The following will be enablers to the achievement of SAQA's five-year objectives:

- The President proclaims the NQF Amendment Act, 2019;
- The stakeholders agree on further amendments to the NQF Amendment Act, 2019; and
- SAQA raises sufficient funds to implement this Strategy fully.

d) How the Outcomes contribute to the achievement of the Impact

Impact Statement	An integrated and transparent national qualifications framework that facilitates access to, and mobility and progression within education, training and career paths
Outcome Statement	Link to Impact
We have a dynamic NQF that is responsive, adapts to, and supports the changing needs of life-long learning	A dynamic NQF facilitates access to, and mobility and progression within education, training and career paths.

<p>We have visionary and influential leadership that drives a well-researched and clearly formulated NQF agenda</p>	<p>It requires visionary and influential leadership to ensure that the NQF family work in unison to achieve the objectives of the NQF. Visionary leaders identify areas for research and use the evidence gained from research to formulate an NQF agenda that supports an integrated and transparent NQF framework. SAQA's influence is visible through its participation in national and international discourses.</p> <p>Stakeholders who criticise the NQF do so on the basis that the public's understanding of the NQF is poor. SAQA will promote the NQF using simple and easy-to-understand language and tools so that stakeholders understand what the NQF is about and how it benefits them.</p>
<p>We have well-articulated quality-assured qualifications and relevant professional designations that instil trust and meet the needs of the people</p>	<p>The public can trust the NQF because of its value-add to the system of education, training and development goals of the country and transparency. SAQA publishes information about registered qualifications and its associated information on its website. If qualifications articulate well, then people can progress within education, training and the workplace. SAQA also publishes information about recognised professional bodies and their registered designations.</p>
<p>We have a competent and capable team, dedicated and resourced to further develop and maintain the NQF</p>	<p>People are required to implement and advance the NQF. Without the right people and skills and adequate resources, it would be challenging to implement the NQF. SAQA also needs the right structure to support its strategy.</p>
<p>We have stakeholders and role-players who are aligned to deliver on the NQF</p>	<p>It takes visionary and influential leadership to bring all the NQF role-players to the same level of understanding. The NQF value chain spans SAQA, the QCs, DHET and DBE, as well as all the institutions, entities and providers associated with each of these organisations. The stakeholders and beneficiaries will only see the full impact of the NQF if all the stakeholders work together to deliver on the NQF.</p>

10.Key Risks

Outcome	Key Risk	Risk Mitigation
We have a dynamic NQF that is responsive, adapts to, and supports the changing needs of life-long learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌚ The NQF as a system does not function optimally. ⌚ The NQF does not respond to the needs of workers or learners. ⌚ Proposed changes to the NQF Amendment Act may cause further confusion and contestations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✳ Implement the System of Collaboration to resolve contestations. Strengthen the NQF Act to place SAQA as the apex body. ✳ Continue to engage with stakeholders to meet the needs of workers and learners in terms of the NQF. ✳ SAQA must ensure that it fully participates in the processes to amend the NQF Amendment Act.
We have visionary and influential leadership that drives a well-researched and clearly formulated NQF agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌚ Stakeholders fight for turf. ⌚ Each entity operates independently with its separate agenda. ⌚ There is little or no co-operation among stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✳ Fully implement the NQF Amendment Act. ✳ Strengthen SAQA's role through amendments to the NQF Act so that SAQA is the apex body with authority to drive a common agenda. ✳ Implement the System of Collaboration to resolve contestations.
We have well-articulated quality-assured qualifications and relevant professional designations that instil trust and meet the needs of the people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌚ Providers offer unregistered qualifications. ⌚ The NLRD does not contain all learner achievement records. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✳ Take action against institutions and providers who offer unregistered qualifications (supported by the NQF Amendment Act). ✳ Put strategies in place to ensure that providers load learner records timeously on the NLRD and that old learner achievement records are digitised and loaded on the NLRD.

Outcome	Key Risk	Risk Mitigation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌚ Qualifications are no longer recognised internationally. ⌚ The NLRD contains “dirty data.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✳ Ensure that all qualifications registered on the NQF adhere to SAQA’s Policy and Criteria. ✳ Put processes in place to remove duplicate data and data that does not conform to the NLRD specifications
We have a competent and capable team, dedicated and resourced to further develop and maintain the NQF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌚ Limited funding does not allow SAQA to recruit skilled staff. ⌚ Staff morale is low. ⌚ Institutional memory is lost as skilled staff retire or leave. ⌚ Not all staff are willing to accept change. ⌚ Due to the current financial situation, retrenchments are being considered as SAQA’s structure is re-designed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✳ Ensure continuous learning and development of staff ✳ Implement SAQA’s policy on Appreciation and Recognition ✳ Put systems in place to retain institutional memory ✳ Introduce staff training to assist with change management. ✳ Additional funding from the fiscus will negate the need for staff retrenchments
We have stakeholders and role-players who are aligned to deliver on the NQF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌚ Each entity communicates different messages, which leads to confusion among stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✳ Work with the NQF family to develop common messages

11.Public Entities

Part D: Technical Indicator Description (TID)

Indicator Title	1. NQF Policies that support the changing needs of life-long learning
Definition	<p>A dynamic NQF facilitates access to, and mobility and progression within education, training and career paths.</p> <p>There are several NQF Policies that SAQA developed during the last strategic cycle. For South Africa to have a dynamic NQF that is responsive, adapts to, and supports the changing needs of life-long learning, the NQF policies must reflect current dynamics. This indicator is, therefore, about ensuring that NQF Policies are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect changes in the needs of learners and workers.</p>
Source of Data	The Research Directorate will conduct research or draw on research reports that will inform possible amendments to the Policies. The team responsible for amending the Policy will consider the recommendations made by the Research team in their proposed changes. Evidence of changes are the published revised Policies and working documents leading up to the final approved revised Policies.
Method of calculation/assessment	The Research Directorate will conduct desktop research, interviews or use any other research methods, depending on the policy under review. The team will formulate a report on finds of the research and make recommendations on amendments to the Policy. The team responsible for reviewing the policy will consider the research report in its proposed amendments. Once the policies are amended, the SAQA Board approves them for publication for public comment. The team then considers the comments, revises the policies and gets Board approval before publishing the approved policies.
Assumptions	SAQA consulted its stakeholders during the review phase.
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Annual progress against the five-year target

Desired performance	Review five NQF Policies and amend them as required over the five years. It is desirable to exceed the target in any given year if circumstances warrant more immediate policy amendments.
Indicator responsibility	Director: International Liaison, Director: Research

Indicator Title	2. Amended NQF Policies are implemented
Definition	<p>A dynamic NQF facilitates access to, and mobility and progression within education, training and career paths.</p> <p>Once SAQA has published its policies, it must also ensure that stakeholders implement these amended policies.</p>
Source of Data	Tracker for Articulation, CAT and RPL; NQF Impact Studies; applications for professional body recognition; recommendations for qualification registration; application of policies in the Verifications Project and the Foreign Qualifications Evaluation unit.
Method of calculation/assessment	SAQA will generate a report on the implementation of the amended NQF Policies based on the information from the different sources.
Assumptions	SAQA's communication about the amended Policies reach all stakeholders
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Annual progress against the five-year target
Desired performance	SAQA monitors implementation of the five amended policies. The actual performance should be higher than the targeted performance.
Indicator responsibility	Director: International Liaison

Indicator Title	3a. SAQA influences and shapes national and international discourses
Definition	<p>It requires visionary and influential leadership to ensure that the NQF family work in unison to achieve the objectives of the NQF. Visionary leaders identify areas for research and use the evidence gained from research to formulate an NQF agenda that supports an integrated and transparent NQF. SAQA's influence is visible through its participation in national and international discourses. SAQA will use this influence to align the SA NQF to the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF).</p> <p>This indicator is about aligning the SA NQF to the proposed African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF).</p>
Source of Data	Evidence of alignment to the ACQF; Board approval of alignment document
Method of calculation/assessment	Once the ACQF is published, SAQA will embark on an alignment exercise. The exercise will require SAQA to compare and align the SA NQF to the ACQF. SAQA will produce a document outlining the alignment process and the outcome of the alignment.
Assumptions	The ACQF will be completed within the five-year period.
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Annual
Desired performance	The SA NQF and the proposed African Continental Qualifications Framework are aligned
Indicator responsibility	Director: International Liaison

Indicator Title	3b. SAQA influences and shapes national and international discourses
Definition	<p>It requires visionary and influential leadership to ensure that the NQF family work in unison to achieve the objectives of the NQF. Visionary leaders identify areas for research and use the evidence gained from research to formulate an NQF agenda that supports an integrated and transparent NQF. SAQA's influence is visible through its participation on national and international discourses.</p> <p>The President ratified the Addis Convention in 2019 and deposited the instrument with UNESCO. The Addis Convention became active on 15 December 2019 after ten countries had ratified it.</p> <p>This indicator is about implementing the Addis Convention.</p>
Source of Data	Addis Convention, SAQA's Policy and Criteria for evaluating foreign qualifications that is aligned to the Addis Convention; Implementation Plan.
Method of calculation/assessment	SAQA will use the source documents to develop and implement a plan for implementing the Addis Convention and track and report on progress.
Assumptions	There is sufficient funding available to fully implement the Addis Convention.
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	Foreign nationals, refugees and asylum seekers wishing to work or study in South Africa; and South Africans who studied outside the borders of SA.
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Annual
Desired performance	The Addis Convention is fully implemented
Indicator responsibility	Director: International Liaison

Indicator Title	4a. SAQA's work through the CEO Committee shows the results of a well-researched and clearly formulated NQF agenda
Definition	<p>It requires visionary and influential leadership to ensure that the NQF family work in unison to achieve the objectives of the NQF. Visionary leaders identify areas for research and use the evidence gained from research to formulate an NQF agenda that supports an integrated and transparent NQF. SAQA's influence is visible through its participation on national and international discourses.</p> <p>SAQA addressed all transitional arrangements listed in section 36 of the NQF Act except: 36(c) "the regulations made under the SAQA Act continue to exist to the extent that they are consistent with this Act until they are repealed by the Minister by notice in the Gazette."</p> <p>This indicator is about concluding all transitional arrangements listed in section 36 of the NQF Act, 2008.</p>
Source of Data	Analysis of qualifications still not complying the NQF Act; SAQA's efforts in encouraging the QCs to de-register qualifications that do not comply with the NQF Act and replace them with compliant qualifications; CEO Committee minutes on this issue; SAQA Board approval for the decision to end the transitional arrangements; and SAQA's advice to the Minister to end the transitional arrangements.
Method of calculation/assessment	Once SAQA is satisfied that the QCs have recommended all non-aligned qualifications for de-registration, SAQA will propose the end of the transitional arrangements to the CEO Committee, the Board and then the Minister: HEST.
Assumptions	The QCs are willing to end the transitional arrangements.
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Annual
Desired performance	The Minister ends the transitional arrangements through a notice in the Government Gazette.

Indicator responsibility	CEO
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Indicator Title	4b. SAQA's work through the CEO Committee shows the results of a well-researched and clearly formulated NQF agenda
Definition	<p>It requires visionary and influential leadership to ensure that the NQF family work in unison to achieve the objectives of the NQF. Visionary leaders identify areas for research and use the evidence gained from research to formulate an NQF agenda that supports an integrated and transparent NQF. SAQA's influence is visible through its participation on national and international discourses.</p> <p>SAQA performs its oversight role through a Tracking Grid. The current System of Collaboration only includes SAQA and the QCs.</p> <p>This indicator is about strengthening the System of Collaboration and NQF structures.</p>
Source of Data	Further amendments to the NQF Act, 2008 as amended; report from the task team working on the proposed amendments to the System of Collaboration; CEO Committee recommendation regarding the System of Collaboration; SAQA Board approval of the amendments to the System of Collaboration.
Method of calculation/assessment	Once DHET has made the necessary changes to the NQF Act, and these changes have been signed into law by the President, SAQA will lead a task team to amend the System of Collaboration. Work may begin prior to the president's signature, but the document will only be implemented after the President signs the amendments to the NQF Act.
Assumptions	The DHET will make the amendments to the NQF, parliament will approve the amendments and the President will sign the Amended Act during this five-year period.
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	This System of Collaboration affects SAQA, the QCs, DHET and the DBE.
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Annual
Desired performance	The System of Collaboration is amended during this five-year period.

Indicator responsibility	CEO
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Indicator Title	5a. SAQA's activities promote a world-class NQF that is well understood and benefits all stakeholders
Definition	<p>It requires visionary and influential leadership to ensure that the NQF family work in unison to achieve the objectives of the NQF. Visionary leaders identify areas for research and use the evidence gained from research to formulate an NQF agenda that supports an integrated and transparent NQF. SAQA's influence is visible through its participation on national and international discourses.</p> <p>Stakeholders who criticise the NQF do so on the basis that the NQF is poorly understood. SAQA's focus will be on promoting the NQF with clear and simplified messages so that stakeholders understand what the NQF is about and how it benefits them.</p> <p>This indicator is about stakeholders interacting with information about the NQF. SAQA will reach 5 000 000 people through its advocacy and communication initiatives.</p>
Source of Data	Reports from various advocacy and communication initiatives across platforms including online and social media platforms.
Method of calculation/assessment	The quarterly figures from various initiatives are added to give the annual totals and compared to the yearly targets. By the 5 th year of this Plan, the annual total should meet the expected goal of having reached 5 000 000 people.
Assumptions	If stakeholders interact with information about the NQF, then it is assumed that they know, understand and see value in the information.
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A

Reporting cycle	Annual progress against the five-year target
Desired performance	The target is to reach 5 000 000 people through SAQA's advocacy and communication initiatives. The actual performance should be higher than the targeted performance.
Indicator responsibility	Director: Advocacy, Communication and Support

Indicator Title	5b. SAQA's activities promote a world-class NQF that is well understood and benefits all stakeholders
Definition	<p>It requires visionary and influential leadership to ensure that the NQF family work in unison to achieve the objectives of the NQF. Visionary leaders identify areas for research and use the evidence gained from research to formulate an NQF agenda that supports an integrated and transparent NQF. SAQA's influence is visible through its participation on national and international discourses.</p> <p>Stakeholders who criticise the NQF do so on the basis that the NQF is poorly understood. SAQA's focus will be on promoting the NQF with simple and easy-to-understand language and tools so that stakeholders understand what the NQF is about and how it benefits them.</p> <p>The National Learners' Records Database (NLRD) is the largest and only official database of the NQF. Among other sets of information, the NLRD contains learner achievement data. The growth in the learner achievement data is a reflection of the NQF working for the people. The NLRD is an indicator of learners' benefitting from the NQF. The NQF Amendment Act, once promulgated, makes it a requirement for QCs to load all learner achievement data on the NLRD within 30 days of it being in the public domain.</p> <p>The target is for the NLRD to reflect 24 million learner achievements by 2025.</p>
Source of Data	Quality Councils and information partners such as SETAs and professional bodies that load data onto the NLRD
Method of calculation/assessment	A report is drawn annually on the total number of learner achievements on the NLRD and compared to the previous year's learner achievement data. The NLRD should load one million or more learner achievements each year.
Assumptions	QCs, professional bodies and information partners continue to load data on the NLRD, in compliance with the NQF Act and the NQF Amendment Act once promulgated. Data cleaning does not result in net negative growth in numbers

Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Annual progress against the five-year target
Desired performance	The NLRD reflects 24 million or more learners with achievements. The actual performance should exceed the targeted performance.
Indicator responsibility	Director: NLRD

Indicator Title	6. There are well-defined systemic, specific or individual Articulation pathways within and across Sub-Frameworks
Definition	<p>The public can trust the NQF because of its transparency. SAQA publishes information about registered qualifications and its associated information on its website. If qualifications articulate well, then people can progress within education, training and the workplace.</p> <p>The Minister's Articulation Policy supports the idea of systemic, specific and individual Articulation pathways. SAQA will not register a qualification that does not have clear Articulation pathways. SAQA published the Policy and Criteria for registering a Qualification and Part-Qualification on the NQF in March 2013. SAQA will now monitor implementation of this Policy by identifying qualifications that it registered from 1 January 2014, that do not have Articulation pathways and requesting the missing information from the QCs.</p> <p>The target is for all qualifications registered on the NQF after 1 January 2014 to have at least one Articulation pathway within or across Sub-Frameworks.</p>
Source of Data	The NLRD. SAQA published the Policy and Criteria for the Registration of Qualifications and Part- Qualifications on the National Qualifications Framework in March 2013. SAQA registered 13 179 qualifications since 1 April 2014. Of these, 2

	143 (16%) do not have articulation options. SAQA must source the missing Articulation options for these qualifications from QCs and update the NLRD.
Method of calculation/assessment	Create a spreadsheet with the qualifications with no articulation options and track progress until the articulation options appear on the NLRD. SAQA will achieve the target once all qualifications registered from 1 January 2014 have articulation options.
Assumptions	Quality Councils provide the missing information when SAQA requests it.
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Annual accumulated progress against the five-year target
Desired performance	All qualifications registered on the NQF after 1 January 2014 have at least one Articulation pathway within or across Sub-Frameworks. Actual performance should equal the targeted performance.
Indicator responsibility	Director: Registration and Recognition and Director: NLRD

Indicator Title	7. There is a clear understanding of the types of professional bodies, their designations and their value-add in the changing NQF landscape
Definition	<p>The public can trust the NQF because of its transparency. SAQA publishes information about recognised professional bodies and registered professional designations on its website. Qualifications underlie professional designations. SAQA does not fully understand the differences between statutory and non-statutory professional bodies in the changing NQF context. This impacts on SAQA's ability to recognise professional bodies, register their designations and provide services to them. If SAQA is clear about this, then it will better market its services to professional bodies and ensure that the registered designations meet the needs of the people.</p> <p>The target is to clearly define the roles of statutory and non-statutory professional bodies and use the research findings to amend the Policy and Criteria for Recognising a Professional Body and Registering a Professional Designation.</p>
Source of Data	Desktop research and a survey

Method of calculation/assessment	The Research Directorate must produce a report that clearly defines the roles of statutory and non-statutory professional bodies. SAQA must use the research findings to amend the Policy and Criteria for Recognising a Professional Body and Registering a Professional Designation. The deliverables are the report on research findings and the amended Policy and Criteria.
Assumptions	SAQA can classify all professional bodies as either a statutory or non-statutory professional body.
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Annual progress accumulates towards the five-year target
Desired performance	There is a Report that clearly defines the roles of statutory and non-statutory professional bodies. SAQA uses this Report to amend the Policy and Criteria for Recognising a Professional Body and Registering a Professional Designation. The actual performance should equal the targeted performance.
Indicator responsibility	Director: Registration and Recognition; and Director: Research

Indicator Title	8. SAQA's structure is aligned to deliver on its strategy
Definition	<p>People are required to implement the NQF. Without the right people, skills and adequate resources, it would be challenging to implement the NQF. SAQA also needs the right structure to support its strategy.</p> <p>The target is to re-design SAQA's structure to better suit delivery on its strategy.</p>
Source of Data	Strategy; proposed re-structure to deliver on strategy; evidence of consultation with staff; evidence of REMCO recommendation and Board approval.
Method of calculation/assessment	Approved organisational development design developed after staff consultation

Assumptions	The SAQA Board will be open to approving a new organisational structure
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Annual
Desired performance	The actual performance equals the targeted performance.
Indicator responsibility	Director: Human Resources and CEO

Indicator Title	9. SAQA develops and trains its staff
Definition	<p>People are required to implement the NQF. Without the right people and skills and adequate resources, it would be challenging to implement the NQF. SAQA also needs the right structure to support its strategy. SAQA relies on the intellectual capital of its staff. It takes years to develop the depth of knowledge required to make a real difference.</p> <p>The target is for every staff member to have at least two learning interventions each year.</p>
Source of Data	Records of learning interventions managed by HR.
Method of calculation/assessment	HR records each staff member's learning and development initiatives on a spreadsheet. At the end of the year, HR analyses the information to confirm that all staff members engaged in at least two training and development initiatives.
Assumptions	Staff members on maternity or long term sick or study leave may not have completed two learning initiatives. Staff members who joined SAQA during the year may not have completed two learning initiatives. Training and development may be formal, informal or non-formal.
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A

Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Annual progress measured discretely against the five-year target
Desired performance	Every staff member has at least two learning interventions per year. The actual performance should be higher than the targeted performance.
Indicator responsibility	Director: Human Resources

Indicator Title	10.1 The NQF value chain works efficiently
Definition	<p>It takes visionary and influential leadership to bring all the NQF role-players to the same level of understanding. The NQF value chain spans SAQA, the QCs, DHET and DBE, as well as all the institutions, entities and providers associated with each of these organisations. The stakeholders and beneficiaries will only see the full impact of the NQF if all the stakeholders work together to deliver on the NQF. Many stakeholders are involved in implementing the NQF. If the NQF value chain works efficiently, then it would mean that the stakeholders and role-players are aligned to deliver on the NQF.</p> <p>This specific deliverable is about QCs recommending qualifications to SAQA for registration on the NQF. Currently, SAQA returns approximately 30% of qualifications to QCs because they do not comply with SAQA's Policy and Criteria. The QCs, in turn, must communicate with the providers to get the required information. This process causes unnecessary delays that QCs could avoid if they implement SAQA's Policy and Criteria correctly and if there is a common workflow between SAQA and the QCs.</p> <p>The target is to have a functional system that allows for the efficient registration of qualifications within 3 weeks of submission.</p>
Source of Data	Qualifications and Part-Qualifications Tracking Grid; and letters sent to QCs
Method of calculation/assessment	The time difference between the Board approving the registration of qualifications and the date on which the compliant qualifications were received from the QCs \leq 3 weeks.

Assumptions	The Directorate applies the Policy and Criteria consistently
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	Quality Councils
Reporting cycle	Quarterly beginning with 4 months leading up to the 5-year target of 3 weeks
Desired performance	It is desirable for QCs only to recommend fully compliant qualifications to SAQA so that it does not return any qualifications to the QCs. SAQA should reach its target of a three-week turnaround time before the fifth year.
Indicator responsibility	Director: Registration and Recognition; CEO

Indicator Title	10.2 The NQF value chain works efficiently
Definition	<p>It takes visionary and influential leadership to bring all the NQF role-players to the same level of understanding. The NQF value chain spans SAQA, the QCs, DHET and DBE, as well as all the institutions, entities and providers associated with each of these organisations. The stakeholders and beneficiaries will only see the full impact of the NQF if all the stakeholders work together to deliver on the NQF. Many stakeholders are involved in implementing the NQF. If the NQF value chain works efficiently, then it would mean that the stakeholders and role-players are aligned to deliver on the NQF.</p> <p>This specific indicator is about verifying national qualification achievements against the learner achievements on the NLRD. Approximately 75% of learner achievements verified against registered qualifications and part-qualifications currently appear on the NLRD. As a result, the Verifications team must source 25% of its information from providers and education and training institutions, which results in delaying the verification outcomes to potential employers and learning institutions.</p> <p>The target is for SAQA to identify all historical (legacy) datasets that are not on the NLRD, secure and load it on the NLRD. 90% of national learner achievements submitted for verification appear on the NLRD.</p>
Source of Data	The Verifications database; records of qualifications that were verified; the NLRD Tracking Grid of legacy datasets not on the NLRD

Method of calculation/assessment	The total number of learner achievements verified from the NLRD (x) as a percentage of the total number of verification requests received (y). $x/y \times 100 = \pm 90\%$
Assumptions	The employer provides the correct information about the learner and the qualification achievement
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Annual reporting measured against the five-year target
Desired performance	Approximately 90% of learner achievements against registered qualifications and part-qualifications appear on the NLRD. The actual performance should exceed the planned execution.
Indicator responsibility	Director: NLRD; Director: Verifications Project

Indicator Title	10.3 The NQF value chain works efficiently
Definition	<p>It takes visionary and influential leadership to bring all the NQF role-players to the same level of understanding. The NQF value chain spans SAQA, the QCs, DHET and DBE, as well as all the institutions, entities and providers associated with each of these organisations. The stakeholders and beneficiaries will only see the full impact of the NQF if all the stakeholders work together to deliver on the NQF. Many stakeholders are involved in implementing the NQF. If the NQF value chain works efficiently, then it would mean that the stakeholders and role-players are aligned to deliver on the NQF.</p> <p>SAQA only just began monitoring professional bodies for their data loads. Going forward, all professional bodies that fail to load professional designation information annually will be de-recognised.</p>

	The target is for all recognised professional bodies to load information about their members with professional designations on the NLRD annually.
Source of Data	The Tracking Grid for recognised professional bodies; the NLRD data load report; letter sent to non-compliant professional bodies; SAQA Board decision to de-recognise non-compliant professional bodies
Method of calculation/assessment	The NLRD will report on all recognised professional bodies that do not load data in a given year. The Registration and Recognition Directorate will prepare letters for the CEO's signature, to these non-compliant professional bodies. If they fail to load data within the specified deadline and cannot provide an acceptable reason for the non-compliance, the SAQA will be requested to de-recognise these professional bodies.
Assumptions	The professional bodies recruit new members with additional designations each year.
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Annual reporting measured against the five-year target
Desired performance	All recognised professional bodies load their professional designation information on the NLRD annually.
Indicator responsibility	Director: NLRD; Director: Registration and Recognition



Annexure A

Amendments to the Strategic Plan 2020/25

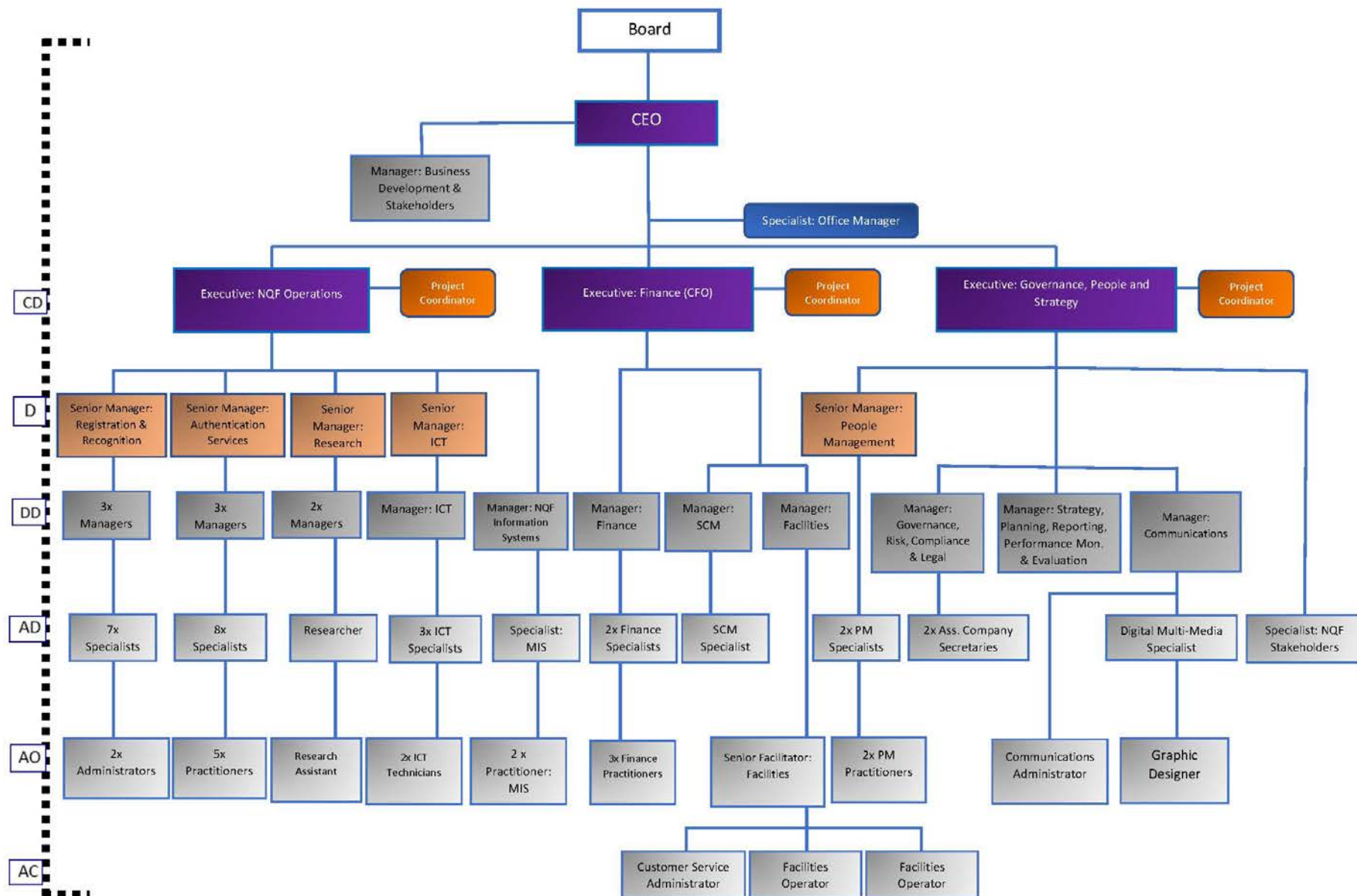
Annexure A: Amendments to the Strategic Plan 2020/25

SECTION	REVISED TEXT	REASON FOR REVISION	DATE WHEN REVISED
	Official Sign-Off	SAQA's structure changed, staff were retrenched or had resigned, so there had to be a new sign-off.	29 July 2021
8.2	<p>The SAQA Board utilises the following committee structures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✧ Executive Committee ✧ Audit and Risk Committee ✧ Information and Information Technology Committee ✧ NQF Qualifications Committee ✧ Professional Bodies Committee ✧ National and Foreign Qualifications Appeals Committee ✧ Professional Body Appeals Committee 	The term of office of the 6 th Board ended on 31 December 2020. The 7 th Board took office on 1 January 2021. At its first meeting on 29 January 2021, the Board adopted a new governance structure. The amendment reflects SAQA's new Board Committees.	29 January 2021

8 e	<p>Information on the capacity of the institution to deliver on its mandate</p> <p>The SAQA Board approved SAQA's new microstructure for implementation, in January 2021. The monitoring and evaluation process is designed to identify gaps. The Board will approve the final structure in March 2022.</p> <p>SAQA has a staff complement of 82 members. The distribution of staff is as follows: CEO plus support = 3 Programme 1: Governance, People and Strategy: 16</p>	<p>SAQA's new organogram was designed on the basis of available funding. Though not ideal, it was designed to support delivery on mandated functions. This structure may change over time if new functions are added, more service delivery avenues are explored and funding permits.</p> <p>This structure is set up to complement efforts to automate processes and employ 4IR technologies to SAQA's work.</p>	29 July 2021
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	<p>Programme 1: Finance and Administration: 15 Programmes 2 – 5: NQF Operations: 46</p> <p>The current capacity is the minimum structure required to carry out SAQA's functions. SAQA's approach to managing unexpected and short-term crises, is to make use of short-term contract staff. Also, SAQA will be considering ways to automate processes so that capacity is available to deal with more complex functions.</p> <p>SAQA's new structure will be implemented on 1 April 2021.</p>		
8.2	<p>SAQA's capacity to deliver on its mandate</p> <p>The SAQA Board approved SAQA's new microstructure for implementation, in January 2021. Only once the microstructure has been implemented, monitoring and evaluation completed to identify and fill gaps, will the Board approve the final microstructure. The Board expects to approve this microstructure by March 2022.</p> <p>At this stage, it seems that the new structure accommodates eighty-two posts. The areas most impacted are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NQF Advisory Services – closure of this service ▪ Foreign Qualifications Walk-in Centre – closure of this service ▪ Advocacy, Communications and Advisory Services – closure of this Directorate and a more streamlined function focusing on the media and communication with stakeholders via social media platforms will emerge. ▪ NLRD – closure of this Directorate. The database itself will be managed by IT, and the MIS unit will have 	<p>SAQA experienced financial difficulties during the lockdown. It was unable to balance its budget. The SAQA Board approved implementation of Section 189 of the Labour Relations Act. Approximately, 71 employees were to be retrenched. Hours before retrenchment letters were to be issued, DHET gave SAQA an additional R 5 million which stopped retrenchments in the short term, and gave SAQA an additional 3 months to restructure. The new Board approved the microstructure for implementation on 9 February 2021, via a round-robin process. After implementation on 1 April 2021, SAQA will perform a monitoring and evaluation process to determine the effectiveness of the new structure, and make</p>	29 July 2021

	<p>minimal staff to ensure the integrity of the information on the database.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ International Relations – closure of this Directorate and a more streamlined function is considered under Stakeholder Relations. ▪ Combining the Verifications Project (Programme 3) with the Foreign Qualifications Evaluations and Advisory Service (Programme 4) for a more streamlined service provision with less staff and an investment in automation if funding allows. <p>Below is SAQA’s new microstructure. This microstructure will be implemented on 1 April 2021. The microstructure currently accommodates eighty-two posts. This may change during implementation. Approximately eighty-nine employees may be retrenched during this process.</p>	changes where required. The Board will approve the final structure at its meeting in March 2022.	
Part C: 9.2 Part D: 5b	The target relating to the indicator “SAQA’s activities promote a world-class NQF that is well understood and benefits all stakeholders”, was changed to: “The NLRD reflects 24 million or more learners <u>with</u> achievements”.	The change was made to align with the revised 2021/22 APP	29 July 2021





Annual Performance Plan 2022/23

SOUTH AFRICAN QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

Annual Performance Plan 2022/23

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APPROVED BY THE SAQA BOARD ON 28
OCTOBER 2021 (SAQA 05134/21)

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REVISED ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN 2022/23

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Executive Authority Statement

Dr BE Nzimande, MP

Executive Authority: The South African Qualifications Authority

Accounting Officer Statement

SAQA, a Section 3A Public Entity in terms of the PFMA, has an unbroken record of unqualified audit opinions in its twenty-five-year history, and consecutive clean audit opinions in the last three years. SAQA faced one of its toughest years during the 2020/21 financial year. The Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdown had severely hampered SAQA's ability to generate funding through its various paid-services. The extended closure of South Africa's borders resulted in SAQA not receiving many applications for the evaluation of foreign qualifications. Also, national and provincial departments had slowed down recruitment during this period and did not make use of SAQA's verification services. Professional bodies too, like many organisations, suffered financial difficulties, and many struggled to pay their annual service fees to SAQA.

Despite its best efforts to remain sustainable, the SAQA Board had no choice but to approve negotiations towards the implementation of Section 189 of the Labour Relations Act on 29 September 2020. This meant that seventy-one employees across all salary bands were put on a list to be retrenched to balance the 2020/21 budget. Fortunately, the retrenchment process was halted hours before final letters were to be issued, as DHET approved an additional once-off payment of five million rand to cover the shortfall in the salary bill until 31 March 2021. This provided SAQA with the time it required to resume and complete its redesign and restructure process for implementation in April 2021. The new structure comprised eighty-two (82) positions, and after an intense interview process, the remaining eighty-nine (89) employees who were not successful in securing a place on the new structure, were retrenched to streamline the organisation and balance the 2021/22 budget. A monitoring and evaluation process followed the implementation of the redesign process, and the SAQA Board plans to approve a final staffing structure in March 2022. The M&E process has highlighted that the Authentication Services Unit, with a drastically reduced staff complement of sixteen, is under tremendous pressure to meet its deliverables timeously. The automation of processes in this Unit when resources become available, will resolve this problem in the medium to long-term. In the interim, SAQA is making use of short-term contract staff, drawn from among the eighty-nine (89) retrenched staff members, to address the backlogs.





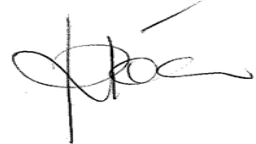
SAQA's primary focus for the 2020/25 Planning Cycle, is on streamlining and automating its operational processes to become more efficient in its service provision. The NQF Act 2008, as amended and when promulgated by the President of the country, will give SAQA more authority and responsibilities. SAQA will also focus on making the new staffing structure, with its drastically reduced staff complement work. The Board is re-considering SAQA's current Strategic Plan to determine if SAQA is implementing its mandate optimally.





Dr J Reddy
Accounting Officer

Official Sign-Off

It is hereby certified that this Annual Performance Plan:

- Was developed by the Management of SAQA under the guidance of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation;
- Takes into account all the relevant policies, legislation and other mandates for which SAQA is responsible; and
- Accurately reflects the Impact, Outcomes and Outputs which SAQA will endeavour to achieve over the period 2022/23.

Senior manager: People Management	Senior Manager: Registration & Recognition	Acting Senior Manager Authentication Services	Senior Manager: Research Senior	Senior Manager: ICT
				
Ms. P Flanagan	Mr. J Nel	Ms T Mutloane	Dr H Bolton	Mr. J Ntsioa

Executive: Governance, People & Strategy		Executive: NQF Operations		Chief Finance Officer		Chief Executive Officer	
Ms. N Naidoo		Ms. N Starr		Ms. S Netili		Dr J Reddy	

Approved by:

Dr BE Nzimande, MP
Minister: Higher Education, Science and Innovation

SOUTH AFRICAN QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY



Annual Performance Plan 2022/23

Part A: Our Mandate

1. Updates to the Relevant Legislative and Policy Mandates

1.1 National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008 (Act 67 of 2008 as amended)

SAQA was established under the SAQA Act, No. 58 of 1995 and continues under the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act, No. 67 of 2008 (as amended by the Higher Education Laws Amendment Act 26 of 2010). The NQF Amendment Act, No. 12 of 2019, once proclaimed, will further amend the NQF Act, 2008. The functions of SAQA are set out in sections 5(3) and 13 of the NQF Act of 2008, which became effective on 1 June 2009. The NQF Act positions SAQA as the oversight body of the NQF and the custodian of its values. In summary, SAQA must:

- ✳ Advance the objectives of the NQF,
- ✳ Oversee the further development and implementation of the NQF, and
- ✳ Coordinate the three NQF Sub-Frameworks.

SAQA's mandated functions include, amongst others:

- ✳ Advising the relevant Ministers and decision-makers on NQF matters,
- ✳ Overseeing the implementation of the NQF and ensuring the achievement of its objectives,
- ✳ Developing a system of collaboration to guide the mutual relations of SAQA and the Quality Councils,
- ✳ Developing and publishing the NQF level descriptors in agreement with the Quality Councils,
- ✳ Developing policies and criteria for the development, registration and publication of qualifications, assessment, recognition of prior learning and credit accumulation and transfer, recognising a professional body and registering a professional designation
- ✳ Collaborating with its international counterparts and sharing good NQF practice nationally and internationally,
- ✳ Conducting or commissioning and publishing investigations on issues of importance for the development and implementation of the NQF, including periodic studies of the impact of the NQF on South African education, training, and employment,

- ✱ Maintaining a national learners' records database (NLRD) comprising registers of national qualifications, part-qualifications, learner achievements, recognised professional bodies, professional designations, and associated information, including misrepresentation regarding qualifications,
- ✱ Providing an evaluation and advisory service with respect to foreign qualifications; and
- ✱ Informing the public about the NQF.
- ✱

The NQF Amendment Act, No. 12 of 2019 that was signed by the President on 13 August 2019 and published for information, further adds to SAQA's mandate.

"The purpose of the NQF Amendment Act is:

- › To amend the National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008, so as to amend and insert certain definitions;
- › to provide for the verification of all qualifications or part-qualifications by the SAQA;
- › to provide for the formulation of criteria for evaluating foreign qualifications;
- › to provide for the establishment and maintenance of separate registers of misrepresented or fraudulent qualifications or part-qualifications;
- › to provide for a separate register for professional designations;
- › to provide for the referral of qualifications or part-qualifications to the SAQA for verification and evaluation;
- › to provide for offences and penalties which have a bearing on fraudulent qualifications; and
- › to provide for matters connected therewith.

Source: NQF Amendment Act, 2019

The NQF Amendment Act "seeks to create an enabling mechanism for the South African Qualifications Authority ("SAQA") and the three Quality Councils ("QCs") to have legislative competence to address challenges regarding fraudulent or misrepresented qualifications or part-qualifications. In this regard, a provision is made for the referral of all qualifications or part-qualifications presented for study, employment, or appointment to the SAQA for verification or evaluation. Further provisions include the referral of fraudulent qualifications or part-qualifications to the relevant professional body and offences in respect of fraudulent qualifications or part-qualifications.

The SAQA is also empowered to establish and maintain separate registers for professional designations, misrepresented and fraudulent qualifications and part-qualifications. The NQF Amendment Act, 2019 mandates SAQA to evaluate foreign qualifications or part-qualifications and to formulate and publish criteria for evaluating foreign qualifications or part-qualifications.

The NQF Amendment Act, 2019 states that SAQA, as the body with overall responsibility for the National Qualifications Framework (“NQF”) and for the coordination of the sub-frameworks, must be consulted when the QCs advise the Minister: HESI on matters relating to their sub-frameworks.

Source: MEMORANDUM ON THE OBJECTS OF NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK AMENDMENT BILL, 2018 presented to Parliament.

The Public Finance Management Act (1999)

SAQA commits to sound corporate governance, integrity, efficiency, and compliance. This Strategic Plan considers section 30.1 of the Treasury Regulations, 2005, promulgated under the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (PFMA) as well as the Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans, issued by the DPME in June 2019.

1.2 Policy Mandates

SAQA has direct responsibility for implementing, managing, or overseeing the following Policy mandates:

- The White Paper on Post- School Education and Training (November 2013) and its implementation plan, the National Plan for PSET (NPPSET) (DHET, 2019);
- Priorities and Guidelines for the NQF and other directives issued by the Minister of Higher Education, Science, and Innovation.

Concerning the White Paper on Post-School Education and Training (2013): the implementation of this document finds expression in the Draft National Plan for Post-School Education and Training discussed in Section 2.5 below.

In terms of the Ministerial Guidelines: The Minister: Higher Education, Science, and Innovation, may publish guidelines that highlight priorities that SAQA and the QCs must consider. The Minister did not publish Guidelines in 2019, 2020 or 2021 and requested NQF entities to implement the NQF Act Implementation Evaluation Improvement Plan. SAQA considered the contents of the latter in the development of its Strategic Plan and Annual Performance Plan.

2 Updates to Institutional Policies and Strategies

2.1 National Development Plan 2030

Chapter 9 of the National Development Plan (NDP) deals with IMPROVING EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND INNOVATION. In its focus on the **Youth and Education**, the NDP lists the following targets:

- (i) Improve the school system, including increasing the number of students achieving above 50 per cent in literacy and mathematics, increasing learner retention rates to 90 per cent and bolstering teacher training;
- (ii) Strengthen youth service programmes and introduce new, community-based programmes to offer young people life-skills training, entrepreneurship training and opportunities to participate in community development programmes;
- (iii) Strengthen and expand the number of FET colleges to increase the participation rate to 25 per cent;
- (iv) Increase the graduation rate of FET colleges to 75 per cent;
- (v) Provide full funding assistance covering tuition, books, accommodation and living allowance to students from poor families;
- (vi) Provide a tax incentive to employers to reduce the initial cost of hiring young labour-market entrants;
- (vii) Subsidise the placement sector to identify, prepare and place matric graduates into work. The subsidy will be paid upon successful placement;
- (viii) Expand learnerships and make training vouchers directly available to job seekers;
- (ix) Formalise the graduate recruitment scheme for the public service to attract highly skilled people; and
- (x) Expand the role of state-owned enterprises in training artisans and technical professionals.

Enabling milestones

- (i) Increase the quality of education so that all children have at least two years of preschool education, and all children in grade 3 can read and write.
- (ii) Broaden social cohesion and unity while redressing the inequities of the past.

Critical actions

An education accountability chain, with lines of responsibility from the state to the classroom.

In line with the priorities of the plan, **people with disabilities** must have enhanced access to quality education and employment. Efforts to ensure relevant and accessible skills development programmes for people with disabilities, coupled with equal opportunities for their productive and gainful employment, must be prioritised.

These targets are currently under review.

2.2 National Development Plan Five-Year Implementation Plan

Government has identified seven priorities derived from the Electoral Mandate and the 2019 State of the Nation Address:

- Priority 1: Economic Transformation and Job Creation;
- **Priority 2: Education, Skills and Health;**
- Priority 3: Consolidating the Social Wage through Reliable and Quality Basic Services;
- Priority 4: Spatial Integration, Human Settlements and Local Government;
- Priority 5: Social Cohesion and Safe Communities;
- Priority 6: A Capable, Ethical and Developmental State; and
- Priority 7: A better Africa and World.

Priority 2, namely, *Education, Skills and Health*, is relevant to the Department of Higher Education and Training. This priority contributes to pillar 2 of the 3 NDP pillars, which is *Capabilities of South Africans*.

The DHET's NDP five-year Implementation Plan does not specify any direct contribution from SAQA.

2.3 Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF)

Cabinet approved its Revised Medium Term Strategic Framework 2019/24 in September 2021.

"The Revised MTSF 2019-2024 continues to reflect government's plan of action over the remaining term of the sixth administration. The Revised MTSF 2019-2024 also prioritises government commitments to prevail over the coronavirus pandemic and to work towards recovery. These commitments were outlined in the 2021 State of the Nation Address and include the following focus areas: First, to defeat the coronavirus pandemic; Second, to accelerate our economic recovery; Third, to implement economic reforms to create sustainable jobs and drive inclusive growth; And finally, to fight corruption and strengthen the capacity of the state. These commitments are included in the Revised MTSF 2019-2024 and will provide the focus for annual plans." Revised MTSF, page 3

Priority 3 refers to Education, skills, and health.

With respect to post-school education and training, the Revised MTSF states: "... there is also a need to force the more rapid adoption of innovative delivery models and methods, such as distance and digital learning, alternative and more efficient degree structures, improved institutional models, and approaches to improve quality and throughput."

Focus should also be on the youth in giving them the necessary skills to be productive in the workforce, in the 4IR era. With great emphasis being placed on Early Childhood Development and basic education, having capable and committed teachers is an imperative.

DHET's five-year MTSF refers to the following outcomes:

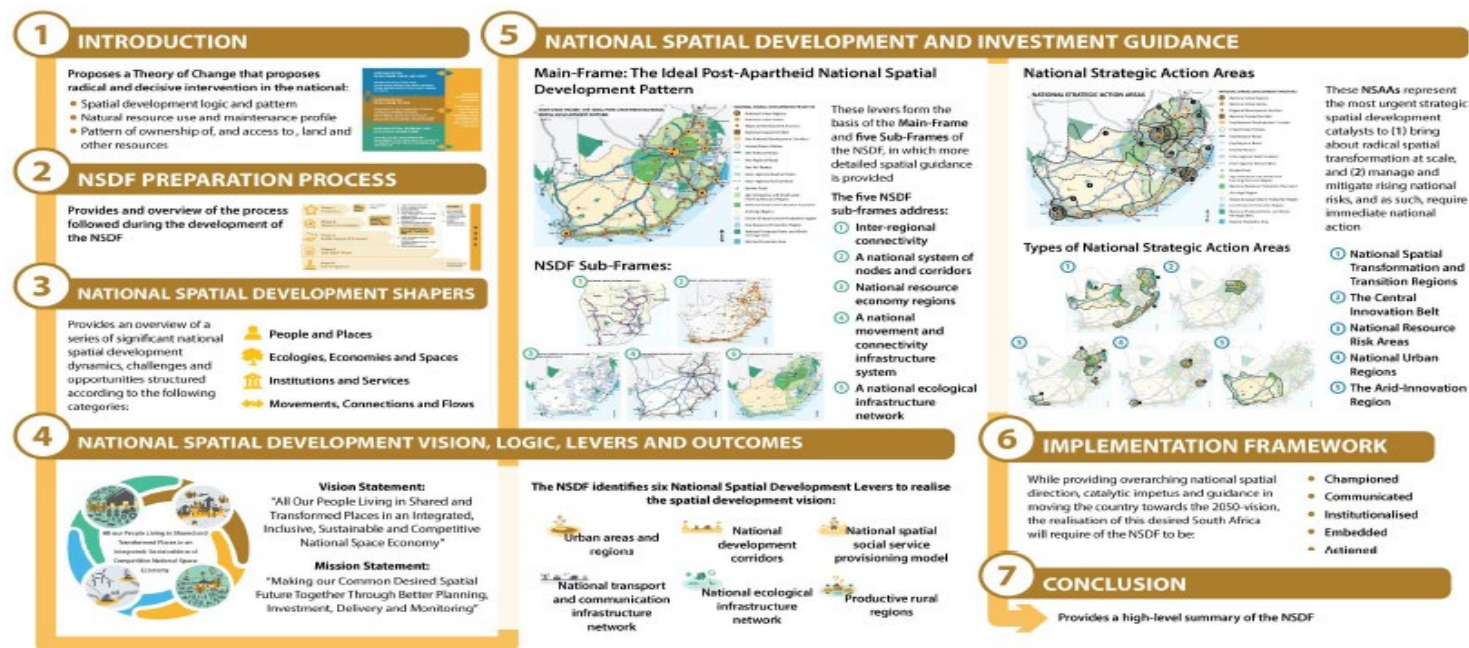
- Access;
- Quality;
- Responsiveness;
- Success; and
- Efficiency.

DHET has recommended that SAQA and the QCs consider the following three outcomes in their Strategic Plans:

- Improved quality;
- Expanded access (RPL and Articulation); and
- Improved efficiency.

2.4 National Spatial Development Framework

SAQA awaits Cabinet approval of this document. The illustration below shows the contents of the Framework. It is not directly relevant to SAQA's work as SAQA's projects and initiatives are aimed at stakeholders nationally. SAQA seeks to support diverse learners through its policies and processes.



Source: DPME September 2021

2.5 National Plan for Post-School Education and Training

The White Paper for Post-School Education and Training of 2013 sets out a vision for a post-school education system that enriches lives, promotes social justice, and overcomes historical inequalities. This Draft National Plan for Post-School Education and Training (the Plan) gives effect to that vision.

The post-school education and training (PSET) system provide for three main types of public education and training providers: community education and training (CET) colleges; technical and vocational education and training (TVET) colleges and higher education institutions, each with an important role to play in the system. The Plan provides for an expanded and differentiated public system, in which the TVET and the CET sectors should enrol 3.5 million students by 2030 or well over two-thirds of all public PSET students. All colleges and universities that provide post-school education and training opportunities across the sector will work closely with skills development providers, as identified in the National Skills Development Strategy (2030).

The sections of the Plan that are relevant to SAQA are detailed below.

Goal	Objective	Outcomes	Strategies
Goal 1: An integrated and coordinated PSET system	To build a PSET system that is integrated and coordinated to achieve efficiencies and improve the effectiveness	1.1 Clear and streamlined roles and responsibilities of all key stakeholders and role players	1.1 The roles, responsibilities, functions and funding frameworks of the quality councils, the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) are being refined to reduce duplication and improve efficiency.
		1.3 A simplified National Qualifications Framework (NQF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The DHET will work with SAQA and the Quality Councils to address all NQF-related issues, including, among other things, simplifying occupational qualification nomenclature and developing policies on NQF matters. The quality councils and SAQA will simplify accreditation and registration processes. The sub-frameworks, in particular, the higher education qualifications sub-framework (HEQSF) and the occupational qualifications sub-framework (OQSF), should be reviewed to ensure alignment and reduce the proliferation of programmes leading to qualifications. NQF-related policies will be reviewed to eliminate contradictions.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NQF Act will be reviewed, considering the recommendations of the report of the NQF evaluation undertaken by the Department in collaboration with the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME).
		1.4 Increased articulation for students between and within the NQF sub-frameworks, and between and within institutions	Unnecessary and unfair barriers to student articulation between programmes and NQF levels will be addressed through a joined-up planning process between the DHET, Department of Basic Education (DBE), and Council on Higher Education (CHE), QCTO and Umalusi.
		1.5 Aligned policy and legislation	Policy and legislation will be reviewed to consider the implications of this Plan.
Goal 3: A responsive PSET system	To provide qualifications, programmes and curricula that are responsive to the needs of the world of work, society and students	3.1 A diverse range of programmes relevant to the aspirations and needs of the locality and responsive to community needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CET colleges will offer skills/occupational programmes, community education programmes, general or academic programmes (particularly the General Education and Training Certificate for Adults [GETCA] and the National Senior Certificate for Adults [NASCA]) and foundational learning programmes. By 2030, TVET colleges will offer general vocational programmes (particularly the National Certificate Vocational [NCV]), skills/occupational certificate programmes, foundational learning programmes, higher certificate programmes (initially in partnership with universities), advanced certificate programmes, and, beyond that, those with capacity will offer diplomas. Higher education colleges will offer a range of undergraduate certificate, diploma, and degree programmes in specific niche areas. Universities will offer general formative programmes, professional programmes, and career-focused programmes at the undergraduate level, all of which may be offered through extended curriculum programmes, as well as a range of postgraduate professional and research-oriented programmes. Universities will be supported to develop engagement policies and strategies (with the CHE advising on policy, reporting, monitoring and sharing of good practice) and to integrate these into teaching, learning and research.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through the Internationalisation Policy Framework, outbound scholarship and academic exchange opportunities will be broadened, and foreign postgraduate enrolments encouraged.
		3.2 A diverse range of programmes responsive to the world of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CET colleges will analyse municipal local economic development plans and Labour Market Intelligence Unit (LMIU) data to assess demand and develop programmes, including programmes which articulate with TVET studies, and skills development programmes where needed by other government departments. SAQA and the QCTO will review all NQF Level 2 and 3 occupational certificates and NQF Level 4 National Occupational Certificates (NOCs) with regard to the possibility of simulated workplace-based experience components, as there are limitations currently with placements for WPBL. TVET Centres of Specialisation will initially focus on 13 priority trades in demand and will extend to other trades as identified in the pilot review. University enrolment and Programme Qualification Mix (PQM) planning will be reviewed to ensure that they are clear and responsive to the changing national and global contexts. Occupational programmes will be responsive to global technological advancements.

2.6 South African Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan

The outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020, found a vulnerable South African economy. The South African Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP) sets out a reconstruction and recovery plan for the South African economy that is aimed at stimulating equitable and inclusive growth.

In terms of the Plan, the following priority interventions will be made:

- Aggressive infrastructure investment;
- Employment orientated strategic localisation, reindustrialisation and export promotion;
- Energy security;
- Support for tourism recovery and growth;

- Gender equality and economic inclusion of women and youth;
- Green economy interventions;
- Mass public employment interventions;
- Strengthening food security; and
- Macro-economic interventions.

SAQA is committed to playing its role in the economic recovery of the country by contributing to the repurposing of State-Owned Enterprises (SOE's) through its organisational re-design. SAQA's restructuring has improved institutional efficiencies through automation and has promoted job creation through its authentication services, the registration of relevant and quality qualifications and the recognition of professional bodies.

In line with the ERRP and other national priorities, SAQA also contributes towards gender equality and economic inclusion of women and youth. SAQA's employment equity targets are transformative as seen in the higher targets set for women, over men. SAQA continues to meet these targets as seen in Section 7.2b and 7.2c below.

One of the critical enablers of the ERRP is a focus on Communications and the Digital Economy, which among other things, can lower business costs and enable better service delivery. SAQA's Authentication Services has moved online, which has contributed to both reduced costs and improved service delivery. In addition to this, SAQA uses social media platforms to inform the public about the NQF and other developments related to education, training, and the workplace, thereby showing the organisation's commitment to embracing digital communication.

2.7 NQF Act Implementation Evaluation Improvement Plan

The DPME evaluated the implementation of the NQF Act in 2016. The findings of the evaluation resulted in the development of the NQF Act Implementation Evaluation Improvement Plan of 2018. The purpose of the Improvement Plan is to ensure that the relevant stakeholders address the evaluation findings. SAQA has included its commitments from the Improvement Plan for this planning period, in the Strategic Plan.

Below is an extract of the Improvement Plan highlighting SAQA's deliverables.

Recommendation	Outputs to achieve the objective	Activity to produce output	Deadline	Target
Specify the roles and responsibilities of the NQF Forum, [CEO Committee] and Inter-Departmental NQF Steering Committee in greater detail. Particular emphasis should be placed on defining the scope and authority for a decision of each structure, their accountability and reporting lines.	SAQA, after consultation, strengthens the System of Collaboration: R4.1 - Roles and responsibilities specified in the NQF Act to strengthen the System of Collaboration.	Review the System of Collaboration	31 December 2020	Amendments to the NQF Act are taken into account when the review of the System of Collaboration is done.
Ensure that the NQF Forum is again held on at least an annual basis. For this to happen, SAQA will require the support from the M: HET and DG: HET. It is important to note that for the forum to achieve its goals, it needs to be attended by the right policymakers who have the authority to address the complex issues being raised.	A dedicated channel created for CEO Committee to engage DHET and DBE on policy issues	Amend System of Collaboration, and in particular the Terms of Reference of the CEO Committee	30 March 2022	Amendments to the NQF Act are taken into account when a review of the System of Collaboration is done.
The DHET should clarify and document the role of the NQF Directorate in the policy framework and review its location within the department.	Establish monitoring mechanisms and report on the functioning of the System of Collaboration	Use DHET's Guidelines on M&E to establish a monitoring and evaluation protocol for the System of Collaboration	1 April 2023	The new M&E protocol is ready for implementation in the next financial year
There is currently no implementation of the registered qualifications designed for adults, i.e. the NASCA and the GETC. In this regard, Umalusi, DHET and the DBE	Provide advice to the Minister about the transfer of the	SAQA will coordinate meetings between the QCTO and Umalusi to draft	30 March 2021	Develop a project plan on the transitional transfer arrangements

Recommendation	Outputs to achieve the objective	Activity to produce output	Deadline	Target
<p>must clarify the status of the NASCA and the GETC, in terms of where in the system the qualifications are to be offered, how they will be funded and what upwards articulation possibilities exist for those completing the NASCA and the GETC.</p> <p>SAQA, after consultation with the QCTO and Umalusi, will advise the Minister about the transfer of the quality assurance of N1-N3 qualifications to the QCTO.</p>	quality assurance of N1-N3 qualifications	a proposal on the transfer of the quality assurance of N1-N3 qualifications to the QCTO		
Based on the theories of change, DHET in collaboration with the DBE, SAQA and Quality Councils, must develop a detailed implementation plan that outlines the key activities, outputs and outcomes that the NQF is expected to achieve over a five-year period.	Analyses and reporting on trends in data relating to key policy initiatives, in terms of the indicators and performance metrics	SAQA reports on the analyses on trends in data relating to key policy initiatives.	31 March 2021	NLRD trends reporting on analyses relating to key policy initiatives
SAQA after consultation with the Quality Councils must issue guidelines clarifying what a part-qualification is in the context of their sub-framework and specify what is allowable or not in terms of a part-qualification (e.g. will a part-qualification require a workplace component in the OQSF).	Guidelines issued on registration of part-qualifications in line with policy and criteria requirements	Guidelines published	31 December 2022	Guidelines published

Recommendation	Outputs to achieve the objective	Activity to produce output	Deadline	Target
SAQA must use the data from the NLRD to track and monitor policy changes and developments across the NQF. The indicators and performance metrics could be defined by the CEO Committee, after consultation with the Inter-Departmental NQF Steering Committee.	Establish an NQF-wide workflow system to track and monitor the status of qualifications and part-qualifications submitted to the QCs for accreditation and to SAQA for registration on the NQF	Develop and implement the MIS tracking system for qualifications and part-qualifications submitted to the QCs for accreditation and to SAQA for registration on the NQF	30 March 2022	MIS tracking system developed and implemented (subject to budget availability)

2.8 Policy Initiatives

SAQA, as the organisation responsible for overseeing the further development and implementation of the NQF, will work with its NQF Partners to ensure implementation of the following NQF-related Policies and Criteria:

- National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Level Descriptors (2012);
- Policy and Criteria for the Registration of Qualifications and Part-Qualifications on the National Qualifications Framework, as amended (2020);
- National Policy and Criteria for Designing and Implementing Assessment for NQF Qualifications and Part-Qualifications and Professional Designations in South Africa (2014);
- National Policy and Criteria for the Implementation of the Recognition of Prior Learning, as amended (2019);
- Policy and Criteria for Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT) within the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) as amended (2021);
- Policy and Criteria for Recognising a Professional Body and Registering a Professional Designation for the purposes of the National Qualifications Framework Act, Act 67 of 2008, as amended (2020);
- Policy and Criteria for Evaluating Foreign Qualifications within the South African NQF, as amended (2017);
- Addendum on the Recognition of Qualifications of Refugees and Asylum Seekers (2019);

- Draft National Policy on the Misrepresentation of Qualifications (2019);
- NQF Implementation Framework 2020/21-2024/25;
- System of Collaboration 2019; and
- The Articulation Policy for the Post-School Education and Training System of South Africa (2017); and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Coordination Policy (2016).

SAQA reviews its policies periodically to ensure currency and alignment to legislation. In the period 2020/2021, SAQA has finalised its Policy on the Misrepresentation of Qualifications and will publish the Policy after the President proclaims the NQF Amendment Act, 2019.

3 Relevant Court Rulings

In the matter between *Accelerated Christian Education South Africa* (ACE) (Applicant) and *South African Qualifications Authority* (SAQA) (1st respondent); *Council for Further Education and Training Quality Assurance* (Umalusi) (2nd respondent):

ACE provides education programmes through many schools known as the Schools of Tomorrow (SOT). ACE lodged an urgent application against SAQA and Umalusi on 3 March 2017. The essence of the application was to restrain SAQA and Umalusi from informing the public that the SOT Grade 12 College Entrance Certificate (ACE Certificate):

- a. Has not been registered on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework (GENFETQSF);
- b. That the ACE certificate has been de-registered; and
- c. That the qualification is invalid.

SAQA, supported by Umalusi, launched a counter application that sought declaratory orders that:

- a. The provisional accreditation granted by Umalusi to ACE has been terminated;
- b. ACE has been operating unlawfully as an assessment body of qualifications;
- c. ACE be prohibited from acting as an assessment body;
- d. ACE be ordered to inform ACE students that it may not enrol new students until it has been accredited by Umalusi; and
- e. It is declared that ACE has been operating unlawfully since 15 September 2016 and continues to operate unlawfully, in that it has been acting as an assessment body of certain identified qualifications without having been accredited as an assessment body by Umalusi.

Final Order:

- (i) It is declared that the ACE Grade 12 qualification awarded by independent schools to learners at any date prior to this order is registered and is a valid qualification;
- (ii) It is declared that the ACE qualification presently being offered by independent schools to learners who had enrolled for the learning programme leading to the qualification before 30 June 2016, is a qualification registered on the NQF as a qualification that has passed its end date, i.e. with the last date of enrolment is 30 June 2016 and the last date for achievement being 30 June 2019;
- (iii) SAQA is interdicted and restrained from informing the public anything different than what is provided for in (i) and (ii) above; and
- (iv) It is declared that ACE's Grade 12 qualification offered through independent schools has never been assessed by Umalusi or an accredited assessment body, and ACE's qualifications, therefore, do not comply with the 2012 and 2017 Umalusi Policies, which fact does not impact the validity or registration of the qualifications, and consequently, the qualifications already obtained and to be awarded to learners who had enrolled for the learning programmes leading to qualifications before 30 June 2016, will have the same status as the qualifications had before 30 June 2015, and should be treated accordingly.

Part B: Our Strategic Focus

4 Vision

A world-class National Qualifications Framework that works for the People in South Africa

5 Mission

Oversee the further development and implementation of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and advance its objectives, which contribute to the full development of each lifelong learner and to the social and economic development of the nation at large

6 Values

SAQA regards the NQF as a framework for communication, coordination and collaboration across education, training, development, and work. SAQA's staff commitment expressed in the SAQA Staff Declaration underpins its work. SAQA staff commits to serve the life-long learner by:

- Building a dynamic, responsive, internationally respected and living NQF;
- Developing a visionary, influential and reflective leadership who cares;
- Registering quality qualifications and professional designations that articulate;
- Building a competent, skilled, and caring staff component; and
- Increasing the visibility, understanding and appreciation of the NQF through advocacy and communication over the next five years.

"We also commit to being more accountable, listen more attentively, and to be more respectful and accepting of one another. We pledge to be more aware of the work that we do as an organisation and to appreciate how each of us contributes to serving all people, particularly the poor, rural and marginalised".

"We commit to creating a sustainable environment, where new ideas are encouraged and given due consideration. We commit to reflect on our practices and strive to communicate without fear, favour or prejudice."

Extracts from the Staff Declaration 2019

7 Updated Situational Analysis

The Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdown had severely hampered SAQA's ability to generate funding through its paid services. The closure of South Africa's borders resulted in SAQA not receiving requests for the evaluation of foreign qualifications. National and provincial departments had also slowed down recruitment during this period and therefore did not make use of SAQA's verification services. Professional bodies, like many organisations, suffered financial difficulties, and struggled to pay their annual fees to SAQA.

The SAQA Board, on 29 September 2020, approved the start of negotiations towards the implementation of section 189 of the Labour Relations Act so that SAQA could balance its 2020/21 budget. This meant that seventy-one employees across salary bands had to be retrenched. Retrenchments were to be implemented from 1 December 2020; any delay in the process would result in further retrenchments. Hours before issuing retrenchment letters to staff, DHET offered SAQA an additional five million rands to halt retrenchments. This meant that SAQA had to defer all capital and operational spending for the last four months, to meet its salary bill until 31 March 2021. DHET also warned that no further "bail-outs" were forthcoming and that SAQA should restructure to reduce its salary bill.

Restructuring was on the cards for 2020/21, as this was a deliverable in SAQA's APP. The restructuring process had begun in April 2020 but was overtaken by SAQA's financial crisis and the threat of retrenchments. The SAQA Board, in December 2020 approved SAQA's functional structure, which was used as the basis for developing its organogram. The 7th Board approved the implementation of the microstructure (organogram) in February 2021. The new structure had eighty-two (82) positions. As a result of the restructure, some positions became redundant, while new hybrid posts were created. Unfortunately, this meant that eighty-nine (89) staff members who were not appointed on the new structure, were retrenched. SAQA continues with the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the new structure and may adjust the headcount if required. The Board plans to approve a final structure in March 2022.

The 7th Board continues to focus SAQA's efforts on its financial sustainability. This means that SAQA must find alternate ways to raise revenue to build its reserves and ensure that it generates more revenue through its paid services. The focus is also on streamlining its processes for greater efficiency and improved service delivery through automation and artificial intelligence tools. The latter will address service delivery delays brought about by the drastic reduction in the staff complement in the Authentication Services Unit, responsible for the verification of national and the foreign qualifications evaluation functions. The automation project fits in with Cabinet's Revised MTSF which focuses on digital platforms that improve service delivery and eliminate blockages.

Delays in providing authentication services have negatively impacted SAQA's reputation as stakeholders raised complaints on every available platform. SAQA responded to these complaints by bringing back twenty (20) retrenched staff on short-term contracts to address the backlogs in service delivery. This is a short-term solution while SAQA works on a long-term solution. The solution to the service delivery issues is re-engineering and automation of processes where possible so that the seventeen permanent staff members can cope with the volume of work.

The Board is also considering SAQA's role in the education and training sector and is working on a sharpened and streamlined focus for SAQA. This may result in an amendment to the current Strategic Plan and APP. For now, the organisation continues to implement the current approved strategy.

The NQF Act 2008, as amended, gives SAQA more responsibility and authority regarding its authentication, evaluation, misrepresentation, and coordination responsibilities and strengthens SAQA's ability to carry out its mandate. SAQA must ensure that it is ready to implement the Act as soon as the President proclaims it.

It is also essential for SAQA to continue to ensure that it plays a strong leadership role nationally, in SADC, on the African continent and globally as it grows its international footprint.

The environment in which SAQA operates is below

a) The strategic focus over the five-year planning period

SAQA, as the custodian of the NQF and its values, strives for:

- A dynamic NQF that is responsive, adapts to, and supports the changing needs of life-long learning;
- Visionary and influential leadership that drives a clear, evidence based NQF Agenda;
- Well-articulated quality-assured-qualifications and relevant professional designations that instil trust and meet the needs of the people;
- A competent and capable team, dedicated and resourced to develop and maintain the NQF; and
- Stakeholders and role-players who are aligned to deliver on the NQF.

SAQA has incorporated DHET's outcomes as follows:

SAQA's Outcome Statements	DHET's Outcome Statements
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A dynamic NQF that is responsive, adapts to and supports the changing needs of life-long learning	Expanded Access; Improved Efficiency; Improved Quality
Visionary and influential leadership that drives a clear, evidence based NQF Agenda	Improved Quality; Improved Efficiency; Expanded Access
Well-articulated quality-assured-qualifications and relevant professional designations that instil trust and meet the needs of the people	Improved Quality; Expanded Access; Expanded Access
A competent and capable team, dedicated and resourced to develop and maintain the NQF	Improved Efficiency
Stakeholders and role-players who are aligned to deliver on the NQF	Improved Efficiency

In light of these outcomes, SAQA will focus its efforts to:

- Register **quality** qualifications;
- Coordinate **articulation and RPL** initiatives;
- Lobby to strengthen and align relevant **legislation**; and
- Continue to **simplify** the NQF.

b) The medium- and long-term policy environment

The President signed the NQF Amendment Act in August 2019, but yet to proclaim it. The NQF Amendment Act, No. 12 of 2019 gives SAQA additional responsibilities in terms of verifying national qualifications, reporting, and acting on misrepresented and fraudulent qualifications, and advising the Minister on the Sub-frameworks.

It is anticipated that the NQF Act might change further within these five years. The NQF Act Implementation Evaluation identified the need for further changes to the Act, and the NQF Act Implementation Evaluation Improvement Plan captures this recommendation.

The recommendations state: "The DHET, the Department of Basic Education (DBE), SAQA and the Quality Councils must, as a matter of priority, revise the objectives of the NQF set out in the Act to ensure that they describe the specific contribution of the NQF to the systemic goals. To do this, the DHET, SAQA and Quality Councils must consider the following actions. SAQA, DHET and the Quality Councils must create theories of change or log frames as tools to clarify the following:

- (a) The aims and objectives of the NQF, and how these will contribute to the broader goals of the education and training system, and
- (b) How implementers will achieve the specific NQF objectives.

This will inform the required changes to the objectives of the NQF Act.”

Another area for proposed amendments is on the roles and responsibilities of the NQF structures. Proposed changes include strengthening SAQA’s position as the apex body within the NQF space.

A change in the NQF Act will probably result in a shift in SAQA’s strategy.

c) Challenges experienced by the institution in the performance environment and mechanisms to address the challenges over the planning period

SAQA’s biggest challenge is **financial sustainability**. Its allocation of voted funds comprises less than half (44%) of its conservative budget.

The lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic had severely affected SAQA’s ability to generate revenue for rendered services. SAQA has three sources of revenue generation:

- ✳ The evaluation of foreign qualifications;
- ✳ The verification of national qualifications; and
- ✳ Recognised professional bodies unable to pay their fees for services rendered by SAQA

With South Africa’s borders closed, and some countries prohibiting travel into and out of South Africa, there is a reduced demand for the evaluation of foreign qualifications services. With more people around the world being vaccinated, we hope that travel into South Africa for work or study purposes will resume. To date, SAQA has been verifying national qualifications primarily for the public service. There has been little demand for this service, and with further budget cuts in the public service, there has been a decline in demand for verification of national qualifications services. Professional bodies find themselves experiencing financial difficulties, and SAQA has noted the delays in receiving payment of annual professional body fees. This leaves SAQA facing serious financial challenges, and SAQA must look for alternate funding.

Many of SAQA’s processes are manual, outdated, and time-consuming. With adequate resources, SAQA will be able to: automate and streamline processes; employ artificial intelligence to repetitive processes; improve its productivity; and develop innovative and effective solutions to complex problems. SAQA is seeking funding from DHET for this project. The project is estimated to cost approximately twenty-one (21) million rand.

In the period, SAQA will continue to look for alternative sources of funding for specific projects and will continue to charge for services rendered, where possible. Once processes are automated, and the staffing structure streamlined, this will bring about greater efficiencies.

The second challenge is SAQA's ability to manage the **transition** to the NQF Amendment Act. The NQF Act was passed in 2008 and came into effect in June 2009. SAQA is still dealing with some of the transitional issues from the SAQA Act, 1995 to the NQF Act, 2008. This challenge exists because of SAQA's limited resources to deal with the problems and the differences in understandings of the NQF Act among entities in the NQF family. The amendments to the NQF Act worsen this problem and the additional changes expected in the next five-year period will compound this further. In December 2020, SAQA advised the Minister: HESI to end the transitional arrangements so that there will be greater clarity in terms of registered qualifications. SAQA awaits the Minister's response.

SAQA's approach will be to phase in the implementation of the amendments to the NQF Amendment Act and take on funded functions

d) Emerging priorities and opportunities which will be implemented during the planning period

The latest amendments to the NQF Act, 2008 add to SAQA's mandate. Implementation of these amendments will be phased in during the planning period. In addition, SAQA plans to do the following:

- ✳ Implement its **Plan for SAQA's Financial Sustainability**;
- ✳ Implement, in its efforts to enhance efficiency, a **plan for automating processes** across SAQA;
- ✳ Finalise its new structure and
- ✳ Prioritise quality qualifications, articulation (including flexible learning pathways, RPL and CAT), aligning NQF legislation and policy, and simplifying the NQF.

e) Information on the capacity of the institution to deliver on its mandate

The 6th SAQA Board approved the restructuring of SAQA in July 2020. The process was finalised by the 7th Board in January 2021. The staffing structure was reduced from one hundred and eighty-seven (187) to eighty-two (82) positions. This number is likely to change during the implementation and monitoring and evaluation of the new structure in 2021. The areas most impacted are the following:

- NQF Advisory Services – closure of this service. Client/public queries will be handled by each of the units within the workstreams;
- Foreign Qualifications Walk-in Centre – closure of this service;
- Advocacy, Communications and Advisory Services – closure of this Directorate and establishment of a more streamlined function focusing on the media and communication with stakeholders via social media platforms included in the new Division: Governance, People and Strategy;
- National Learners' Records Database (NLRD) – closure of this Directorate and establishment of a new workstream within the Division: NQF Operations focuses on maintaining the larger NQF management information system (NQF MIS);
- International Relations – closure of this Directorate and a more streamlined function, together with Business Development, in the CEO's office; and
- The Verifications Project (Programme 3) and the Foreign Qualifications Evaluations and Advisory Service (Programme 4) have been combined a new unit, Authentication and Recognition Services (A&RS) in the new Division: NQF Operations, towards streamlined service provision, a smaller staff complement and investment in automation if funding allows.

f) Relevant stakeholders that contribute to the institution's achievement of its outcomes

SAQA has a Board that is appointed by the Minister: Higher Education, Science, and Innovation. The Board delegates some of its work to various committees but maintains overall responsibility. The Board sets the strategy and monitors its implementation.

The NQF family (SAQA, the QCs, DHET and DBE) are the primary stakeholders responsible for implementing the NQF Act. The Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs), public and private higher education institutions, technical and vocational education, and training (TVET), private, and community education and training (CET) colleges, skills development providers (SDPs), professional bodies, public and private schools, and others relevant entities remain key stakeholders and contribute to SAQA's achievements through their engagements with SAQA and the NQF partners, and their participation in NQF initiatives.

The Departments of Justice and Constitutional Development (DoJ&CD), Public Service Administration (DPSA), Home Affairs (DHA) and International Relations (DIRCO), DFA and others play key roles by contributing to SAQA's evaluation of foreign qualifications functions, the verification the qualifications of public sector employees and in supporting SAQA's ability to create and maintain the Register of Fraudulent Qualifications, and in the implementation of NQF legislation. The South African Police Services (SAPS) play an important role in investigating cases of misrepresented qualifications.

The Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) assists SAQA with some of its media briefings.

The National Treasury, Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME), National Treasury and the Auditor-General remain key stakeholders for compliance to the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) and other government priorities.

7.1 External Environment Analysis

SAQA operates with multiple diverse partners and stakeholders in a challenging environment. A description of the external environment follows.

a) Background information on factors contributing to the performance of policy and regulatory institutions

SAQA is a Schedule 3A public entity. Less than half of SAQA's funding comes from voted state funds. SAQA must raise the balance of funds through the provision of paid services. This requirement potentially impacts SAQA's ability to fully deliver on its mandate as the funds generated through paid services are limited. The services offered by SAQA arise from SAQA's mandate described in the NQF Act. The activities in which SAQA engages also align with the functions and powers given to SAQA by this Act. In addition to the NQF and Public Finance Management Acts, SAQA also aligns to the King Code on Good Corporate Governance (King IV) and has sound governance practices. SAQA has had unqualified audit opinions from the Auditor-General throughout its twenty-five-year history.

b) Background information on demand for services and other factors which inform the development of SAQA's Strategic Plan

At the heart of SAQA, is a Unit that is responsible for registering qualifications and part-qualifications on the NQF, recognising professional bodies, and registering professional designations. The demand for these services continues to grow as the learning and work environments change.

Providers of education and training in the country should not offer qualifications and part-qualifications that are not registered on the NQF.

No person may use a professional designation registered by SAQA on its NQF MIS, if s/he is not a member of the respective professional body that registered the designation. SAQA recognises professional bodies for a period of five years. If a recognised professional body no longer complies with SAQA's Policy and Criteria for Recognising a Professional Body and Registering a Professional Designation, the professional body is de-recognised, and its professional designations are de-registered. A recognised professional body, among other criteria, must ensure that it uploads its member's qualification and professional designation records into the National Learners' Records Database (NLRD) managed by SAQA, of all members who achieved its professional designations. The NQF Management Information System (the NQF MIS), comprising: (1) the NLRD (all qualifications and part-qualifications registered on the NQF together with the providers who are accredited/ approved to offer these qualifications, and learner achievements

against the qualifications); (2) the registers of recognised professional bodies and their professional designations; (3) the register of foreign qualifications evaluated by SAQA; and (4) the registers of misrepresented and fraudulent qualifications (under development), is a national treasure in that it is the largest and only official database for all records of learning and related information. QCs are expected to load learner records onto the NQF MIS within 30 days of the data being quality assured. All the registers of the NQF MIS (incorporating the NLRD) that meet the requirements of the Protection of Personal Information (POPI) Act, are available to the public through SAQA's Website. The proposed further amendments to the NQF Act through the NQF Amendment Act provide for the referral of all qualifications or part-qualifications presented for study, employment, or appointment to SAQA for verification or evaluation. Learner achievements on the NQF MIS are used to verify national qualification achievements as well as for NQF policy development and implementation, and research and decision-making.

The NQF Act of 2008, as amended, will also provide for the QCs to consult SAQA when the QCs advise the Minister: HESI on matters relating to their NQF Sub-Frameworks. SAQA, as the body responsible for advancing the objectives of the NQF, overseeing the further development and implementation of the NQF, and coordination of the three NQF Sub-Frameworks, embraces this provision. The amendment addresses the current situation whereby the QCs advise the Minister: HESI on their NQF Sub-Frameworks and related matters - independently of SAQA and each other – and where this advice does not necessarily consider its effect across the NQF system. SAQA continues to be responsive and act quickly when the QCs request advice.

SAQA is also mandated to inform the public about the NQF. To this end, SAQA uses its website and social media platforms to communicate with NQF stakeholders and the public in general, over, and above hosting and participating in events, meetings, workshops, and other types of engagements.

c) Identifying challenges and providing interventions

Registration of qualifications: In some instances, lengthy periods are required to register qualifications on the NQF. One of the reasons for the extended time taken in the registration process, is that SAQA does not receive all the required information from the QCs or SAQA receives incorrect information. The root cause of this problem is that SAQA and the QCs use independent systems to carry out their respective roles and tasks in this continuum of work. The DPME's (2018) NQF Act Implementation Evaluation highlighted this problem and recommended remedial action in the NQF Improvement Plan based on the recommendations from the evaluation study. One of the deliverables in the NQF Improvement Plan is the development and implementation of an end-to-end workflow system that will allow providers to load information once for both the SAQA, DHET and QC parts of the process. This intervention requires additional funding that DHET has committed to secure. Considering SAQA's financial situation, this project will be on hold until the necessary funding becomes available.

Professional bodies: The most significant challenge regarding the professional bodies in the NQF context, is the overlaps and conflicts in the legislation for the professional bodies, and that governing the NQF partners and stakeholders. These challenges arise due to the pre-NQF legislation that governs statutory professional bodies – some of which dates to the 1950s, and which conflicts with or duplicates SAQA and QC functions under the NQF Act. The risk to SAQA is that statutory bodies encroach on the roles of SAQA

and the QCs, causing legal challenges, system inefficiency and duplication of work. As a result, SAQA becomes embroiled in unnecessary litigation. One of the recommendations of the DHET with the support of DPME's (2018) NQF Act implementation Evaluation, was for SAQA to analyse the extent of the conflicts and overlaps across the NQF and statutory professional body legislation. This analysis was concluded in 2020, the DHET, SAQA and the QCs engaged around the findings in 2020 and 2021 the recommendations of the analysis affect ten government Ministries and as a result, a memo on the matter has been submitted to Parliament. In addition, acknowledging the time needed to change legislation, the CHE has commenced a system of memoranda of understanding (MoUs) with statutory professional bodies under which these professional bodies carry out their quality assurance role during the qualifications development process. This initiative serves to strengthen the quality of qualifications registered on the NQF and highlights the quality and communication roles that professional bodies play in the NQF context.

The NQF MIS (incorporating the NLRD): The most significant challenge regarding the NQF MIS, while it is already an extensive and comprehensive management information system of multiple databases and registers, is its incomplete or missing datasets in particular sub-sectors and/or aspects. Since the NQF MIS (incorporating the NLRD) is the official management information system of the NQF, it is of critical importance to ensure that it has complete sets of all learner achievements and other data sets required. SAQA will meet this objective if it:

- (i) accommodates all the data subsets and advocates the use of its formats;
- (ii) ensures that the QCs, through their data suppliers, load information onto the NQF MIS; and

encourages the QCs to locate historical records, digitise these records and load them on a timely basis onto the NQF MIS. This digitisation process requires additional resources. Amendments to the NQF Act, once enforced, will support the timeous provision of data to SAQA.

Authentication and Recognition Services (Incorporating SAQA's qualification achievement verification and evaluation services) While SAQA currently verifies national qualifications and evaluates and verifies foreign qualifications, the NQF Amendment Act is expected to increase the demand for these services. These are paid services, and SAQA uses this revenue to supplement its government funding. SAQA does not have the resources to increase its employee headcounts any further in these areas. It is therefore essential to automate and streamline the processes involved - as far as funding permits - so that these services are offered timeously and in line with service standards. The demand for these services is still low but is expected to increase once the economy fully opens-up in South Africa's post-pandemic recovery.

Under the NQF Amendment Act, the QCs must consult SAQA whenever they advise the Minister on matters relating to their NQF Sub-Frameworks: The QCs do not accept this requirement readily. The QCs reluctance to give up their rights to direct communication with the Minister: Higher Education, Science, and Innovation, could prove challenging. SAQA must strengthen its relationships with the leadership of the QCs and be highly responsive and collaborative when asked to comment on advice for the Minister, including the QCs in the discussions around any advice that directly impacts their work. Inroads and improved relationship have been noted in this regard, and SAQA intends to continue to develop the SAQA-QC community of practice and trust. .

SAQA provides information about the NQF to the public: Covid-19 highlighted the need for online platforms as a means of communication and SAQA has embraced technology to host and participate in online events, workshops, meetings, and the use of social media for information-sharing and the advocacy of the NQF. Based on its successes, SAQA will continue to use these platforms as tools for communication. SAQA is working with the NQF partners and stakeholders to raise awareness of NQF policy, implementation initiatives and services. One challenge is that at times, NQF stakeholder entities convey conflicting messages to the public. The public does not always know about the services available, or trusted information sources, or which NQF entity is responsible for specific services. It is therefore crucial for SAQA to continue to drive and enhance the NQF advocacy and communication strategy and ensure that the NQF partners communicate with one voice. To this end, it is essential that there be one portal with information about all the NQF partners and entities, and some planned joint campaigns. SAQA and the QCs are in discussion about a single portal for communication.

d) Findings of internal or external evaluations that inform the strategy

The NQF Act Implementation Evaluation, undertaken by DHET in collaboration with the DPME, was concluded in 2017 and the report circulated to NQF partners in 2018. Subsequently, the NQF Act Implementation Evaluation Improvement Plan was developed to address the findings of the Evaluation. The Improvement Plan is a critical document used in compiling the Strategic Plan for 2020/25.

e) Information from the political environment which may impact the implementation of the Strategic Plan

SAQA reports to the Minister: Higher Education, Science, and Innovation (HESI). The provision of free education to learners in the PSET sector as well as budget cuts due to the Covid-19 pandemic have severely reduced budgets to entities such as SAQA. SAQA's strategic direction has not changed as it is governed by the NQF Act, 2008.

7.2 Internal Environment Analysis

SAQA's structure and its configuration to deliver on its mandate

SAQA is governed by the SAQA Board comprising sixteen members. The term of the 7th Board commenced on 1st January 2021, with Professor Peliwe Lolwana appointed as the Chairperson.

Functions of the Board and Corporate Governance

According to Section 14 (3) (a) of the NQF Act, the SAQA Board is appointed by the Minister (Higher Education, Science, and Innovation) following a public nomination process. The functions of the Board are set out in sections 5(3), 11, and 13 of the NQF Act.

SAQA is a National Public Entity listed under Schedule 3(a) of PFMA. Therefore, in addition to its responsibilities as set out in the NQF Act, the Board also fulfils the role of the Accounting Authority in terms of section 49 of the PFMA.

As the Accounting Authority, the Board acts in a fiduciary capacity and is responsible for ensuring that:

- ✳ Effective, efficient and transparent systems of financial and risk management and internal control, internal audit and procurement are in place;
- ✳ Steps are taken to collect outstanding debts; prevent irregular, fruitless and wasteful expenditure; and recoup losses from criminal conduct and spending resulting from non-compliance with operational policies;
- ✳ Effective and efficient management is in place which will include ensuring the safeguarding of the assets of SAQA and controlling its liabilities, revenues and expenditures;
- ✳ SAQA complies with applicable legislation and regulations;
- ✳ An effective and appropriate disciplinary system is in place to deal with failures to comply with the PFMA and the internal control system;
- ✳ Budgets, significant contracts and other commitments are approved;
- ✳ Finances are well-controlled; and
- ✳ SAQA operates ethically.

The SAQA Board determines SAQA's strategy and policy. SAQA's management team formulates strategy and makes policy proposals for the Board's consideration and approval. SAQA's management team together with staff also implements the decisions made by the Board and maintains systems of internal control as well as accounting and information systems. The Board monitors Management's performance.

Section 16 (1) of the NQF Act allows the Board to establish committees to assist in the execution of its fiduciary responsibilities. The SAQA Board utilises the following committee structures:

- ✳ Executive Committee
- ✳ Audit and Risk Committee
- ✳ Information and Information Technology Committee
- ✳ NQF Qualifications Committee
- ✳ Professional Bodies Committee
- ✳ National and Foreign Qualifications Appeals Committee

✱ Professional Body Appeals Committee

Each of these committees operates within Board-approved Terms of Reference. The Board assesses the responsibilities of all committees and evaluates their performance annually. The committees also self-evaluate their performance each year. The Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Committee is not a Board member. Board members chair all other Committees, and at least one other Board member is a member of each committee. Twelve of the sixteen Board members are non-executive members. Three Board members are the CEOs of the QCs, and one is the CEO of SAQA. At least two Board members come from organised labour.

SAQA's Board has committed to the principles of openness, integrity, efficiency, accountability, and compliance reflected in the King Code of Governance Principles 2009 (King IV). SAQA, even though it is not a private corporation, subscribes to the principles of King IV and continuously works towards the further enhancement of its excellent governance processes.

The new Board approved its new governance structure as shown in Section 7.2 above so that the Board's governance structure aligns with SAQA's new structure.

a) SAQA's capacity to deliver on its mandate

Human Resources

The SAQA Board approved SAQA's new organogram for implementation, in February 2021. The new structure was implemented in April 2021 and monitoring, and evaluation commenced in August 2021 to identify and address gaps and challenges. The Board will approve the final structure in March 2022.

The new structure currently accommodates eighty-two posts. This may change after the monitoring and evaluation process is complete.

Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

SAQA's ICT Unit focuses mainly on managing the various service level agreements with suppliers, ensuring that risks are identified and mitigated, and ensuring that staff have the necessary tools to perform their job functions. SAQA conforms to the Government-Wide ICT Strategy and relevant Cobit Standards. ICT is an area of deficiency within SAQA. SAQA's strategy is to remain current and relevant by employing ICT to streamline processes and to automate where possible. The human and financial resources to implement this strategy fully are lacking. SAQA plans to outsource the automation project, with SAQA ICT staff managing the project.

Finance and Administration

SAQA's Finance Division manages all SAQA's contracts, ensures that staff comply with SCM regulations, manages SAQA's financial resources and maintains the building. SAQA fully complies with the PFMA, and its twenty-four years of consecutive unqualified audit opinions bear testimony to this. SAQA has established a realistic baseline budget in line with the MTEF. In the past, several donor and sponsor provided resource contributions complemented the funds obtained from the fiscus and from SAQA's services. The primary sources of income currently are:

- ✳ Voted funds through the Department of Higher Education and Training; and
- ✳ Self-funded projects through paid services and sponsored project

SAQA owns and operates from an old building that requires significant maintenance. After careful research into the matter, the SAQA Board approved the sale of the building as the space is too big for the new staff complement, face-to-face offices are no longer the most efficient way of working and the budget required for renovations is exorbitant.

Below is SAQA's new structure that was implemented on 1 April 2021. The structure currently accommodates eighty-two posts. This may change during implementation.

b) The status of the institution regarding compliance with the BBBEE Act

SAQA's subscribes to the Employment Equity Act.

Below is the SAQA EMPLOYMENT EQUITY statistics for June 2021.

Notes to the table below:

**The Employment Equity Plan (Target) is based on the National EAP for Top, Senior and Professional levels. The provincial EAP is applicable for Skilled, Semi-Skilled and Unskilled levels, according to Statistics SA.

Occupational Categories	Male					Female					Foreign Nationals		Total SAQA Actual Status	Total Approved Positions*	Total Vacant Positions	Persons with Disabilities ***		
Racial Group	A	C	I	W	Other	A	C	I	W	Other	M	F				M	F	Total
Target %	35,1%	5,3%	1,8%	4,2%		40,8%	4,5%	4%	5,3%				100%					
Top Management (CEO & EXECUTIVE)	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	4	4	0	0	0	0
Senior Management (SENIOR MANAGERS)	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1		5	5	0	0	0	0
Professionally Qualified/experienced specialist/mid-management (MANAGERS)	2	1	0	0	0	6	0	1	2	0	1	2	15	17	2	0	0	0
Total SAQA Actual Status	3	1	0	1	0	7	2	3	3	0	2	2	24	26	2			
% SAQA Actual Status	13%	4%	0%	4%		29%	8%	13%	13%		8%	8%	92%		8%			
Target %	35,2%	1,3%	1,1%	6,3%		44,8%	1,7%	1,8%	7,9%		0%	0%	100%					
Skilled technically and academically qualified workers, junior management/supervisors (SPECIALISTS & PRACTITIONERS)	21	1	1	1	0	23	1	1	0	0	1	0	50	53	3	1	0	1

Semi-skilled (OPERATORS)	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	0
Total Actual Status (AD & Below)	23	1	1	1		24	1	1	0		1	0	53	56	3	1	0	1
% Actual status (SPECIALISTS and Below)	43%	2%	2%	2%		45%	2%	2%	0%		2%	0%	95%		5%	1%	0%	1,22 %
Total Approved Positions & Total Vacancies														82	5			
Total Filled Positions & SAQA % Vacancy Rate													77		6,10%			
Learners and Interns	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0					
Temporary Employees & Fixed Term	4	0	0	0	0	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	20					
GRAND TOTAL					0								20					

*Total Establishment of 82 as per approved 2021/22 Organogram

**The Employment Equity Plan (Target) is based on the National EAP at Top, Senior and Professional levels, and the provincial EAP is applicable at Skilled, Semi-Skilled and Unskilled levels

***"Persons with Disabilities are included in the Total Establishment. B34 The race and gender profile of Persons with Disabilities is reflected on the Employment Equity Profile Report."

Source: (Statistics South Africa, -QLFS 3rd Quarter, 2016/17) & SAQA Approved establishment

c) **The status of the institution regarding women, youth and people with disabilities**

54% of staff are women; 1.4% are people with disabilities, and the youth (35 years old and below) represent **38%** of staff.

Part C: Measuring Our Performance

8 Institutional Programme Performance Information

Programmes

SAQA has five programmes, and its objectives span across these programmes.

8.1. Programme 1: Administration:

This programme covers the activities under the Office of the CEO; Finance and Administration; and Governance, People, and Strategy divisions. Its purpose is to support the operations of SAQA.

The Office of the CEO comprises the Business Development and Stakeholders sub-unit, which is responsible for international initiatives and growing SAQA's international footprint.

The Finance and Administration Division comprises the following sub-units:

- Financial Management;
- Supply Chain Management; and
- Facilities.

The Governance, People and Strategy (GPS) Division comprises one unit and three sub-units:

- People Management
- Communication
- Governance, Risk, Compliance and Legal; and
- Strategy, Reporting, and Performance M&E

This Division provides human resource support; performs the governance, risk, and mandatory reporting functions; promotes SAQA and the NQF through electronic and social media platforms; and ensures that SAQA's strategy is implemented.

8.1.1 Office of the CEO

Outcomes, Outputs, Performance Indicators and Targets

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Visionary and influential leadership that drives a clear, evidence-based NQF Agenda	National and international promotion of the SA NQF	1. Prominent national, regional and global standing			SAQA participated in the UNESCO Flexible Learning Pathways project	Identified and implemented two initiatives to promote the SA NQF	Identify and implement two initiatives to promote the SA NQF	Identify and implement two initiatives to promote the SA NQF	Identify and implement two initiatives to promote the SA NQF
	Sharing of national and international trends and best practices with stakeholders	2. Informed stakeholders			Exceeded target Developed a paper "Case Study of Flexible Learning Pathways in South Africa", for inclusion in UNESCO's book on flexible learning pathways	Identified and implemented two initiatives to share national and international best practice with stakeholders	Identify and implement three initiatives to share national and international best practice with NQF stakeholders in South Africa	Identify and implement three initiatives to share national and international best practice with NQF stakeholders in South Africa	Identify and implement three initiatives to share national and international best practice with NQF stakeholders in South Africa

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
					<p>The paper is entitled " National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Policy Framework for Flexible Learning Pathways (FLPs) in Post-School Education and Training (PSET) in South Africa"</p> <p>Produced a paper on foreign school leaving qualifications in SADC and distributed it to the NQF Family through the CEO Committee</p>				

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
					SAQA hosted four webinars to inform stakeholders about the NQF				
	Implementation of the Addis Convention	3. Recognition of international studies			Achieved Developed a plan for SAQA to implement the Addis Convention		Implement SAQA's Implementation Plan for the Addis Convention	Continue to implement SAQA's Implementation Plan for the Addis Convention	Evaluate the implementation of the Addis Convention Implementation Plan

Indicators, Annual and Quarterly Targets

Output Indicator	Annual target	Quarterly targets			
		1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
Prominent national, regional and global standing	Identify and implement two initiatives to promote the SA NQF				Collate evidence of the two initiatives implemented to promote the SA NQF
Informed stakeholders	Identify and implement three initiatives to share				Collate evidence of the three initiatives implemented to share

<i>Output Indicator</i>	<i>Annual target</i>	<i>Quarterly targets</i>			
		<i>1st</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
	national and international best practice with stakeholders				national and international best practice with NQF stakeholders in South Africa
Recognition of international studies	Implement SAQA's Implementation Plan for the Addis Convention				Report on progress with SAQA's Implementation Plan for the Addis Convention

Explanation of Planned Performance over the Medium-Term Period

The Stakeholders sub-unit is responsible for working with international partners on matters concerning qualifications frameworks and sharing best practice with stakeholders.

Its five-year focus is on:

- Growing its national, regional and global standing;
- Having well-informed national stakeholders; and
- Implementing the Addis Convention.

This function sits in the Office of the CEO as the CEO drives the international agenda. The office of the CEO contributes to one of the five Outcomes.

8.1.2 Finance and Administration

Outcomes, Outputs, Performance Indicators and Targets

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Competent and capable team, dedicated and resourced to further develop and maintain the NQF	Alternative revenue streams to support the work of SAQA	4. Sufficient revenue to support SAQA's work			Achieved Developed a strategy to secure alternative funding The Board approved the proposed strategy	Implemented a plan for alternate funding	Continue to implement the plan to generate funds through alternate revenue streams	Update and continue to implement the plan to generate funds through alternate revenue streams	Update and continue to implement the plan to generate funds through alternate revenue streams

Indicators, Annual and Quarterly Targets

Output Indicator	Annual target	Quarterly targets			
		1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
Sufficient revenue to support SAQA's work	Continue to implement the plan to generate funds through alternate revenue streams				Report on implementation and financial gains through alternate revenue streams

Explanation of Planned Performance over the Medium-Term Period

The Finance and Administration Division is responsible for ensuring effective governance and the aligned development of financial and infrastructural resources to support the achievement of organisational objectives. The Finance and Administration Division ensures that SAQA adheres to the PFMA and National Treasury requirements. This Division must also ensure that SAQA has the required budget to deliver on its mandate and that expenditure is within budget. Lastly, the Facilities unit is responsible for maintaining the building infrastructure and managing the relevant service providers.

The Finance and Administration contributes to one of the five outcomes.

8.1.3 Governance, People and Strategy

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Visionary and influential leadership that drives a clear, evidence-based NQF Agenda	Strengthened System of Collaboration and NQF structures	5. An effective System of Collaboration and NQF structures	Produced report on the implementation and effectiveness of collaboration between SAQA and the QCs The Board approved the report for submission to the Minister	Implemented the System of Collaboration to guide mutual relations between SAQA and the QCs and reported on its effectiveness	Achieved Assessed the effectiveness of the System of Collaboration Produced a report and sent the Board-approved report to the Minister: HESI	Reported on the effectiveness of the System of Collaboration	Report on the effectiveness of the System of Collaboration	Report on the effectiveness of the System of Collaboration	Report on the effectiveness of the System of Collaboration

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
				Reviewed the System of Collaboration and amended as required					Review the System of Collaboration in line with changes to the NQF Act
							Develop a Monitoring and Evaluation protocol for the System of Collaboration	Implement the M&E protocol for the System of Collaboration	Continue to implement the M&E protocol for the System of Collaboration
	Implementation of the closure of transitional arrangements from the SAQA Act to the NQF Act	6. Compliance with the requirements of the NQF Act			Completed ahead of schedule In addition to the progress report, SAQA provided advice to the Minister on ending the transitional arrangements				

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Visionary and influential leadership that drives a clear, evidence-based NQF Agenda	Advice to the Executive Authority on NQF matters, including the alignment of relevant Laws	7. Evidence of advice provided to the Executive Authority	SAQA provided advice to the Minister on the TVET landscape	Provided advice to the Minister: HET on all requested matters, or as and when deemed necessary	<p>Achieved</p> <p>SAQA advised the Minister: HESI on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Determination of the Sub-Frameworks. * Ending the transitional arrangements from the SAQA Act to the NQF Act; and *The Matriculation Board function <p>The Board approved advice to the Minister to publish data regulations for</p>	Advise the Executive Authority on NQF matters as required	Advise the Executive Authority on NQF matters as required	Advise the Executive Authority on NQF matters as required	Advise the Executive Authority on NQF matters as required

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
					submission of information to the NLRD; however DHET advised SAQA not to send the advice until the President had proclaimed the NQF Amendment Act, 2019				
								SAQA ensures that the QCs, in consultation with SAQA, advise the Executive Authority on matters relating to their Sub-Frameworks if required	SAQA ensures that the QCs, in consultation with SAQA, advise the Executive Authority on issues about their Sub-Frameworks if required

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	The NQF explained simply (Simplification)	8. Stakeholders access simplified information about the NQF	Recorded 3 803 354 people interactions on digital media platforms	Recorded 4 200 000 people interacting with content on SAQA/NQF digital platforms	Exceeded target SAQA hosted four webinars focusing on the NQF and two social media campaigns Followers made 2 151 015 impressions on SAQA's social media platforms and website	Implement four online campaigns aimed at informing the public about the NQF	Implement four online campaigns aimed at informing the public about the NQF	Implement four online campaigns aimed at informing the public about the NQF	Implement four online campaigns aimed at informing the public about the NQF
	A growing number of learner achievements on the NLRD	9. An increasing number of learners with achievements recorded on the NLRD			Achieved The NLRD contains 17 918 214 qualification achievements,	Ensured that the NLRD contains at least 21 000 000 learners with achievements	Ensure that the NQF MIS incorporating the NLRD contains 22 000 000 learners with achievements	Ensure that the NQF MIS incorporating the NLRD contains 23 000 000 learners with achievements	Ensure that the NQF MIS incorporating the NLRD contains 24 000 000 learners with achievements

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
					1 191 266 professional designation awards and 113 886 076 part-qualification achievements The total number of unique learners' records is 20 555 731				
A competent and capable team, dedicated and resourced to further develop and maintain the NQF	Re-design SAQA's structure to better suit delivery of its strategy	10. SAQA's structure is aligned to deliver on its strategy			Achieved Reviewed and re-designed the organisational structure After a series of consultations, the 6 th Board approved the	Implement the new structure			

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
					proposed macro-structure and the 7 th Board approved the micro-structure for implementation				
	Staff capacity building programmes	11. Implemented Staff capacity building programmes	All staff members participated in at least one learning and development intervention	All SAQA staff members participated in at least one learning and development activity	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Every staff member participated in at least two learning interventions</p> <p>Recorded activities for 22 learning interventions</p> <p>SAQA sponsored two (2) employees to study towards their</p>	Every staff member has at least two learning interventions per year	Every staff member has at least two learning interventions per year	Every staff member has at least two learning interventions per year	Every staff member has at least two learning interventions per year

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
					formal qualifications				

Indicators, Annual and Quarterly Targets

Output Indicator	Annual target	Quarterly targets			
		1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
An effective System of Collaboration and NQF structures	Report on the effectiveness of the System of Collaboration				Report on the effectiveness of the System of Collaboration
	Develop a Monitoring and Evaluation protocol for the System of Collaboration	Conduct desktop research on an appropriate M&E protocol for the System of Collaboration	Develop the draft M&E protocol	Consider inputs from DHET and the QCs and revise protocol	Get CEO Committee approval for the M&E protocol
Evidence of advice provided to the Executive Authority	Advise the Executive Authority on NQF matters as required	Provide advice to the Executive Authority on NQF matters if required	Provide advice to the Executive Authority on NQF matters if required	Provide advice to the Executive Authority on NQF matters if required	Provide advice to the Executive Authority on NQF matters if required
Stakeholders access simplified information about the NQF	Implement four online campaigns aimed at informing the public about the NQF	Implement the first campaign	Implement the second campaign	Implement the third and third campaigns	Implement the fourth campaign

<i>Output Indicator</i>	<i>Annual target</i>	<i>Quarterly targets</i>			
		<i>1st</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
An increasing number of learner achievements recorded on the NLRD	Ensure that the NQF MIS incorporating the NLRD contains at least 22 000 000 learners with achievements	Record the number of learners and achievements loaded for Q1	Record the number of learners and achievements loaded for Q2	Record the number of learners and achievements loaded for Q3	Record the number of learners and achievements loaded for Q4
Implemented Staff capacity building programmes	Every staff member has at least two learning interventions per year	Record learning and development activities for Q1	Record learning and development activities for Q2	Record learning and development activities for Q3	Record learning and development activities for the financial year and confirm that all staff participated in at least two learning & development activities

Explanation of Planned Performance over the Medium-Term Period

The Governance, People and Strategy (GPS) Division is responsible for the oversight of the implementation of the Strategic Plan and Annual Performance Plan; performance monitoring and evaluation; and reporting to the Minister: HESI and other prescribed stakeholders. The Division is also responsible for governance, risk, compliance and legal; and the promotion of SAQA and the NQF through electronic and social media platforms. The **People Management** unit is responsible for providing human resource support to discharge the Authority's mandated functions and achieve their planned performance targets while embracing diversity, environmental sustainability, and social justice. This unit ensures that SAQA employs the right people with the right skills, and that staff are trained to deliver on SAQA's mandate.

GPS contributes to two of the five Outcomes.

NQF Operations Division

Programmes 2-5 fall under the **NQF Operations Division**. This Division comprises:

Programme 2: Registration and Recognition

Programme 3: ICT and NQF MIS

Programme 4: Authentication Services

Programme 5: Research

8.2 Programme 2: Registration and Recognition

Outcomes, Outputs, Performance Indicators and Targets

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Stakeholders and role-players who are aligned to deliver on the NQF	Improved turnaround times for the registration of qualifications and part-qualifications (Simplified NQF)	12. Streamlined processes and improved turnaround times			Achieved Registered all qualifications recommended by QCs that met all SAQA's criteria, within four months	Registered qualifications recommended by QCs that met all SAQA's criteria within three months of submission	Register qualifications recommended by QCs that meet all SAQA's criteria within three months of submission	Register qualifications recommended by QCs that meet all SAQA's criteria within three months of submission	Register qualifications recommended by QCs that meet all SAQA's criteria within three months of submission

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
					of submission Processed 287 qualifications for registration on the NQF Registered in 1 month: 65% Registered in 2 months: 10% Registered in 3 months: 5% Registered in 4 months: 20%				

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	Reduced proliferation of qualifications registered on the NQF (Simplified NQF)	13. Increased number of national qualifications and part-qualifications registered on the NQF					Produce a concept paper on the registration of national qualifications on the NQF in consultation with the 3 QCs and DHET	Finalise concept paper and amend Policy and Criteria for the Registration of Qualifications and Part-Qualifications on the NQF	Implement the Amended Policy and Criteria for the Registration of Qualifications and Part-Qualifications on the NQF
Well-articulated quality-assured-qualifications and relevant professional designations that instil trust and meet the needs of the people	Registered qualifications that articulate across Sub-Frameworks (Simplified NQF)	14. Increased number of qualifications that articulate across Sub-Frameworks			Achieved Identified qualifications with no articulation pathways and requested missing information from the QCs Updated the records of qualifications on the NLRD	Track progress made in terms of ensuring that the identified qualifications have articulation pathways across and within sub-frameworks			

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
					where QCs had provided information				
	A refined understanding of a professional body and its value-add in the NQF landscape (Simplified NQF)	15. A clearly defined role of a professional body			Conducted research on the roles of statutory and non-statutory professional bodies and produced a research document outlining these roles	Clearly defined the roles of statutory and non-statutory professional bodies in relation to SAQA's professional body function	Use the research findings to amend the Policy and Criteria for Recognising a Professional Body and Registering a Professional Designation if required	Implement the amended Policy and Criteria for Recognising a Professional Body and Registering a Professional Designation	Evaluate the implementation of the amended Policy and Criteria for Recognising a Professional Body and Registering a Professional Designation

Indicators, Annual and Quarterly Targets

Output Indicator	Annual target	Quarterly targets			
		1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
Streamlined processes and improved turnaround times	Register qualifications recommended by QCs that meet all SAQA's criteria within three months of submission	Report on turnaround times for the registration of qualifications	Report on turnaround times for the registration of qualifications	Report on turnaround times for the registration of qualifications	Report on turnaround times for the registration of qualifications

Output Indicator	Annual target	Quarterly targets			
		1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
Increased number of national qualifications and part-qualifications registered on the NQF	Produce a concept paper on the registration of national qualifications on the NQF in consultation with the 3 QCs and DHET	Produce a draft concept paper on the registration of national qualifications on the NQF and consult the NQF Qualifications Committee	Consult the DHET and QCs on the draft concept paper	Implement recommended changes to the concept paper	Finalise the concept paper on the registration of national qualifications on the NQF for Board approval
A clearly defined role of a professional body	Use the research findings to amend the Policy and Criteria for Recognising a Professional Body and Registering a Professional Designation if required		Amend the Policy and Criteria for Recognising a Professional Body and Registering a Professional Designation	Discuss the draft Policy with the Professional Bodies Committee	Get Board approval for the updated Policy

Explanation of Planned Performance over the Medium-Term Period

This programme is responsible for registering qualifications and part-qualifications, recognising professional bodies, and registering professional designations. This programme contributes to two of the five Outcomes.

The five-year focus is for this unit to:

- Develop a streamlined workflow to register qualifications faster;
- Create clear policies and guidelines for registering national qualifications;
- Reduce the number of qualifications on the NQF by encouraging the Quality Councils to recommend national qualifications instead of provider qualifications; and
- Automate and streamline processes for efficient, professional body recognition and monitoring.

8.3 Programme 3: ICT and NQF MIS

This programme covers the work of the ICT unit and the NQF MIS sub-unit incorporating the National Learners' Records Database (NLRD).

8.3.1 ICT

Outcomes, Outputs, Performance Indicators and Targets

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Stakeholders and role-players who are aligned to deliver on the NQF	3 NLRD Registers	16. Efficient electronic processes across SAQA			<p>Not achieved</p> <p>Developed a separate register for Professional designations</p> <p>Developed registers in-house for the Misrepresented Qualifications and Fraudulent Qualifications, but it was not fit for purpose</p>	Developed the electronic Registers for misrepresented qualifications and fraudulent qualifications as part of the NLRD, if budget permits			

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	A workflow system for the evaluation of foreign qualifications				Not achieved This project did not proceed due to the lack of funding		Develop an end-to-end electronic system for the evaluation of foreign qualifications	Test and pilot an end-to-end electronic system for the evaluation of foreign qualifications	Implement an end-to-end electronic system for the evaluation of foreign qualifications
	A workflow tracking system for qualifications and part-qualifications	17. Integrated Tracking System for qualifications and part-qualifications			Achieved Conceptualised a workflow tracking system for qualifications and part-qualifications in collaboration with the CHE The development of the workflow is in progress				

Indicators, Annual and Quarterly Targets

Output Indicator	Annual target	Quarterly targets			
		1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
Efficient electronic processes across SAQA	Develop an end-to-end electronic system for the evaluation of foreign qualifications	Appoint the service provider and begin the work	Report on progress	Report on progress	Report on progress

8.3.2 NQF MIS comprising the National Learners' Records Database (NLRD)

Outcomes, Outputs, Performance Indicators and Targets

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Well-articulated quality-assured-qualifications and relevant professional designations that instil trust and	NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD) information for informed decision making	18. Access and use of MIS (comprising the NLRD) information			Not Achieved Revamped the website, making it easier to gain access to the NLRD databases, but did not revamp			Make the public information on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD) easily accessible and usable by all stakeholders	Promote the use of SAQA's information for policy and decision making

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
meet the needs of the people					the databases				

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Stakeholders and role-players who are aligned to deliver on the NQF	Legacy learner achievement records on NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)	19. Percentage completeness of legacy learner achievement data on NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)						Identify institutions with legacy data and make arrangements to get legacy achievement data	Report on the progress made with obtaining legacy qualifications
							Develop a funding proposal for the digitisation of legacy achievement records	Seek funding for the digitisation of legacy achievement records	Digitise legacy qualifications that have been located and load information on the NQF MIS (incorporating the NLRD)

	Current learner achievement records on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)	20. Learner achievement records loaded by QCs					Ensure that QCs load learner achievement records on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)	Ensure that QCs load learner achievement records on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)	Ensure that QCs load learner achievement records on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)
	Professional designations on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)	21. Percentage completeness of learner achievement data from professional bodies on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)			Achieved All recognised professional bodies loaded professional designation achievements that meet the requirements, on the NLRD	All recognised professional bodies loaded professional designation achievements that met the requirements, on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)	All recognised professional bodies load professional designation achievements that meet the requirements, on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)	All recognised professional bodies load professional designation achievements that meet the requirements, on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)	All recognised professional bodies load professional designation achievements that meet the requirements, on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)
	Registers of Misrepresented and Fraudulent Qualifications	22. Updated Registers of Misrepresented and Fraudulent Qualifications			Achieved Developed the Policy on the Misrepresentation of Qualifications the Board approved the Policy in December 2020		Publish the Policy on the Misrepresentation of Qualifications if the President proclaims the NQF Amendment Act, 2019	Implement the Policy on the Misrepresentation of Qualifications	Implement the Policy on the Misrepresentation of Qualifications

			<p>The List of Misrepresented Qualifications was updated</p> <p>Produced bi-monthly reports on Misrepresented Qualifications and sent these reports to the Minister</p>	<p>Maintained and reported bi-monthly on the Register of Misrepresented Qualifications to the Minister</p>	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Updated the List of Misrepresented Qualifications</p>	<p>Updated the List of Misrepresented Qualifications</p>	<p>Update the Register of Misrepresented Qualifications</p>	<p>Update the Register of Misrepresented Qualifications</p>	<p>Update the Register of Misrepresented Qualifications</p>
			<p>Met with the Dept. of Justice on 11 February 2019</p> <p>The DOJ agreed to provide information on fraudulent qualifications to SAQA</p>	<p>No update was required as the President did not proclaim the NQF Amendment Act establishing the Register of Fraudulent Qualifications yet</p>	<p>Could not be achieved</p>				

Indicators, Annual and Quarterly Targets

Output Indicator	Annual target	Quarterly targets			
		1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
Percentage completeness of legacy learner achievement data on the NLRD	Develop a funding proposal for the digitisation of legacy achievement records	Develop a funding proposal for the digitisation of legacy achievement records	Get approval for the funding strategy	Source funding	Source funding
Learner achievement records loaded by QCs	Ensure that QCs load learner achievement records on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)	<p>Receive and screen data loads from QCs</p> <p>Load all data of acceptable quality on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)</p>	<p>Receive and screen data loads from QCs</p> <p>Load all data of acceptable quality on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)</p>	<p>Receive and screen data loads from QCs</p> <p>Load all data of acceptable quality on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)</p>	<p>Receive and screen data loads from QCs</p> <p>Load all data of acceptable quality on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)</p>
Percentage completeness of learner achievement data from professional bodies on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)	All recognised professional bodies load professional designation achievements that meet the requirements, on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)	<p>Receive and screen data loads from professional bodies</p> <p>Load all data of acceptable quality on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)</p>		<p>Receive and screen data loads from professional bodies</p> <p>Load all data of acceptable quality on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)</p>	Report on professional body data loads and identify professional bodies that did not load data for the year
Updated Registers of Misrepresented and Fraudulent Qualifications	Publish the Policy on the Misrepresentation of Qualifications if the President proclaims	Begin the SEIAS process	Work on the SEIAS process	Get approval from DPME to proceed with the Policy	Publish the Policy on the Misrepresentation of Qualifications if the President proclaims

Output Indicator	Annual target	Quarterly targets			
		1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
	the NQF Amendment Act, 2019				the NQF Amendment Act, 2019
Updated Registers of Misrepresented and Fraudulent Qualifications	Update the Register of Misrepresented Qualifications	Update the Register of Misrepresented Qualifications	Update the Register of Misrepresented Qualifications	Update the Register of Misrepresented Qualifications	Update the Register of Misrepresented Qualifications

Explanation of Planned Performance over the Medium-Term Period

Information Communication Technology (ICT): Responsible for ensuring effective ICT governance and the aligned development of ICT infrastructural resources to support the achievement of organisational objectives and business processes. The ICT unit drives SAQA's plans to embrace the Fourth Industrial Revolution by enabling the automation of operations across the organisation and developing end-to-end workflows where required. Owing to budget cuts, the ICT unit will not pursue any ICT development in this financial year, unless budgets permit. The focus will be on keeping current systems operational and investigating the move to the Microsoft platform from IBM.

The NQF MIS sub-unit comprising the NLRD is responsible for maintaining and further developing SAQA's Management Information System as the critical national source of information for human resource and skills development in policy, infrastructure, and planning. The sub-unit's five-year focus is on:

- Securing and loading legacy learner achievements;
- Ensuring that QCs load records within thirty days of the information being in the public domain;
- Creating and maintaining the Registers of Misrepresented Qualifications; and
- Publishing public databases of qualifications and related information for public consumption.

Programme 3 contributes to two of the five Outcomes.

8.4 Programme 4: Authentication & Ratification Services

Outcomes, Outputs, Performance Indicators and Targets

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
A dynamic NQF that is responsive, adapts to, and support the changing needs of life-long learners	A foreign qualifications evaluation and advisory service that meets changing learner and worker needs	23. Articulation from foreign systems into South Africa takes place				Did not complete all compliant applications received for the evaluation of foreign qualifications within 3 months	Complete all compliant applications received for the evaluation of foreign qualifications within 3 months	Complete all compliant applications received for the evaluation of foreign qualifications within 3 months	Complete all compliant applications received for the evaluation of foreign qualifications within 3 months
		24. The evaluation criteria align with the current legislative and policy context			Achieved Considered the implications of the NQF Amendment Act and reviewed the policy and criteria for evaluating foreign qualifications pending the				

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
					proclamation of the Amendment Act				
Well-articulated quality-assured-qualifications and relevant professional designations that instil trust and meet the needs of the people	A trusted qualification verification process	25. A Verification service used by employers and institutions			Not achieved Did not complete all applications received for the verification of national qualifications within 20 working days	Did not complete all compliant verification requests received for the verification of South African qualifications within 25 working days	Complete all compliant verification requests received for the verification of South African qualifications within 25 working days	Complete all compliant verification requests received for the verification of South African qualifications within 20 working days	Complete all compliant verification requests received for the verification of South African qualifications within 20 working days

Indicators, Annual and Quarterly Targets

Output Indicator	Annual target	Quarterly targets			
		1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
Articulation from foreign systems into South Africa takes place	Complete all compliant applications received for the evaluation of foreign qualifications within 3 months	Report on the turnaround time for compliant applications received in Q1	Report on the turnaround time for compliant applications received in Q2	Report on the turnaround time for compliant applications received in Q3	Report on the turnaround time for compliant applications received in Q4

<i>Output Indicator</i>	<i>Annual target</i>	<i>Quarterly targets</i>			
		<i>1st</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
A Verification service used by employers and institutions	Complete all compliant verification requests received for the verification of South African qualifications within 20 working days	Report on the number of records verified in Q1 against the turnaround time	Report on the number of records verified in Q2 against the turnaround time	Report on the number of records verified in Q3 against the turnaround time	Report on the number of records verified in Q4 against the turnaround time

Explanation of Planned Performance over the Medium-Term Period

This programme contributes to two of the five Outcomes.

The Authentication Services unit is responsible for verifying South African qualifications and evaluating foreign qualifications. It also locates foreign qualifications on the SA NQF by comparing them to the relevant national qualifications. This Unit must ensure that it streamlines its processes where possible so that it can reduce the time that it takes to process applications and verification requests. This unit's success in meeting turnaround times and servicing clients rely heavily on its processes being automated. The longer SAQA takes to introduce automation into this unit, the more public dissatisfaction with SAQA grows.

8.5 Programme 5: Research

Outcomes, Outputs, Performance Indicators and Targets

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	
A dynamic NQF that is responsive, adapts to, and supports the changing needs of life-long learning	Reviewed NQF Policies and recommendations for Policy amendments	26. Number of policies reviewed	Reviewed 2 NQF policies	Reviewed 2 NQF policies	Achieved Reviewed and amended the CAT Policy Reviewed and amended the Policy & Criteria for Recognising a Professional Body and Registering a Professional Designation The Board approved both policies	Review one NQF policy	Review one NQF policy	Review one NQF policy	Review one NQF policy
	Implemented Policies	27. The implementation of amended Policies is monitored						Report on the implementation of the amended policies	

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	
	Research on the implementation of the NQF	28. Findings and recommendations of NQF-related research	Commence conceptualisation of the 2021 NQF Impact Study	Produced a progress report on the 2021 NQF Impact Study	Produced a progress report on the 2021 NQF Impact Study	Produced the draft 2021 NQF Impact Study Report	Produce the final 2021 NQF Impact Study Report	Disseminate to, and engage stakeholders around, the approved 2021 NQF Impact Study report	
			Produced a detailed report on progress made with the current partnership	Provided a detailed report on progress made with the existing partnership	Compiled specifications for a new research and development partnership		Provide a progress report on work done with research partner(s)	Provide a progress report on work done with research partner(s)	Provide a progress report on work done with research partner(s)
Well-articulated quality-assured-qualifications and relevant professional designations that instil trust and meet the	Coordinated Articulation, CAT and RPL initiatives	29. Record of Articulation initiatives	Developed a new Action Plan for Articulation The Board approved the Articulation Action Plan	Reported on SAQA's contribution to the Action Plan for Articulation	Achieved Provided the Minister with a report on progress made by SAQA and the QCs in implementing	Provided the Minister with a report on progress made by SAQA and the QCs in implementing the Articulation Policy	Provide the Minister with a report on progress made by SAQA and the QCs in implementing the Articulation Policy	Provide the Minister with a report on progress made by SAQA and the QCs in implementing the Articulation Policy	Provide the Minister with a report on progress made by SAQA and the QCs in implementing the Articulation Policy

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	
needs of the people			in March 2019		the Articulation Policy After Board approval				

Indicators, Annual and Quarterly Targets

Output Indicator	Annual target	Quarterly targets			
		1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
Number of policies reviewed	Review 1 NQF policy				Get approval to publish the reviewed NQF Policy or report on the reviewed NQF Policy if not yet approved for publication
Findings and recommendations of NQF-related research	Provide a progress report on work done with research partners				Provide a progress report on work done with research partners
	Produce the final 2021 NQF Impact Study Report				Produce a final report on the 2021 NQF Impact Study and get Board approval
Record of Articulation initiatives	Provide the Minister with a report on progress made by	Send the 2021/22 report to the Minister		Request updates from SAQA and the QCs	Collate the report on progress made with implementing the

Output Indicator	Annual target	Quarterly targets			
		1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
	SAQA and the QCs in implementing the Articulation Policy				Articulation Policy for 2022/23

Explanation of Planned Performance over the Medium-Term Period

The Research Unit leads two of the five Outcomes and contributes to the remaining three Outcomes in this set. The Research Unit also contributes to other SAQA Outcomes as needed (e.g. through concept papers, NQF policy development and implementation, publications, events, sharing documenting and sharing good NQF practice, providing leadership in NQF stakeholder implementation of NQF policies, and others).

The unit is responsible for conducting evidence-based research to track the development and implementation of the NQF and to evaluate the impact of the NQF on the people in South Africa.

The five-year focus is on:

- Recommending amendments to current NQF Policies based on research;
- Producing the 2021 NQF Impact Study Report;
- Establishing and continuing new research partnership work;
- Reporting on progress made with implementing the Articulation Policy; and
- Monitoring the implementation of the amended Policies.

Programme Recourse Considerations

9.1 Budget Allocation for Programme and Sub-Programme as per the ENE

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	Audited outcome	Audited outcome	Audited outcome	Audited outcome	Budget Estimates			
Programmes						Medium -Term Estimates		
R Thousand								
Objective/Activity								
Administration	54,581	55,941	59,998	65,587	56,585	53,601	60 996	62 282
Registration and Recognition	9,248	9,451	14,043	8,254	10,547	11,021	11,516	12,032
ICT and NQF MIS	14,724	16,798	17,890	16,149	24,678	18,945	21,442	19,005
Authentication and Ratification								
Services	28,444	29,293	31,043	31,405	23,341	24,389	25,485	26,628
Research	4,194	3,673	4,123	3,993	5,008	5,232	5,467	5,964
International liaison	1,511	2,261	2,598	2,499	-	-	-	-
Subtotal	112,702	117,417	129,695	127,887	120,159	115,666	124,194	130,298
Government Grant received form Department of Higher Education and Training	64,940	66,719	69,983	72,519	82,793	81,164	88,143	92,628
Economic classification								
Current payments	191,118	116,557	128,803	127,887	120,159	115,666	124,194	130 298
Compensation of employees	111,797	86,093	98,680	101,589	79,694	78,792	80,715	84,339

Salaries and wages	111,797	76,102	87,692	91,661	71,804	70,902	72,470	75,723
Social contributions	-	9,991	10,988	9,928	7,890	7,890	8,245	8,616
Goods and services	79,321	27,063	26,197	26,298	35,289	36,873	38,530	40,259
Of which								
Administrative fees	1,461	1,851	1,643	1,706	1,350	1,411	1,474	1,540
Advertising	33	361	172	12	50	52	55	134
Minor assets	23	26	57	-	27	28	29	39
Audit costs: External	2,310	1,778	1,849	1,913	2,000	2,090	2,184	2,282
Bursaries: Employees	269	106	254	-	-	-	-	-
Catering: Internal activities		244	304	-	193	202	211	221
Communication (G&S)	3,598	413	207	627	2,355	2,461	2,571	2,687
Computer services	1,672	1,389	1,097	3,135	4,557	4,762	4,975	5,199
Consultants: Business and advisory services	3,438	4,250	2,805	1,007	2,219	2,319	2,423	2,532
Legal services (G&S)	3,271	692	516	1,112	1,300	900	940	983
Science and technological services		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Contractors		1,350	1,073	1,752	301	315	329	343
Maintenance and repairs of other fixed structures	973	845	883	-	62	65	68	71
Maintenance and repairs of other machinery and equipment		397	78	369	218	228	238	249
Other		108	112	560	200	209	218	228
Agency and support/outsourced services	4,543	7,026	7,579	-	8,577	7,055	12,322	13,318
Fleet services (including government motor transport)		14	19		18	19	20	21
Consumable supplies		-	-		-	-	-	-
Consumables: Stationery, printing and office supplies		552	859		944	986	1,031	1,077
Operating leases	52	56	130			-	-	-
Rental and hiring		-	-	-		-	-	-

Property payments	1,913	1,194	1,534	1,682				
Transport provided: Internal activities		-	-	-		-	-	-
Travel and subsistence	690	848	812	219	400	418	437	456
Training and development	824	219	463	-	-	-	-	-
Operating payments	4,492	4,316	4,092	5,998	3,981	4,160	4,347	4,542
Venues and facilities	491	378	732	8	284	297	310	324
Depreciation	2,423	2,733	3,879	4,348	3,000	2,500	2,612	2,730
Losses from		668	47	20	-	-	-	-
Impairments and adjustments to fair value		656	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairments to assets		656	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other		12	47	-	-	-	-	-
Interest, dividends and rent on land		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers and subsidies	905	860	892	1,830	3,253	3,399	3,552	3,711
Other government units	905	860	892	1,830	3,253	3,399	3,552	3,711
Municipalities	905	860	892	1,830	3,253	3,399	3,552	3,711
Payment of capital assets	2,633	4,597	3,728	3,728	5,175	3,000	3,135	3,275
Building and other fixed structures	244	864	491	491	2,500	1,300	1,358	1,419
Computer Equipment	1,164	2,735	2,779	2,779	2,000	1,200	1,254	1,310
Office Furniture and Equipment	271	234	458	458	675	500	522	546
Motor Vehicles								
Intangible assets	954	764						
Tax payment		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Outside shareholders Interest		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Expenditure	112,702	117,417	129,695	127,887	120,159	115,666	124,194	130,298

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Revenue: Rand thousand								
	Audited	Audited	Audited	Audited	Budget Estimates 2021/22	Medium-Term Estimate		
Government Grant Income	64,940	66,719	69,893	72,519	82,793	81,164	88,143	92,628
Other government units			5,787					
Evaluation Fees	36,927	37,599	39,695	32,564	20,000	20,898	21,836	22,816
Income - Verifications	10,418	9,819	11,385	10,558	10,000	10,449	10,918	11,408
Rental Income	1,037	1,099	856	33		-	-	-
Sundry Income	5,312	3,447	1,513	1,392	320	334	349	365
Interest Received	1,844	1,878	2,096	1,021	1,200	1,254	1,310	1,369
Income from professional Bodies	-	2,745	2,534	2,421	1,500	1,566	1,637	1,711
Sale of fixed assets	27	-	33	20	-	-	-	-
Other income			428				-	-
Reversal of provision for impairment	-	-	-	217	-	-	-	-
Prior year carried forward					4,346			
TOTAL INCOME	120,505	123,306	134,220	120,745	120,159	115,666	124,194	130,298

9.2 Explanation of the Contribution of Resources towards Achievement of Outputs

The budget allocation per programme appears above. Funding for automation to improve workflows is imperative to take SAQA forward and improve service delivery efficiencies to support its streamlined structure. The ICT division requires more resources to drive the Automation Project. By automating processes, SAQA hopes to improve service delivery in the Registration and Recognition and Authentication Services units. Therefore, an amount of R25,9 million has been set aside in the current financial year.

Once the President proclaims the NQF Amendment Act, 2019 SAQA will require additional resources to manage the legal processes associated with the Registers for Misrepresented and Fraudulent Qualifications.

10. Updated Key Risks

Outcome	Key Risk	Risk Mitigation
We have a dynamic NQF that is responsive, adapts to, and supports the changing needs of life-long learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌚ The NQF as a system does not function optimally. ⌚ The NQF does not respond to the needs of workers or learners. ⌚ Proposed changes to the NQF Amendment Act may cause further confusion and contestations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✳ Implement the System of Collaboration to resolve contestations. Lobby DHET to strengthen the NQF Act to clearly define the roles and responsibilities of SAQA, DHET and the QCs. ✳ Continue to engage with stakeholders to meet the needs of workers and learners in terms of the NQF. ✳ SAQA must ensure that it fully participates in the processes to further amend the NQF Act, 2008 as amended.
We have visionary and influential leadership that drives a well-researched and clearly formulated NQF agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌚ Stakeholders fight for turf. ⌚ Each entity operates independently with its separate agenda. ⌚ There is little or no co-operation among stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✳ Fully implement the NQF Act, 2008 as amended. ✳ Strengthen SAQA's role through amendments to the NQF Act so that SAQA has authority to drive a common agenda. ✳ Implement the System of Collaboration to resolve contestations.
We have well-articulated quality-assured qualifications and relevant professional designations that instil trust and meet the needs of the people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌚ Providers offer unregistered qualifications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✳ Report institutions and providers who offer unregistered qualifications (supported by the NQF Amendment Act). ✳ Put strategies in place to ensure that providers load learner records timeously on the NQF MIS

Outcome	Key Risk	Risk Mitigation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌚ The NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD) does not contain all learner achievement records. ⌚ Qualifications are no longer recognised internationally. ⌚ The NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD) contains "dirty data." 	<p>(comprising the NLRD) and that old learner achievement records are digitised and loaded on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✳ Ensure that all qualifications registered on the NQF adhere to SAQA's Policy and Criteria. ✳ Put processes in place to remove duplicate data and data that does not conform to the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD) specifications
We have a competent and capable team, dedicated and resourced to further develop and maintain the NQF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌚ Limited funding does not allow SAQA to recruit skilled staff ⌚ Staff morale is low ⌚ Institutional memory is lost as skilled staff retire or leave ⌚ SAQA's new streamlined structure does not support service delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✳ Ensure continuous learning and development of staff ✳ Implement SAQA's policy on Appreciation and Recognition ✳ Make learning and development central to SAQA's culture ✳ Automate processes and upskill staff
We have stakeholders and role-players who are aligned to deliver on the NQF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌚ Each entity communicates different messages, which leads to confusion among stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✳ Work with the NQF family to develop common messages and common platforms for communication with stakeholders

11. Public Entities

N/A

12. Infrastructure Projects

N/A

13. Public Private Partnerships

N/A

Part D: Technical Indicator Description (TID)

Indicator Title	1. Prominent national, regional, and global standing
Definition	The purpose of this indicator is to participate in at least two initiatives to promote the SA NQF nationally and internationally.
Source of Data	Evidence of participation in national and international initiatives
Method of calculation/assessment	SAQA will engage in national and international initiatives to promote the SA NQF. These activities include workshops, meetings, webinars, conferences, research projects and others, and the method of calculation will be the collation of evidence to show participation
Assumptions	SAQA will continue to participate in international events and on international platforms
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Annual
Desired performance	The actual performance should equal or exceed the expected performance.
Indicator responsibility	Manager: Business Development & Stakeholders; Senior Manager: Research; and CEO

Indicator Title	2. Informed stakeholders
Definition	The purpose of this indicator is to identify and implement at least three initiatives to share national and international best practice with stakeholders.
Source of Data	Reports and articles from national and international events and publications. Reports on SAQA-hosted webinars.
Method of calculation/assessment	SAQA: (1) informs the QCs regarding good national and international NQF practice through its quarterly reports to the CEO Committee, (2) shares national and international good practice with NQF stakeholders through various platforms such as webinars, conferences and other events, reports, articles and other publications; and participation in research and development initiatives towards the further development and implementation of the NQF. The method of calculation is the collation of evidence to show that SAQA did inform stakeholders. This will include documentary evidence and the evidence of events hosted as well as events in which SAQA participated.
Assumptions	Stakeholders understand and use the information that SAQA provides
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Annual
Desired performance	The actual performance equals or exceeds the expected performance.
Indicator responsibility	Manager: Business Development & Stakeholders; Senior Manager: Research and CEO

Indicator Title	3. Recognition of international studies
Definition	The President ratified the Addis Convention in 2019 and deposited the instrument with UNESCO. SAQA must be ready to implement the Addis Convention as soon as DHET prepares its Implementation Plan for the Addis Convention.

	The purpose of this indicator is to implement SAQA's implementation plan for the Addis Convention.
Source of Data	Addis Convention, SAQA's Policy and Criteria for evaluating foreign qualifications and SAQA's implementing its Addis Convention Implementation Plan
Method of calculation/assessment	SAQA will collate the evidence to support its Addis Convention Implementation Plan and report progress against its Implementation Plan.
Assumptions	DHET will distribute its Implementation Plan for the Addis Convention within this financial year and make funding available
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	Learners from across the African continent
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Annual
Desired performance	The actual performance should equal the expected performance
Indicator responsibility	Manager: Business Development & Stakeholders, Senior Manager: Authentication Services and Executive: NQF Operations

Indicator Title	4. Sufficient revenue to support SAQA's work
Definition	<p>SAQA's biggest challenge is financial sustainability. The voted funds are not sufficient to sustain SAQA. With a bigger baseline budget, SAQA will be able to achieve much more. Many of our processes are manual, outdated, and time-consuming. We can automate processes; employ artificial intelligence to repetitive processes; improve our productivity; and develop innovative solutions to complex problems, with adequate resources.</p> <p>SAQA hopes to raise funding from sources other than the fiscus that will grow its financial sustainability.</p>

	The purpose of this indicator is to implement a plan to secure alternate funding.
Source of Data	SAQA's budget and Strategic Plan; revenue generated for paid-for services; possible donor funding for specific projects.
Method of calculation/assessment	The Method of Calculation will be funding that has been secured from other sources. This will include actual monies received in SAQA's bank account and any funding agreements that SAQA signed.
Assumptions	SAQA's service offerings are valued and SAQA has sufficient staff to take on additional projects
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Annual
Desired performance	The plan for Alternate Funding is successfully implemented.
Indicator responsibility	Executive: Finance (CFO); CEO; Executive: NQF Operations

Indicator Title	5a. An effective System of Collaboration and NQF structures
Definition	<p>The objective of the System of Collaboration is to guide the mutual relations of SAQA and the Quality Councils in such a manner as to promote constructive cooperation. The System of Collaboration also defines the roles and responsibilities of the collaboration structures and outlines what needs to be done if there is a dispute between SAQA and one of the QCs, or between two QCs. The System of Collaboration was published in 2013 and is regularly amended.</p> <p>The purpose of this indicator is to assess the effectiveness of the System of Collaboration and the NQF structures.</p>

Source of Data	Reports emanating from the CEO Committee, CEO Committee Task Teams, CEO Sub-Committees and NQF Forum; and relevant correspondence and outcomes of joint initiatives.
Method of calculation/assessment	Information from the source data will be collated into a report annually and analysed for evidence of effective collaboration. The SAQA Board will approve this report in March before sending it to the Minister: HESI in April each year.
Assumptions	The CEO Committee continues to function in the same manner so that information is available for analysis and reporting.
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Annual
Desired performance	The System of Collaboration and NQF structures work as they should and support the implementation of the NQF Act, 2008 as amended.
Indicator responsibility	Head: Strategy, Reporting & Performance Monitoring & Evaluation; Executive: Governance, People and Strategy Division

Indicator Title	5b. An effective System of Collaboration and NQF structures
Definition	<p>The objective of the System of Collaboration is to guide the mutual relations of SAQA and the Quality Councils in such a manner as to promote constructive cooperation. The System of Collaboration also defines the roles and responsibilities of the collaboration structures and outlines what needs to be done if there is a dispute between SAQA and one of the QCs, or between two QCs. The System of Collaboration was published in 2013 and is regularly amended.</p> <p>The purpose of this indicator is to develop a monitoring and evaluation protocol for the system of collaboration.</p>

Source of Data	CEO Committee tracking grid, desktop research on M&E protocols; inputs from DHET and QCs; evidence of CEO Committee approval.
Method of calculation/assessment	The M&E protocol emerged from the desktop research. The draft protocol was developed and then circulated for comment by DHET and the QCs. The final protocol was approved by the CEO Committee.
Assumptions	There are similar M&E protocols already in existence. DHET and the QCs will provide inputs when requested to do so.
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	quarterly
Desired performance	Develop a Monitoring and Evaluation protocol for the System of Collaboration that should support the implementation of the NQF Implementation Framework and the Ministerial Guidelines.
Indicator responsibility	Head: Strategy, Reporting & Performance Monitoring & Evaluation; Executive: Governance, People and Strategy Division

Indicator Title	7. Evidence of advice provided to the Executive Authority
Definition	<p>SAQA strives for visionary and influential leadership that drives a well-researched and clearly formulated NQF agenda. SAQA will have achieved this outcome if it is viewed as a body coordinating the implementation and at the forefront of debates about the further development of the NQF. Currently, SAQA and the QCs advise the Minister independently. Section 27f of the NQF Amendment Act, 2019 requires QCs to advise the Minister: HESI, in consultation with SAQA. SAQA will implement this clause during this planning cycle.</p> <p>The purpose of this indicator is to advise the Executive Authority on NQF matters as required.</p>

Source of Data	Requests for consultation on advice from QCs; SAQA Board decisions to provide advice to the Minister: HESI on specific matters; and requests from the Minister: HESI for advice on specific matters.
Method of calculation/assessment	Record of advice provided to the Minister: HESI as reported in SAQA's quarterly reports.
Assumptions	There will be a need for advice each year.
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Annual
Desired performance	The actual performance should equal the planned execution.
Indicator responsibility	Executive: Governance, People and Strategy Division.

Indicator Title	8. Stakeholders access simplified information about the NQF
Definition	The purpose of this indicator is to implement four online campaigns aimed at informing the public about the NQF in a simple manner that is easy to understand.
Source of Data	The sources of data include plans, progress reports, statistics about reach and final campaign reports. Social media and website statistics is also an indicator of the public interacting with SAQA's information.
Method of calculation/assessment	Campaign reports will be drawn up to show how the campaign was implemented, its reach (number of people reached) and the impact that it had. Furthermore, statistics of social media and website activity is an indication of the public interacting with SAQA's information online.
Assumptions	If stakeholders interact with information about the NQF, then it can be assumed that they know, understand, and see value in the information.

Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Quarterly
Desired performance	Four online campaigns. The actual performance should equal the expected performance.
Indicator responsibility	Manager: Communications; Executive: Governance, People and Strategy Division.

Indicator Title	9. An increasing number of learner achievements recorded on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)
Definition	The National Learners' Records Database (NLRD) is the largest database of the NQF MIS. Among other sets of information, the NLRD contains learner achievement data. The growth in the learner achievement data reflects the NQF working for the people. The purpose of this indicator is to ensure that the NLRD contains 22 000 000 or more learners with achievements.
Source of Data	An NLRD learner achievement report
Method of calculation/assessment	A report is drawn quarterly and annually on the total number of learners with achievements on the NLRD for the financial year
Assumptions	QCs, professional bodies, and information partners continue to load data on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD), in compliance with the NQF Act and the NQF Amendment Act once proclaimed. Data cleaning does not result in nett negative growth in numbers
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A

Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Quarterly achievements accumulating to the annual target
Desired performance	The NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD) reflects 22 million or more learners with achievements. The actual performance should exceed the targeted performance.
Indicator responsibility	Manager: NQF MIS; Executive: NQF Operations

Indicator Title	11. Implemented staff capacity building programmes
Definition	<p>People (human resources) are required to implement the NQF and SAQA's strategy. Without the right people and skills and adequate resources, it would be challenging for SAQA to achieve its objectives. SAQA aims to make learning and development central to everything that it does. This approach would support a matrix structure and ensure a pipeline for succession planning.</p> <p>The purpose of this indicator is for every staff member to have at least two learning interventions per year</p>
Source of Data	Records of learning interventions managed by People Management.
Method of calculation/assessment	People Management records each staff member's learning and development initiatives on a spreadsheet. At the end of the year, they analyse the information to confirm that all staff members engaged in at least two training and development initiatives.
Assumptions	Staff members on maternity or long term sick or study leave may not have completed two learning initiatives. Staff members who joined SAQA during the year may not have completed two learning initiatives. Training and development may be formal, informal, or non-formal.
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A

Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Annual
Desired performance	Every staff member has at least two learning interventions per year. The actual performance should be equal to or higher than the targeted performance.
Indicator responsibility	Senior Manager: People Management

Indicator Title	12. Streamlined processes and improved turnaround times
Definition	Streamlined processes and improved turn-around times: Internal Processes that do not duplicate and are concluded within three months.
Source of Data	R&R tracking grid; evidence of receipt of qualifications from QCs; evidence of returned qualifications; evidence of NQF Qualifications Committee approval and Board ratification.
Method of calculation/assessment	The process time is calculated from the time that qualifications are received from the QCs, until the time that the qualifications are approved for registration for NQF.
Assumptions	Some qualifications are returned to the QCs if they do not meet the criteria. At this point, the process ends with the return rather than with the registration of the qualification on the NQF.
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Quarterly

Desired performance	It is desirable if the team completes the registration process ahead of schedule
Indicator responsibility	Senior Manager: Registration & Recognition (R&R); Executive: NQF Operations

Indicator Title	13. Increased number of national qualifications and part-qualifications registered on the NQF
Definition	Produce a concept paper on the registration of national qualifications: SAQA will investigate a sample of registered qualifications to produce findings on the proliferation of qualifications to inform the concept paper on the registration of national qualifications.
Source of Data	Report on proliferation findings; evidence of QC consultations
Method of calculation/assessment	Concept paper produced within the financial year after having consulted the QCs
Assumptions	QCs and providers buy into the idea of national qualifications
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Annual accumulated progress against the five-year target
Desired performance	It is preferred if the team completes the concept paper ahead of schedule
Indicator responsibility	Senior Manager: Registration and Recognition; Executive: NQF Operations

Indicator Title	15. A clearly defined role of a professional body
Definition	A clearly defined role of a recognised professional body: SAQA will conduct research and define the role of SAQA recognised professional bodies within the NQF space
Source of Data	Updated Policy and Criteria on Recognising Professional Bodies and Registering Professional Designations
Method of calculation/assessment	Board decision number
Assumptions	All professional bodies display characteristics of being either a statutory or a non-statutory professional body.
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Annual
Desired performance	There is a Report that clearly defines the roles of statutory and non-statutory professional bodies as they pertain to SAQA's professional body function. The actual performance should equal the targeted performance.
Indicator responsibility	Senior Manager: Registration & Recognition; Senior Manager: Research; Executive: NQF Operations; CEO

Indicator Title	16. Efficient electronic processes across SAQA
Definition	Many of SAQA's processes are manual, outdated, and time-consuming. We can automate processes; employ artificial intelligence to repetitive processes; improve our productivity; and develop innovative solutions to complex problems, with adequate resources. SAQA's strategy is to remain current and relevant by employing ICT to streamline processes and to automate where possible. SAQA will, therefore, consider which processes across the organisation can be automated and put plans in place to automate them. This is a long-term project that began in 2021 and will span several years. The purpose of this indicator for the current year is to develop an end-to-end electronic system for the evaluation of foreign qualifications.
Source of Data	Specifications for an end-to end electronic system for the evaluation of foreign qualifications; evidence of development; progress reports
Method of calculation/assessment	The development of an end-to end electronic system for the evaluation of foreign qualifications is being built according to the specifications.
Assumptions	There is sufficient budget to complete the project
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Annual
Desired performance	The end-to-end system is ready before the end of the financial year.
Indicator responsibility	Senior Manager: ICT with support from the Executive: NQF Operations and Senior Manager: Authentication Services

Indicator Title	19 Percentage completeness of legacy learner achievement data on the NLRD
Definition	<p>The NQF MIS (incorporating the NLRD) does not have all records of learning, particularly those pre-dating 1992. Many of these records are in hard copy in basements and archives. SAQA requires this information in electronic format to load it on the NQF MIS. This information is critical to SAQA's Authentication Services.</p> <p>The purpose of this indicator is to develop a funding proposal for the digitisation of legacy achievement records</p>
Source of Data	List of missing datasets; Funding proposal
Method of calculation/assessment	The funding proposal will be based on identified missing datasets.
Assumptions	DHET can source funding from donors for this project
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Annual
Desired performance	SAQA can secure funding to digitise all outstanding datasets, over the next few years.
Indicator responsibility	Manager: NQF MIS; Executive: NQF Operations
Indicator Title	20. Learner achievement records loaded by QCs
Definition	The purpose of this indicator is to ensure that QCs load learner achievement records on the NLRD

Source of Data	QC data load confirmation
Method of calculation/assessment	A report is drawn quarterly and annually on the total number of learners with achievements on the NLRD for the year and as at 31 March each year.
Assumptions	QCs load data as soon as they have completed the QA processes.
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Quarterly aggregating into Annual
Desired performance	QCs load data quarterly
Indicator responsibility	Manager: NQF MIS

Indicator Title	21. Percentage completeness of learner achievement data from professional bodies on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)
Definition	The purpose of this indicator is to ensure that all recognised professional bodies load professional designation achievements that meet the requirements, on the NLRD database of the NQF MIS
Source of Data	A professional body and designation report
Method of calculation/assessment	A report is drawn quarterly and annually on the total number of learners with designations on the NLRD for the year and as at 31 March each year.

Assumptions	Professional bodies load complete sets of data that meet SAQA's data load requirements each time.
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Twice a year – accumulated to annual
Desired performance	The actual performance should equal or exceed the expected performance.
Indicator responsibility	Manager: NQF MIS with support from Senior Manager: Registration & Recognition; Executive: NQF Operations

Indicator Title	22a. Updated Registers of Misrepresented and Fraudulent Qualifications
Definition	<p>The NQF Amendment Act provides for the establishment of the Registers of Misrepresented and Fraudulent Qualifications. SAQA must establish these Registers in these five years.</p> <p>The purpose of this indicator is to publish the Policy on the Misrepresentation of Qualifications if the President proclaims the NQF Amendment Act, 2019</p>
Source of Data	Published policy
Method of calculation/assessment	Gazetted policy
Assumptions	The President will proclaim the NQF Amendment Act, 2019 in this financial year.

Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Quarterly
Desired performance	
Indicator responsibility	Executive: Governance, People and Stakeholders; Manager: Governance, Legal & Compliance

Indicator Title	22b. Updated Registers of Misrepresented and Fraudulent Qualifications
Definition	<p>The NQF Amendment Act provides for the establishment of the Registers of Misrepresented and Fraudulent Qualifications. SAQA must establish these Registers in these five years.</p> <p>The purpose of this indicator is to update the Register of Misrepresented Qualifications. SAQA will update the List of Misrepresented Qualifications until such time as the President proclaims the NQF Amendment Act, 2019.</p>
Source of Data	<p>Misrepresented qualification information from Authentication Services, and the QCTO. Currently, Umalusi and the CHE do not provide any information on misrepresented qualifications to SAQA. Once the Registers have been developed, the data sources will load data about the Misrepresented Qualifications onto the NQF MIS (incorporating the NLRD) according to the NLRD specifications, monthly. The NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD) database administrator will clean the information by removing duplicate data and ensuring that the data sources filled in all the compulsory fields, before uploading the information.</p> <p>Until then, the data sources provide data on Excel spreadsheets to the GPS Division.</p>

Method of calculation/assessment	The Executive: Governance, People & Stakeholders receives information monthly on separate spreadsheets from each data source and adds the information into a consolidated list after removing duplicate data. The Excel Spreadsheet is updated monthly, and statistics are reported quarterly to the Minister: HESI in SAQA's Quarterly Report.
Assumptions	The data sources confirmed the accuracy of the data before providing them to the Executive: Governance, People & Strategy
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Quarterly
Desired performance	An updated Register (List) of Misrepresented Qualifications
Indicator responsibility	Executive: Governance, People and Stakeholders and Manager: Governance Legal and Compliance for the current year

Indicator Title	23. Articulation from foreign systems into South Africa takes place
Definition	<p>SAQA has the mandate to evaluate foreign qualifications and place them on the SAQA NQF, so that foreign qualification holders can either study further or enter the job market.</p> <p>The purpose of this indicator is to ensure that 90% or more of compliant foreign qualification applications are evaluated within 90 days.</p>
Source of Data	DFQ workflow system
Method of calculation/assessment	Applications are received and checked for completeness. Incomplete applications are returned to the applicant. Those that meet the criteria are captured on the foreign qualifications database and assigned to a FQ verifier to commence with the verifications process. All verification requests must be completed, and the results presented to the client within 3 months

	of being captured on the FQ Database. Under conditions of lockdown, it may not be possible for qualification achievements that require an information partner to confirm its authenticity, to be completed in 3 months, SAQA will therefore allow for a 10% variation, i.e., SAQA will allow for 10% of FQ qualification achievements that require information from data sources, to take longer than 3 months
Assumptions	External sources provide information on time, and there is sufficient staff to do the work
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Quarterly accumulated to the annual target
Desired performance	The actual performance should equal or exceed the expected performance
Indicator responsibility	Senior Manager: Authentication Services

Indicator Title	25. A Verification service used by employers and institutions
Definition	The purpose of this indicator is to complete all applications received for the verification of national qualifications within 25 working days
Source of Data	Verifications database
Method of calculation/assessment	Applications are received and checked for completeness. Incomplete are returned to the applicant. Those that meet the criteria are captured on the Verifications database and assigned to a batch verifier to commence with the verifications process. All verification requests must be completed, and the results presented to the client within 25 working days of being captured on the Verifications Database. Under conditions of lockdown, it may not be possible for qualification achievements that require an information partner to confirm its authenticity, to be completed in 25 working days. SAQA

	will therefore allow for a 10% variation for qualification achievement verification if the data is not on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD). I.e., SAQA will allow for 10% of qualification achievements that require information from data sources, to take longer than 25 working days.
Assumptions	It is assumed that most requests for verification are for qualification achievements that are loaded on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD).
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Quarterly accumulated to the annual target
Desired performance	The actual performance should equal or exceed the expected performance
Indicator responsibility	Senior Manager: Authentication Services

Indicator Title	26. Number of policies reviewed
Definition	SAQA has several NQF Policies that is has published over the years. Over time, some polices may be dated and require a review. The purpose of this indicator is to review one NQF policy annually.
Source of Data	Final approved revised Policy.
Method of calculation/assessment	Successful performance means a Board approved amended Policy or explanation post research, as to why the Policy should not be amended; or an explanation post research and engagement, as to why a longer review period is required for additional engagement before amendments are implemented.

Assumptions	SAQA consulted its stakeholders during the review phase.
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Annual progress against the five-year target
Desired performance	Review five NQF Policies and amend them as required over the five years. It is desirable to exceed the target in any given year if circumstances warrant more immediate policy amendments. It is possible that the review of a policy, if requiring extensive research and/or stakeholder consultation, may require more than a single financial year.
Indicator responsibility	Senior Manager: Research supported by Senior Manager: Registration & Recognition; Senior Manager: Authentication Services; and Executive: NQF Operations

Indicator Title	28a. Findings and recommendations of NQF-related research
Definition	The purpose of this indicator is to produce the finalised 2021 NQF Impact Study Report.
Source of Data	Finalised NQF Impact Study report; board approval
Method of calculation/assessment	The research process culminates in the final draft of the 2021 NQF Impact Study Report
Assumptions	SAQA can only use available data and cannot measure some aspects because of the lack of data

Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Annual
Desired performance	SAQA produces the finalised 2021 NQF Impact Study Report by March 2023.
Indicator responsibility	Senior Manager: Research

Indicator Title	28b. Findings and recommendations of NQF-related research
Definition	SAQA is currently working with partners on two research projects: HERESA and UPSET The purpose of this indicator is to provide a progress report on work done with research partner(s)
Source of Data	Activity reports on HERESA and UPSET projects
Method of calculation/assessment	The activity reports will be used to draft a progress report on the HERESA and UPSET projects.
Assumptions	The HERESA and UPSET projects continue.
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A

Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Annual
Desired performance	SAQA meets its project goals for both projects.
Indicator responsibility	Senior Manager: Research

Indicator Title	29. Record of Articulation initiatives
Definition	<p>A dynamic NQF facilitates access to, and mobility and progression within education, training, and career paths. It is not enough for SAQA to publish policies. SAQA must also ensure that stakeholders implement these policies.</p> <p>The purpose of this indicator is to provide the Minister: HESI with a report on progress made by SAQA and the QCs in implementing the DHET's Articulation Policy.</p>
Source of Data	SAQA, DHET and the QCs reports culminating in a combined report.
Method of calculation/assessment	SAQA, DHET and the QCs each produce an update on their Articulation activities. SAQA uses these updates to compile the consolidated report for the Minister: HESI. The consolidated report is first approved by the SAQA Board in March before being sent to the Minister: HESI in April each year.
Assumptions	Sufficient funding is available to implement the Articulation Policy and the QCs supply their reports in line with SAQA guidelines, timeously.
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A

Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Annual
Desired performance	SAQA completes the consolidated report for the Minister: HESI, the Board approves it, and SAQA sends it to the Minister within 30 days after the financial year-end.
Indicator responsibility	Manager: Strategy, Reporting, and Performance M&E; Executive: Governance, People and Strategy Division, supported by the Senior Manager: Research.

Annexures to the Annual Performance Plan

Annexure A: Amendments to the Strategic Plan

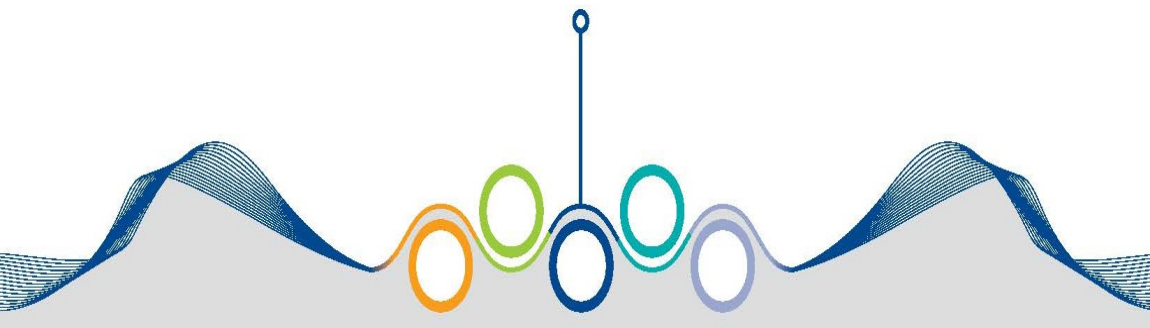
There are no amendments during this period.

Annexure B: Conditional Grants

Name of Grant	Purpose	Outputs	Current Annual Budget (R'000)	Period of Grant
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Annexure C: Consolidated Indicators

Institution	Outputs	Output Indicator	Target	Data Source
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A



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Materiality Framework 2022/23



Materiality and Significance Framework Financial Year 2022/23

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1. Scope

The Board of the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) is responsible for developing a Materiality and Significance Framework that must be updated annually before the start of the financial year. The Materiality and Significance Framework must be incorporated into the Strategic Plan of SAQA, and the annual report should detail the framework applied during the year.

The Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act no. 1 of 1999) (PFMA), read with section 28.1.5 of the Treasury Regulations, requires the accounting authority of a public entity to submit:

An Annual Report on the activities of that public entity during the financial year, as well as the financial statements for that financial year after they have been audited to the relevant treasury and the executive authority responsible for that public entity [Section 55(1)(d)].

Section 55(2)(b)(i) of the PFMA requires that the annual report and financial statements must include particulars of any **material** losses through criminal conduct, irregular expenditure, fruitless and wasteful expenditure, which occurred during the financial year.

The public entity's accounting authority is responsible for developing a **materiality** and **significant** framework. The prepared materiality and significant framework should be submitted to the external auditors for evaluation in order to obtain their assessment as to the reasonability of the framework.

The public entity must include this framework in the following documents, which is submitted to the executive authority –

- **Corporate Business Plan** (Treasury Regulation 29.1.1).
- **Strategic Plan** (Treasury Regulation 30.1.3).

Based on the submitted information, the executive authority may decide to conduct further investigations in the activities of the entity. It is therefore important for the public entity to include all national and significant information in its annual report and for the material and significant figures to be set at the appropriate level in order to ensure that correct information is included in the annual report.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 **Materiality** - Information is material if its omission or misstatement could influence the economic decisions of users taken based on the financial statements. Materiality depends on the size of the item or error judged in the particular circumstances of its omission or misstatement. Thus, materiality provides a threshold or cut-off point rather than being a primary qualitative characteristic which information must have if it is to be useful.

Materiality has two components, quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative materiality is when an amount is material in relation to rand value and whether

its omission or misstatement can affect the user's decision. Qualitative materiality focuses on the inherent nature of the item under consideration.

- 2.2 **Significant** - is defined as extensive or important enough to merit attention” and may, therefore, be interpreted as of relative importance to the SAQA as a whole. Thus, a transaction will be significant if conducting the transaction is vitally important to fulfil the SAQA’s mandate and for it to operate effectively.
- 2.3 From the interpretations above, it is evident that there is a difference between “material” and “significant.” Significant is larger than material, as a significant transaction impacts on SAQA as a whole. An occurrence may be material but not necessarily significant, whereas any occurrence that is significant will be material.

3. Legislative Requirements

- 3.1 Treasury Regulations 28.3.1 requires the Board to develop and agree on framework of acceptable levels of Materiality and Significance with the Minister of Higher Education and Training.
- 3.2 Section 54(2) of the Public Finance Management Act (Act no. 1 of 1999) (PFMA) requires that the SAQA Board informs the relevant treasury and submit relevant

particulars to the Minister of Higher Education and Training for approval in respect of any of the following qualifying transactions:

3.2.1 The acquisition or disposal of a significant asset; and

3.2.2 The beginning of a significant business activity.

3.3 Treasury Regulations 30.1.3 (e) also requires a strategic plan to include the material/significance framework. The Annual Integrated Report must detail the framework applied during that specific financial year.

3.4 Calculation of materiality figure used (as per Annexure A attached).

The calculations of materiality figures used are based on the amount in relation to the rand value focused on the inherent nature of the items as indicated on the attached Annexure. (See "Annexure A").

4. Determining the Materiality / Significance levels

4.1 The following factors must be taken into consideration in determining the materiality and significance levels for SAQA:

4.1.1 Guidelines issued by the National Treasury;

4.1.2 The nature of SAQA's business;

4.1.3 Statutory requirements affecting SAQA;

4.1.4 Risks associated with SAQA; and

4.1.5 Quantitative and qualitative factors.

4.2 To comply with Section 54(2) of the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA), the Board will report on the acquisition and disposal of a significant asset and the beginning of a significant business activity.

5. Compliance

5.1 To ensure compliance with the PFMA, the following steps will be taken:

#	DETAIL	Responsible Person or Committee	Date
1	Review the materiality and significance framework in consultation	CFO	As per Treasury guidelines
2	Include framework in strategic plan	CEO	As per the Treasury submission schedule
3	Approval of the framework	Board	Annual
4	Include the framework in an annual report	CFO	Annual – May to July
5	Include particulars of any losses through criminal conduct, irregular expenditure and fruitless and wasteful expenditure that occurred during the financial year in annual report.	CEO	Annual - May to July
6	Maintain a register on all irregular expenditure and fruitless and wasteful expenditure that occurred during the financial year	CFO	Continuous Reported quarterly, annually and at each Finance Committee meeting (where applicable)
7	Maintain a register of any losses through criminal conduct that occurred during the financial year	CEO	Continuous Reported quarterly, annually and at each Finance Committee meeting (where applicable)
8	Report all material / significant items to the Board	CEO	As and when they occur

6. Determining the Materiality and Significance Levels

- 6.1 The operating requirements of SAQA are to ensure that all its expenses are recovered through government grants from the Department of Higher Education and Training and revenue that it raises mainly from evaluation of foreign qualifications and verification of local qualifications. SAQA budgets on a break-even basis (meaning, it does not budget for a surplus or deficit) unless it obtains approval from National Treasury as per section 53 of the PFMA.
- 6.2 SAQA is also expenditure intensive as its mandate is to render a service to the general public.
- 6.3 The materiality figure calculated by the SAQA should not exceed the figure used (reviewed annually) by the Auditor General of South Africa (external auditors), because it could indicate a difference of opinion regarding the materiality of misstatements. The external auditors are not allowed to disclose the materiality amounts to auditees. The external auditors confirmed that the materiality amount is not less than 1% of actual operating expenditure or revenue.

7. Materiality Framework

PFMA SECTION	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITATIVE [AMOUNT]	QUALITATIVE [NATURE]
S50(1)(c)	Fiduciary duties of accounting authorities		
	The accounting authority for a public entity must -		
	On request, disclose to the executive authority responsible for that public entity or the legislature to which the public entity is accountable, all material facts, including those reasonably discoverable, which in any way may influence the decisions or actions of the executive authority or the legislature.	All amounts greater than the materiality figure as determined in Annexure A	Any item or event where specific disclosure is required by law. Any fact discovered of which is omission or misstatement, in the Board's opinion, could influence the Board decisions or actions of the

PFMA SECTION	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITATIVE [AMOUNT]	QUALITATIVE [NATURE]
			executive authority or legislature.
S(54)(2)	Information to be submitted by accounting authorities		
	Before a public entity concludes any of the following transactions, the accounting authority for the public entity must promptly and in writing inform the relevant treasury of the transaction and submit relevant particulars of the transaction to its executive authority for approval of the transaction;		
(a)	Establishment or participation in the establishment of a company;	Not applicable	
(b)	Participation in a significant partnership, trust, unincorporated joint venture or similar arrangement;	Not applicable	
(c)	Acquisition or disposal of a significant shareholding in a company;	Not applicable	
(d)	Acquisition or disposal of a significant asset;	R2 000 000.00	
(e)	Commencement or cessation of a significant business activity; and	Not applicable	
(f)	A significant change in the nature or extent of its interest in a significant partnership, trust, unincorporated joint venture or similar arrangement.	Not applicable	
S55(2)	Annual report and financial statements		
(b)(i)	The accounting authority for a public entity must include particulars of – Any material losses through criminal conduct and any irregular expenditure and fruitless and wasteful expenditure that occurred during the financial year.	All amounts greater than the materiality figure as determined in Annexure A	
S66(1)	Restrictions on borrowing, guarantees and other commitments		
	An institution to which this Act applies may not borrow money or issue a guarantee, indemnity or security, or enter into any other transaction that binds or may bind that		

PFMA SECTION	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITATIVE [AMOUNT]	QUALITATIVE [NATURE]
	institution or the Revenue Fund to any future financial commitment, unless such borrowing, guarantee, indemnity, security or other transaction –		
(a)	Is authorized by this Act; and	All amounts	
(b)	In the case of public entities, is also authorized by other legislation not in conflict with this Act, and	All amounts	

“ANNEXURE A”

Materiality and Significant Framework

1. Reasons for basis and selection

A materiality and significant framework, as well as materiality figures indicated below are based on the assumption that SAQA assets and liabilities as appearing in the financial statements, are not indicators of the size of the entity, and risk associated with such amounts is low. SAQA risks are more closely associated with expenditure amounts, and total expenditure is therefore a more reliable indication of the size and risk.

The materiality amount was therefore calculated based on the expenditure amount as a cut-off point of what will be material information if omitted or misstated, which could influence the economic decision of the user of SAQA financial statements.

2. Justification of % used

Based on the premise that the total budget of the SAQA is largely used for expenditure purposes, it was decided to calculate the materiality figure based on 0.75% of the total expenditure. The table in point 4 below reflects the general range between 0.5% and 1%. Based on the value of daily transactions at SAQA, it was decided that 0.5% was too low, and that 0.75% was more reasonable and in order to take a more conservative view, 0.75% was selected. Thus, materiality was set at 0.75% of total expenditure.

3. Qualitative factors and influence on materiality and significance

Unauthorized expenditure

- Irregular expenditure
- Fruitless / wasteful expenditure
- Losses through criminal conduct
- All significant transactions envisaged in Section 54(2) of the PFMA.

4. Basis of selection

The prior year's (2020/21) audited amounts, based on general guidelines as set out in point 5 below, were used to calculate materiality.

Material basis	Guideline %	Amount Per 2020/21 AFS (R)	Minimum level (R)	Maximum level (R)
A. Total Assets	0.5 up to 1%	55 989 740	279 949	559 897
B. Gross revenue	0.5 up to 1%	120 745 462	603 727	1 207 455
C. Total expenditure	0.5 up to 0.75%	127 886 600	639 433	959 150
D. Net surplus/deficit	0.5 up to 0.75%	(7 141 138)	(35 706)	(53 559)

5. Basis of selection

Materiality basis	Guideline %
Statement of financial position items	0.5 up to 1%
Statement of Financial performance items	0.5 up to 1%
Expenditure items	0.5 up to 1%
Net surplus or deficit	0.5 up to 1%
A. Total Assets	0.5 up to 1%
B. Gross Revenue	0.5 up to 1%
C. Total Expenditure	0.5 up to 1%
D. Net Surplus/Deficit	0.5 up to 1%

6. CONCLUSION

The budget of the SAQA is largely dependent on the transfer grant from the DHET and any amount above the materiality figure determined in the expenditure cycle will have an impact on the financial statements and will be reported. The materiality figure, based on 0.75% of total expenditure R127 886 600 (2022/23) is therefore set at **R959,150.00**.

Any material losses through criminal conduct, irregular expenditure, fruitless and wasteful expenditure which may occur will be reported regardless of the materiality figure stated above.

The Materiality and Significance amounts above are for the 2022/23 financial year.