
GOVERNMENT NOTICE

DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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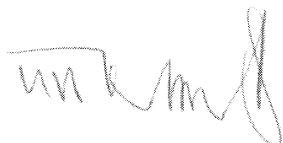
29 September 2014

FOREWORD FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF UMALUSI

Section 8(2)(e) of the National Qualifications Framework Act, Act 67 of 2008, provides for the Minister to determine the sub-frameworks of the NQF and publish them in a Gazette. To that end, the Minister determined the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework through Government Gazette No 36006 of 14 December 2012, which was amended by Government Gazette No 36803 of 30 August 2013.

In terms of Section 24 of the NQF Act, Act 67 of 2008, Umalusi is the Quality Council for General and Further Education and Training. Section 27(e) of the Act provides for Umalusi to develop and manage its sub-framework.

Umalusi hereby publishes the policy for the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework.



Dr Mafu S Rakometsi
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

23 September 2014

Policy for the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework

Umalusi

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II

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Policy for the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework

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Definitions

In this document, any word or expression to which a meaning has been assigned in the National Qualifications Framework Act, Act No. 67 of 2008, as amended, and the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, Act No. 58 of 2001, as amended, has the same meaning when used in this document, unless the context otherwise indicates.

Accreditation	The recognition of- (a) the capacity of a private provider to offer a qualification on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Framework, and the provider's implementation of the curriculum in support of the qualification, at the required standard; and (b) the capacity of a private assessment body to assess a qualification on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Framework and the quality and standard of the assessment services and products provided by the private assessment body. As part of a quality assurance process accreditation attests to the capacity and the quality of the offering in an independent provider or in a private assessment body.
Act	The General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, Act no 58 of 2001, as amended.
Articulation	The process which formally creates recognizable (and recognised) connections between qualifications and part qualifications.
Assessment	The process of identifying, gathering and interpreting information about a learner's achievement in order to- (a) assist the learner's development and improve the process of learning and teaching; and (b) evaluate and certify competence in order to ensure qualification credibility.
Assessment body	A department of education or a juristic body accredited by the Council as a body responsible for conducting internal assessment and external examinations.
Basic education	Grades R – 12, as evidenced in the National Curriculum Statement Grades R – 12 documentation.
Council	Umalusi, the Quality Council for General and Further Education and Training; as contemplated in the <i>National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008 (Act No. 67 of 2008)</i> and the <i>General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, 2001 (Act No. 58 of 2001)</i> .

Certification	The formal act of recognition of a qualification or part-qualification awarded to a successful learner.
Curriculum	<p>The underpinning policy provided for a qualification to facilitate a more general understanding of its implementation in an educational system. The curriculum encompasses three components:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The intended curriculum: the documented curriculum for a qualification that provides a more detailed description in terms of the depth, breadth and level of difficulty and cognitive demand of what is required for the purpose of the qualification to be fulfilled. Syllabi for the necessary subjects form an integral part of the curriculum. The enacted curriculum: the delivery of the curriculum in an institution which includes leadership and management, the ethos and values, teaching and learning, extra-curricular activities, learner support, institutional performance and the management of quality towards improvement. The assessed curriculum: the internal assessment and the external examination of the intended curriculum. <p>The curriculum policy and its syllabi provide the information necessary for the enactment of the curriculum in the institution and the necessary framework for assessment. A "programme" means the same as curriculum in the Act.</p>
Exit point	A point in General and Further Education and Training at which a learner is required to demonstrate competence with a view to obtaining documentary proof of proficiency.
External assessment	Any assessment conducted by an assessment body, the outcomes of which count towards the achievement of a qualification.
Further Education and Training	All learning and training programmes leading to qualifications from Levels 2-4 of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).
General Education	All learning and training programmes leading to a qualification on Level 1 of the National Qualifications

and Training	Framework, which level is below further education and training.
General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework	The sub-framework of qualifications developed and managed by Umalusi Quality Council for NQF Levels 1- 4 as envisioned in sections 4 – 7 of the <i>National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008 (Act No. 67 of 2008)</i> .
Minimum outcomes and standards	As contemplated in the policy document, <i>National policy pertaining to the programme and promotion requirements of the National Curriculum Statement Grades R – 12</i> , published Government Gazette No. 34600 of 12 September 2011; and any other policy documents promulgated by the Minister(s) pertaining to qualifications on the General and Further Education and Training Sub-framework of Qualifications and their institutions of provision.
Minister(s)	The Minister of Higher Education and Training and/or the Minister of Basic Education, as determined by the context.
National Qualifications Framework (NQF)	Is a comprehensive system for the classification, registration, publication and articulation of quality-assured national qualifications;
Part –qualification	An assessed unit of learning or subject that is registered as part of a qualification/ recognition accorded to the achievement of part of a qualification registered on the sub-framework.
Programme	Means the same as curriculum in the Act.
Qualification	A registered national qualification.
Registered	A qualification acknowledged on the National Qualifications Framework by SAQA in terms of section 13(1)(h) of the <i>National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008 (Act No. 67 of 2008)</i> .
Standard	Statement of level of quality or attainment required.
Umalusi	The Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training established in terms of the <i>General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, 2001 (Act No. 58 of 2001)</i> .

Abbreviations and Acronyms

CAT	Credit accumulation and transfer
CHE	Council for Higher Education
GENFETQA	General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance
GENFETQSF	General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework
HESA	Higher Education South Africa
NASCA	National Senior Certificate for Adults
NC (V)	National Certificate (Vocational)
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSC	National Senior Certificate
QC	Quality Council
QCTO	Quality Council for Trades and Occupations
QRG	Qualifications Reference Group
QSC	Qualifications Standards Committee
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority

1. THE GENERAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING QUALIFICATIONS SUB-FRAMEWORK IN CONTEXT

A single qualifications framework for a diverse system

1. In terms of the National Qualifications Framework Act, Act no 67 of 2009, the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is a framework of ten levels encompassing three sub-frameworks: the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework, the Occupational Qualifications Sub-framework, and the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-framework. The General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework coordinates with the two sub-frameworks developed and managed by the Quality Council for Higher Education and the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations.
2. The sub-framework serves as a register of general educational qualifications at NQF Levels 1 – 4.
3. The sub-framework is intended to provide the basis for articulation with qualifications residing on the two other sub-frameworks.

Purpose

4. This policy provides for the development of general and further education qualifications. This policy fosters the development of a single yet diverse general and further education and training sector committed to serve the needs of the individual, South African society and the economy.

Legislative and regulatory framework

5. In 2001 Umalusi, the Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training, was mandated by parliament, in its founding Act, ***The General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, 2001*** (Act 58 of 2001) as the quality assurance body for Levels 1 – 4 of the National Qualifications Framework¹.

¹ The South African education system is now divided into the Basic- and Further- as well as Higher Education and Training. Umalusi's responsibilities lie currently with all twelve years of Basic Education (which subsumes General Education and a portion of Further Education) and Further Education. The legal redefinition of the various sectors within education must precede the final naming of this framework which is responsible for institutional learning across these sectors.

6. **National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008**, (Act 67 of 2008), constituted Umalusi as the Quality Council for General and Further Education and Training, as provided for in the amended GENFETQA Act of 2008. Umalusi now serves as one of three Quality Councils, alongside the Council for Higher Education (CHE) and the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO), and is required to collaborate with the South African Qualifications Authority and the other Quality Councils (QCs). In terms of Paragraph 27 (a) – (k) of the NQF Act, each QC is responsible for the development and management of its sub-framework. Paragraph 27 identifies a range of responsibilities related to the management of the NQF which includes advising the Minister(s) on matters affecting the sub-framework, undertaking research, informing the public about the sub-framework and its qualifications and performing any functions consistent with and required by the Act or by the Minister.
7. In terms of the 2008 amendment of the **General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, 2001**, (Act 58 of 2001), and further explicated in Council Policy, Umalusi's responsibilities are identified as the development and management of a sub-framework of qualifications, quality assurance of assessment (both internal and external) at exit points, certification, the accreditation of private assessment bodies and the monitoring of public assessment bodies, as well as the quality assurance of education institutions that offer qualifications on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework.
8. This policy framework needs to be read in conjunction with the following legislation:
 - a) Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996
 - b) The National Education Policy Act, 1996 (Act no 27 of 1996)
 - c) The National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008 (Act no 67 of 2008)
 - d) The General and Further Education and Training Act, 2001 (Act no 58 of 2001)
 - e) Skills Development Act, 1997 (Act no 97 of 1998)
 - f) Further Education and Training Colleges Act, 2006 (Act no 16 of 2006)
 - g) The South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act no 84 of 1996)
 - h) Higher Education Act, 1997.
9. The present policy must also be read in conjunction with Umalusi Council policy entitled *Standards and Quality Assurance for General and Further Education and Training* and all related Umalusi policies identified in that document. The Council policy explains Umalusi's approach to quality assurance, and the complex activities that set standards in education.

Umalusi undertakes the statutory responsibilities to provide for control over norms and standards in respect of curriculum, quality assurance, accreditation, research and the development and management of its sub-framework in terms of this policy.

10. This policy outlines the nature and extent of the qualification types on the sub-framework for General and Further Education and Training. The sub-framework serves as a means for the public to understand and have confidence in the achievements represented by the qualifications in general and further education and training. It supports a common understanding of the relationship of one qualification to another. Through related policy, the sub-framework establishes parameters for the design of qualifications. These parameters facilitate general comparability of qualifications across the system thus allowing for greater ease of access and the possibility of credit transfer and articulation for learners.

Scope and application

11. In respect of the work required to develop and manage the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework and the qualifications necessary for the sub-framework, this policy provides guidance to Umalusi, all agencies public or private that are proposers of new qualifications or who wish to review existing qualifications, such as the Departments of Basic and Higher Education and Training, private assessment bodies or providers, institutions requiring to be accredited by Umalusi, and other stakeholders such as the South African Qualifications Authority and the other two Quality Councils, CHE and QCTO, with an interest in qualifications for the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework.

2. THE GENERAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING QUALIFICATIONS SUB-FRAMEWORK

The character of the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework

12. The purpose of the qualifications on the sub-framework is to fulfill the state's constitutional responsibility to citizens' rights to a *basic and further education*. The constitution specifically mentions adults' right to adult basic education. The constitution also makes provision for further education which is to be made progressively available and accessible.

13. The qualifications on the sub-framework are thus organised into two streams which cater for two distinct learner groups: a) children and adolescents involved in the acquisition of a basic education in schools, and b) adolescents who are already out of school, and adults. This latter group has diverse needs that range from adult basic education and training (ABET) to needing to achieve a school-leaving certificate. The groups overlap substantially in terms of age, and yet have distinct needs.
14. The qualifications on the sub-framework prepare learners in a broad, general way for further learning, for becoming educated South African citizens with some readiness to enter the world of work. These qualifications are either academic or vocational in nature, but not occupational.
15. All the qualifications are supported by curricula that are discipline-based and include foundational learning which requires proficiency in one or more languages and some form of mathematics or quantitative/mathematical literacy.
16. All qualifications are nationally assessed through external examinations set by the national Departments of Education (Basic Education and Higher Education and Training) and private Umalusi accredited assessment bodies.
17. The sub-framework is designed to cater for adults' basic literacy needs as well as their general academic and general vocational requirements in order to build a post-schooling environment supportive of a wide range of adult needs.
18. This policy integrates existing disciplinary-based qualifications offered at institutions—schools, TVET/FET colleges and adult education and training centres—both public and private—into the sub-framework. It also allows for the development of new qualifications needed to respond to emerging learning needs.
19. This policy determines the structure for new General and Further Education and Training qualifications which are not occupational qualifications. Guidance in respect of new qualifications development is provided in the policy for the management of qualifications on the sub-framework.
20. Existing, inherited qualifications retain their structure until they are reviewed and re-registered. Guidance in respect of the review of qualifications is provided in policy for the management of qualifications on the sub-framework. Once reviewed, qualifications will be required to conform to the requirements set out for qualifications on the sub-framework.

21. Prescribed qualification specifications; evaluation of curriculum statements or syllabuses to establish comparability; the verification of the quality of external examinations, and the monitoring of provision are all significant and relatively cost-effective ways of establishing coherent standards, as well as measuring and improving quality in the education and training system. Such measures are particularly critical since Umalusi is responsible for maintaining the necessary standards in a large-scale educational system.
22. Certificates are issued for qualifications where at least 50% of the final mark is derived from suitably quality-assured external assessment, based on approved syllabuses or curriculum statements. The monitoring of provision (and the accreditation) of educational institutions is based on quality assurance of the enacted curriculum and of internal assessment.
23. In summary, the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework is designed to:
 - 23.1 be sufficiently flexible to accommodate different types of general and further education needs and to enable a variety of public and private institutions to pursue their teaching and learning obligations responsibly;
 - 23.2 facilitate the education of learners, whether they are of school-going age or beyond, so that they will ultimately contribute to the social, cultural and economic development of South Africa;
 - 23.3 provide qualifications that can be benchmarked credibly against similar qualifications internationally;
 - 23.4 allow for the development of new qualification variants (and/or programmes within a variant) as the need arises;
 - 23.5 be simple, clear, easy to understand and user-friendly; and
 - 23.6 facilitate wherever possible the articulation between qualifications within the sub-framework and across the NQF to qualifications developed and managed by the other Quality Councils.

The structure of the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework

24. A qualification on the sub-framework is defined as the broad specifications and combinations of subjects/learning areas which must be achieved by learners, but which can also reflect individual learners' preferred learning needs, as expressed within those specifications.

25. In the South African context, the word signifies too that an individual learner has successfully completed a coherent and purposeful programme of learning at a particular level on the NQF. It also denotes that the learner has been assessed—in terms of the exit-level outcomes—as qualified.
26. The word 'qualification' also denotes the formal recognition, through certification, of successful learning achievement associated with a qualification on the sub-framework. Umalusi is mandated to award certificates at the exit points in General and Further Education and Training.
27. The sub-framework defines a number of qualification **types**. The qualification types specify broad requirements for qualifications and create the basis for the development of specific qualifications (**designated variants**). Qualification types allow for the registration of designated variants and/or part-qualifications.
28. A coherent standard is maintained by the identification of a single qualification type with each of the NQF levels on the sub-framework. The type is determined by the educational, socio-political, cultural and economic imperatives that require fulfillment in the education system of the country.
29. Qualification variants are designed to share a common structure while allowing some flexibility for learner interest and preference.
30. Part-qualifications refer to the achievement and acknowledgement of some part of a qualification on the sub-framework without having fulfilled the complete requirements for the full qualification.
31. All qualifications are further specified at the level of a curriculum for the subjects within the qualifications. Performance in the subjects is assessed through external examinations.
32. The word, '*qualifier*' is used to identify an area of specialization. So, for example, the vocational field, Information Technology and Computer Science, is determined as a *qualifier* in the NC(V).

Roles and responsibilities

33. The Minister of Higher Education and Training has overall executive responsibility for the NQF, SAQA and the Quality Councils.
34. The Minister of Higher Education and Training also has overall responsibility for setting minimum outcomes and standards for education in Technical and

Vocational Education and Training (Further Education and Training) colleges, and for setting minimum outcomes and standards for qualifications designed for adults in the post school system.

35. The Minister of Basic Education is responsible for setting the minimum outcomes and standards for basic education as offered in schools.

36. The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) is responsible, after consultation with the Quality Councils, for the development of policy and criteria for the development, registration and publication of qualifications and part-qualifications. It also registers approved qualifications on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework of the NQF.

37. Umalusi as a Quality Council is responsible for:

37.1 the development and management of the GFETQSF

37.2 advising the Minister of Higher Education and Training on matters relating to the GFETQSF

37.3 determining and implementing policy and criteria for the development and registration of qualifications in the sub-framework for General and Further Education and Training, taking into account the policy and criteria developed by SAQA, including the development of the naming conventions for qualifications; for quality assurance in general and further education and training

37.4 for ensuring that such qualifications meet the necessary criteria for registration on the NQF in terms of Section 27 (h) (i) – (iv) of the NQF Act, 2008, (Act No 67 of 2008), and for requesting registration of such qualifications; and for

37.5 quality assuring education in general and further education and training.

Standards for qualifications in General and Further Education and Training

38. The standard of qualifications on the GFETQSF is determined through qualification policies which provide details on the design specifications of the qualification, its supporting curriculum, the nature of the assessment (site-based assessment and examinations), and evaluating and monitoring the manner in which the curriculum is implemented in institutions of learning.
39. Umalusi develops processes that measure, evaluate, monitor and report against the standards set in the qualification, the curriculum/ programme, the related assessment, the implementation and assessment of the curriculum in the institution and/or by the assessment body.
40. In concert, all these activities are directed towards ensuring a quality assurance standard that can rightfully underpin the certification of the qualification. Certification is regarded as closing the quality assurance cycle that begins with the qualification, and is considered as Umalusi's public commitment to the value of the qualification. It is a function that is not delegated.
41. The value of the final certificate is seen to depend on maintaining high ethical standards in the final, high-stakes, and high-security processes of setting exams, externally moderating exams, monitoring the marking of exams, standardizing marks and processing them for certification. The value of the qualification is equally seen to depend on the foundation documents which underpin the required learning (i.e. the curriculum). Both the qualification itself and the curricula underpin the necessary quality assurance processes which ensure quality teaching and learning.
42. The maintenance and development of the qualifications and their curricula for the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework is a significant means of exercising control over standards and improving quality in South African education.
43. Development of the qualifications sub-framework may include strengthening existing qualifications, developing new qualifications, as well as evaluating new qualifications which are proposed for inclusion on the sub-framework.
44. Establishing and using new and innovative ways to set and strengthen educational standards forms part of Umalusi's responsibility in setting standards for the sub-framework and are actively researched and pursued.

The registration of qualifications on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework

45. The NQF level forms the most generic specification of the qualification, and the level descriptors developed by SAQA have reference.
46. Placement of qualifications on the sub-framework is in large part determined by comparative evaluations with existing qualifications on the sub-framework. The level of qualifications is further determined through research into the critical curricula underpinning the qualifications, and through an evaluation of the quality and depth of the concomitant assessment.
47. The qualification specifies the level of the qualification, its minimum credit rating and its purpose and characteristics. A qualification is required to meet at least the generic competencies associated with the level at which the qualification has been pegged. The basic qualification types are used as points of reference for the development of specialized qualifications.
48. A qualification type may have one or more *designated variants*.
49. Certain designated variants may be further specified, producing a qualification specialization called a *qualifier*. This specialization is expressed in the *qualifier*. For example, the combination of subjects specified for the National Certificate (Vocational) Level 4: Public Administration, meets the basic requirements for the NC(V), but also includes specialized learning in the field of public administration (Organizing field 3 – Business, Commerce and Management Studies). Qualification specializations are expressed as a *qualifier* in a maximum of five words after the name of the qualification. The description of the *qualifier* is separated from the qualification type by a colon.
50. Developing and monitoring standards for quality assurance for the sub-framework requires that these qualifications are accompanied by acceptable prescribed curricula.
51. All qualifications must conform to the character of qualifications in the Sub-framework, and must specify at least the following information²:
- 51.1 The full name of the qualification – and one which accords with the qualification type; the sub-framework to which the qualification

² Additional guidance is available in the relevant policies identified in Umalusi's policy, *Standards and quality assurance for General and Further Education and Training*.

- belongs; its NQF Level and the minimum number of credits required for its award;
- 51.2 the legislative / policy framework to which the qualification belongs (viz. which Acts and regulations refer)
 - 51.3 a brief overview of the qualification
 - 51.4 a rationale explaining the function of the qualification in the education and training system, and the kind of need it is intended to address;
 - 51.5 a broadly-stated purpose, explaining in general terms the knowledge and skills the learner will have mastered on completion, that fits within the general purpose of the qualification type;
 - 51.6 the exit level outcomes and post-qualification articulation
 - 51.7 the entry requirements
 - 51.8 entry articulation options
 - 51.9 the identity of the particular target group for the qualification
 - 51.10 the duration of the qualification
 - 51.11 the qualification structure and design
 - 51.12 qualification requirements (the rules of combination)
 - 51.13 credit accumulation and transfer
 - 51.14 provisos
 - 51.15 certification requirements
 - 51.16 an overview of the (prospective or actual) supporting curriculum statements or syllabuses which clearly specify the content and skills to be mastered in the qualification
 - 51.17 assessment requirements for the award of the qualification
 - 51.18 recording and reporting
 - 51.19 minimum accreditation requirements to be met for the provision and certification of the qualification
 - 51.20 Critical cross-field outcomes (CCFOs)
 - 51.21 Transitional arrangements (where required)
 - 51.22 International comparability
 - 51.23 Proposer of the qualification, the expertise used in the development of the qualification and the process followed.

52. Documentation submitted with the qualification must make reference to the curricula accompanying / to accompany the qualification. Such documentation provides guidance should the curricula still require development, and would need to be in accord with the requirements outlined in Umalusi's *Policy for the management of curricula for qualifications on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework*.
53. Qualifications, once registered on the sub-framework, are regarded as belonging to that sub-framework permanently, although the qualification may be reviewed if the need arises. After review, a qualification may no longer be offered, but remains nevertheless on the sub-framework as historical record.
54. The relevant Minister of Education and/or private assessment body, in consultation with Umalusi, determines the inception date of a qualification being offered from the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework.
55. SAQA is responsible for the registration of qualifications on the sub-frameworks of the NQF once the qualification is recommended for registration by the Council, provided that it conforms to the Council's policy and criteria for the registration of qualifications. Once registered on the qualifications sub-framework, a qualification does not have an expiry date, and is retained on the sub-framework.

Qualification types

56. The sub-framework of qualifications for General and Further Education is summarized in the table opposite.
57. The four qualification types are:

General and Further Education and Training

- 58.1 Level 4: National Certificate
- 58.2 Level 3: Intermediate Certificate
- 58.3 Level 2: Elementary Certificate
- 58.4 Level 1: General Certificate

The General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework

NQF level	Qualification types and qualifications					Certificates for units of learning
Level 4	National Certificate (NC)					Subject certificates towards one or more qualification designated variants
Designated variants	Senior Certificate and National Senior Certificate (Colleges)	National Senior Certificate (NSC)	National Certificate (Vocational) Level 4	National Senior Certificate for Adults (NASCA)	National Certificate (Vocational) for Adults (NACVA)	
Level 3	Intermediate Certificate (IC)					Subject certificates towards one or more qualification designated variants
Designated variants	[NSC – Gr 11]		National Certificate (Vocational) Level 3	Intermediate Certificate of Education		
Level 2	Elementary Certificate (EC)					Subject certificates towards one or more qualification designated variants
Designated variants	[NSC – Gr 10]		National Certificate (Vocational) Level 2	Elementary Certificate of Education		
Level 1	General Certificate (GC)					Subject (LA) certificates for adult learners
Designated variants	General Certificate of Education (GCE)		General Education and Training Certificate: ABET	General Education and Training Certificate for Adults (GETCA)		

58. These qualification types operate as a broad framework to regulate teaching, learning, and assessment at the various levels. Although there are just four types of qualifications, they are expected to be sufficient to accommodate a diverse range of needs.

59. Umalusi may review the sub-framework and introduce a new qualification type should a proven need arise as a result of developments in knowledge production or acknowledged international practice.
60. In the event of the need to formulate a new qualification type, Umalusi consults with the other Quality Councils (QCs) and South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) before the development of such a qualification begins, particularly in the event that such a qualification potentially impacts upon the sphere of responsibility of one of the other QCs.

Qualification descriptors

61. Each qualification type has a unique descriptor stating its purpose and how it relates to other qualification types. Each descriptor serves as an initial point of reference which enables comparisons with other qualifications, and provides a basis for designing, evaluating, approving and reviewing qualifications and their associated curricula.
62. All qualifications using the same qualification type (and where appropriate, the designated variant) in their titles must be consistent with the descriptor for each qualification type as defined in this policy.
63. Descriptors for the qualification types recognized by the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework are provided in Annexure 1.

Naming of qualifications

64. The *qualification type* is the name given to a qualification. Existing qualifications, while belonging to the type, may already have names which differ from the type name. Umalusi determines the name given to any future qualifications in accordance with the qualification type.
65. The *designator* is the second name given to a qualification to indicate its broad area of study or discipline. Umalusi determines the designator for qualifications.
66. The third name given to the qualification is the *qualifier*. Qualifiers may be used to indicate a field of specialization. A colon appears between the qualification type or its designator and the qualifier (or specialization). In

order to use a qualifier, at least 50% of the total credits for the qualification must be in the field of specialization denoted by the qualifier. Umalusi determines the qualifier for a qualification type or variant.

67. In registering qualifications on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework, SAQA ensures that the naming of qualifications in the sub-framework is consistent with this policy.

Volumes of learning and achievement of credits

68. The sub-framework recognizes credits as a general measure of volume of learning required for a qualification, quantified as the number of notional study hours required for achieving the learning required by the qualification. The credit rating is independent of the mode of delivery of learning, and the attainment of the expected learning is established through the appropriate assessment of the learning outcomes.
69. The credit rating system rates ten notional study hours as equivalent to one credit. Credit ratings specified on the framework are expressed as minima.
70. The volume of learning required for a qualification is specified in terms of the total number of credits required. On the sub-framework, the number of credits associated with a subject, expressed in terms of a curriculum, may range between 20 and 30 credits³, and qualifications range between 80 and 120 credits or more.
71. Each subject is associated with a curriculum statement, or syllabus, which outlines the selection, sequencing, and pacing of key knowledge areas as well as skills and abilities to be mastered, and prescribes how the curriculum will be assessed. For new qualifications and/or subjects, where there has been no history of external examinations, exemplars of proposed external assessment form a part of the extended curriculum description.
72. To obtain a qualification, a learner *must* be examined by a public examination body or an Umalusi accredited private assessment body. The assessment policy for each qualification must include a measure or set of measures that allows the generation of continuous reporting on a learner's achievement, as achievement is necessarily taken into account in progression decisions.

³ Life Orientation, a subject in both the NSC and the NC(V), allocated 10 credits, is an exception.

Articulation with other sub-frameworks

73. Articulation is the process which formally creates recognisable (and recognised) connections between qualifications and part qualifications, whether within a sub-framework or across sub-frameworks. It is a practice which creates explicit links between qualifications and/or part-qualifications.
74. The qualification types determined for the sub-framework form the first, and most basic kind of articulation, since the intention is to put broadly comparable qualifications at the same NQF level. Being on the same NQF level, however, does not of necessity allow for the assumption of articulation, since qualification purpose and design may preclude the possibility of credit accumulation and transfer of credits.
75. One of the primary means employed by Umalusi Council in establishing articulation possibilities is through the identification of access possibilities within a qualification policy. The entry requirements determined at the point of qualification development serve to connect the qualification to others which are considered to prepare successful candidates for entry into the qualification described.
76. Articulation also includes exemptions - the situation where some part of the pre-requisites required for one qualification is recognised for the transfer of credit from one to another. So, for example, certain subjects already achieved by a candidate and certified in one qualification may be recognised within the context of another qualification, thus providing exemption from those subjects. The determination of exemption based on prior achievement is determined on a qualification-by-qualification basis through a researched comparison of the curricula for the qualifications in question as well as of the demands made in terms of assessment. Articulation of this nature only occurs when there is a significant degree of consonance between the qualifications themselves - in terms of purpose, their respective curricula, and the nature of the associated assessment.
77. Articulation may also be established through regulation to allow for access to another qualification as, for example, the regulated higher education admission requirements associated with the NSC and NC(V) do. For large scale, national qualifications such as those on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework, the regulation of articulation options between qualifications is possible, desirable and necessary: however, the regulation of articulation between a national qualification on the GFETQSF such as the NSC or NC(V) and others (such as a bachelor's degree, diploma or higher certificate on the Higher Education

Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF), for example) is only possible because issues of qualification purpose, national curriculum, uniform quality assurance and assessment are considered to be sufficiently understood and adequately managed.

78. Where it is evident from *research* that learning acquired in one context is valid for another, articulation is called for. Adaptation of curricula and assessment practices may forge greater consonance between qualifications, thus allowing for the possibility of articulation.
79. The credibility of a qualification depends on the quality it comes to represent, and is determined by many factors. It often takes time for all the parts of the system to understand the qualification and to implement it well. Only once a qualification is well understood and accepted generally, can it be used to negotiate relationships with other important qualifications in the system. Even if the qualifications have a high level of general acceptance, the actual articulation needs research to establish the nature of the relationships between them.

Accumulation and transfer of credits towards qualifications

80. Credit accumulation and transfer (CAT) is the process whereby a learner's achievements are recognized. Credits previously obtained may be recognized as meeting the requirements for a different qualification, and, subject to limits, the credits achieved towards one qualification may be recognized as meeting part of the requirements for another qualification. Decisions regarding the transfer of credit are made by the Quality Council(s) responsible for the qualifications in question. The Departments of Education will be advised regarding the permissibility of credit transfer: such decisions in respect of qualifications offered by the Departments of Education need to be regulated before being implemented.
81. Umalusi certification processes recognize partial achievement of qualifications, through the issue of subject statements and under the prerequisite conditions, allow the combination of partial achievements to result in a full qualification.
82. Umalusi Council has policy regarding credit recognition, accumulation and transfer and the recognition of prior learning, as these are practised in a large-scale, massified education system.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

83. Informal and non-formal learning may be recognized by Umalusi through a process of formal assessment. Learners seeking to be recognized for prior learning against a specific qualification will write an external assessment at the exit point of the qualification. Placement assessment may also be used to evaluate prior learning. All Umalusi accredited providers of education and training and assessment are required to have a policy that governs the application of RPL.

Progression within the framework

84. The General and Further Education and Training Sub-framework is designed, where possible, to facilitate vertical, horizontal and diagonal progression within and across the National Qualifications Framework and within the sub-framework in particular. The minimum requirements for vertical progression between qualifications are stipulated by the entry requirements in the qualification policy.
85. Progression is also possible horizontally between qualifications if candidates meet the minimum requirements for admission to the target qualification.
86. Diagonal progression between qualifications is possible if candidates present a completed qualification or credits toward a related qualification as a means of meeting the admission requirements for the target qualification. Candidates moving at the end of Grade 9 from the NSC into the NC(V) are regarded as progressing diagonally from the one qualification to another.

Admission to General and Further Education and Training qualifications

87. All qualifications on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework have their own policies that specify minimum admission requirements where applicable.

Admission to Higher Education qualifications and Occupational qualifications

88. The NQF is intended to facilitate articulation between general, further and higher education, and between qualifications registered by SAQA on behalf of Umalusi and those registered on behalf of other Quality Councils.

89. The National Senior Certificate and the National Certificate (Vocational) Level 4, whose minimum outcomes and standards are determined by the Ministers of Education in national policy, currently constitute the minimum requirements for admission to higher education.
90. Additional minima, declared by the Minister as policy in the *Minimum Admission Requirements for Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's Degree Programmes requiring a National Senior Certificate*, published in the *Government Gazette*, Vol 482, No 27961, August 2005, must be met by applicants in order to be considered for entry into higher education qualifications.
91. Additional minima, declared by the Minister as policy in the *Minimum Admission Requirements for Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's Degree Programmes requiring a National Certificate (Vocational)*, published in the *Government Gazette*, No 32743, November 2009, must be met by NC(V) applicants in order to be considered for entry into higher education qualifications.
92. Additional minima, determined by the Committee of Principals of Higher Education South Africa and approved by the Minister of Education in terms of section 74 of the Higher Education Act (Act 101 of 1997) read in conjunction with Section 7(1)(a), (d) and (e) of the Universities Act (Act 61 of 1955), prescribed standards and conditions for the endorsement of senior certificates and the issuing of certificates of exemption from the matriculation endorsement, published in *Government Gazette*, Vol 1317, No.31674, 5 December 2008, which must be met by SC applicants in order to be considered for entry into a bachelor's degree programmes.

Quality assurance

93. This General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework formally demarcates Umalusi's quality assurance responsibilities, and to that end, Umalusi develops policy that expresses the standards used for quality assuring the qualifications on the sub-framework, their provision and assessment.
94. In terms of both the GENFETQA and NQF Acts, Umalusi is responsible for quality assurance of assessment at exit points for qualifications registered on the sub-framework.

95. The assessed curriculum associated with each qualification is subject to a coherent set of quality assurance practices and processes that all contribute to a single end: Umalusi must be able to assure that the qualification has been credibly assessed, and achieved, at an identifiable standard through external examinations and internal assessments.
96. External examinations set sound standards for educational attainment that are specified in very precise terms for a large system; and through implementing processes and procedures to manage the conduct and administration of examinations.
97. The necessary national assessments are offered by the state and by private assessment bodies accredited to do so by Umalusi.
98. In addition, Umalusi accredits private providers of education and training to offer qualifications on the Sub-framework. These include: Independent schools, private TVET/FET colleges and private adult learning centres. Such providers may be registered as examination centres with the state or with accredited private assessment bodies.
99. Umalusi only approves the release of results if the Council has satisfied itself that the assessment body concerned has complied with all the quality assurance requirements prescribed by the Council for the conduct of assessment.

Certification

100. The award of a certificate marks the achievement of a qualification attained through successfully fulfilling the necessary learning stipulated in the qualification and its associated curriculum.

101. Certification is thus the formal recognition of learner's having successfully completed a qualification or part-qualification. Umalusi is mandated to issue such certificates at exit points in General and Further Education and Training.

102. A subject or learning area statement (that is, 'a subject statement') is issued by Umalusi if a candidate has not met the full certification requirements for the qualification. It provides a record of what the candidate has achieved at a particular date. A subject statement, as a record of learning, may be used as the vehicle for credit accumulation and transfer.

103. Umalusi may issue several subject statements as records of learner achievement. A combination of the subject statements may be requested by

the learner through an Umalusi accredited private assessment body or the state should the requirements for the qualification now be fulfilled.

104. Umalusi is obligated to ensure that the certificates it issues are credible both nationally and internationally.

105. In order to issue certificates, Umalusi maintains the capacity to:

- 106.1 develop and maintain policies and directives for certification;
- 106.2 maintain acceptable standards for awarding certificates; and
- 106.3 maintain a certification system and infrastructure including appropriate security arrangements.

106. Umalusi is also responsible for verifying the authenticity of the certificates on the sub-framework, and for issuing replacement certificates under specified conditions as determined by policy.

107. Qualification certificates and subject statements within General and Further Education and Training are issued in English.

3. IMPLEMENTATION

Management Information System

108. Umalusi collaborates with SAQA in respect of maintaining a national learner's records database comprising registers of qualifications, part-qualifications, learner achievements for formal learning, and any other associated information.

Transitional arrangements

109. Certain qualifications may need to be phased out over time and certain proposed qualifications developed, so there will be a transition period to full compliance. In respect of qualifications offered in the public system, Umalusi shall advise the relevant Minister of Education, and, after consultation with the department of education concerned, the date for implementation or phasing out shall be determined by notice in the Government Gazette. In respect of other qualifications, implementation decisions will be communicated through notifications placed on the Umalusi and SAQA websites.

Full compliance

110. All General and Further Education and Training qualifications and curricula must comply with this policy by a date to be determined by Umalusi by notice in a Government Gazette.

ANNEXURE 1**GENERAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING QUALIFICATION DESCRIPTORS****General Certificate (GC)****Type specifications**

NQF Level 1

Grade 9 certificate (schooling), and

Exit level qualification for adults

Minimum total credits:	120 (schooling, GETC (Adults))
	120 (non-school usage, e.g. GEC for adults)
Minimum units of learning (Subjects):	6 (schooling;
	5 GETC: ABET
	4 (GETCA)

Designated variants: General Education Certificate; General Education and Training Certificate

Designated variants are named within the qualification type to indicate differences in educational intent

Qualifiers: General Education and Training Certificate: Adults

The word or words separated from the designated variants may indicate either the target group for whom a qualification is intended (e.g. *adults*), or may indicate an area of qualification specialization (e.g. a general vocational area such as *Education and Development*)

Abbreviations

For example: GEC; GETC: ABET (Level 4); GETCA

Purpose and characteristics

Level 1 (grade 9) theoretically serves to mark the end of general education for school-going learners. It could be used as an indicator of learner strengths at the end of Grade 9. The qualification will provide guidance regarding future study, that is, whether a general academic or a more vocational route ought to be followed for the final three years of schooling.

The goal of general education—whether marked by a formal record or achievement or not—is the development of literacy and numeracy, and a sound, general, basic understanding of important knowledge areas, including languages, mathematics, natural and social sciences, arts and culture, life orientation, economic and management sciences, and technology.

Supplementary goals are to produce learners who are confident, independent, multi-skilled, compassionate, environmentally respectful, and able to participate in society as critical and active citizens. These supplementary goals should also be achievable through the knowledge areas—and associated skills—listed above.

The broad social goals of adult education at level 1 are to develop literacy and numeracy and to provide an introduction to the natural and social sciences as the basis for further learning and informed citizenship. Additional subjects may enrich the curriculum. The acquisition of vocational skills as a supplement to a broad basic education can be incorporated into the structure of the qualification. The possession of this qualification indicates that an adult learner, through systematic study and engagement, has achieved foundation learning and is equipped to benefit from further education and training programmes.

The needs of adults and children are very different, which means that the curricula for the two variants are different, and provision must be organized and delivered appropriately.

Minimum admission requirements

Were the GEC for adolescents to be introduced, the typical entrance requirement would be a minimum of nine years including Grade R of schooling and satisfactory progress in the achievement of the outcomes for grade 8, as defined in the relevant policy.

The minimum entry requirements for adults into an NQF Level 1 qualification would be a record of satisfactory achievement in at least two learning areas at AET level 3.

Institutions may, however, make use of suitable diagnostic tests to satisfy themselves that a candidate has sufficient prior learning to embark meaningfully on a course of study at NQF Level 1.

Progression

Successful completion of the GC indicates that the candidate meets the minimum entry requirement for entrance into Grade 10, or certain NQF Level 2

qualifications, provided that the candidate has the necessary requirements for admission into that qualification.

Accumulated credits may be presented for consideration of admission into a related qualification.

Elementary Certificate (EC)

Type specifications

NQF Level 2

Exit level qualification (college; post school)

Minimum total credits: 120 (post schooling and colleges)

Designated variants: Elementary Certificate of Education; Elementary Certificate of Education and Training

Designated variants are named within the qualification type to indicate differences in educational intent

Qualifiers: Elementary Certificate of Education: Adults;
National Certificate (Vocational) (Level 2): Safety in Society

The word or words separated from the designated variants may indicate either the target group for whom a qualification is intended (e.g. *adults*), or may indicate an area of qualification specialization (e.g. a general vocational area such as *Safety in Society*; *Primary Agriculture*)

Abbreviations

For example: ECE; ECET

Also for, example, NC(V) (Level 2): Mechatronics;

Purpose and characteristics

The EC as a qualification type provides general foundational and vocational learning. Its purpose is to provide learners with certain discipline-related knowledge and applied theory skills in a number of subjects. In addition, this NQF Level 2 qualification, the Elementary Certificate, contributes towards equipping learners for citizenship, and in a general sense, for the workplace by further developing literacy and numeracy as foundational learning.

In the NC(V), the teaching and learning, while providing a suitable theoretical grounding is intended also to teach basic vocational skills in a manner which integrates 'academic knowledge' with 'the practical skills and values that are specific to a particular vocational area'. This level 2 qualification signifies that the learner has attained 'the necessary knowledge, practical skills, applied

competence and understanding required for employment at an elementary level of a particular occupation or trade, or class of occupations or trades'.

In prospect, the Elementary Certificate, provides an alternative qualification for adults at this level, and is designed to fulfill needs similar to the NC(V) but provides greater flexibility to deal with divergent learning needs. This qualification specifically anticipates the need for articulation with artisan- and other occupational training in order to accommodate learners, already in employment who require formal additional skills.

Minimum admission requirements

For adolescents, the entrance requirement would be a minimum of nine/ten years including Grade R years of schooling, and record of satisfactory performance in Grade 9, which would indicate successful progress in the achievement of the outcomes as defined in relevant policy.

The minimum entry requirements for adults into the EC would be satisfactory achievement in the GETC: ABET and the GETCA.

However, institutions may make use of suitable diagnostic tests to satisfy themselves that a candidate has sufficient prior learning to embark meaningfully on a course of study at NQF Level 2.

Progression

Successful completion of the EC indicates that the candidate meets the minimum entry requirement for entrance into some form of Level 3 qualification, provided that the candidate has the necessary requirements for admission into that qualification

Accumulated credits may be presented for consideration of admission into a related qualification.

Intermediate Certificate (IC)

Type specifications

NQF Level 3

Qualification (college learners/adults)

Minimum total credits: 120

Designated variants: Intermediate Certificate of Education; Intermediate Certificate of Education and Training

Designated variants are named within the qualification type to indicate differences in educational intent

Qualifiers: Intermediate Certificate of Education: Adults
National Certificate (Vocational) (Level 3): Tourism

The word or words separated from the designated variants may indicate either the target group for whom a qualification is intended (e.g. *adults*), or may indicate an area of qualification specialization (e.g. a general vocational area such as *Hospitality*)

Abbreviations

For example: ICE; ICET; ICE: Adults

Also, for example, NC(V) (Level 3): Office Administration

Purpose and characteristics

The Intermediate Certificate as a qualification type provides general foundational and vocational learning. Its purpose is to provide learners with certain discipline-related knowledge and applied theory skills in a number of subjects. In addition, this NQF Level 3 qualification, the Intermediate Certificate, contributes towards equipping learners for citizenship, and in a general sense, for the workplace by further developing literacy and numeracy as foundational learning.

In the NC(V) at Level 3 on the NQF, the teaching and learning, while providing a suitable theoretical grounding is intended also to teach basic vocational skills in a manner which integrates 'academic knowledge' with 'the practical skills and

values specific to each vocational area'. This level 3 qualification signifies that the learner has attained 'the necessary knowledge, practical skills, applied competence and understanding required for employment at an intermediate level of a particular occupation or trade, or class of occupations or trades'.

In addition, the Intermediate Certificate contributes towards equipping learners for citizenship, and for the workplace.

The IC, the Intermediate Certificate, as a proposed qualification for adults, provides an alternative qualification at this level designed to fulfill needs for adults similar to those served by the NC(V) Level 3 but provides greater flexibility to deal with divergent learning needs. This qualification specifically anticipates the need for articulation with artisan- and other occupational training in order to accommodate learners, already in employment who require formal additional skills.

Minimum admission requirements

For adolescents, the entrance requirement would be a minimum of ten/eleven years including Grade R years of schooling, and satisfactory performance in Grade 10, which would indicate progress in the achievement of the outcomes for grade 10, as defined in the relevant NSC or NC(V) documentation.

The minimum entry requirements for adults would be satisfactory achievement in the EC.

However, institutions may make use of suitable diagnostic tests to satisfy themselves that a candidate has sufficient prior learning to embark meaningfully on a course of study at NQF Level 3.

Progression

Successful completion of the NC(V) Level 3 indicates that the candidate meets the minimum entry requirement for entrance into NC(V) Level 4, or some form of Level 4 qualification, provided that the candidate has the necessary requirements for admission into that qualification.

Similarly, the completion of the adult IC would allow access to some form of Level 4 qualification, provided that the candidate has the necessary requirements for admission into that qualification.

Accumulated credits may be presented for consideration of admission into a related qualification.

National Certificate (NC)

Type specifications

NQF Level 4

Exit level qualification

Minimum total credits: 120

Designated variants: National Senior Certificate; National Senior Certificate for Adults; National Certificate (Vocational) (Level 4); National Certificate (Vocational) for Adults

Designated variants are named within the qualification type to indicate differences in educational intent

Qualifiers: National Certificate (Vocational) (Level 4): Management
National Certificate (vocational) for Adults: Business Studies
(Financial Practice)

The word or words separated from the designated variants may indicate either the target group for whom a qualification is intended (e.g. *adults*), or may indicate an area of qualification specialization (e.g. a general vocational area such as *Education and Development*). It is also possible for a programme to be additionally specified by means of up to five words in brackets after the programme name, for example, National Certificate (Vocational) for Adults: Business Studies (Human Resource Management).

Abbreviations

For example: NSC; NASCA; NACVA; NC(V); SC; NSC (Colleges)

Also, for example: NC(V) (Level 4): Electrical Infrastructure Construction;

NIC: Hospitality (Lodging Management)

Purpose and characteristics

The National Certificate is the exit level qualification for schooling as well as for the NC(V) at FET Colleges.

The National Senior Certificate (NSC) is primarily a discipline-based qualification where all subjects are determined through curricula expressed in the relevant policy. Its purpose is to allow for progression from General Education and Training and to provide learners a school-leaving certificate with the possibility of access to Higher Education. The qualification expresses 'what South Africans regard as

knowledge skills and values worth learning' during the final three years of education.

The NSC thus provides an opportunity for learners to focus on more specific skills and knowledge in a smaller number of more academically oriented subjects than in general education. Within the NSC, the teaching and learning is overtly intended to be more academic in nature, and has the potential to provide access to higher education or other forms of post- secondary education.

The NC(V) at Level 4 on the NQF enables students to 'acquire the necessary knowledge, practical skills, applied competence and understanding required for employment in a particular occupation or trade, or class of occupations or trades', or, given the necessary achievement levels, entrance into Higher Education. Its purpose is thus to foster a suitable theoretical grounding in a vocational area, *and* to provide more advanced vocational skills. As an exit level qualification, it provides access to occupational qualifications on the OQF and also provides the possibility of access to certain qualifications in Higher Education. This qualification signifies that the learner has attained more extensive knowledge, cognitive and conceptual tools and (practical) skills for progression in further education. It provides progression into artisan-education and training.

The Senior Certificate continues to be offered until the NASCA has fully taken on its role, at which point its continued use as an active qualification will be evaluated. Only selected SC subjects are now examined.

The NASCA, the National Senior Certificate for Adults, is designed as a comparable qualification to the NSC but offered and delivered in ways that will suit the needs of adults and young, out-of-school people who cannot return to the school environment.

The NACVA, the National Certificate Vocational for Adults, is designed to provide greater flexibility to deal with divergent learning needs. This qualification is designed specifically for adults and enables people wishing to acquire some basic knowledge and skill in a broad vocational area to do so. This general vocational learning will assist in making learners potentially more employable than they would be if they had no knowledge at all in that general area of work. The NACVA could also enrich the person, already in employment, who requires formal additional knowledge to enhance their contribution in the workplace.

In addition, all forms of the NC contribute towards equipping learners for citizenship.

Certain of the N1 – N3 certificates (NATED 190/191)⁴ have been reinstated and require revision. The N3 is regarded as a part-qualification at NQF 4. Four N3 subjects may be combined with the Business Languages (at Home or FAL level) in order to be awarded the National Senior Certificate (Colleges). However, access to higher education has required the completion of the N4 certificate. The N4 plus the necessary language is thus akin to the NSC with university admission.

Minimum admission requirements

For adolescents, the entrance requirement for entrance into the final year of the NSC or into NC(V) Level 4 would be a minimum of eleven/twelve years including Grade R, of schooling, and satisfactory performance in the achievement of the outcomes for grade 11, as defined in the NSC or NC(V) policies.

However, institutions may make use of suitable diagnostic tests to satisfy themselves that a candidate has sufficient prior learning to embark meaningfully on a course of study at NQF Level 4.

Entry into the Senior Certificate, which is currently being phased out, is previous registration for one or more SC subjects.

In the case of candidates selecting to register for the examinations associated with the NASCA, no minimum admission requirements will be enforced. There are, however, advisory guidelines which indicate the likelihood of readiness.

Progression

Successful completion of any of the forms of the National Certificate indicates that the candidate has achieved the qualification outcomes specified. For the NSC and the NC(V), prescribed levels of achievement are able to indicate that candidates have met the entry requirements for admission to various forms of study in further and higher education. Details are provided in the Minister of Education's policy on *Minimum Admission Requirements for Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's Degree Programmes requiring a National Senior Certificate (2005)*. The entry requirements to Higher Education for candidates who have achieved the NC(V) are contained in the Minister of Higher Education and Training's policy on *Minimum Admission Requirements for Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's Degree Programmes requiring a National Certificate Vocational (2009)*. The minimum admission policy for higher education programmes does not at present refer to the NASCA.

⁴ The N1 – N3 (Engineering Studies) has been granted an extension period before being phased out. (Gazettes 28677, 29 March 2006; and 33793, 23 November 2010 refer). A fuller discussion of the N3 certificate occurs as an endnote to this description of Level 4 qualifications.

In addition, the NC may provide access into certain other qualifications on the NQF. The NIC however, may not on its own provide access for learners to higher education, but may be supplemented through credit accumulation from the NSC or NC(V) or through the Further Certificate at NQF level 5.

Accumulated credits may also be presented for consideration of admission into a related qualification.

Endnote:

The National Certificate: N3: Engineering Studies

The N3 is a certificate which is offered in FET colleges. Learners are required to offer:

- a. A trade theory, or a technological instructional offering (Category A subjects)
- b. A mathematics category subject (Category B)
- c. A science category subject (Category C); and
- d. A drawing category subject (Category D).

Non-apprenticed learners are required to pass any *three* of the subjects offered.

The N3 programme is envisaged to be completed in a trimester of full-time tuition in a college.

The certificate thus allows learners access to subjects in three general subject categories—mathematics, science and drawing—which were originally contextualized to draw on the workplace experience of indentured apprentices. So, for example, learners enroll for a science module that was tailored to their needs: Industrial Chemistry, Building Science, Engineering Science. These four applied discipline-based subjects service almost 50 Category A subjects, while N3 Mathematics appears to be a generic prerequisite except for the Water Treatment programme. Similarly, 5 more-or-less generic drawing programmes service the 50 Category A subjects. The only subjects that are directly occupationally focused are the Category A subjects which form a quarter of the entire institutional offering.

The function of the college-based N courses is to provide a modest theoretical base for people training to become artisans. The reason for their institutional location is that the knowledge to be acquired is not the sort that can be readily acquired 'on the job'. The purpose of the N-courses is precisely to offer apprentices an opportunity to engage with the disciplinary discourses that underpin the work they do in order to provide a different sort of insight than that achieved in work. Decisions about *what* mathematics or *what* science needs to

be learned may be influenced by the nature of the work the apprentice-learner is acquiring, but it is determined by the discipline itself. It is the disciplinary focus that determines the nature of the learning, and its location in a formal institution.

In the past, each of these subjects, briefly taught in a college environment, would have been supplemented by 9 months of practical experience, which would have made these subjects something more akin the amount of learning associated with year-long qualifications. The N3 certificate has, however, once more been made available to people without their being enrolled as apprentices, which means the N-courses stand alone as rather modest, outdated offerings.

Umalusi standardizes the N1 – N3 on behalf of the Department of Higher Education and Training. It certifies N3 in order to allow for its combination with two languages in order to allow candidates to receive the National Senior Certificate (Colleges) (Report 191).

The end of the extension for the N1 – N3: Engineering studies requires consultation with Umalusi.