


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, 29 JULY 2021 and 15
February 2023

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STRATEGIC PLAN 2020/21 – 2024/25

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Accounting Officer Statement

SAQA, a section 3A public entity, has an unbroken record of unqualified audit opinions in its twenty-five-year history. The organisation continues to strive towards achieving a world-class National Qualifications Framework for South Africa under the leadership of the seventh Board. This period focused on implementing the NQF policies and consolidating SAQA's national and international footprint. SAQA also continued to show leadership 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.

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'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, proposed amendments, 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 current Board's term of office started on 1 January 2021, when SAQA was going through a financial crisis. Despite challenges faced by the organisation, SAQA is in the process of stabilising and continues to strive for excellence in service delivery. As the incoming CEO I take the opportunity to thank the SAQA Board for their steady guidance in tumultuous times and the SAQA staff for their continued commitment to SAQA and the NQF. I look forward to leading this dynamic team through a period of renewal, growth and impact.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nadia Starr', is positioned above the printed name.

Ms Nadia Starr




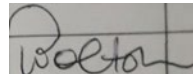
Accounting Officer



The South African Qualifications Authority

It is hereby certified that this Strategic Plan:

Official Sign-Off

- 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 2020/21 – 2024/25.

People Management Senior Manager	Registration & Recognition Senior Manager	Authentication Services Senior Manager (Acting)	Research Senior Manager	ICT Senior Manager	Legal, Governance, Risk and Compliance Senior Manager
					
Ms P Flanagan	Mr J Nel	Mr J Thomas	Dr H Bolton	Vacant	Vacant

Chief Operations Officer	Chief Finance Officer	Chief Executive Officer
		
Vacant	Mr Innocent Gumbochuma	Ms Nadia Starr

Approved by:

 Dr BE Nzimande, MP
 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 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 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 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)

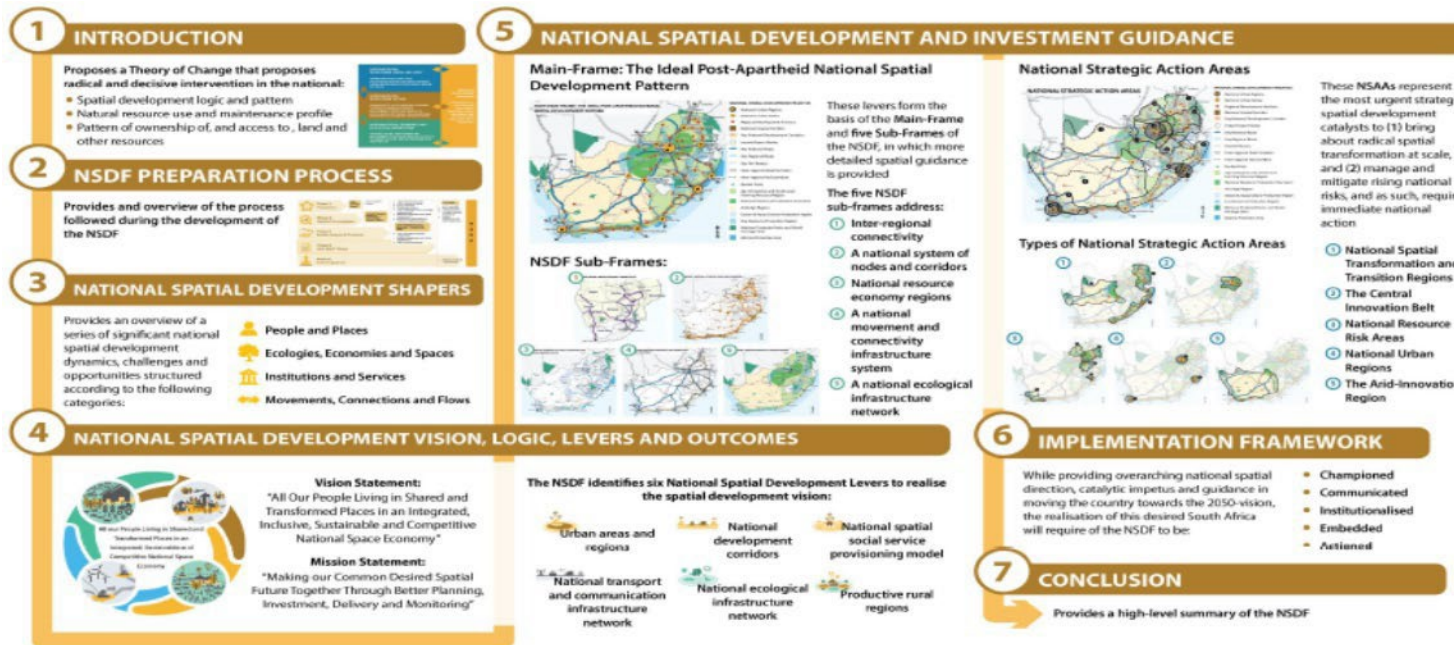
DHET's five-year MTSF refers to the following outcomes:

- 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



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. 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).

REVISED SAQA STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2020/21 – 2024/2025

		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 devastating reality of staff retrenchments.






Despite the difficulties faced with the conclusion of the section 189A retrenchment process, the implementation of SAQA's new structure was successfully executed. The restructuring was not without its challenges as SAQA is dealing with service delivery backlogs in its Authentication Services unit which is responsible for the verification of national and the evaluation of foreign qualifications. The backlogs were further exacerbated by an increase in the demand for SAQA's verification and evaluation services following the adjustment of the covid-19 alert levels and the lifting of the National State of Disaster. We anticipate these challenges to continue in the short term as Management works on completing the automation of its processes and bringing service delivery online. The automation project aligns with Cabinet's Revised MTSF which focuses on digital platforms that improve service delivery and eliminate blockages.

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 automation of SAQA's processes will assist in generating more revenue. 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 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

SAQA's new structure was implemented on 1 April 2021, and changed following monitoring and evaluation. The SAQA Board approved the structure in March 2022. After the evaluation of the implemented organisational structure, some inefficiencies in the delivery of SAQA's mandated functions were identified. To remedy this, the SAQA Board approved the amended structure in December 2022.

SAQA has 86 approved positions in its new structure accommodates eighty-six posts.

CEO plus support = 2

Programme 1: Administration: 12

Programme 1: Finance and Administration: 25

Programme 2 – 5: NQF Operations: 47

SAQA has a current staff complement of 76 members. The distribution of staff is as follows:

CEO plus support = 2

Programme 1: Administration: 12

Programme 1: Finance and Administration: 20

Programmes 2 – 5: NQF Operations: 42

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.

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 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 NQF Management Information System incorporating the NLRD (NQF MIS).

The NQF MIS 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 NQF MIS 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 NQF MIS. SAQA must establish the Registers in these five years. All the registers of the NQF MIS 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 Innovation, 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 Innovation, 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 Innovation, 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 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 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 Board approved the microstructure in March 2022. However, after the completion of monitoring and evaluation of the microstructure, gaps were identified. As a result, the Board approved the amended microstructure to allow SAQA to efficiently carry out its mandate in December 2022.

At this stage, it seems that the new structure accommodates eighty-six 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 and Communication Technology

The ICT Unit 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.

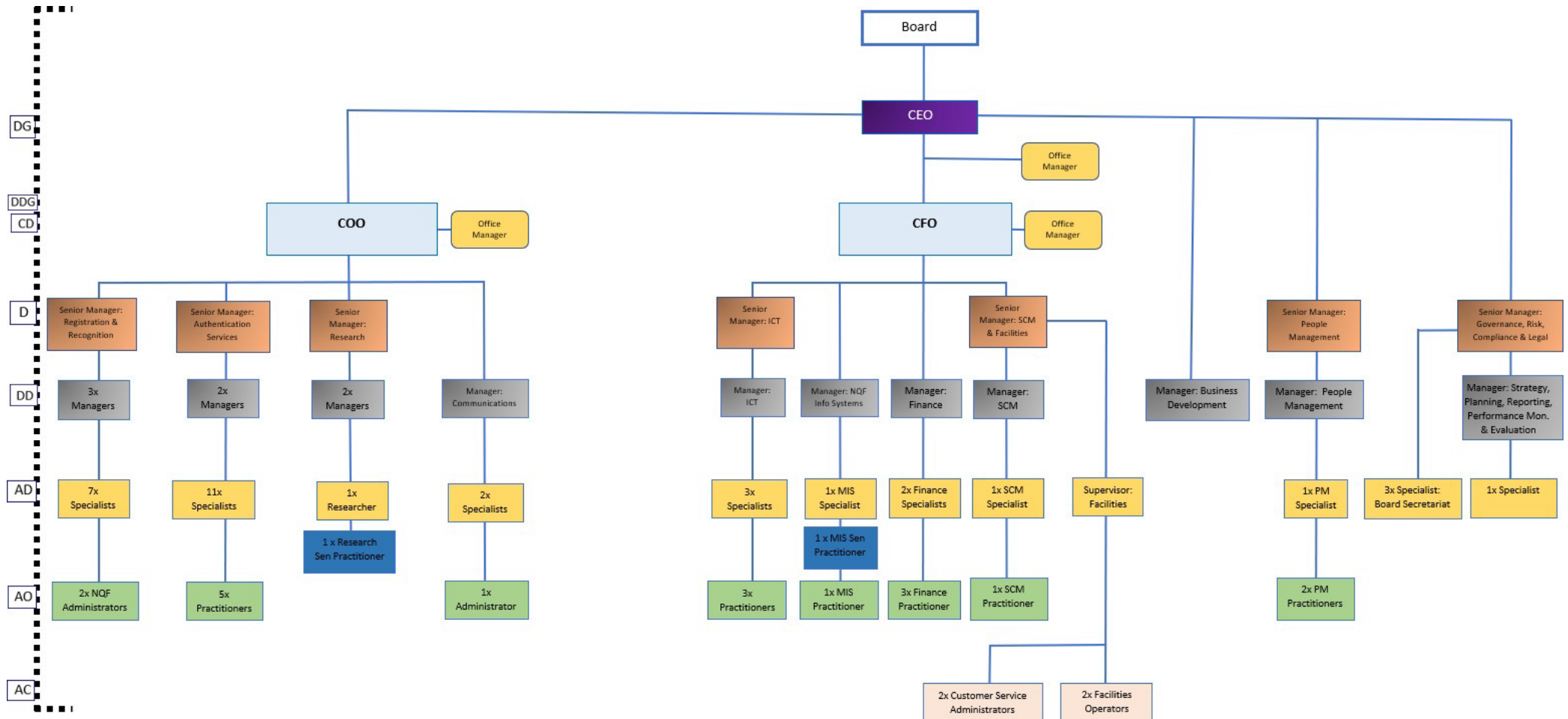
Finance and Administration

This Unit 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 amended microstructure. This microstructure was implemented in December 2022. The microstructure currently accommodates eighty-six 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	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.
	Amended NQF Policies are implemented	
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: HESI 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 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 Unit 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 Unit 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	Senior Manager: Research

Indicator Title	2. Amended NQF Policies are implemented
Definition	A dynamic NQF facilitates access to, and mobility and progression within education, training and career paths. Once SAQA has published its policies, it must also ensure that stakeholders implement these amended policies.
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	Senior Manager: Research

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	Senior Manager: Research

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	Chief Executive Officer

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: HESI.
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	Chief Executive Officer
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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	Manager: Strategy, Reporting & Performance Monitoring & Evaluation
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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 online 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	Manager: Communications

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 NQF MIS incorporating National Learners' Records Database (NLRD) is the largest and only official database of the NQF. Among other sets of information, the NQF MIS contains learner achievement data. The growth in the learner achievement data is a reflection of the NQF working for the people. The NQF MIS 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 NQF MIS within 30 days of it being in the public domain.</p> <p>The target is for the NQF MIS 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 NQF MIS
Method of calculation/assessment	A report is drawn annually on the total number of learner achievements on the NQF MIS and compared to the previous year's learner achievement data. The NQF MIS should load one million or more learner achievements each year.
Assumptions	QCs, professional bodies and information partners continue to load data on the NQF MIS, 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 NQF MIS reflects 24 million or more learners with achievements. The actual performance should exceed the targeted performance.
Indicator responsibility	Manager: NQF Info Systems

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 NQF MIS. 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	Senior Manager: Registration and Recognition (R&R)

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 Unit 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	Senior Manager: Registration and Recognition

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 EXCO 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	Senior Manager: People Management

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 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, People Management 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	Senior Manager: People Management

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 Unit 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	Senior Manager: Registration and Recognition

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 NQF MIS comprising NLRD. Approximately 75% of learner achievements verified against registered qualifications and part-qualifications currently appear on the NQF MIS comprising 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 NQF MIS comprising NLRD, secure and load it on the NQF MIS comprising NLRD. 90% of national learner achievements submitted for verification appear on the NQF MIS comprising 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	Senior Manager: Authentication Services

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	Manager: NQF Info Systems

SOUTH AFRICAN QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

Annual Performance Plan 2023/24

A blue decorative bar with a gradient, tapering from left to right.

Approved by the SAQA Board on
15 February 2023 (SAQA 012/23)

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ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN 2023/24

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SAQA Board Chairperson's Statement

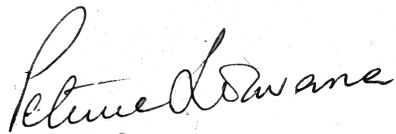


The term on the current Board commenced in January 2021 at a time when the world and indeed SAQA specifically, was going through crisis. The impact of the pandemic on SAQA's financial stability was significant and the journey to stability arduous and ongoing.

But 2021 also marked 25 years since SAQA's inception. The occasion prompted a deep reflection of the organisation's role in the education and training sector and the SAQA Board engaged critically with SAQA's current Strategic Plan. I also initiated a series of consultative workshops to reflect on SAQA's role, with NQF partners, key NQF stakeholders, as well as critics of the NQF. The workshops confirmed my belief that SAQA has become too inward-looking and needs to focus externally to best understand and meet the needs of the South African public. The Board and management will continue to apply its mind as we introduce short- and long-term initiatives now that will lead us to the development of SAQA's next five-year strategy for 2025/30.

SAQA faces challenges in one of its key service delivery units, unchecked, this will erode the public trust in the entity. Several measures have already been implemented to address the issues in the short to medium term and discussions are underway regarding ensuring sustained high quality service provision through automation and staff capacitation in the long term.

SAQA bid farewell to its outgoing CEO, Dr Julie Reddy, who retired at the end of November 2022. Dr Reddy steered the organisation through a time of arguably its greatest struggles and served with great integrity. Ms Nadia Starr was appointed as CEO from December 2022. We look forward to a period of renewal and excellence under her leadership.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Prof. P. Lolwana". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Prof. P. Lolwana

Accounting 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-sixth-year history. In addition to the challenges brought about by Covid-19, SAQA has been adjusting to the reality of being a smaller and more streamlined structure following an organisational redesign that was approved by the SAQA board in March 2022. The new structure catered for eighty-two permanent positions and as a result adversely impacted service delivery of the Authentication Services Unit which is responsible for the verification of national qualifications as well as the evaluation of foreign qualifications. In addition to short-term interventions, SAQA focused on designing and implementing a project and multi-year process to automate its internal processes and delivery systems, where possible, in order to bring about greater efficiencies in service delivery.

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. Upon the promulgation of the NQF Amendment Act, 2019 into law, SAQA will therefrom be empowered by the law to have 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.

Ms Nadia Starr

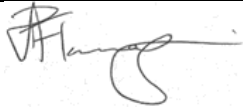

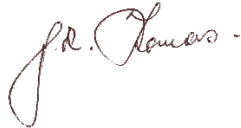





Accounting Officer

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 2023/24.

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	Mr Jeremy Thomas	Dr H Bolton	Vacant

Senior Manager: Legal, Governance, Risk, and Compliance	Chief Operations Officer	Chief Finance Officer	Chief Executive Officer
			
Vacant	Vacant	Mr. Innocent Gumbochuma	Ms. Nadia Starr

Approved by:

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

SOUTH AFRICAN QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY



Annual Performance Plan 2023/24

Part A: Our Mandate

1. Updates to the Relevant Legislative and Policy Mandates

1.1 National Qualifications Framework Act 67 of 2008

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, upon proclamation, 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 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, 2021 or 2022 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 TVET colleges to increase the participation rate to 25 percent;
- (iv) Increase the graduation rate of TVET colleges to 75 percent;
- (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:

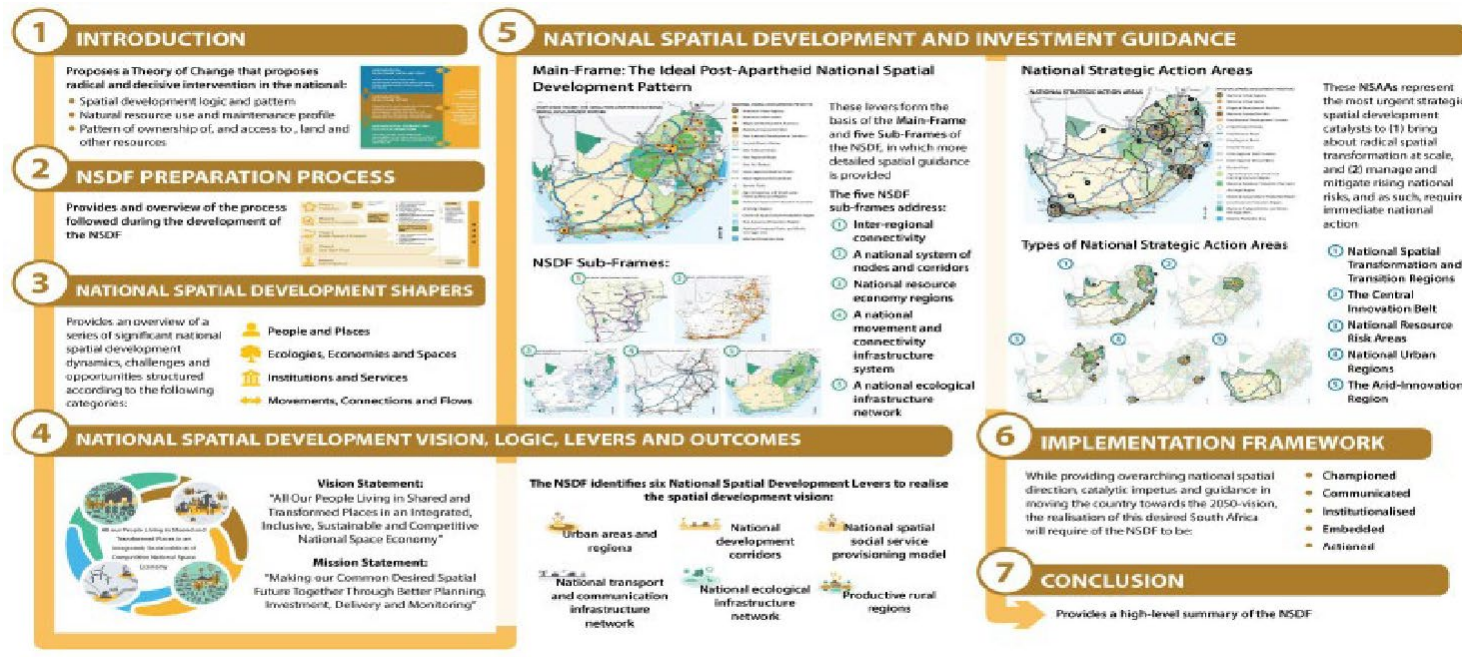
- Access;
- Quality;
- Responsiveness;
- Success; and
- Efficiency.

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

The National Spatial Development Framework was approved by Cabinet in March 2022. 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 QCs, 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 QCs to address all NQF-related issues, including, among other things, simplifying occupational qualification nomenclature and developing policies on NQF matters. The QCs 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. 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	To provide qualifications, programmes	3.1 A diverse range of programmes relevant to the aspirations and 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.

PSET system	and curricula that are responsive to the needs of the world of work, society and students	of the locality and responsive to community needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • 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 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. Although women are under-represented in decision-making and leadership positions across the public sector, in the 2022/23 financial year SAQA had three women in four of the top leadership positions.

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 is moving online, which will contribute 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 Skills Strategy: Support for the South African Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan

The education sector will play a pivotal role in ensuring the success of the ERRP. Accordingly, the aim of the Skills Strategy: Support for the South African Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP SS) is to support the ERRP by ensuring that the workforce has enough skills and knowledge to support the recovery and growth of the South African economy. Furthermore, the ERRP SS "...seeks to prioritise steps that will build the PSET system's capacity to be responsive to the needs of the economy in the longer term, while putting in place interventions that can more immediately meet the imperatives emerging from the ERRP" (SS ERRP; p ii).

The skills strategy identifies ten interventions that are grouped into two dimensions:

Dimension 1: Interventions focused on the provision of targeted Education & Training programmes

- Expand the provisioning of short skills programmes (both accredited and non-accredited) to respond to the skills gaps identified in this strategy;
- Enable the provisioning of short skills programmes (both accredited and non-accredited) that respond to the skills gaps identified in this strategy;
- Expand the provisioning of WBL opportunities to respond to the occupational shortages and skills gaps identified in this strategy;
- Increase enrolments in qualification-based programmes that respond to the occupational shortages identified in this strategy;
- Review and revise E&T qualifications, programmes and curricula to respond to the occupational shortages and skills gaps identified in this strategy; and
- Update the draft CSL and associated regulatory mechanisms.

Dimension 2: Interventions focused on enabling and supporting education-to-work transitions

- Strengthen entrepreneurship development programmes;
- Embed skills planning in economic planning processes and vice versa;
- Facilitate the use of the national PMN in the PSET system; and
- Strengthen the PSET system.

2.8 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 updated deliverables.

Recommendation	Outputs to achieve the objective	Activity to produce output	Deadline	Target
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 Minister: HESI 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 ¹ .	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 2023	Amendments to the NQF Act are considered 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.	Advice to the Minister clarifying different categories of qualifications in the occupational/ vocational space	SAQA-led QC discussion to clarify quality assurance linked to each type of qualification + criteria that determine which NQF Sub-Framework each	30 March 2023	Discussion and clarification re QA and Sub-Framework

¹ This recommendation will be updated in line with The Department of Higher Education and Training's position towards a National Qualifications Framework Coordination Mechanism (March 2022)

Recommendation	Outputs to achieve the objective	Activity to produce output	Deadline	Target
		qualification type is assigned		
SAQA after consultation with the QCs 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 March 2023	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 QCs for accreditation and to SAQA for registration on the NQF	Develop and implement an online workflow for qualifications and part-qualifications submitted to the QCs for accreditation and to SAQA for registration on the NQF	2023/24 financial year	Online workflow developed and implemented (subject to budget availability)

2.9 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 (2022);

- 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 2021/2022, SAQA amended and published its Policy and Criteria for the Registration of Qualifications and Part-Qualifications on the National Qualifications Framework.

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

Despite the difficulties faced with the conclusion of the section 189A retrenchment process, the implementation of SAQA's new structure was successfully executed. The restructuring was not without its challenges as SAQA is dealing with service delivery backlogs in its Authentication Services unit which is responsible for the verification of national and the evaluation of foreign qualifications. The backlogs were further exacerbated by an increase in the demand for SAQA's verification and evaluation services following the adjustment of the covid-19 alert levels and the lifting of the National State of Disaster. We anticipate these challenges to continue in the short term as Management works on completing the automation of its processes and bringing service delivery online. The automation project aligns 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 and three (3) on permanent contracts to address the backlogs in service delivery. This is a short-term solution while SAQA works on a long-term solution. The automation of SAQA's processes has commenced and authentication services functionality is prioritised. Once automated, SAQA will be able to successfully address the backlogs.

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 automation of SAQA's processes will assist in generating more revenue. 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
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 is 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 this strategic period. 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 DBE, SAQA and the QCs 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 QCs must consider the following actions. SAQA, DHET and the QCs 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) **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; and
- ✱ Prioritise quality qualifications, articulation (including flexible learning pathways, RPL and CAT), aligning NQF legislation and policy, and simplifying the NQF.

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**

Although SAQA receives 70% of its budget from voted Government funds, it 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 emanate 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-six-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.

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 securing. 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.

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 relationships 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.

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, 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.

SAQA's capacity to deliver on its mandate

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. 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 is currently outsourcing an automation project, with SAQA ICT staff managing the project which is aimed at making SAQA's service delivery units more efficient.

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-six 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. The Minister: HESI has given approval for the sale of the building and the sale is expected to be concluded in the 2023/24 financial year.

Over the previous two financial years, SAQA saw its revenue base especially from the evaluation of foreign qualifications and verifications shrinking, mainly due to the COVID 19 induced lockdown, which slowed down economic activities. This negatively affected SAQA and was forced to retrench about 100 employees and this also necessitated the restructuring of the organisation.

The DHET baseline allocation over the previous MTEF grew by 14% from 2020/21 financial year to 2021 /22 financial from R 73 million rand to R 83 million rand. There was a decline in allocation of -2% from R 83 million to R81 million in 2022/23 financial year. However, this decline was offset by a conditional Grant provided by the DHET for the SAQA automation project amounting to R 9.8 million rand. For the 2023/24 financial year, the baseline allocation has been increased by 10% to R 90 million rand. The baseline allocation represents 70% of the total revenue of SAQA.

For the financial stability of the organisation SAQA is improving its systems through the automation project to ensure that more revenue is collected from its paid for services. The organisation is looking for more revenue sources to increase its budget and is also changing its costing models for the various services to ensure that organisation can maximise revenue collection from services rendered e.g., the costing model for registration and recognition of professional bodies has changed for the 2023/24 financial year and will result in 324% increase in revenue from R 1.6 million to R 6.6 million. The organisation is expecting a steady increase in revenue for the outer years and projects an average increase of about 4% from all revenue sources over the MTEF.

Projected revenue for 2023/24 and projections for the MTEF outer years are depicted in Figure 1 below

Figure 1: Revenue Estimates per programme

Description	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Government Grant - DHET	81,164	89,734	94,242	98,417
Foreign Evaluation Fees	20,898	26,336	27,121	26,500
Verification Fees	10,449	14,918	14,408	15,500
Income from Professional bodies	1,566	6,637	6,711	6,990
Interest Received	1,254	3,810	3,869	3,871
Sundry Income	334	349	365	370
Total	115,665	141,784	146,716	151,648

The expenditure estimates as shown on figure 2 below were projected with the assumption that all income revenue would be realised in full.

The compensation budget is expected to steadily grow by an average of 4% over the MTEF. The organisation has undergone a restructuring exercise and all vacant positions are expected to be filled in the 2023/24 financial year. The compensation budget covers expected increases over the MTEF. The compensation budget is maintained at a ratio of 57% to total budget over the MTEF.

There is a 33% projected increase in goods and services in the 2023/24 financial year as there is an anticipated increase in ICT services as the organisation implements its new ICT strategy to ensure that the ICT environment is enhanced. There other two outer years will see inflation adjusted increases as the organisation matures into its new structure. Any unexpected increases in expenditure are covered by realized surpluses which will have to be approved by National Treasury.

In terms of capital expenditure there is a marked increase for the 2023/24 financial year as the automation project is expected to be completed. The other costs are normal tools of trade like laptops and other hardware that will be replaced during the MTEF. Although there is an expected sale of the SAQA office building and possible acquisition of a new building, these have not been factored in the budget estimates for both revenue and expenditure and the transaction once it materializes will be accounted for as an extra-ordinary event.

Figure 2: Expenditure Estimates per Programme

Programmes	2022/23			Projections		
	Original budget	Adjustment	Adjusted budget	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000
1. Administration	53,601	-	53,601	70,727	72,204	74,776
2. Registration and Recognition	11,021	-	11,021	11,510	12,031	12,281
3. ICT and NQF MIS	21,423	-	21,423	23,131	24,489	26,283
4. Authentication and Ratification Services	24,389	-	24,389	26,641	27,628	27,730
5. Research	5,232	-	5,232	9,775	10,364	10,578
TOTAL	115,666	-	115,666	141,784	146,716	151,648

Figure 3: Expenditure classification per classification

Classification	2022/23			Projections		
	Original budget	Adjustment	Adjusted budget	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000
Compensation	78,792	-	78,792	81,018	83,938	86,108
Goods and services	36,873	-	36,873	48,026	49,920	53,168
Capital expenditure	3,000	-	3,000	12,740	12,858	12,372
TOTAL	115,665	-	115,665	141,784	146,716	151,648

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 (1) Office of the CEO, which includes Business Development and Stakeholders; Governance, Risk, Legal & Compliance; Strategy, Reporting & Performance M&E, and People Management; (2) Finance and Administration and (3) Communications, which falls under the NQF Operations Division. The purpose of Programme 1 is to support the operations of SAQA. Together these activities ensure SAQA financial sustainability; provide 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		
			2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Visionary and influential leadership that drives a clear,	National and international promotion of the SA NQF	1. Prominent national, regional and global standing		SAQA participated in the UNESCO Flexible Learning	Achieved Identified and implemented two initiatives to promote the SA NQF	Identified and implemented two initiatives to promote the SA NQF	Implement two initiatives to promote the SA NQF	Implement two initiatives to promote the SA NQF	

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
evidence-based NQF Agenda				Pathways project					
	Sharing of national and international trends and best practices with stakeholders	2. Informed stakeholders		<p>Exceeded target</p> <p>Developed a paper "Case Study of Flexible Learning Pathways in South Africa", for inclusion in UNESCO's book on flexible learning pathways</p> <p>The paper is entitled " National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Policy Framework for Flexible Learning Pathways (FLPs)</p>	Achieved Identified and implemented two initiatives to share national and international best practice with stakeholders	Identified and implemented three initiatives to share national and international best practice with NQF stakeholders in South Africa	Identify and implement one initiative to promote best practice.	Identify and implement one initiative to promote best practice .	

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
					in Post-School Education and Training (PSET) in South Africa” Produced a paper on foreign school leaving qualifications in SADC and distributed it to the NQF Family through the CEO Committee SAQA hosted four webinars to inform stakeholders about the NQF				

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
	Implementation of the Addis Convention	3. Recognition of international studies		Achieved Developed a plan for SAQA to implement the Addis Convention		Implemented SAQA's Implementation Plan for the Addis Convention	Rollout a second phase of the Refugee Pilot project		
Visionary and influential leadership that drives a clear, evidence-based NQF Agenda	Strengthened System of Collaboration and NQF structures	4. An effective System of Collaboration and NQF structures	Implemented the System of Collaboration to guide mutual relations between SAQA and the QCs and reported on its effectiveness	Assessed the effectiveness of the System of Collaboration Produced a report and sent the Board-approved report to the Minister: HESI	Achieved Reported on the effectiveness of the System of Collaboration	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	
	Implementation of the closure of transitional arrangements from the SAQA Act to the NQF Act	5. Compliance with the requirements of the NQF Act		Completed ahead of schedule In addition to the progress report, SAQA provided					

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
				advice to the Minister on ending the transitional arrangements					
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	6. Evidence of advice provided to the Executive Authority	Provided advice to the Minister: HET on all requested matters, or as and when deemed necessary	SAQA advised the Minister: HESI on the following: *Determination of the Sub-Frameworks. * Ending the transitional arrangements from the SAQA Act to the NQF Act; and *The Matriculation Board function The Board	Achieved The SAQA Board did not have any new advice for the Minister, but the Board followed up on the advice sent to the Minister: HESI in December 2020	Advised 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		
			2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
				approved advice to the Minister to publish data regulations for 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					
A competent and capable team, dedicated and resourced to further develop and	Re-design SAQA's structure to better suit delivery of its strategy	7. SAQA's structure is aligned to deliver on its strategy		Reviewed and re-designed the organisational structure After a series of consultations, the 6 th Board approved the	Achieved Implemented the new structure Completed two independent monitoring & evaluation exercises and used the results			Review and revise the structure in line with automation.	Implement and monitor the revised structure.

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
maintain the NQF				proposed macro-structure and the 7 th Board approved the micro-structure for implementation	to make adjustments to the structure The SAQA Board approved the current structure				
	Staff capacity building programmes	8. Implemented Staff capacity building programmes	All SAQA staff members participated in at least one learning and development activity	Every staff member participated in at least two learning interventions Recorded activities for 22 learning interventions SAQA sponsored two (2) employees to study towards their formal qualifications	Achieved Each staff member attended at least two learning interventions during the financial year	Every staff member had at least two learning interventions during year	Every staff member has at least two learning interventions per year	Every staff member has at least two learning interventions per year	

Indicators, Annual and Quarterly Targets

<i>Output Indicator</i>	<i>Annual target</i>	<i>Quarterly targets</i>			
		<i>1st</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
1.Prominent national, regional and global standing	Implement two initiatives to promote the SA NQF		Implement the first initiative		Implement the second initiative
2. Informed stakeholders	Identify and implement one initiative to promote best practices.		Identify opportunity and relevant stakeholders in SADC	Engage and consult with stakeholders in SADC.	Report on agreed recommendations
3. Recognition of international studies	Rollout a second phase of the Refugee Pilot project in SADC				Identify a regional coordination structure (strategic partners, funding partners, regional governance and implementation partners).
4. 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.
6. 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.

<i>Output Indicator</i>	<i>Annual target</i>	<i>Quarterly targets</i>			
		<i>1st</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
8. Implemented Staff capacity building programmes.	Every staff member has at least two learning interventions per year	Record learning and development activities for the first quarter.	Record learning and development activities for the second quarter.	Record learning and development activities for the third quarter.	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 Business Development sub-unit is responsible for working with international partners on matters concerning qualifications frameworks and sharing best practice with stakeholders.

Changes to MTEF Targets:

Target 1: SAQA increased the number of initiatives to promote the SA NQF from two to three in the 2024/25 financial year in response to over-performance in this target over two years.

Target 2: SAQA Changed the 2023/24, 2024/25 targets with the aim of having more streamlined and targeted stakeholder engagements that will be used to review learnings and identify ways to scale up. This will result in more coordinated and deeper impact.

Target 3: SAQA changes the targets for 2023/24 and 24/25 to reflect the progress made towards achieving this target.

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.

The Office of the CEO is also 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 Office of the CEO is also responsible for governance, risk, compliance and legal.

Changes to MTEF Targets:

Target 7: SAQA added “review and revise the structure in line with automation” in the 2024/25

The CEO’s Office contributes to two 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		
			2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Competent and capable team, dedicated and resourced to further develop	Alternative revenue streams to support the work of SAQA	9. Sufficient revenue to support SAQA’s work		Developed a strategy to secure alternative funding The Board approved the	Achieved Implemented a plan for alternate funding	Continued to implement the plan to generate funds through alternate revenue streams	Review and continue to implement strategies to generate funds through alternate revenue streams	Review and continue to implement strategies to generate funds through alternate revenue streams	Review and continue to implement strategies to generate funds through alternate

<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Output</i>	<i>Output Indicator</i>	<i>Audited / Actual Performance</i>			<i>Estimated Performance</i>	<i>Medium-Term Targets</i>		
			<i>2019/20</i>	<i>2020/21</i>	<i>2021/22</i>	<i>2022/23</i>	<i>2023/24</i>	<i>2024/25</i>	<i>2025/26</i>
and maintain the NQF				proposed strategy					revenue streams
	Good governance in financial matters	10. Unqualified Audit opinion					Unqualified Audit opinion	Unqualified Audit opinion	Unqualified Audit opinion

Indicators, Annual and Quarterly Targets

<i>Output Indicator</i>	<i>Annual target</i>	<i>Quarterly targets</i>			
		<i>1st</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
9. Sufficient revenue to support SAQA's work	Review and continue to implement strategies to generate funds through alternate revenue streams	Implement strategies	Implement strategies	Implement strategies	Report on implementation and financial gains through alternate revenue streams
10. Unqualified Audit opinion	Unqualified audit opinion	Good financial management practices implemented	Good financial management practices implemented	Good financial management practices implemented	Good financial management practices implemented

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 Communications

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Visionary and influential leadership that drives a clear, evidence-based NQF Agenda	The NQF explained simply (Simplification)	11. Stakeholders access simplified information about the NQF	Recorded 4 200 000 people interacting with content on SAQA/NQF digital platforms	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	Achieved Implemented four online campaigns aimed at informing the public about the NQF 1 st campaign: targeted the youth during Youth month 2 nd campaign: was about SAQA's 25th birthday #SAQA25	Implemented 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

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
					<p>3rd campaign: SAQA Annual Integrated Report (AIR) social media engagement campaign</p> <p>4th campaign: Isikolosiphumile – a TikTok video about registered qualifications in both English and siSwati</p> <p>We also hosted a stakeholder webinar on the NQF and 4IR</p> <p>Members of the public left 2 242 471 impressions on SAQA's website and social media platforms</p>				

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
	A growing number of learner achievements on the NLRD	12. An increasing number of learners with achievements recorded on the NLRD		<p>The NLRD contains 17 918 214 qualification achievements, 1 191 266 professional designation awards and 113 886 076 part-qualification achievements</p> <p>The total number of unique learners' records is 20 555 731</p>	Achieved The NQF MIS incorporating the NLRD contained 21 365 389 learners with achievements	Ensured that the NQF MIS incorporating the NLRD contained 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	

Indicators, Annual and Quarterly Targets

Output Indicator	Annual target	Quarterly targets			
		1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
11. Stakeholders access simplified	Implement four online campaigns aimed at	Implement the first campaign.	Implement the second campaign.	Implement the third campaign.	Implement the fourth campaign.

Output Indicator	Annual target	Quarterly targets			
		1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
information about the NQF	informing the public about the NQF.				
12. An increasing number of learner achievements recorded on the NLRD.	Ensure that the NQF MIS incorporating the NLRD contains 23 000 000 learners with achievements.	Record the number of learners and achievements loaded for the first Quarter.	Record the number of learners and achievements loaded for the second quarter.	Record the number of learners and achievements loaded for the third quarter.	Record the number of learners and achievements loaded for the fourth quarter.

PROGRAMME RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS

Table: Budget Allocation for Programme 1

Programmes	2022/23			Projections		
				2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
	Original budget	Adjustment	Adjusted budget			
	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000
Compensation	29,850	-	29,850	29,643	30,196	30,746
Goods and services	23,751	-	23,751	28,344	29,150	31,658
Capital expenditure	3,000	-	3,000	12,740	12,858	12,372
TOTAL	53,601	-	56,601	70,727	72,204	74,776

Contribution of resources towards the achievement of outputs

The resources allocated to Programme 1 (Administration) will be utilised mainly to fund the day-to-day general administrative expenditure for centralised services such as ICT services, housekeeping, Communications, facilities management, legal costs ,professional services . Included in the budget for Programme 1 is the compensation expenditure for the support services staff (CEO's Office, Legal, Finance and SCM, People management and Governance)

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		
			2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Stakeholders and role-players who are aligned to deliver on the NQF.	Improved turnaround times for the registration of qualifications	13. Streamlined processes and improved		Registered all qualifications recommended by QCs that met all	Not Achieved Did not register all qualifications recommended	Registered qualifications recommended by QCs that meet all SAQA's criteria within	Register qualifications recommended by QCs that meet all SAQA's criteria within	Register qualifications recommended by QCs that meet all SAQA's criteria within three	Register qualifications recommended by QCs that meet all SAQA's

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
	and part-qualifications (Simplified NQF).	turnaround times.		SAQA's criteria, within four months of submission	by QCs that met all SAQA's criteria, within four months of submission.	three months of submission.	three months of submission.	months of submission.	criteria within three months of submission.
				Processed 287 qualifications for registration on the NQF	Registered 253 qualifications on the NQF: Registered in 1 month: 9.0% (23) Registered in 2 months: 41% (104) Registered in 3 months: 36% (92) Registered in 4 months: 12% (31) Non-achieved 1% (3)				
				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		
			2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
	Reduced proliferation of qualifications registered on the NQF (Simplified NQF)	14. Increased number of national qualifications and part-qualifications registered on the NQF				Produced a concept paper on the registration of national qualifications on the NQF in consultation with the 3 QCs and DHET	Finalise concept paper and commence review of Policy and Criteria for the Registration of Qualifications and Part-Qualifications on the NQF if necessary	Publish the updated 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)	15. Increased number of qualifications that articulate across Sub-Frameworks		Identified qualifications with no articulation pathways and requested missing information from the QCs Updated the records of qualifications on the NLRD where QCs	Achieved All information provided by the QCs have been updated on the system Tracking grid on qualifications with outstanding pathways is up to date SAQA did not receive any further				

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
				had provided information	<p>updates during the year</p> <p>The CHE requested SAQA to extend the registration date of 7 000 qualifications to allow for the revision of all CHE qualifications, which includes the 6 outstanding qualifications on the Tracking Grid</p> <p>The QCTO indicated that it is in the process of reviewing all qualifications to be aligned to the revised</p>				

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
					OQSF Policy as well as the Ministerial Determination of 24 December 2020, which includes all outstanding qualifications on the Tracking Grid				
	A refined understanding of a professional body and its value-add in the NQF landscape (Simplified NQF)	16. 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	Achieved The SAQA Board approved the SAQA Professional Body Model derived from the findings of the research report This model will provide a foundation for working with statutory and	Used the research findings to amend the Policy and Criteria for Recognising a Professional Body and Registering a Professional Designation if required			

<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Output</i>	<i>Output Indicator</i>	<i>Audited / Actual Performance</i>			<i>Estimated Performance</i>	<i>Medium-Term Targets</i>		
			<i>2019/20</i>	<i>2020/21</i>	<i>2021/22</i>	<i>2022/23</i>	<i>2023/24</i>	<i>2024/25</i>	<i>2025/26</i>
					non- statutory professional bodies				
		17. Naming convention for professional designations				Present the research report to the Professional Body Committee for a recommendation			

Indicators, Annual and Quarterly Targets

<i>Output Indicator</i>	<i>Annual target</i>	<i>Quarterly targets</i>			
		<i>1st</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
13. 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.
14. Increased number of national qualifications and part-qualifications registered on the NQF	Finalise concept paper and amend Policy and Criteria for the Registration of Qualifications and	Identify the number of proliferated qualifications on the SAQA MIS and inform the QCs about the number of proliferated	Workshop QCs on recommending programmes and specialisations against national qualifications	Update the SAQA MIS with national qualifications, programmes and specialisations	Present the concept paper and amend Policy and Criteria for the Registration of Qualifications and

<i>Output Indicator</i>	<i>Annual target</i>	<i>Quarterly targets</i>			
		<i>1st</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
	Part-Qualifications on the NQF	qualifications and SAQA's intention to deregister all proliferated qualifications			Part-Qualifications on the NQF

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 QCs to recommend national qualifications instead of provider qualifications; and
- Automate and streamline processes for efficient, professional body recognition and monitoring.

Changes to MTEF Targets:

Target 14: SAQA changed the target for 2024/25 to publish the policy instead of implementing the Policy and Criteria for the Registration of Qualifications to allow for a longer consultation period.

PROGRAMME RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS

Table: Budget Allocation for Programme 2

Programmes	2022/23			Projections		
				2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
	Original budget	Adjustment	Adjusted budget			
	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000
Compensation	10,261	-	10,261	10,710	11,205	11,455
Goods and services	760	-	760	800	826	826
TOTAL	11,021	-	11,021	11,510	12,031	12,281

Contribution of resources towards the achievement of outputs

This programme budget is mainly for compensation of employees as the programme is an income generating unit. The goods and services is mainly workshops, consumables as well as travel and subsistence.

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		
			2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Stakeholders and role-players who are aligned	3 NLRD Registers	18. Efficient electronic processes across SAQA		Developed a separate register for	Achieved Completed the development of the electronic				

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
to deliver on the NQF				Professional designations Developed registers in-house for the Misrepresented Qualifications and Fraudulent Qualifications, but it was not fit for purpose	Registers for misrepresented qualifications and fraudulent qualifications as part of the NQF MIS incorporating the NLRD				
	A workflow system for the evaluation of foreign qualifications			This project did not proceed due to the lack of funding		Developed an end-to-end electronic system for the evaluation of foreign qualifications	Test and implement an end-to-end electronic system for the evaluation of foreign qualifications	Implement an end-to-end electronic system for the authentication services	
	A workflow tracking system for qualifications and part-qualifications	19. Integrated Tracking System for qualifications		Conceptualised a workflow tracking system for qualifications and part-			Test and pilot a workflow tracking system for qualifications	Implement a workflow tracking system for qualifications	

<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Output</i>	<i>Output Indicator</i>	<i>Audited / Actual Performance</i>			<i>Estimated Performance</i>	<i>Medium-Term Targets</i>		
			<i>2019/20</i>	<i>2020/21</i>	<i>2021/22</i>	<i>2022/23</i>	<i>2023/24</i>	<i>2024/25</i>	<i>2025/26</i>
		and part-qualifications		qualifications in collaboration with the CHE The development of the workflow is in progress			and part-qualifications		

Indicators, Annual and Quarterly Targets

<i>Output Indicator</i>	<i>Annual target</i>	<i>Quarterly targets</i>			
		<i>1st</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
18. Efficient electronic processes across SAQA	Test and pilot an end-to-end electronic system for the evaluation of foreign qualifications	Test the functionality of the system.	Perform the User Acceptance Testing.	Conduct end-user training	Pilot the implementation of the system.
19. Integrated Tracking System for qualifications and part-qualifications	Test and pilot a workflow tracking system for qualifications	Test the functionality of the system.	Perform User Acceptance Testing.	Conduct end-user training	Pilot the implementation of the system.

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

Outcomes, Outputs, Performance Indicators and Targets

<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Output</i>	<i>Output Indicator</i>	<i>Audited / Actual Performance</i>			<i>Estimated Performance</i>	<i>Medium-Term Targets</i>		
			<i>2019/20</i>	<i>2020/21</i>	<i>2021/22</i>	<i>2022/23</i>	<i>2023/24</i>	<i>2024/25</i>	<i>2025/26</i>
Well-articulated quality-assured-qualifications and relevant professional designations that instil trust and meet the needs of the people	NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD) information for informed decision making	20. Access and use of MIS (comprising the NLRD) information		Revamped the website, making it easier to gain access to the NLRD databases, but did not revamp the databases			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	

<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Output</i>	<i>Output Indicator</i>	<i>Audited / Actual Performance</i>			<i>Estimated Performance</i>	<i>Medium-Term Targets</i>		
			<i>2019/20</i>	<i>2020/21</i>	<i>2021/22</i>	<i>2022/23</i>	<i>2023/24</i>	<i>2024/25</i>	<i>2025/26</i>
Stakeholders and role-players who are	Legacy learner achievement records on NQF	21. Percentage completeness of legacy learner					Identify institutions with legacy data and organise the procuring of	Report on the progress made with obtaining	

aligned to deliver on the NQF	MIS (comprising the NLRD)	achievement data on NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)					legacy achievement data	legacy qualifications	
						Developed 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)	22. Learner achievement records loaded by QCs				Ensured 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)	23. Percentage completeness of learner achievement data from		All recognised professional bodies loaded professional designation achievements that	Not achieved 96 of the 100 recognised professional bodies loaded	All recognised professional bodies loaded professional designation achievements that	Recognised professional bodies load professional designation achievements	Recognised professional bodies load professional	

		professional bodies on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)		meet the requirements, on the NLRD	data during the 2021/22 financial year	meet the requirements, on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)	that meet the requirements, on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)	designation achievements that meet the requirements, on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)	
	Registers of Misrepresented and Fraudulent Qualifications	24. Updated Registers of Misrepresented and Fraudulent Qualifications		Developed the Policy on the Misrepresentation of Qualifications the Board approved the Policy in December 2020		Published the Policy on the Misrepresentation of Qualifications if the President proclaims the NQF		Implement the Policy on the Misrepresentation of Qualifications	Implement the Policy on the Misrepresentation of Qualifications
			Maintained and reported bi-monthly on the Register of Misrepresented Qualifications to the Minister	Updated the List of Misrepresented Qualifications	Achieved Target Updated the List of Misrepresented qualifications	Updated the Register of Misrepresented Qualifications	Update the Register of Misrepresented Qualifications	Update the Register of Misrepresented Qualifications	Update the Register of Misrepresented Qualifications

			No update was required as the President did not proclaim the NQF Amendment Act establishing the Register of Fraudulent Qualifications yet	Could not be achieved					
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Indicators, Annual and Quarterly Targets

Output Indicator	Annual target	Quarterly targets			
		1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
20. Access and use of MIS (comprising the NLRD) information	Make the public information on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD) easily accessible and usable by all stakeholders	Send the updated information on the NLRD to the website administrator	Send the updated information on the NLRD to the website administrator	Send the updated information on the NLRD to the website administrator	Send the updated information on the NLRD to the website administrator
21. Percentage completeness of legacy learner achievement data on NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)	Identify institutions with legacy data and propose arrangements to get legacy achievement data	Review the draft data gap report (2018) and update	Identify institutions or periods with significant data gaps (not missing at random)	Identify institutions or periods with significant data gaps (not missing at random)	Update data gap report with institutions and data gap periods

Output Indicator	Annual target	Quarterly targets			
		1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
	Seek funding for the digitisation of legacy achievement records	Distribute funding proposal		Distribute funding proposal	
22. Learner achievement records loaded by QCs	Ensure that QCs load learner achievement records on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)	Manage the quarterly upload of learner achievement	Manage the quarterly upload of learner achievement	Manage the quarterly upload of learner achievement	Manage the quarterly upload of learner achievement
23. Percentage completeness of learner achievement data from professional bodies on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)	Recognised professional bodies load professional designation achievements that meet the requirements, on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)	Manage the quarterly upload of professional body data	Manage the quarterly upload of professional body data	Manage the quarterly upload of professional body data	Manage the quarterly upload of professional body data
24. 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.

Changes to MTEF Targets:

Target 18 and 19: SAQA's automation has been prioritized for the service delivery units which has resulted in then implementation of automation for the end-to-end electronic system being brought forward. In addition, a workflow system for qualifications and part-qualifications was added for the 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years.

RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS

Table: Budget Allocation for Programme 3

Classification	2022/23			Projections		
				2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
	Original budget	Adjustment	Adjusted budget			
	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000
Compensation	12,949	-	12,949	12,282	12,725	13,779
Goods and services	8,474	-	8,474	10,849	11,764	12,504
TOTAL	21,423	-	21,423	23,131	24,489	26,283

Contribution of resources towards the achievement of outputs

The programme oversees all the ICT infrastructure of the organisation and is responsible for spearheading SAQA into the 4th industrial revolution. The major costs are software licence fees, IT security, connectivity as well as applications development. This Programme is strategic to the organisation and is central to the successful completion of the SAQA automation project. The programme is also responsible for the maintenance and enhancement of all SAQA databases the major one being the NLRD and costs of maintenance of these databases are also significant.

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		
			2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
A dynamic NQF that is responsive, adapts to, and support the changing needs of life-long learning	A foreign qualifications evaluation and advisory service that meets changing learner and	25. Articulation from foreign systems into South Africa takes place			Not achieved Did not complete all compliant applications received for the evaluation of foreign qualifications	Completed all compliant applications received for the evaluation of foreign qualifications within 3 months	Request from foreign partners, Verification confirmations for all compliant applications received for	Send Verification request for all compliant applications received for the evaluation of foreign qualifications	Send Verification request for all compliant applications received for the evaluation of foreign

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
	worker needs				within 3 months		the evaluation of foreign qualifications within 60 Working days	within 60 Working days	qualifications within 60 Working days
		26. The evaluation criteria align with the current legislative and policy context		Considered the implications of the NQF Amendment Act and reviewed the policy and criteria for evaluating foreign qualifications pending the proclamation of the Amendment Act					
Well-articulated quality-assured-qualifications	A trusted qualification verification process	27. A Verification service used by employers,		Did not complete all applications received for the verification	Not achieved Did not complete all compliant verification	Completed all compliant verification requests received for	Complete all compliant verification requests received for	Complete all compliant verification requests received for	Complete all compliant verification requests received for

<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Output</i>	<i>Output Indicator</i>	<i>Audited / Actual Performance</i>			<i>Estimated Performance</i>	<i>Medium-Term Targets</i>		
			<i>2019/20</i>	<i>2020/21</i>	<i>2021/22</i>	<i>2022/23</i>	<i>2023/24</i>	<i>2024/25</i>	<i>2025/26</i>
and relevant professional designations that instil trust and meet the needs of the people		institutions and individuals		of national qualifications within 20 working days	requests received for the verification of South African qualifications within 25 working days	the verification of South African qualifications within 25 working days	the verification of South African qualifications within 25 working days	the verification of South African qualifications within 25 working days	the verification of South African qualifications within 25 working days

Indicators, Annual and Quarterly Targets

<i>Output Indicator</i>	<i>Annual target</i>	<i>Quarterly targets</i>			
		<i>1st</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
Articulation from foreign systems into South Africa takes place	Send verification requests for all compliant applications received for the evaluation of foreign qualifications within 60 Working days	Send Verification request for all compliant applications received for the evaluation of foreign qualifications within 60 Working days	Send Verification request for all compliant applications received for the evaluation of foreign qualifications within 60 Working days	Send Verification request for all compliant applications received for the evaluation of foreign qualifications within 60 Working days	Send Verification request for all compliant applications received for the evaluation of foreign qualifications within 60 Working days
A Verification service used by employers, institutions and individuals	Complete all compliant verification requests received for the verification of South	Complete all compliant verification requests received for the verification of South	Complete all compliant verification requests received for the verification of South	Complete all compliant verification requests received for the verification of South	Complete all compliant verification requests received for the verification of South

<i>Output Indicator</i>	<i>Annual target</i>	<i>Quarterly targets</i>			
		<i>1st</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
	African qualifications within 25 working days	African qualifications within 25 working days	African qualifications within 25 working days	African qualifications within 25 working days	African qualifications within 25 working days

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.

Changes to MTEF Targets:

Target 25: The turn-around times have been reduced in the 2023/24 and 24/25 financial years to reflect the anticipated effects of the implementation of the automation project.

RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS

Table: Budget Allocation for Programme 4

Classification	2022/23			Projections		
				2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
	Original budget	Adjustment	Adjusted budget			
	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000
Compensation	20,832	-	20,832	22,848	23,749	23,851
Goods and services	3,557	-	3,557	3,793	3,879	3,879
TOTAL	24,389	-	24,389	26,641	27,628	27,730

Contribution of resources towards the achievement of outputs

This programme is a key contributor to the revenue generation of SAQA through the national verification and the foreign qualifications evaluations. This contributes about 20% of the total revenue of the organisation. Major expenditure items are mainly compensation of employees and consultants as well as general consumables.

8.5 Programme 5: Research

Outcomes, Outputs, Performance Indicators and Targets

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
A dynamic NQF that is responsive, adapts to, and supports the changing needs of life-	Reviewed NQF Policies and recommendations for Policy amendments	28. Number of policies reviewed	Reviewed 2 NQF policies	Reviewed and amended the CAT Policy Reviewed and amended the	Achieved Reviewed the Policy and Criteria for Registering Qualifications	Reviewed one NQF policy	Review one NQF policy	Review one NQF policy	

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
long learning				Policy & Criteria for Recognising a Professional Body and Registering a Professional Designation The Board approved both policies	and Part-Qualifications on the NQF The approved Policy is available on SAQA's website				
	Implemented Policies	29. The implementation of amended Policies is monitored					Host one SAQA-QC engagement towards reporting on the implementation of one revised policy		
	Research on the implementation of the NQF	30. Findings and recommendations of NQF-related research	Produced a progress report on the 2021	Produced a progress report on the	Achieved Produced the draft 2021	Produce, disseminate to, and engage stakeholders around the			Conceptualize the 2028 NQF Impact Study

Outcome	Output	Output Indicator	Audited / Actual Performance			Estimated Performance	Medium-Term Targets		
			2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
			NQF Impact Study	2021 NQF Impact Study	NQF Impact Study Report	final 2021 NQF Impact Study Report			
			Provided a detailed report on progress made with the existing partnership	Compiled specifications for a new research and development partnership		Provided 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 needs of the people	Coordinated Articulation, CAT and RPL initiatives	31. Record of Articulation initiatives	Reported on SAQA's contribution to the Action Plan for Articulation	Provided the Minister with a report on progress made by SAQA and the QCs in implementing the Articulation Policy After Board approval	Achieved Collated report on the progress made on implementing the Articulation Policy for 2021/22 The Board approved the report for	Provided the Minister with a report on progress made by SAQA and the QCs in implementing the Articulation Policy			

<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Output</i>	<i>Output Indicator</i>	<i>Audited / Actual Performance</i>			<i>Estimated Performance</i>	<i>Medium-Term Targets</i>		
			<i>2019/20</i>	<i>2020/21</i>	<i>2021/22</i>	<i>2022/23</i>	<i>2023/24</i>	<i>2024/25</i>	<i>2025/26</i>
					submission to the Minister				

Indicators, Annual and Quarterly Targets

<i>Output Indicator</i>	<i>Annual target</i>	<i>Quarterly targets</i>			
		<i>1st</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
28. Number of policies reviewed	Review one NQF policy				One revised policy approved by the Board
29. The implementation of amended Policies is monitored	Host one SAQA-QC engagement towards reporting on the implementation of one revised policy			Host one SAQA-QC engagement towards reporting on the implementation of one revised policy	

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.

Changes to MTEF Targets:

Target 29: The 2023/24 target was changed to have more targeted meaningful engagement around implemented policies with the NQF family.

Target 31: The target for 2023/24 was removed because it was deemed to be too operational. The report will continue to be submitted to the Minister as required.

Programme Recourse Considerations

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

Classification	2022/23			Projections		
	Original budget	Adjustment	Adjusted budget	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000
Compensation	4,900	-	4,900	5,535	6,063	6,277
Goods and services	332	-	332	4,240	4,301	4,301
TOTAL	5,232	-	5,232	9,775	10,364	10,578

Contribution of resources towards the achievement of outputs

This Programme has seen a significant increase in the budget allocation as more research projects are planned to ensure that SAQA policy proposals have the desired impact. The major costs driving this programme is compensation and research consultants as well as printing costs for publications.

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. ⌚ The NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD) does not contain all learner achievement records. ⌚ Qualifications are no longer recognised internationally. 	<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 (comprising the NLRD) and that old learner

Outcome	Key Risk	Risk Mitigation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌚ The NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD) contains "dirty data." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> achievement records are digitised and loaded on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD). ✳ 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 three 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 strategic engagements led by CEO Office or other Executives presentations, workshops and conferences. The method of calculation will be delegated representatives of the CEO, or Executive, the evidence will include the invitation and the content presented.
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	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Indicator Title	2. Informed stakeholders
Definition	The purpose of this indicator is to identify and implement at least one initiative to share national and international best practice with stakeholders.
Source of Data	SAQA-hosted event (webinar, workshop, etc) or publication.
Method of calculation/assessment	SAQA invitation or agenda, or evidence of publication

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

Indicator Title	3a. Recognition of international studies
Definition	<p>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.</p> <p>The purpose of this indicator is to continue to finalise and implement the Refugee Pilot Project that forms part of the implementation of the Addis Convention.</p>
Source of Data	Evidence will include a CEO approved report for the Refugee Pilot Project.
Method of calculation/assessment	SAQA's report will serve as evidence of implementing the Addis Convention 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 as well as globally
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Annual

Desired performance	The actual performance should equal the expected performance
Indicator responsibility	Manager: Business Development

Indicator Title	4. 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 QCs 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	Manager: Strategy, Reporting & Performance Monitoring & Evaluation

Indicator Title	6. Evidence of advice provided to the Executive Authority
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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	Manager: Strategy, Reporting & Performance Monitoring & Evaluation

Indicator Title	8. 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 attended 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 an L&D tracking grid. At the end of the year, they analyse the information to confirm that all staff members engaged in at least two learning 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 or who have left SAQA during the year may not have completed two learning initiatives. Training and development may be formal, informal, or non-formal. Unavailability of the L&D budget may result in staff members not being able to attend two learning initiatives.
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Annual
Desired performance	Every staff member has attended 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	9a. 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> <p>The purpose of this indicator is to review and continue to implement strategies to secure alternate funding.</p>

Source of Data	Revenue generated
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	Additional revenue is sourced
Indicator responsibility	Chief Finance Officer (CFO)

Indicator Title	10b. Unqualified Audit opinion
Definition	The purpose of this indicator is to maintain good governance and financial management practices to ensure that SAQA continues to obtain an unqualified audit opinion report.
Source of Data	Annual Financial statements as approved by the Board.
Method of calculation/assessment	The Method of Calculation is undertaken through an external audit conducted annually by the Auditor-General of South Africa.
Assumptions	SAQA's has competent Finance and Supply Chain Management staff to undertake rigorous compliance daily resulting in an unqualified audit opinion by the AGSA.
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A

Reporting cycle	Annual
Desired performance	Good governance and financial management as a daily occurrence.
Indicator responsibility	Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

Indicator Title	11. 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

Indicator Title	12. An increasing number of learners with achievements recorded on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD)
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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 23 000 000 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 23 million or more learners with achievements. The actual performance should exceed the targeted performance.
Indicator responsibility	Manager: NQF MIS

Indicator Title	13. Streamlined processes and improved turnaround times
Definition	90% of compliant qualifications are processed and registered within 90 days.
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 as 90 days 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. As the organisation is closed in December, qualifications received in this month will be evaluated and tracked from the following January.

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)

Indicator Title	14. Increased number of national qualifications and part-qualifications registered on the NQF
Definition	Finalise 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	Finalise a 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

Indicator Title	18b. Efficient electronic processes across SAQA
Definition	Many of SAQA's processes are manual, outdated, and time-consuming. 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

Indicator Title	19. Integrated Tracking System for qualifications and part-qualifications
Definition	Develop a system for tracking the application and registration of qualifications and part-qualification from the QCs.
Source of Data	The QCs will submit qualifications and part-qualifications using the online tracking system.
Method of calculation/assessment	An integrated tracking system developed

Assumptions	That we have all data from the QCs
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

Indicator Title	20. Access and use of MIS (comprising the NLRD) information
Definition	To provide for public access to qualification information stored on the NQF MIS
Source of Data	SAQA Website
Method of calculation/assessment	Send the updated information on the NLRD to the website administrator
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	
Indicator responsibility	Manager: Communications

Indicator Title	21a. Percentage completeness of legacy learner achievement data on the NLRD
Definition	Identify institutions with legacy data and update the data gap report
Source of Data	Updated data gap report (based on 2018 report)
Method of calculation/assessment	Data gap report updates approved by Chief Financial Officer (CFO)
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	
Indicator responsibility	Manager: NQF Info Systems

Indicator Title	21b 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. 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 seek funding for the digitisation of legacy achievement records</p>
Source of Data	Funding proposal

Method of calculation/assessment	The funding proposal distributed to DHET or one other funding entity
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 Info Systems

Indicator Title	22. 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 Info Systems
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Indicator Title	23. 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 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 once a year that meet SAQA's data load requirements
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Quarterly
Desired performance	90% of recognised professional bodies load data
Indicator responsibility	Manager: NQF Info Systems

Indicator Title	24b. 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	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.
Method of calculation/assessment	Manager: NQF Info Systems 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 Manager: NQF Info Systems.
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	Manager: NQF Info Systems

Indicator Title	25. 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 screened, captured and sent to information partners (Verification sought) within 60 working days.</p>
Source of Data	DFQ workflow system, verifications database
Method of calculation/assessment	<p>Applications are received and checked for compliance. Non-compliant applications are returned to the applicant. Compliant applications are captured on the foreign qualifications database and assigned to a FQ verifier to process the verification (screen, capture and send verification request) within 60 working days.</p> <p>Calculation will be as follows: % = Total compliant applications received in the period / Total applications sent for verification within 60 working days</p>

Assumptions	External sources provide information on time, there is sufficient staff to do the work, less than 2% System downtime Automation solution is implemented successfully
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	27. A Verification service used by employers, institutions, and individuals
Definition	The purpose of this indicator is to complete the verification of at least 90% of compliant records found on the NLRD s within 25 working days OR 75% OF COMPLIANT VERIFICATION APPLICATIONS SUCCESSFULLY PROCESSED WITHIN 25 WORKING DAYS (AS THERE IS ONLY 75% OF THE DATA ON THE NLRD EXCLUDING ERRONEOUS DATA)
Source of Data	Verifications database, NLRD
Method of calculation/assessment	<p>Applications are received and checked for compliance. Non complaint applications are returned to the applicant. Complaint applications are captured on the Verifications database and assigned to a batch verifier to commence with the verifications process on the NQF MIS. Errors within the NQF MIS will render such applications non-compliant for calculation purposes. All verification records found on the NQF MIS must be completed, and the results presented to the client within 25 working days of being captured on the Verifications Database. Under unforeseen circumstances, it may not be possible for qualification achievements to be completed in 25 working days. In that case, SAQA will therefore allow for a 10% variation for qualification achievement verifications.</p> <p>Calculation will be as follows: %= Total compliant applications received in the period/Total applications verified within 25 working days</p>

Assumptions	<p>It is assumed that most requests for verification are for qualification achievements that are loaded on the NQF MIS (comprising the NLRD).</p> <p>External sources provide information on time, and there is sufficient staff to do the work, with less than 2% System downtime.</p> <p>Automation solution is implemented successfully.</p>
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	28. Number of policies reviewed
Definition	<p>SAQA has several NQF Policies that it has published over the years. Over time, some policies may be dated and require a review.</p> <p>The purpose of this indicator is to review one NQF policy annually. 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.</p>
Source of Data	Final Board approved revised Policy or Research report tabled at Board/ Exco explaining why the Policy should not be amended; or why a longer review period is required for additional engagement before amendments are implemented.
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

Indicator Title	29. The Implementation of Amended Policies is Monitored
Definition	At least one SAQA-QC engagement towards reporting on the implementation of one revised policy
Source of Data	Meeting agenda and a report on the meeting.
Method of calculation/assessment	Finalised meeting report emailed to participants.
Assumptions	The QC implemented the amended policy in question and/or conducted research towards the implementation of the amended policy.
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Reporting cycle	Annual progress against the annual target.
Desired performance	The actual performance should equal or exceed the expected performance.

Indicator responsibility	Senior Manager: Research
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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