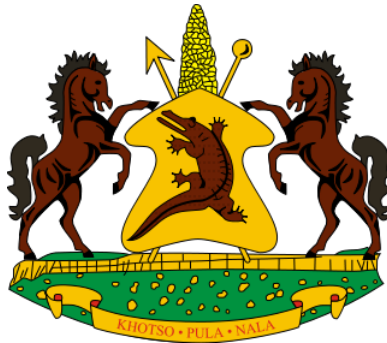


# Ministry of Education and Training (MOET)



## The Lesotho Qualifications Framework (LQF) Procedures Manual

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## **LQF Abbreviations and Acronyms**

AC	Accreditation Committee
AU	African Union
CAT	Credit Accumulation and Transfer
CESM	Category of Educational Subject Matter
CHE	Council on Higher Education
LO	Learning Outcome
LQF	Lesotho Qualifications Framework
LQQC	Lesotho Qualifications and Quality Council
MA	Modern Apprenticeship
MOET	Ministry of Education and Training
OAU	Organisation of the African Union
PDA	Professional Development Award
QA	Quality Assurance
QMS	Quality Management Systems
RCC	Recognition of Current Competences
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SER	Self Evaluation Report
SOTL	Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
ToR	Terms of Reference
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
VQ	Vocational Qualification
WIL	Work Integrated Learning

## **Foreword by Principal Secretary Ministry of Education and Training**

The purpose of this Procedures Manual is to provide guidelines to stakeholders in the development of qualifications that can be recognised as part of the revised Lesotho Qualifications Framework (LQF). The manual aims to expand on the revised LQF policy document to provide a working set of policy guidelines and instruments for use in implementing the requirements relating to the design and development of qualifications for the LQF. This is done by offering guidelines explaining and describing the processes involved and how decisions are reached.

Primarily, the manual is intended to be used by qualification developers and regulators responsible for the quality of qualification specifications. However, other stakeholders e.g. qualification and programme providers, will find it useful as an instrument to assist in the development process and accreditation. The manual will also benefit learners and holders of existing national and foreign qualifications, employer organisations, prospective employees, entrance tutors and parents of learners.

This guidance applies to all qualifications, at all levels, and in all sub-sectors (or tracks) of education in Lesotho i.e. Basic, Academic, Professional and TVET.

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**Thabiso Lebese (Dr.)**  
**Princip[al Secretary MOET**

## **1.0 Introduction**

The purpose of this Procedures Manual is to facilitate effective implementation of the revised Lesotho Qualifications Framework (LQF). The primary users of this document are those who will be implementing the LQF, qualifications and programme developers within and outside institutions across the education and training sector. It outlines mechanisms and systems for implementing the LQF. It provides guidelines on qualifications design within the context of a national qualifications framework. The manual discusses learning outcomes, methodology for writing and applying them. It outlines a clear procedure for levelling qualifications. It also addresses credit value, how to calculate and allocate it. Finally, it outlines guidelines on validation of qualifications.

### **1.1 Revised LQF Policy**

The stewardship for governance of the LQF is a core function of the Lesotho Qualifications and Quality Council (LQQC) mandated by the MOET. The single and co-ordinated entity is critical to ensure robust oversight, monitoring and optimal resourcing / allocation processes that make full use of available resources. The Lesotho Qualifications Framework (LQF), as a national qualifications framework (NQF), provides for the statutory, structural arrangements and supporting quality instruments, to achieve equivalence, harmonisation and the standardisation of the Lesotho education and training system.

The revised LQF provides an aspirational, contemporary, and responsive framework as a means of creating an integrated national framework for learning. The articulation of qualifications in industry and other social partners, in support of enhancing consistent application of standards has received attention and stakeholder scrutiny. The LQF has consciously sought to accommodate the diversity of purposes and institutional cultures of all providers in the Lesotho education and training landscape now and into the future. The LQF, in its purpose and construction facilitates measures of equivalence and the mutual recognition of internal and external qualifications.

The framework describes the purpose and titles of all qualifications within the education, training, research and innovation systems, their respective levels and how they can be interlinked across different tracks. The many different types and sizes of qualifications included in the LQF, are organised based on their complexity and levels of knowledge, skills and competence, volume and duration of study.

In Lesotho, as is the case in most developing countries, an additional feature is that the attitudes, ethical and value dispositions that underpin the professional identities of graduates are also consciously factored into the learning outcomes. The LQF provides measures for learning achievements across all sectors, and describes the

relationships in a coherent way by using a credit system, where 1 credit is representative of 10 notional hours of learning for an average learner, and can include class time, practical work and assessment activities.

## **1.2 The LQF – structure and characteristics**

The LQF consists of a set of agreed principles, practices, procedures and standardised terminology intended to ensure effective comparability of qualifications and credits across borders in the SADC region, in order to: facilitate mutual recognition of qualifications among Member States; harmonise qualifications wherever possible; and to contribute to the creation of acceptable regional standards where appropriate. The main role is to make qualifications more accessible and understandable across different country systems for the purpose of advancing human and economic development in the region.

The structure of the LQF consists of level descriptors that explain what learners should know (knowledge), understand, and be able to do (capabilities and competencies), having graduated and been awarded a qualification. The credit accumulation and transfer (CAT) mechanisms built into the framework facilitates the horizontal and vertical progression of learners, and offers entry points for the recognition of prior learning (RPL) and the recognition of current competencies (RCC).

## **1.3 LQF Framework and Sub-framework Sectors/Tracks**

The framework consists of three integrated sub-sectors/tracks: TVET; Basic/General; and Academic/Professional tracks as illustrated below. In addition to the generic qualification types such as certificates, diplomas, degrees etc, modern apprenticeships and professional development awards promoting lifelong learning and strengthening partnerships with professional bodies and industry, have also been recognised.

**Table 1: Lesotho Qualifications Framework**

Qualification Types	Level	Academic / Professional Track		TVET Track ( <i>formal, professional &amp; industry based qualifications</i> )		Credit Values (Minimum)	Credit Values
<b>Degrees</b> (Levels 7 – 10)	<b>10</b>	Doctorate		Doctorate		360	360
	<b>9</b>	Masters		Masters		120	240
<b>Diplomas</b> (Levels 6 – 8)	<b>8</b>	PGC/PGD/Honours Bachelor		PGC/PGD/Honours Bachelor		120	120
	<b>7</b>	Bachelor		Bachelor		360	360 - 480
<b>PDA's</b> (Levels 6 - 10)	<b>6</b>	Diploma		Diploma		120	240
	<b>5</b>	AS Certificate	Technical Education Certificate A	National Craft Certificate	Trade Test A	120	120 - 240
<b>Certificates</b> (Levels 1 – 8)	<b>4</b>	O Level / LGCSE Certificate	Technical Education Certificate B	Vocational Education & Training Certificate	Trade Test B	120	
	<b>3</b>			Basic Vocational Education & Training Certificate	Trade Test C	120	
	<b>2</b>	Junior Certificate	Technical Education Certificate C	Basic Operative Certificate	Trade Test Operative	120	
	<b>1</b>	Primary Cert / Basic Adult Education Cert.		Foundation Certificate		120	

## 2.0 The LQF Level Descriptors

To ensure that the diversity, depth, breadth, volumes of learning and complexity of qualifications and part-qualifications can be adequately represented on the LQF, a set of Level Descriptors have been developed. The Level Descriptors define the relative complexity and depth of achievements and capabilities of graduates to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, applications and professional values awarded. Each Level (1-10) in the LQF is described using the following headings:

Level 1-10	Generic statement and credit value	Areas of knowledge (depth, breadth and complexity)	Nature of skills ( covering competencies of graduates)	Agency and Context
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The full table of descriptors for each Level 1 – 10 are detailed in the Revised LQF Policy which should be read in conjunction with this manual.

LQF Level Descriptors are expressed broadly through general statements that define the learning outcomes at a particular level. They allow for more than one qualification type to be placed on the same level, but does not mean they are equivalent in purpose or have similar competencies. The titles of qualifications are important for facilitating general understanding, employer appreciation and wider legitimacy in external contexts. They also enable the Lesotho Qualifications and Quality Council (LQQC) to make decisions about the most appropriate level for placing and aligning qualifications on the framework.

Level Descriptors provide criteria to be used as a lens of inquiry for quality reviews and applications for Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT); Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Recognition of Current Competencies (RCC) include notions of depth that operate on a continuum from general to specialised; breadth (single topic to multidisciplinary areas of knowledge); kinds of knowledge (concrete – abstract and segmented to accumulative); and lastly, complexity (combinations of kinds of depth and breadth of knowledge).

The Level Descriptors are compelling formulations that are able to withstand external scrutiny and have a considerable shelf life. However, renewal and adaptation of the level descriptors is necessary at regular intervals to ensure they remain current and responsive to a dynamic environment. They have been deeply conceptualised, are inclusive, contextualised and comprehensive. They are also accumulative, and scaffolded upwards from 1 to 10, and are applicable for evaluating the RPL and RCC dimensions. They are descriptive and not prescriptive, and crafted to meet the needs of both academic and occupational qualifications. There should be clear links between qualifications and occupational levels in the spheres of work.

In addition, qualification purpose statements and their supporting qualification descriptors need to be used to distinguish between diverse qualifications on the



same LQF level, as is evident from levels 5 -10 on the LQF. It must be noted that the volume of learning/years of study for acquiring qualifications, calculated for residential studies as distance learning, often takes the student double the time.

### **3.0 Mechanisms and Systems necessary for implementing LQF**

#### **3.1 The Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (CATS)**

The last statutory element to promote access for marginalized citizens and student progression are contained in the rules for inserting CATS into the LQF. The CATS arrangements when implemented have a direct bearing upon the management information systems for maintaining accurate student achievement and progression records.

A maximum of 50% credits of a completed qualification may be transferred to another qualification. The proviso being that no more than 50% of the credits required for the other qualifications are credits that have been used for another completed qualification. Credits may be granted for completed courses even though a full qualification has not been attained. In some cases specifying the duration of the incomplete credits attained, might be necessary, especially in fast changing fields like IT and Law.

Credit transfer can take place between institutions and sub-frameworks/tracks. For example, from one institution to another or between sectors. However, credit transfer is not automatic and protocols have to be negotiated and agreed.

***Note: A full working policy and methodology for CATS should be developed.***

#### **3.2 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Current Competences (RCC)**

RPL and RCC may be used to recognise prior learning or current competencies by awarding credits at an LQF level that can then be used to access a qualification or in the awarding of a qualification. Decisions about RPL and RCC may take account of some or all of the following: previously earned credits, part-qualifications, short courses, work experience and portfolio evidence. In addition, there may be assessment evidence and evaluation required before any award is made.

Qualification specifications do not need to specify conditions for access or credit but should accept the principle of RPL/RCC. Where RPL/RCC is applied in a qualification there should be clear, transparent and coherent procedures that accurately and consistently assess candidates' evidence.

***Note: A full working policy and methodology for RPL and RCC should be developed.***

### **3.3 Work-integrated Learning (WIL)**

The aim of WIL is to integrate theory with practice characterised in occupational and professional qualifications at any level in the LQF. A WIL programme leading to a qualification will be dependent on the purpose and characteristics of that qualification, not least the learning outcomes and assessment criteria. WIL may include learning that takes place in a work context, or simulated work environment. This must be in the form of authentic problem-based or project work activities requiring the application of theoretical learning in the workplace.

An instructional programme or learning outcome may require the deliberate use a workplace as the site for learning. Such a learning activity must be formally structured linking learning with work. Similarly, the workplace may offer learning and training provision that cannot be offered in a learning institution.

***Note: A full working policy and methodology for WIL should be developed.***

## 4.0 Guidelines on Qualification Design/Review within a Framework Paradigm

This section serves to provide guidelines for both the review of existing, and the design of new qualifications to comply with the provisions of the LQF. Upon receiving a successful evaluation and validation outcome, the qualification will be registered on the LQF and given a unique code and its history of performance outcomes recorded.

### 4.1 Design Principles

In an outcomes-based framework paradigm the curriculum structure is more or less prescribed for registering a qualification onto the LQF. This is necessary to promote consistency and to clarify the relationships and fundamental difference between qualifications, as well as their student progression pathways and linkages.

#### 4.1.1 Qualification Titles and Nomenclature

In order to facilitate a streamlined and coherent system the LQF contains the following generic qualification types:

- i. Degrees;
- ii. Diplomas;
- iii. Certificates;
- iv. Professional Development Awards (PDAs);
- v. Vocational Qualifications (VQs); and
- vi. Modern Apprenticeships (MAs).

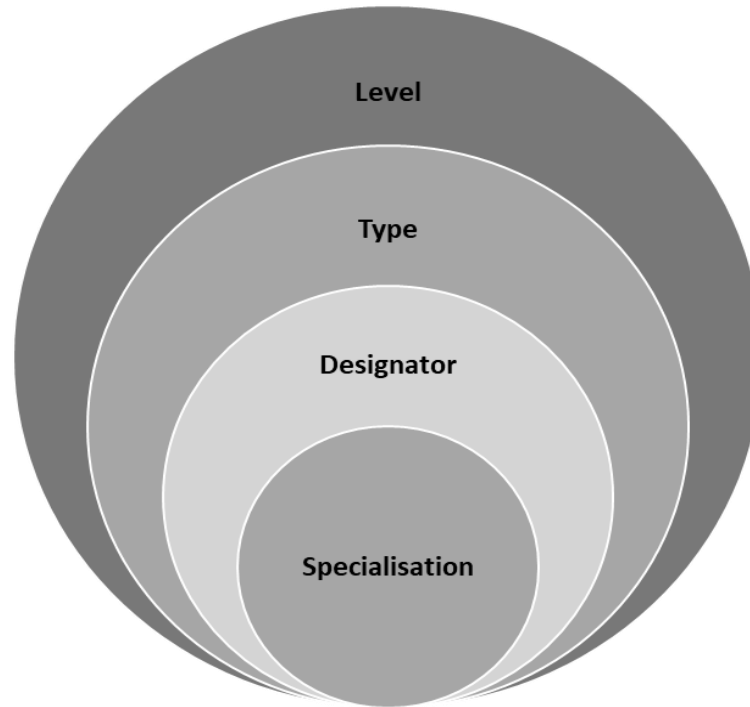
The principles and nomenclature used in naming qualifications is important, in order to reflect the purposes and outcomes of the diverse scope across General / Academic / Professional and TVET tracks within the framework. The approach used also provides the structure to streamline qualifications and enable CAT, RPL and RCC connectors to be applied which are considered in later chapters.

Here are some examples of qualification titles:

**Table 2: Qualifications titles & nomenclature**

Full Title	Shortened Title
LQF Level 7 Bachelor of Commerce in Auditing	BCom Auditing
LQF Level 5 Certificate of Engineering in Water Management	CertEng in Water Mgt
LQF Level 5 Advanced Level Certificate in Mathematics	A Level Maths
LQF Level 3 Basic Vocational Training Certificate	BVTC

These titles are arrived at through the conventional nested approach presented below:



**Figure 1. Naming qualifications**

A layered approach and practice for naming qualifications has been used in Lesotho for some time. The method will make the process more explicit and provide the structure when facilitating CAT, RPL and RCC connectors within and across disciplines, and horizontally and vertically across the framework.

#### ***4.1.2 Rules for naming qualifications:***

Adhering to the following rules when naming a qualification will ensure a consistent application across the LQF:

- i. The outer ring locates the qualification on a **level** within the LQF. This allows comparisons and reviews by examining learning outcomes against the level descriptors.
- ii. The **qualification type** is the first name given to a qualification based on the generic types on the LQF.
- iii. Then the area of study, discipline, profession or vocation (Commerce; Arts. Engineering and so on - normally referred to as **designators** or categories of educational subject matter (CESM)).

- iv. Given the historical context in Lesotho, and the need to accelerate and coordinate education and development, designators for certificates and diplomas have been included to improve articulation with industry training types and TVET qualifications and courses.
- v. The linking word between the qualification type and the designator is 'of' (e.g., Bachelor of Social Science; National Diploma of Commerce; Certificate of Engineering), and when abbreviated the 'of' is omitted e.g. BSS or BSc; ND Com; CEng.
- vi. The qualifier is the third name used to indicate a field of **specialisation** (can be used in all types of qualifications) (naming of qualifiers usually determined by CESM categories).
- vii. The linking word between the qualification type or its designator and the qualifier is always "in" (e.g. Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics; National Diploma of Commerce in Human Resource Development; Certificate of Engineering in Water Management).
- viii. To use a qualifier, at least 50% of the minimum total credits for the qualification and at least 50% of the minimum credits at the qualification's exit level must be in the field of specialisation denoted by the qualifier.

#### ***4.1.3 Purpose Statement (goals and objectives of the qualification)***

Every qualification must have a well formulated purpose statement that describes what the student should know, understand and be able to do as an outcome of effective teaching and learning. The formulation of the purpose statement should also make mention of the expertise and knowledge dimensions of the field and how learning will be enriched in this regard. An impact statement on graduate contributions to the field and the social context /economy will deepen the formulation. The aspect of 'contributions to the field' should be mindful that different levels of programmes require different levels of rigour. For example, a diploma graduate will contribute specific technical skills to the field of practice such as novel ways of fitting a door as a very immediate activity. The formulation of purpose statements should embrace student progression and the contributions to higher and more abstract forms of knowledge expected at post-graduate levels.

#### ***4.1.4 Alignment to contexts***

This section now serves to locate the LQF and remind the reader of the recent macro and meso shifts that have a bearing on the role and purpose of education and development more broadly. The continental aspirations need to be translated into sound curriculum purposes and aligned to the design of qualifications and programmes. The reformulated Vision of the African Union: "*An integrated,*

*prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in global arena”* gives an indication of the desired attributes and soft skills that African graduates should have.

The 14 specific AU objectives for implementing this vision, consist of the whole range of developmental issues, including closer economic and social integration, regional cooperation, human rights, economic growth and sustainable development, peace and political stability. As in earlier policy positions and strategies since the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), an unfortunate omission is the critical contribution of the education and training sector. This is critical as the sector is not on the radar of policy makers and funders.

The new and expanded Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), do accentuate the pivotal role of education and training. The seventeen (17) SDGs have been clustered into two foci, on *sustainability and vulnerable populations*. The South and developing countries are expected to influence and contribute more significantly to the identified themes this time around. These two themes will also influence funding agendas so careful consideration in the planning process is important.

Developing programmatic and curriculum approaches to finding lasting solutions to these pressing social problems offers an exciting window of opportunity. These macro-strategic goals offer a lens against which to reflect when planning curricula and graduates outcomes. Furthermore, they ensure education as a public good and transparency in terms of the returns on investments of public funds. Reflecting on the macro shifts also enables closer scrutiny of the institutional vision and mission statements and affords an opportunity of aligning the qualification / programmes more meaningfully.

It is important for programme design to take into account both local, regional and global considerations. For example, while gender inequality is a global concern and tends to manifest itself through stark girl disadvantage, in Lesotho its manifestation is different from that in most developing countries because girls' situation in school is not primarily disadvantaged in the stark form that they are in many developing countries. Therefore, a balance needs to be maintained between formal disciplinary issues, alignment to context and particularly between global trends and national concerns. In particular, funding agendas should not determine alignment in a very narrow manner.

#### ***4.1.5 Student profile mapping***

Analyses of prospective students and their needs for new qualifications and trends and/or needs analyses of current students is important. This dimension should also map the progression pathways across qualifications and more importantly, the

possible employment opportunities for graduates. The importance of this requirement is acknowledged in terms of directing the attention of institutions towards designing their programmes in response to the 'profile' of students targeted and considering the wider social impact of the programme externally. However, the complexity of determining prospective students is flagged because of the wide variety of students, particularly since pathways have become all the more convoluted as a result of the introduction of A Levels alongside O Levels, and the ever more widening social backgrounds of students.

While institutions should design their programmes by including innovative ways of exposing students to and targeting employment possibilities, it was acknowledged that because of the limited industry opportunities for which many institutions compete, the expectation for meeting this requirement needs to be realistic.

## **5.0 Learning Outcomes**

Learning Outcomes (LOs) are central in the specification of qualifications for the LQF. Primarily, LOs provide information on the knowledge, skills and competence that will be achieved on successful completion of the qualification, in turn, increasing the transparency and comparability between qualifications. In addition, LOs provide reference points for assessment and in selecting the most appropriate method for assessing the achievement of learners. Methods of learning delivery and study can also be identified through LOs, thus helping providers and learners understand what is expected at the anticipated level of learning. Once achieved, LOs can facilitate mobility through the recognition of part qualifications and full qualifications, thus making credit transfer easier.

When designing a qualification, or part-qualification, it is important to keep the number of learning outcomes to a manageable number, focusing on essential requirements for the learner. Level Descriptors can help the writing of LOs for a particular LQF level by assisting with the selection of appropriate verbs to demonstrate the complexity of a Learning Outcome.

### **5.1 Writing Learning Outcomes - Methodology**

This methodology is intended to provide assistance and support in the writing of appropriate broad learning outcomes for qualifications and specific learning outcomes for units/modules. It begins by explaining what learning outcomes are and the benefits of using them for both staff and students. It distinguishes between programme and module learning outcomes and gives examples of each. It also provides guidance on how to write learning outcomes and link them to the assessment criteria.



Learning outcomes are the specific intentions of a programme or module, written in specific terms. They describe what a student should know, understand, or be able to do at the end of that programme or module. Learning outcomes are written for that level or award. Learning outcomes are essential because:

- i. They define the type and depth of learning learners are expected to achieve;
- ii. They provide an objective benchmark for formative and summative as well as assessment of prior learning;
- iii. They communicate expectations clearly to learners;
- iv. They communicate learner skills to prospective employers in a clear and transparent way. By reading learning outcomes, an employer should be able to identify what knowledge, skills, and attitudes a qualified person will be able to offer them;
- v. They help define coherent units of learning that can be further subdivided or modularized,
- vi. Learning (rather than teaching) becomes central when the focus is on what the learner should be able to achieve (the emphasis moves from inputs to results);
- vii. It is easier to examine the achievements if the expected results of learning are stated in a concrete manner;
- viii. They help to guide and organise the learner and help them to see the anticipated effects of their learning.

Learning outcomes can provide a useful guide to inform potential candidates and employers about the programme and ensure consistency of outcomes across subjects and disciplines. Learning outcomes can also help:

- a) guide students in their learning, in that they explain what is expected of them;
- b) staff to focus on exactly what they want students to achieve in terms of knowledge, skills and competences;
- c) staff in choosing appropriate learning, teaching and assessment strategies;
- d) both staff and students in monitoring progress;
- e) programme managers in ensuring progression between the various levels within a qualification and between programmes of different levels; and
- f) employers in understanding exactly what potential workers know and can do.

Designing courses using learning outcomes leads to a more student-centred approach. It marks a shift from the content of a module or course (namely, what staff members teach) towards its outcome (in other words, what the student is able to do on successful completion of the course or module).

## **5.2 Broad Learning Outcomes**

Any qualification requires a qualification specification. This specification includes the aims of the qualification and the learning outcomes for the qualification. It is essential that these outcomes refer to the outcomes of the entire programme leading to the relevant award. A qualification learning outcome is a statement of what the learner is expected to know, understand or be able to do on successful completion of the entire programme that leads to the award. Here are some examples:

On successful completion of this qualification the graduate will:

- i. have detailed knowledge and understanding of a wide range of hotel business areas and the manner in which these are combined in the overall process of hotel management;
- ii. have a good understanding of airline marketing and its applications;
- iii. be able to demonstrate a technical and commercial awareness of the civil engineering profession;
- iv. be able to analyse business problems and propose solutions in the context of the tourism industry;
- v. be able to confidently engage in and successfully resolve building services engineering projects in both the technical and managerial aspects and communicate effectively their resolution;
- vi. be able to demonstrate a competence in ground engineering and its applications to practice;
- vii. be able to demonstrate an understanding of highways engineering;
- viii. be able to demonstrate a competence in structural engineering, both analysis and design and their application;
- ix. have an appreciation of the necessity for ethical practice in all business transactions;
- x. be able to apply concepts and skills learnt in a variety of contexts;
- xi. be able to research management issues and solutions to issues;
- xii. appreciate the importance of professional development and of the resources available to keep up to date with new developments in construction;
- xiii. be able to work independently;
- xiv. be able to work effectively in a team;
- xv. be able to take responsibility for his/her own learning;
- xvi. be able to learn from experiences gained in different contexts;
- xvii. have insights into the dynamics of the management function in the business world;
- xviii. demonstrate the ability to comprehend multiple perspectives.

Once outcomes are defined, their attainment should be clearly achievable through the module/units/course outcomes on the programme leading to the award. If the qualification covers more than one level (such as a Bachelor's degree) it is useful to break down the aims over the levels so that students are progressively working towards the outcomes throughout the course.

### 5.3 Learning Outcomes at unit/module/course

A well-structured unit/module should show clear alignment between the learning outcomes and the assessment criteria used on the module through appropriately designed assessment tasks, and delivered in a way that enables students to reach the required outcomes. This alignment between learning outcomes, learning and teaching method, assessment tasks and assessment criteria makes the whole process transparent to the students and to other interested parties, and helps providers ensure that there is coherence in their programmes.

A unit/module learning outcome is a statement of what the learner is expected to be able to do on successful completion of the unit/module to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding, skills and/or competences. Unit/module learning outcomes focus on learning rather than teaching, and they do not specify what the lecturer or tutor can provide but what the learner can demonstrate. They should define what a student must be able to do in order to pass the unit/module. It is important to bear in mind when drafting unit/module learning outcomes that all learning outcomes should be assessable. Also, when writing module learning outcomes, it is important to give consideration to how the module fits into an overall programme.

Unit/module outcomes should start with the phrase:

*On successful completion of the module, students will be able to...*

These phrases should then be followed by action verbs so that students are able to demonstrate that they have learned and hence achieved the outcomes. Words like 'know', 'understand' or 'appreciate', should be avoided. Emphasis should be on how the student is able to demonstrate that they have gained the required knowledge, understanding or appreciation. When learning outcomes are devised which use words such as 'know' and 'understand', it is not clear to the students the level of understanding or amount of knowledge required to successfully complete the module.

Different verbs can be used to demonstrate different levels of learning. For instance, in an introductory module where the aim for the student might be to gain knowledge and develop a basic understanding, the learning outcomes may require the students to be able to define, recall, list, describe, explain or discuss. For a more advanced module where the aim might be to develop a thorough understanding, the learning outcomes may require the students to be able to formulate, appraise, evaluate, estimate or construct. As students progress through a programme it would be expected that the learning outcomes would reflect the progressive nature of their learning. Here are some examples of Unit/Module Learning Outcomes:

*On successful completion of the Unit/Module, the student will be able to:*

- i. Explain the role of unified system of accounts in the hotel industry;
- ii. Identify effective on-line marketing strategies and incorporate them into a tourism marketing plan;
- iii. Identify and critically evaluate the strategic options available to tourism enterprises;
- iv. Design an interactive website for use by a tourism attraction;
- v. Apply theory critically to analyse professional experience in the hotel industry;
- vi. Analyse key managerial issues in the hotel industry and propose appropriate managerial solutions to the situation;
- vii. Recognise structural forms and understand the principles involved in the choice of structural form;
- viii. Discuss the roles of the civil engineer and the links between the various parts of the civil engineering industry;
- ix. Distinguish between the different types of engineering problems and situations that civil engineers address, including environmental problems, and be knowledgeable about the appropriate approaches typically adopted in these situations;
- x. Present annotated and dimensioned drawings using orthogonal projection to describe a building structure;
- xi. Set up and present isometric, oblique and perspective views of objects, in the latter case built up to give a pictorial view;
- xii. Present annotated sketches for use as a communication tool; and
- xiii. Produce a dimensioned and labelled 3D geometric shape of reasonable complexity.

#### **5.4 Writing Learning Outcomes**

Learning outcomes should specify the minimum acceptable standard for a student to be able to pass a unit/module (threshold level). This means that it is important to express learning outcomes in terms of the essential learning for a unit/module so that a small number of learning outcomes which are of central importance are required, not a large number of superficial outcomes. Between four and eight learning outcomes for each of single unit/module, and up to twenty-five outcomes for an entire qualification are normal in well-designed qualifications.

Only one verb per learning outcome should be used, and the sentence structure simple to avoid misinterpretation. Avoid unnecessary jargon and if absolutely necessary, use more than one sentence to ensure clarity. To help you write learning outcomes, Bloom's Taxonomy (1956) is recommended, which despite its age is still one of the best aids available. Bloom identified six categories of learning – knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation – which

you can use at any level in an LQF qualification/unit/module. When writing outcomes, use the specific Level Descriptors relevant to that LQF level.

Other tips for writing learning outcomes include:

- i. Be realistic - take into account prior knowledge, available time and the learning opportunities;
- ii. Avoid learning outcomes that are too broad or too narrow in scope;
- iii. Avoid using the verbs “know”, “understand” or “learn” as they are vague and subject to misinterpretation;
- iv. Use open-ended learning outcomes to allow for creativity such as “apply theory critically to analyse a ‘given situation’”;
- v. Be as succinct and as concise as possible;
- vi. Keep the number of learning outcomes to a manageable number;
- vii. Use language that students can understand; and
- viii. Ensure that learning outcomes are assessable.

### **5.5 Linking learning outcomes to assessment**

As already stated, assessment tasks are designed to fulfil the outcomes of a module. One way of ensuring this is by directly linking assessment criteria to learning outcomes. This may involve a simple one-to-one mapping between outcome and criterion, or you may wish to have more than one criterion for any one learning outcome. Similarly, it is possible to combine intellectual outcomes and skills-based outcomes when devising assessments around learning outcomes.

## **6.0 Levelling Qualifications**

When determining the LQF Level of a qualification or part-qualification, the following compliance elements are critical:

- i. Ensure alignment with the level descriptors in terms of depth, breadth, complexity and volumes of learning
- ii. Specific learning outcomes (attached to units/courses/modules) must lead to the attainment of the attributes in the level outcomes.
- iii. Qualification descriptors, especially for specialist and professional programmes, regulate the planning and design to improve rigour and the recognition of qualifications.

The LQF Level Descriptors should be used along with other sources of information to determine the level of a qualification. These include subject benchmarks, qualifications at the same level, and comparable qualifications on other frameworks. The qualification developer should establish and propose the LQF level of a particular qualification and its comprising units by comparing learning outcomes and the associated assessment for each unit to the LQF Level Descriptors. Consideration must be given to the level of each of the units/modules that comprise a qualification, as these will determine the overall LQF level of the qualification. Once the levels of units/modules of a qualification are determined the overall LQF level of the qualification can be proposed.

### **6.1 Levelling Qualifications - Methodology**

The LQF Level Descriptors are used along with other sources of information to place qualifications on the LQF. Other sources, which will become more widely available as qualifications are placed on the LQF, include subject benchmarks, qualifications at the same level, and comparable qualifications on other frameworks. The LQF Level Descriptors are generic and equally applicable to general, academic, vocational and work-based qualifications. When levelling a qualification, developers should aim to find a level that fits qualifications, part-qualifications and individual units on the LQF.

The qualification developer should establish and propose the LQF level of a particular qualification and its comprising units by comparing learning outcomes and the associated assessment for each unit to the LQF Level Descriptors. Consideration must be given to the level of each of the units that comprise a qualification, as these will determine the overall LQF level of the qualification. The level is influenced mainly by the learning outcomes and assessment methods, and other factors such as:

- i. complexity and depth of knowledge and understanding;
- ii. degree of independence and creativity;
- iii. range of sophistication in application and practice; and
- iv. role taken in relation to others in carrying out tasks.

Once the levels of all units of a qualification are determined the overall LQF level of the qualification can be proposed, for which a number of common models or approaches exist such as using:

- a) **equal components:** a simple model that is used where all units of the qualification are at the same level.
- b) **exit level:** often adopted for larger qualifications lasting for one year or more, or where qualifications have been designed at a particular level (such qualifications are usually governed by a distinct specification, relevant to the type of qualification, in which the minimum number of credits is predefined for each level of the qualification). In such qualifications learners build up their knowledge as they progress through the qualification, with the exit level then determining the eventual LQF level.
- c) **proportional design:** a model which determines the level of the overall qualification based on the proportion of units at a particular level – for example a qualification comprising six units in total, two of which are at LQF Level 6 and four of which are at LQF Level 7, would opt for LQF Level 7, the majority of units being at that level.

Where none of the above models is applicable (e.g. for a smaller qualification with an equal number of units at different levels), the qualification developer will need to decide on the eventual (proposed) level of the qualification taking into account:

- i. the credit value of each unit;
- ii. the target group the qualification is aimed at;
- iii. the level of any prerequisite requirements;
- iv. the importance (weighting) of individual units within the qualification; and
- v. the level(s) of entry or progression pathways.

In all cases, the qualification developer and the internal verifier should formally document on the application form, the basis on which they make their final decision on the overall proposed level of a qualification.

The final stage in the development of a new qualification (or a review of an existing one) is to place it at the appropriate level on the LQF. A database in the LQF will hold details of all such qualifications that have been validated. Before the validation

and registration onto the LQF database, qualification developers must check through the internal verification process that the information relating to the qualification is accurate and complete. A critical stage in the internal verification is the levelling of qualifications which these guidelines address.

This methodology should be used in conjunction with other new methodologies to specify qualifications in the terms of the components of the LQF e.g. specification in terms learning outcomes, credits etc. Together they will allow new or reviewed qualifications to be registered to the LQF database in accordance with the level descriptors and specified in terms of knowledge, skills and competences.

In addition, this methodology entails:

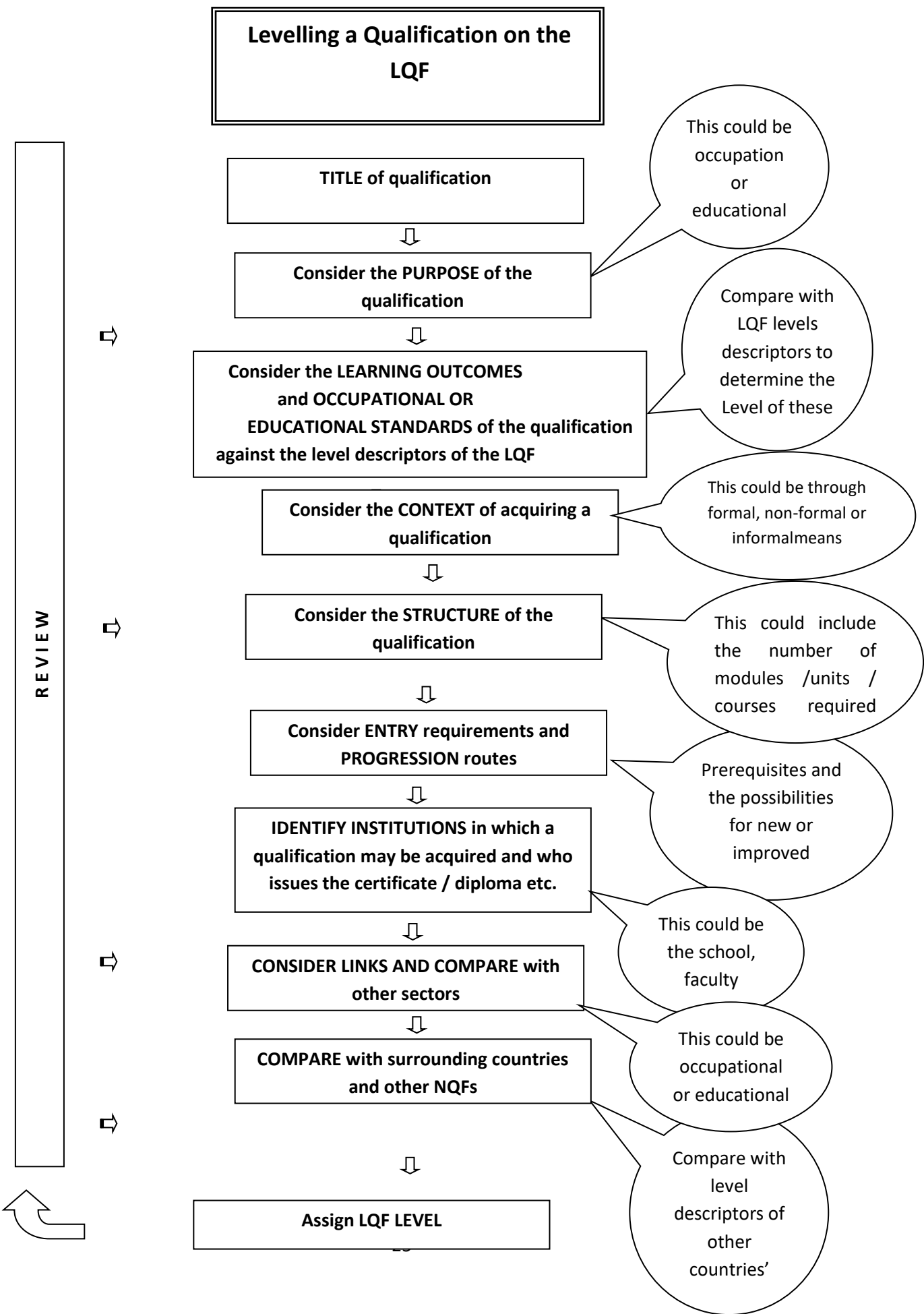
- i. identifying a need for a certain qualification;
- ii. identifying the context that a qualification may be acquired (e.g. vocational, HE etc.);
- iii. outlining the characteristics that serve as a basis for placement on the LQF (e.g. degree of complexity, level of responsibility, the manner in which it is achieved, credit rating, learning outcomes and objectives, etc.); and
- iv. comparing the outcomes of the new qualification with the level descriptors of the LQF.

The results of this process will indicate:

- a) the placement of the qualification compared to others;
- b) the level of learning outcomes and how they are connected with occupational and learning standards;
- c) horizontal and vertical progression routes a learner may take on completion of the qualification.

The flow diagram below provides an outline of the sequence of steps required to level a qualification with the LQF.





The pro forma below provides a record of the Levelling process:

Stage			
1	Title of qualification (enter the full title of the qualification)		
2	Purpose of qualification (vocational qualification or education level e.g. employment or continuation of education)		
3	Description of content of qualification including a brief description of standards (educational and /or occupational) that the qualification is based on.		
4	Description of knowledge, skills and competences of learning outcomes taken from educational or occupational standards.		
5	Comparison with LQF level descriptors (compare response to stages 3 and 4 against LQF level descriptors)		
6	Entry requirements and progression requirements	Prerequisite qualification required	Progression route to next qualification
7	Manner of obtaining qualification (e.g. description of learning mode - formal, non-formal or informal)		
8	Programme and duration		
9	Institution that delivers qualification and issues award		
10	Links with qualifications in other sectors (This can be vocational or educational)		
11	International comparability (comparison with similar qualifications from surrounding countries)		
12	Alignment of qualification onto LQF (Indicate which LQF Level the qualification is aligned with)	LEVEL :	

## **7.0 Credit value**

The LQF is a credit based qualification framework that puts a credit value on a qualification or part-qualification. Credit value refers to the number of credits assigned to parts and the whole qualification, as well as identifying which components can be used to facilitate the RPL / RCC application processes and credit accumulation and credit transfer between qualification. The standard interpretation is that a credit refers to the average amount of learning and assessment for learning that would be required to gain a qualification or the skills and knowledge tied to a level outcome or training standard, which is measured in terms of “notional hours”.

Once the LQF Level and LOs are identified, they can be weighted by a numerical value. This is intended to give an indication of the volume of learning required by a qualification or part-qualification. It is expressed as a numerical value linked to notional learning time. The LQF credit system works on the basis that one credit point represents the outcomes of learning achieved through a notional 10 hours of learning. Notional hours are expressed in terms of credits, with 1 credit being equivalent to 10 notional hours. A full time year of study therefore translates into 120 credits. To ensure meaningful learning and articulation the curriculum needs to be modularised across all sectors. It is important to ensure that the “chunks” of learning are not assigned with too little credits, as this clutters the system and creates challenges for management information systems (MIS), learner databases that record achievements, as well as for managing sensible articulation and credit transfers.

### **7.1 Calculating Credit value - Methodology**

Credit value of a qualification requires agreement on what learning time is required to complete a programme of expected learning outcomes. Where the programme is well established it will be possible to do this by reference to experience; in others, it will be done by making comparisons with established and previously credit-rated programmes; and in some cases the process may have to be carried out from scratch. The qualifications developer is responsible for proposing the number of LQF credits for individual units, based on the number of notional learning hours required to achieve defined learning outcomes.

The LQF definition of notional learning hours is the time that an average learner would take to successfully complete all learning activities, including assessments, required for achieving the learning outcomes and subsequently a qualification. The number of notional learning hours required by a typical learner should be calculated

by those with confirmed experience in the subject area, and should take into account only those activities that relate directly to the learning outcomes of the unit or qualification in question (i.e. not taking into account any prerequisite knowledge that the learner requires prior to starting the unit or qualification). Institutions should take into account activities that need to be carried out by the learner before and after formal teaching or training sessions – for example, before delivery there may be a need for preparatory reading or use of the library (or Internet) for carrying out research, after delivery time may be required for revision and assessment. Calculating the notional hours in the designing of a curriculum should include time spent in independent and/or peer collaborative learning, preparation for and attending classes, interactions with trainers / academics, fellow students, doing assignments, attending practicals and participating in work integrated learning and assessment for learning activities. The notional hours do not include teaching workloads in any form and are exclusively focussed on learning progression and achievements.

Examples of activities that may be considered in the calculation (or estimate) of notional learning hours, include:

- i. formal teaching sessions (lectures, classes, coaching, seminars, tutorials);
- ii. practical work (in laboratories and other locations);
- iii. relevant ICT activities;
- iv. use of the library or learning resource centres for reading and research;
- v. private study time;
- vi. self-directed study time using online and/or text-based open learning materials;
- vii. informal learning activities (e.g. community groups, community-based workshops);
- viii. reflection; and
- ix. assessment.

Credit value can also be useful for comparing the depth or volume of learning, aiding the design of units and qualifications, providing a framework for learning access, transfer and progression, and supporting the development of consistent learner workloads across qualifications within different disciplines and/or within different learning environments. For example, if a comparison is made between two qualifications both at LQF level 7 (one with 120 credits and the other with 60 credits) the level shows that they have an equal level of difficulty but the one with fewer LQF credits is shown to have significantly less notional learning time.

Alternatively, two qualifications having the same number of credits (one at LQF Level 6, the other at LQF Level 7) shows that they will both take the same amount of notional hours to complete but that the qualification at LQF Level 6 is less

demanding than the one at LQF Level 7. The LQF considers a standard academic year to involve 1,200 notional learning hours or 120 credits.

## 7.2 Allocating Credit Value

<b>Individual Units / Subjects / Courses</b>		
To be supported by a completed Unit / Subject / Course descriptor for each listed below:		
<b>Unit / Subject / Course Title:</b>		
<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Notional hours</b>	<b>Credit Value</b>
<b>Total</b>		
<b>Justification Statement</b>		
Summary details of the learning activities relevant to achievement of the related outcomes above, indicating the total learning time required by the average learner to overtake these, and provide a justification for the inclusion of these activities. Where appropriate, please make reference to any benchmarking undertaken with existing qualifications.		
<b>Learning Activity</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Notional Hours</b>
Assessment		
<b>Notes:</b>		

### 7.3 Teaching, learning and integrated assessment strategy

For developing teaching, learning and assessment materials, the following translation of credit value should be considered.

- i. The volume (depth from general to specialised and breadth from single topic to multidisciplinary areas), complexity of work (depth and breadth), kinds of knowledge (concrete to accumulative / abstract) and demonstrable levels of student achievement (knowledge, transferability and application) should inform the total minimum number of credits required.
- ii. Credit ratings are set at minimal levels and some programmes may require credit loads above the minimum, such as those requiring Work Integrated Learning (WIL), practical or service learning.
- iii. The credit rating of a qualification must consider the mode of delivery, given the opportunities that technology brings to offer blended modes of delivery. Investments into the rigorous design and the development of the learning materials will facilitate proper credit loadings. Research into the variable design, development and delivery costs of programmes and qualifications is a neglected area for the SADC region and deserves attention.
- iv. Credit accumulation and transfer (CAT) recognises a student's achievements even if the student does not achieve a full qualification. Credits for an incomplete qualification may be recognised as meeting part of the requirements for a different qualification.
- v. Where students transfer across providers, at least 50% of a qualification (teaching, assessment and student support) must be offered to confer the qualification.

It is necessary to consider the approach taken to developing the learning materials and assessment strategy to democratise knowledge production and allow students access to the ground rules, and often hidden assumptions, of the domain. For example, problem-based learning has its own principles and inherent logic, whereas a hierarchical and spiralling curriculum will have incremental knowledge acquisition and subsequently scaffolded assessments.

The integrated assessment strategy should provide compelling evidence that the planned activities are diverse, to meet the needs of the student population with a wide range of learning styles. The assessment of learning assumes that the teaching is as much a component as the student learning and requires **reflective practices**,

**and mindful assessment for learning to know that graduate learning outcomes are being achieved.** The older assessment of learning approach was biased in favour of a different pedagogical approach managed by the teacher and did not consider student learning styles or assess a range of knowledge attributes.

The restricted industry context was identified as an impediment to the integration of WIL into the curriculum. However, it was generally agreed that 'investment' in the mode of delivery that provides for equitable access as well as planning that includes policies on assessment, including timely feedback, were important considerations arising from the guidelines for ensuring progression. However, such assessment policies must also not emphasise progression at the expense of depth of assessment requirements.

## 8.0 Validation of Qualifications

Validation is the process by which LQQC ensures that qualifications are credible, fit-for-purpose, and meet market and learner needs. Any new or reviewed qualification for registration on the LQF must meet the following criteria:

- a) **Justification of need:** confirming that the overall rationale and justification is based on labour market or learner needs and stating potential occupations to which the qualification leads.
- b) **Appropriateness of qualification design, content and structure:** ensuring that the title of the qualification is concise and indicative of its content, the qualification structure is designed appropriately, and mandatory and elective units are each clearly detailed and include targeted transferable skills where applicable.
- c) **Arrangements for additional support needs (ASN):** arrangements must be in place to meet the needs of learners with ASN.
- d) **Appropriateness of assessment:** ensuring that assessment is planned to adequately cover the targeted learning outcomes and reflects how assessment standards will be maintained, verified and quality assured.
- e) **Appropriateness of LQF Levels and Credit values:** ensuring the adequacy of the proposed LQF levels both for the overall qualification and for all composite units and learning outcomes. Ensuring that assigned notional learning time and credit values are appropriate for the targeted learners and in line with the complexity of the learning outcomes.



Before a qualification can be registered on the LQF it must be specified using the *pro forma* below and later validated by the LQQC:

Qualification Specification						Section A
<b>Title</b>						
<b>LQF Level</b>					<b>Type</b>	
<b>Designation</b>				<b>Specialisation</b>		
<b>Qualification development type:</b>		New qualification		Review of existing qualification		
<b>Track</b>		General Education		TVET		Higher Education
<b>Qualification Award</b>		Certificate		Diploma		Bachelor
		Bachelor Honours		Master		Doctor
<b>Credit Value – (include methodology)</b>						
<b>Rationale:</b>						
<b>Purpose:</b>						
<b>Entry requirements:</b>						
<b>Access / inclusion statement:</b>						
<b>Progression pathways and articulation with other qualifications (if applicable):</b>						

**Qualification Specification (cont'd)**

**Section B**

**Qualification structure:**

<b>Mandatory</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Code</b>
Subjects / Units /Courses		
<b>Elective</b> Subjects / Units /Courses <i>(a list of courses relevant to the core courses from which a learner can pick to satisfy credit loading requirements)</i>		
<b>Optional</b> Subjects / Units /Courses <i>(a list of courses not necessarily related to the core courses from which a learner can pick to satisfy credit loading requirements)</i>		

**Rules of Combinations, Credit distribution and Joint qualifications (where applicable):**

Qualification Specification (cont'd)							Section C			
<b>Learning Outcomes</b>										
<b>Approach to learning</b> This will be included in the learning programme but may be included here for guidance.										
<b>Assessment structure, instruments and requirements, including moderation:</b>										
<b>Other information</b> –supplementary information to help the proposal to develop this qualification for LQF registration.										
<b>Code</b> (for LQF database)							<b>ID</b>		<b>Level</b>	
							0	0	0	0

**Note: Policy and Methodology including the criteria for the Validation of Qualifications should be developed.**

## 9.0 Programme Accreditation

When considering the design of a programme of learning, a clear distinction must be made between a programme and a qualification:

***A programme of learning is a course, curriculum, training package, units of study, or structured workplace learning that leads to the award of a qualification.***

Learning programmes might be used strategically to nest or align cognate qualifications and introduce new trans or multidisciplinary knowledge areas. More progressive formulations refer to programmes as a structured curriculum from which qualifications emerge.

The CHE Minimum Programme Accreditation Standards (available on the website at [www.che.ac.ls](http://www.che.ac.ls)), provide the full set of criteria that guide the accreditation process.

***Note: A Programme Design Manual aimed at developing, accrediting and registering LQF-aligned higher education programmes is available and operational. It should be read in conjunction with this Procedures Manual.***