QCTO Assessment Policy

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

Acronym	Description
AC	Assessment Centre
AIDB	Assessment Item Databank
ARPL	Artisan Recognition of Prior Learning
CAT	Credit Accumulation and Transfer
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
EISA	External Integrated Summative Assessment
ELO	Exit Level Outcomes
FISA	Final Integrated Supervised Assessment
NAMB	National Artisan Moderation Body
NLRD	National Learners' Records Database
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
QAS	Qualification Assessment Specifications
OQSF	Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework
QC	Quality Council
QCTO	Quality Council for Trades and Occupations
QP	Quality Partner
PoE	Portfolio of Evidence (for historically registered qualifications, provider qualifications or ARPL or RPL practices)
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SDP	Skills Development Provider
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SME	Subject Matter Expert
SoA	Statement of Achievements
SoR	Statement of Results
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Term	Description
Accountability	All relevant role-players must be able to provide evidence of the development and moderation of assessment tasks and processes, and these tasks and processes are aligned with SAQA's National Policy for Designing and Implementing Assessment as well as the sectoral policies derived from the National Policy
Accreditation	Means an official approval awarded to a Provider by a Quality Council to offer qualifications registered on the National Qualifications Framework.
Accredited Provider	Means a legally established institution (public or private) that has been recognised, usually for a particular period of time, by a Quality Council (QC) or its appointed agent, as having the capacity or provisional capacity to offer a qualification or part-qualification registered on the NQF at the required standard.
Act of dishonesty	A learner, SDP, Quality Partner or Assessment Centre engaging in dishonest acts during the assessment process, including acts that are identified before the final assessment, as well as acts that are identified during or after the final assessment.

Act of misconduct	Misbehaving, creating a disturbance or wilfully disobeying legitimate instructions that may have an adverse effect on other students, the assessment process or the outcome of the assessment.
Administrative error or omission	An assessment error of a technical or administrative nature where the learner or assessment official unintentionally fails to follow the prescribed administrative procedure with the result that information is omitted, something is not done or is neglected in any way that may cause the learner to be advantaged or disadvantaged as a result of this error or omission.
Apprenticeship	In line with the SDA, Act 97 or 1998, an apprenticeship means a learnership in respect of a listed trade and includes a trade-test in respect of the trade. In the context of the OQSF, an apprenticeship means a learning programme in respect of an officially listed trade or occupational qualification, which includes an EISA in respect of that trade or occupation.
Assessment	Means the process used to identify, gather and interpret information against the required competencies in a qualification or part-qualification or Skills Programme in order to make a judgement about a learner's achievement.
Assessment Assurance	A verification process that confirms that an assessment system is credible and that assessors and learners behave in an ethical way; and that assessments are fair, valid, reliable and practicable.
Assessment Body	A department of education or an entity accredited/delegated by a Quality Council to conduct external summative assessment and moderate site-based assessment for specified qualifications, part-qualifications, or prior learning.
Assessment Centre	A legally established institution (public or private) that has been recognised (accredited), usually for a particular period of time, by the QCTO, as having the capacity and provisional capacity to assess a qualification or part-qualification registered on the NQF at the required standard.
Assessment Criteria	The standards used to guide learning and assess learner achievement and/or evaluate and certify competence.
Assessment Irregularity	Any error, act or omission, or any alleged event, act or omission that may undermine or threaten to undermine the integrity, credibility, security or fairness of the assessment and final assessment process.
Assessment Practitioner	A Subject Matter Expert (previously known as a constituent registered assessor and or moderator) who has been appointed in accordance with established criteria to develop, conduct, assess, invigilate, mark or moderate the External Integrated Summative Assessment (EISA). The appointed facilitators for historically registered qualifications and Skills Programmes may also fulfil this role for FISAs.
Assessment Process	The conduct, management and administration of internal assessments by the SDP, as well as the final assessments that lead to certification (EISA and FISA).
Assessment Range	The full range of relevant competencies needed for a qualification, part-qualification, or skills programme is assessed in the final assessment.

Assessment Standards	Define the skills, knowledge, aptitude, cognitive abilities, performance and competencies which need to be displayed by each learner in a certain time frame during the final assessment, according to the Exit Level Outcomes.
Assessor	A person able to conduct high-quality internal and external assessment for specific qualifications, part-qualifications, or skills programmes. Appropriately qualified lecturers, teachers, educators, trainers, developers, moderators, chief markers, markers, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) specialists, and Credit Accumulation and Transfer officials are all examples of assessors.
Bias	Assessment practices that hinder or advantage particular learners or groups of learners. An absence of bias is sought, where all learners and educators are treated with equal respect and consideration regardless of social, economic, cultural, faith-based, ethnic, gender or other differences, and where disabled learners and educators are given appropriate support.
Blended learning	Learning and assessment based on a variety of modes, types, sites, outputs, contexts, platforms and other aspects including contact and technology-mediated learning, provided for in the qualification, part-qualification or skills programme that allows for such type (or variety of modes) of learning and assessment
Candidate	A citizen learner who resides in the Republic of South Africa or such foreign learner who has been permitted by law (e.g. valid passport and study permit) to undertake final assessments in the country.
Certificate	Means a document indicating formal recognition by the QCTO of an occupational qualification, part-qualification or skills programme awarded to a successful learner.
Continuous Assessment	Continuous assessment is used during skills programmes and is set by the SDP in accordance with the assessment criteria of each module in a contextualised manner.
Competence	The ability to put into practice in the relevant context, the learning outcomes acquired in obtaining a qualification, part-qualification or skills programme (competence encapsulates applied knowledge, practical and workplace competence).
Credibility	A respected process or product which results from a fair, valid, and reliable validation process designed to enhance the quality of a qualification, part-qualification or skills programme.
Credit accumulation	The totalling of credits required to complete a qualification, part-qualification or skills programme.
Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT)	Means the practice of accumulating credits from one or more cognate learning programmes in an institution and transferring those credits to be recognised towards a qualification/part-qualification or skills programme in the same or different institution.
Credit Accumulation and Transfer System	Means an arrangement whereby the diverse features of both credit accumulation and credit transfer are combined to facilitate life-long learning and access to the workplace.
Credit	Means a measure of the volume of learning required for a qualification or part-qualification, quantified as the number of notional study hours required for achieving the learning outcomes specified for the

	qualification or part-qualification. As a guide, one (1) credit is equated to ten (10) notional hours of learning. This may be different for the workplace component of the qualification.
Credit matrix	Means a system in which learning outcomes can be arranged and compared in levels of increasing complexity based on agreed groupings of credits, such as in modules/subjects or part-qualifications.
Credit transfer	Means the vertical, horizontal or diagonal relocation of credits towards a qualification or part-qualification registered on the same or different Sub-Framework.
Developer	A qualified and competent person appointed to develop, administer, and oversee a formal assessment, including a person appointed to develop assessment instruments (including rubrics, marking guidelines, and others). A developer may be an educator.
Educator	An inclusive term referring to teachers, lecturers, facilitators, assessors, moderators, and others teaching, educating, training, facilitating, assessing or enabling learning in learning contexts across the board.
Electronic Assessment	Also known as digital assessment, e-assessment, online assessment or computer-based assessment, is an assessment developed, distributed, completed and submitted in digital format through the use of information technology
Entry requirement	Means the minimum academic knowledge and practical competencies, and or work experience that a learner must have completed to be able to be admitted for a qualification and or part-qualification. This may include recognition of other forms of prior learning such as non-formal and informal learning and work experience deemed as comparable for entry. In the South African context, entry requirements also take into account the broad socio-political issues of access.
Entry requirement to EISA	Competence in all modules of all components of a qualification, part-qualification, confirmed by a Statement of Results issued to the learner, which is valid for a period of two years internally issue by the issuing authority. This SoR, together with a candidate's ID (or valid alternative ID) forms the permit to be allowed into the EISA session.
Entry requirement to FISA	Competence in all modules of the skills programme or historically registered qualification in order to complete the FISA.
Evaluation of learning	A process involving gathering evidence and making informed judgements about a learning programme, or module or component of a learning programme; or its curriculum, learning materials or assessment; or its impact on learners or society. Evaluation involves making a judgement about the worth, merit or impact of learning of a programme of learning.
Examiner	A qualified and competent person appointed to develop, administer, and oversee a formal assessment, including a person appointed to develop assessment instruments (such as exam papers, marking guidelines, and others). An examiner may be an educator.
Exit Level Outcomes	The knowledge, skills and attitudes that a learner should have obtained or mastered on completion of a qualification or part-qualification and against which the learner is assessed for competence.
External Integrated Summative Assessment (EISA)	A final external assessment developed by a qualified and competent person or body not directly involved in the development and/or delivery of the learning being assessed.

	The EISA is a final assessment which integrates the knowledge, practical and/or work experience to assess the competence of a learner against the stated exit level outcomes of an occupational qualification, or part-qualification.
Fairness	Learners are assessed on what they know and have been taught; where questions are set in relation to the cognitive and affective curriculum covered in the teaching and learning. In the case of Recognition of Prior Learning, there has been preparation for the competent mediation of the required knowledge and other competencies, and there is no bias towards any learners on the basis of social class, ethnicity, gender or disability.
Feedback	Specific reporting from the educator to the learner or between learners, on how they have performed in an assessment activity, regardless of the level of formality of the assessment activity. Feedback specifies what was done well, and why, and provides clear guidance regarding what is missing or still needs development in learners' texts, performances or demonstrations, in order to enhance learning.
Final Integrated Supervised Assessment (FISA)	Means a supervised final assessment for which assessment processes, tools, and results are recorded towards the achievement of a historically registered qualification (including provider-based qualifications) or skills programme, conducted under examination conditions with an invigilator/ assessor and moderator. These final assessments are decentralised.
Formal Assessment	Assessment for which assessment processes, tools, and results are recorded towards achievement of a qualification, part-qualification or skills programme.
Formal learning	Learning that occurs in an organised and structured education and training environment and that is explicitly designated as such. Formal learning leads to the awarding of a qualification or part-qualification or skills programme.
Formative Assessment	A range of formal, non-formal, and informal ongoing assessment procedures used to focus on teaching and learning activities to improve learner attainment.
Imposter	Any person who conducts or attempts to conduct the assessment on behalf of a registered learner.
Informal Assessment	Any judgements made or feedback given in the course of teaching and learning activities. Informal assessments may be in written or oral form but are not usually recorded.
Informal Learning	Learning that results from daily activities related to paid or unpaid work, family or community life, or leisure, including incidental learning.
Integrated Assessment	Assessment which involves all the differing types of assessment tasks required for a particular qualification, part-qualification or skills programme, such as written assessment of theory and practical demonstration of competence.
Integrity	Honesty and transparency in every part of the assessment process, including that assessment questions or tasks must be based on work actually covered; learners must at all times be honest about what they offer to be assessed; markers must strive to understand what is offered by learners for assessment, and to grade it fairly at all times; and

	moderators must moderate a fair sample of examples against a fair range of cases.
Internal Assessment	Any assessment conducted internally by a provider of learning. It is assessment conducted by a person, institution or body directly involved in the development and/or delivery of the learning being assessed.
Internal Summative Assessment	A final formal summative assessment conducted at the end of each module by the SDP to evaluate learning achievements relating to particular components of occupational qualifications, or part-qualifications These results are formally recorded and result in the issuing of the Statement of Results for entrance to the EISA (occupational qualifications and part-qualifications).
Invigilator	Any person appointed to supervise the written part or eAssesment of the final assessment to ensure absence of irregularities.
Item bank	A source of assessment tasks/questions specific to each category and/or sub-category from which assessment tasks/questions will be selected to construct the final assessment.
Learner	An inclusive term referring to anyone learning, including pupils, students, apprentices, interns, learners in learnerships, people doing training, and people learning non-formally and informally as well as people enrolled for particular qualifications or part-qualifications, and people learning in contact, distance, e-Learning and self-study contexts at all levels in the system.
Learning Outcomes	The contextually demonstrated end-products of specific learning processes, which include knowledge, skills and values.
Level Descriptor	A statement describing learning achievements at a particular level of the NQF that provides a broad indication of the types of learning outcomes and assessment criteria that are appropriate to a qualification or part-qualification at that level.
Logistic and administration procedures	Physical and other conditions under which assessments are conducted must not unfairly prejudice assessment activities and outcomes.
Marker	A suitably qualified person marking written scripts who is responsible for evaluating and grading learner answers; assessing the performance of learners based on predetermined criteria.
Mixed-mode or multi-modal learning	Learning that makes use of different learning sites and different forms of delivery including but not limited to face-to-face, distance and e-learning, and full-time, part-time, and block-release study.
Moderation	Internal and external verification that an assessment system is credible and that assessors and learners behave in an ethical way; and that assessments are fair, valid, reliable and practicable.
Moderator	A suitably qualified person who has been appointed in accordance with established criteria to ensure that the assessment instruments, learner scripts or evidence, and processes and procedures are fair, valid, reliable and unbiased.
Module	An assessed/assessable unit of learning with a defined outcome and associated credits.
National Learners Records' Database	Means the electronic management information system of the NQF under the authority of SAQA, which contains records of qualifications, part-qualifications, learner achievements, recognised professional bodies,

	professional designations and associated information such as registrations and accreditations.
National Qualifications Framework	Means the comprehensive system, approved by the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation for the classification, co-ordination, registration and publication of articulated quality-assured national qualifications and part-qualifications. The South African NQF is a single integrated system comprising three coordinated qualification sub-frameworks for General and Further Education and Training, Higher Education, and Trades and Occupations respectively.
National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act	Means the National Qualifications Framework Act (No. 67 of 2008), and any subsequent amendments of the NQF Act.
Notional hours of learning	Means the agreed estimate of the learning time that it would take an average learner to meet the defined learning outcomes; it includes consideration of contact time, research, completion of assignments, time spent in structured learning in the workplace, individual learning and assessment. Ten (10) notional hours equate to one (1) credit.
Occupational Curriculum	A statement of the training structure and expected methods of learning and teaching that underpin a qualification or part-qualification to facilitate a more general understanding of its implementation in an education system.
Occupational Qualification	The SDA defines an occupational qualification as “a qualification associated with a trade, occupation or profession resulting from work-based learning and consisting of knowledge unit standards, practical unit standards and work experience unit standards”. An Occupational Qualification means a qualification associated with a trade, occupation or profession developed and quality assured under the auspices of the QCTO and consisting of knowledge/theory and application (practical skills/work experience/simulated work experience) components and an External Integrated Summative Assessment.
Occupational Standards	Means statements of work performance that reflect the ability to successfully execute the functions of an occupation.
Outcomes	The contextually demonstrated end products of a specified learning process, which includes knowledge, skills and values. Outcomes could be generic or specific.
Part-Qualification	An assessed unit of learning with a defined outcome that is, or will be, registered as part of a qualification on the NQF.
Qualification	A registered national qualification consisting of a planned combination of learning outcomes which has a defined purpose or purposes, intended to provide qualifying learners with applied competence and a basis for further learning and which has been assessed in terms of exit level outcomes, registered on the National Qualifications Framework and certified and awarded by a recognised body.
Quality	Meeting the requirements of nationally agreed outcomes and performance/assessment criteria, thus facilitating both provision and monitoring.

Quality Assurance	The process of ensuring that specified standards or requirements for teaching, learning, education administration, assessment and the recording of achievements have been met.
Quality Council (QC)	Means one of the three councils tasked with developing and managing one of the Sub-Frameworks of the NQF in order to ensure that agreed quality standards are met. These Quality Councils are Umalusi for the GENFETQSF; the CHE for the HEQSF; and the QCTO for the OQSF.
QCTO	The Quality Council for Trades and Occupations established in terms of the NQF Act 67 of 2008
Quality Partner	A body recognized by the QCTO and working in collaboration with the QCTO through a signed Service Level Agreement, to perform quality assurance functions for qualifications and part-qualifications within the Occupational Qualification Sub-Framework.
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	Means the principles and processes through which the prior knowledge and skills of a person are made visible, mediated and assessed for the purposes of alternative access and admission, recognition and certification, or further learning and development.
Reliability	The overall consistency of a measure. A measure is said to have high reliability if it produces similar results under consistent conditions. In assessment, reliability refers to the extent to which, in similar contexts, the same assessment-related judgements can be made.
Replicability	The extent to which assessment can be repeated and lead to comparable results in comparable settings.
Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA)	Means a Sector Education and Training Authority established in terms of section 9(1) of the Skills Development Act to perform functions set out in section 10 of this Act.
Sensitivity to language	Care taken to ensure that language does not become a barrier to learning; especially for qualifications at NQF levels 1 and 2.
Simulated work experience	Means learning achieved through exposure and interactions gained through a simulated workplace environment that a learner has to complete towards the achievement of a qualification or part-qualification registered on the OQSF.
Site-based assessment	Assessment tasks developed and administered on-site by educators at the place at which tuition is offered.
Skills Development Act	Means the Skills Development Act (No. 97 of 1998).
Skills Development Provider	Means a legally established institution (public or private) that has been accredited, usually for a particular period, by a QC or its appointed agent, as having the capacity to offer a qualification or part-qualification registered on the NQF at the required standard. The SDA defines a skills development provider as a provider of occupational learning.
Skills Programme	Chapter 5 of the SDA, Act 97 of 1998 defines a skills programme as a "skills programme that is occupationally based and when completed will constitute/contribute a credit towards a qualification registered on the NQF."
Standard	Means the set criteria, norms and model that are prescribed.

Summative Assessment	Assessment conducted at the end of sections of learning, or at the end of a whole learning programme, to evaluate learning achievements related to a particular qualification, part-qualification or skills programme.
Supervised Assessment	The Final Integrated Supervised Assessment (theory and/or practical) conducted by the SDP for historically registered qualifications or Skills Programmes in a supervised manner under examination conditions with an invigilator/ assessor and moderator.
Statement of Achievement	A Statement of Achievement may be issued to the SDPs by the Quality Partner to the learners upon receipt of approved results from the QCTO.
Statement of Results	A statement of results of all learning for which a learner is enrolled or which the learner has completed that is issued by an authorised issuing organisation.
South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)	The Qualification's Authority contemplated in Chapter 4 of the NQF Act, No. 67 of 2008.
Sub-Framework of the NQF	One of three coordinated qualifications' Sub-Frameworks which make up the South African NQF as a single integrated system, namely: the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-Framework (GEFETQSF), the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF), and the Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework (OQSF).
Subject Matter Expert	An inclusive term referring to an individual with extensive knowledge and expertise in a specific area or field, often sought after for their insights and guidance in that particular field.
Trade	Means an occupation contemplated in section 26B of the Skills Development Act for which an artisan qualification is required.
Transparency	The extent to which the assessment criteria and processes are known, visible to, and understood by learners and the various role-players in the assessment process.
Validation	Any assessment-related activity or practice which relates to the credibility of the assessment by confirming that the assessment is assessing what it is meant to assess.
Validity	The extent to which the assessment measures what it has been developed to measure. Validity is about the appropriateness, usefulness and meaningfulness of assessment procedures, methods, instruments, and materials. Assessment is valid when assessment tasks actually test the knowledge and skills required for defined competencies and learning outcomes.
Verification	Confirmation that final results awarded to a learner are accurate and authentic. QCTO's process for externally checking assessment and moderation processes which lead to the approval or rejection of assessment results, as well as the development of EISA and FISA instruments according to set standards
Work Experience	Means the exposure and interactions gained through being in the workplace.

Workplace-based Learning	Means the learning achieved through exposure and interactions required to practice, gained while integrating the knowledge, skills and attitudes required in the workplace.

1 PREAMBLE

The Quality Council for Trades and Occupations is responsible for setting occupational standards, and for quality assuring provisioning, assessments and certification of qualifications registered on the OQSF of the NQF.

The QCTO is therefore responsible for the assessment assurance of the following:

- Occupational Qualifications
- Occupational Part-Qualifications
- Legacy Trades
- Legacy full qualifications
- NATED Report 190/191 programmes, as well as
- Skills programmes recorded with the QCTO

The QCTO's assessment objective is to promote the development and implementation of final assessments which give a reliable indication of learner achievements; and indicate a consistent level of attainment, including over time, between comparable assessments. By implementing and regulating final assessments, the QCTO also has the public objective of promoting confidence in the achievement of qualifications registered on the OQSF.

To achieve this objective, the QCTO will ensure that relevant standards for final assessments for all qualifications registered on the OQSF as well as Skills Programmes are implemented for assessment activities including but not limited to the development of assessment instruments. The QCTO monitors the quality of the final assessment as well as moderation practices and credibility of assessment processes in order to approve learner achievements for certification.

For the post-school system, strengthening final assessment systems for national qualifications has become a priority.

2 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to describe acceptable approaches, methodologies and suitable strategies for the assessment of all qualifications, and part-qualifications registered on the OQSF, as well as skills programmes. In selecting an appropriate assessment strategy, consideration is given to these characteristics: credibility, fairness, integrity, reliability, replicability, transparency, validity and absence of bias.

The purpose of this policy is also to set minimum standards and provide guidance for effective, valid, reliable, fair, transparent and suitable assessment that has integrity. An approach which focuses on assessment for learning, competencies gained by learners, and clear learning outcomes are key parts of this context.

This policy seeks to:

a) Be enabling, by providing sufficient information, guidance and clarity that makes possible its implementation in the spirit intended;
b) Facilitate differing sectoral approaches in a way that is not restricting of innovation but that is aligned with NQF principles and international best practice;
c) Provide the dimensions of a holistic approach to assessment for learning, and key aspects of final assessment to make the requirements visible;
d) Clarify the assessment-related roles of Quality Partners, education and training providers (Skills Development Providers), Assessment Centres and all role-players involved in assessment, with respect to qualifications, and part-qualifications registered on the OQSF and skills programmes; as well as to
e) Ensure alignment regarding the systemic monitoring, evaluation and quality assurance of assessment towards a single national quality assurance framework for qualifications, and part-qualifications registered on the OQSF and skills programmes.

The QCTO is responsible for the quality assurance of the final assessment process and will do so in collaboration with its Quality Partners, as per assessment functions outlined in the signed Service Level Agreement (SLA) and roles as stated within this policy.

The final assessment of a qualification registered on the OQSF and a skills programme is intended to ensure that final occupational competence.

3 LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The QCTO was established in 2010 in terms of Section 26G of the Skills Development Act, of 1998 as a juristic person. This policy provides for the implementation of final assessments as per its quality assurance mandate provided for in the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act, no. 67 of 2008 (and any subsequent amendments of the NQF Act). This Act provides the overarching context in which all regulation takes place.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- QCTO OQSF Policy (2021)
- QCTO's RPL Policy (2021)
- QCTO Accreditation Policy
- QCTO Quality Assurance Policy
- QCTO Certification Policy
- SAQA's *National Policy and Criteria for Designing and Implementing Assessment for NQF Qualifications and Part-Qualifications and Professional Designations in South Africa (Reprinted: March 2017)*

Assessments for the N4 – N6 NATED Report 190/191 programmes must be managed and conducted by the DHET as per *The National Policy Pertaining to the Conduct, Administration and Management of the Examinations of Colleges, established, declared or registered in terms of the Continuing Education and Training Act, 2006 (Act no. 16 of 2006)*.

4 SCOPE AND APPLICATION

This policy applies to:

a) Accredited Skills Development Providers (SDPs).

b) Accredited Assessment Centres (ACs), including accredited Trade Test Centres (TTCs).
c) Quality Partners (QPs).
d) The assessment of all qualifications and part-qualifications registered on the OQSF, as well as skills programmes.
e) Assessment Practitioners
f) Candidates

5 POLICY STATEMENT

5.1 Broad principles

5.1.1 Assessment is integral to curriculum; curriculum together with assessment is integral to the quality of qualifications, part-qualifications and skills programmes and the extent to which qualifications articulate with each other.

5.1.2 The form of any assessment is related to its outcomes and the purpose of the qualification, part-qualification or skills programme.

5.1.3 Adherence to the following assessment principles and practices is key:

a) Accountability;
b) Absence of bias;
c) Ensuring assessment range is assessed;
d) Compliance to assessment standards;
e) Proven competency to relevant outcomes;
f) Credibility;
g) Acceptable moderation practices for internal and final assessments;
h) Fairness;
i) Integrity;
j) Reliability;
k) Replicability;
l) Sensitivity to language;
m) Transparency; and
n) Validity.

5.1.4 Equal assessment opportunities for all learners regardless of their ethnicity, age, gender, culture, disability, social class, language or any other contextual features

5.2 Quality assurance of Internal and Final Assessments

The quality assurance of assessments may be understood as the combined measures that are established to verify that there are processes and procedures in place which, when effective, ensure the quality and efficacy of the QCTO's assessment standards for all qualifications registered on the OQSF and skills programmes.

5.2.1 Internal Assessments (conducted by accredited SDPs)

a) These are developed and conducted according to the Assessment Criteria and Associated Assessment Criteria in the registered qualification and occupational curriculum for occupational qualifications and part-qualifications, and the outcomes provided in skills programmes.

b) Internal assessments may be done using a variety of methods, e.g. formative assessments, tests, case studies, assignments, briefs, projects, etc.

c) There must be a valid internal Quality Assurance and verification process for all internal assessments conducted, which includes assessment plans, marker and moderator reports, and checks in place for recording of results.

d) Summative assessments must be completed for each module and recorded by the accredited SDP.

e) Statements of Results for occupational qualifications and part-qualifications are issued by the SDP when a learner successfully completes a modular component/s of an occupational qualification and part qualification. The Statement of Results is also a compulsory entry requirement to the EISA.

f) Proof of all internal assessments must be kept by the SDP until the learner has been certified, and may thereafter be disposed of or stored digitally, provided all relevant internal summative results have been recorded for historic purposes.

5.2.2 Final Assessments

a) Final assessments are developed and conducted externally for all occupational and part-qualifications registered on the OQSF, historic trades and the current NATED Report 190/191 programmes.

b) Final assessments are decentralised for all historically registered qualifications (other than trades), and skills programmes recorded with the QCTO.

c) Once implemented, the QCTO Assessment Item Databank (AIDB) will be a repository system for the development and distribution of assessment instruments for occupational qualifications and part-qualifications.

d) All final assessments must be developed and pre-moderated according to the relevant assessment standards.

e) A FISA for historically registered qualifications must be implemented (if not already), in conjunction with the usual Portfolio of Evidence that is externally moderated. Learners must be declared Competent in both these components.

f) A final assessment is also required for all OCTO skills programmes (FISA).

5.3 Electronic Assessments (e-Assessments)

e-Assessment, for the purposes of being regulated by the QCTO for qualifications, and part-qualifications registered on the OQSF and skills programmes., is the use of electronic systems for the development, operation and/or delivery of internal assessments conducted by accredited Skills Development Providers as well as the Final Integrated Supervised Assessment (FISAs) and External Integrated Summative Assessment (EISAs).

The QCTO encourages the modernisation of final assessments through the use of technology, in order to provide the flexibility to create innovative forms of assessment and to extend the ways in

which learners can demonstrate their competencies, without compromising on quality and QCTO compliance standards.

5.3.1 Principles for e-Assessments:

(a) Integrity, reliability and validity of e-Assessments must be upheld.
(b) Security of hardware and software, as well proctoring, must be of the highest standards for protection against corruptive influences.
(c) The remote proctoring on the system used, must include security mechanism to verify the identity of the learner, to uphold the principle of authenticity in assessments.
(d) Data integrity (output and input) must have been thoroughly tested to ensure that the system has sufficient capacity to retrieve, generate and share all necessary data.
(e) e-Assessment systems must be stable and work reliably to generate valid and reliable assessments and results and be easy to navigate.
(f) Systems must allow for flexibility in the light of technological development without compromising integrity.
(g) Systems must have suitable support facilities in place and have a contingency plan in place for any part of the system fail.
(h) The system used should not disadvantage any learners, and should be inclusive of differently-abled persons, or indicate by means of policies or procedures, how such learners will be accommodated.
(i) The use of a system must not create barriers for learners and ensure all stakeholders (assessment centres and candidates) find it user-friendly by familiarisation and/or training sessions provided for the appropriate use to the mode of delivery.
(j) Measures must be in place to ensure the effective management of business continuity to address business interruption and the need for disaster recovery for e-assessment services and systems, in the event of a system's failure.
(k) With the use of item banks, there must be a sufficient volume of assessment items to provide consistently secure, robust, balanced and unique on-demand assessment instruments, or appropriate to the form of assessment used.
(l) For the final assessments, there must be invigilator/monitoring procedures in place to ensure a secure assessment environment. The QCTO should have access to be able to monitor a session randomly,
(m) e-Assessments for the final External Integrated Summative Assessment (EISA) may only be implemented once an e-Assessment application has been submitted and approved by the QCTO.

5.4 Competency based Assessments

All final assessments are competency-based assessments. The evidence produced by the candidate will declare whether the learner has achieved the required occupational standards in order to work competently. This approach is used to produce competent, work-ready learners.

5.4.1 Competency standards for final assessments

a) Competency-based assessments are based on meeting occupational standards. This means that learners are assessed against a set standard or benchmark.

b) Competency-based assessments are based upon evidence demonstrated, produced or provided by the candidate and assessed in the final assessment.

c) Assessment standards are derived from learning outcomes.

d) Assessment standards guide the developers and moderators of final assessment instruments as to the requirements, specifications, guidelines and characteristics of the EISA/FISA upfront (as captured in the QAS Addendum or Skills Programme Document),

which ensure consistency with use, and that all developed instruments and processes are fit for purpose.

e) The expected level of competency to be displayed by the learners are the occupational standards derived from the Exit Level Outcomes and elaborates on the level of competence required to perform successfully in the relevant skill, occupation or trade.

f) QCTO's management of these assessment standards that are developed by industry Subject Matter Experts for the final assessment, as well as the evaluation of quality assurance processes throughout the final assessment process, forms the foundation for the approval or decline of final learner results.

g) Being declared Competent in the final assessment means that the successful candidate would have been able to perform at the expected skill level, respond and react well to unexpected or new situations, and fulfil the expected role in the workplace confidently by applying acquired skills, knowledge and experience.

5.4.2 Competency standards for internal assessments

a) Accredited SDPs should have well-designed relevant learning resources and explicit formative and summative assessment strategies, to prepare learners for the EISA or FISA.

b) Summative results for all modules must be recorded, and evidence of quality assurance processes conducted must be in place.

5.4.3 Criterion and/or norm referenced assessments

a) Norm-referenced assessments are designed to compare a learner's performance against their peers (a larger group), often at a national level, whereas Criterion-referenced assessments focus on the attainment of specific objectives or criteria; these assessments provide a clear picture of what a learner has mastered and what areas need improvement.

b) The most commonly recognised form of assessment is the norm-reference assessment method which indicates how one learner has performed in relation to another learner.

c) Norm-referenced assessments aim to sort and rank learners, whereas criterion-referenced assessments are more concerned with whether a learner has achieved specific learning objectives.

d) The QCTO is moving away from norm-referenced assessments, towards an approach in which a particular learner is able to display the required level of skill or capabilities (Criterion-referenced), irrespective of the other learners' performance, based on a competency assessment.

5.5 Content of Assessment

The content of assessment is informed by its purpose, as a systematic method of gathering evidence regarding the desired knowledge, skills and values.

Assessment of occupational competence shall be guided by the principle of authenticity. Occupational qualifications are intended to certify a learner's ability to perform the functions of an occupation and, therefore, assessment methods must reflect the realities of workplace performance. The selection of assessment approaches should be informed by the nature of the occupation, the competencies being assessed and the complexity associated with the relevant NQF level. Accordingly, assessment may take different forms across occupations and qualification levels,

provided that the chosen approach enables learners to demonstrate the integrated application of knowledge, practical skills, experience, judgement and decision-making required in the workplace. The determination of the most appropriate and authentic form of assessment should be informed by industry and Subject Matter Experts, while ensuring compliance with the assessment principles and practices as stipulated under section 5.1.3 and fitness for purpose.

When deciding the content of the assessment, the following aspects need to be considered:

5.5.1 In deciding the scope of any assessment, the following aspects must be covered from the curriculum document: relevant knowledge, skills and values; relevant levels of cognitive challenge and complexity as found in the curriculum document.

5.5.2 Assessment requires the candidate to demonstrate a range of competencies such as the following, all of which are covered over the duration of the qualification, part-qualification and skills programme:

a) The reproduction of knowledge, skills and values (formative assessment)

b) Application of knowledge, skills and values in known settings (summative assessment)

c) Application of knowledge, skills and values in new contexts (integrated assessments); and

d) New ways of doing based on application and development of knowledge and skills, and evidence of deep analysis, synthesis and understanding that enables making new connections (EISA (including a trade test) or FISA).

5.5.3 During training, assessment is used to facilitate learning. This kind of assessment – continuous assessment in various forms, with instruction, learner engagement and facilitator or peer feedback is adopted wherever feasible and appropriate.

5.6 Components of the final assessment

5.6.1 The number of components for the final assessment is indicated in the QAS Addendum for occupational qualifications and part-qualifications and in the Assessment Specifications section in the Skills Programme document.

5.6.2 For historically registered full qualifications, the FISA consists of 2 components: a final supervised assessment (which may be in any format), as well as the relevant Portfolio of Evidence.

5.6.3 The FISA for Skills programmes must assess the knowledge and skills acquired as per the FISA standard set in the Skills Programme document and is conducted by the accredited Skills Development Provider.

5.6.4 The EISA is conducted at accredited Assessment Centres. For ease of implementation, the Quality Partner may conduct the written component of the EISA (where relevant) at the accredited Skills Development Providers if accredited as an Assessment Centre to do so.

5.6.5 The final results for these components, if de-centralised, must be submitted in the format required to the Quality Partner for the submission of final results to the QCTO for approval.

5.9 Final Assessment Requirements

Irrespective of the type of final assessment, whether it is an EISA for occupational qualifications or part-qualifications, or a FISA for historically registered qualifications or skills programme, the following are requirements for a final assessment:

5.9.1 Learner enrolments must be submitted to the QCTO within 21 working days after enrolling for the qualification, part-qualification and 5 working days after enrolling for a skills programme, and on the first day of regulatory skills programmes in the format required by the QCTO. This also applies to candidates completing the RPL or ARPL process.

5.9.2 All learners qualifying for the EISA must be registered at least 3 months prior to the date of the EISA. All learners registering for an EISA, have to be enrolled learners (as per 5.9.1), whether via formal training or RPL/ARPL. Sample monitoring reports on the implementation of the curriculum or RPL/ARPL process must be in place. This will trigger compliance in terms of curriculum implementation monitoring before the scheduled EISA. This may be done either virtually or by means of visits. This monitoring, will, amongst others, monitor the following:

a) The quality of provisioning by qualified facilitators as per curriculum requirements.
b) Compliance to learner enrolments.
c) The quality of internal summative assessments conducted as well as the moderation thereof.
d) Internal quality assurance mechanisms used by the Skills Development Provider (SDP).
e) Recording of internal summative results which lead to the issuing of the Statement of Results.
f) Assessment processes and resources in place for learners with special educational needs.

5.9.3 All relevant documentation, (available on the QCTO website), in conjunction with the registered qualification (also available on the SAQA website), curriculum and Qualification Assessment Specification must be studied by the Quality Partner, accredited Skills Development Providers, accredited Assessment Centres, Subject Matter Experts, facilitators, learners and all assessment practitioners.

5.9.4 For all occupational qualifications and part-qualifications, final assessment standards are captured in the QAS Addendum, which is a blueprint for the development of the EISA. This is an internal QCTO quality assurance document for the assessment of occupational qualifications and part-qualifications that must be approved by the QCTO before the development of assessment instruments by the QP.

5.9.5 An exemplar and all final assessment instruments must be developed by the QP in accordance with the set standards in the approved QAS Addendum for applied knowledge and/or practical assessments, based on the Exit Level Outcomes of the qualification or part-qualification, providing evidence of competency in occupational related tasks.

5.9.6 For all historically registered qualifications, a Final Integrated Supervised Assessment (FISA) must take place before the usual external moderation on the Portfolio of Evidence (PoE) is done by the Quality Partner. During this practice, the external verifier appointed by the Quality Partner must also complete the required QCTO Report and submit this together with the usual documentation to the QP, which in turn, will submit the required documents to the QCTO. This final assessment, based on the application of the Exit Level Outcomes of the qualification, must be developed and conducted

by the accredited SDP, and internal moderation reports completed to this effect by the SDP. The QP may take a lead role in the standardisation thereof, or it may be de-centralised to the accredited SDP. The learner must be declared competent in both the FISA and the Portfolio of Evidence in order to be awarded the qualification through certification by the QP.

5.9.7 For all skills programmes, a Final Integrated Supervised Assessment (FISA) must take place in order for Competent learners to be certified by the QCTO. These assessments must be developed, managed and conducted by the accredited SDP in accordance with the 'Assessment Specifications' in the Skills Programme document. A databank of FISA Items/instruments is to be developed so that instruments are not re-used at the point of FISA. Assessment Items/Instruments must be validated and approved by the QCTO prior to being administered. All accredited SDPs must comply with the learner enrolment timeline to the QCTO and upload final results achieved together with the required QCTO Report (within 21 working days of the FISA conducted) in order for the QCTO to approve these results before certification.

5.9.8 Final learner results for the EISA must be submitted to the QCTO within 21 working days of the date of the EISA.

5.9.9 The QCTO reserves the right not to approve final results due to non-compliance to any quality assurance requirements which will affect the integrity of the final assessment. Certification of learners take place within 21 days after the final approval of results by the QCTO.

5.9.10 Final results are only allowed to be released to learners by the QP upon receipt of the formal "Approval (or Decline) letter" from the QCTO.

5.9.11 QPs must submit their EISA schedules for each academic year in advance to the QCTO. Once published, no EISA dates are allowed to be changed without approval by the QCTO.

Current historically registered qualifications, unit standards-based skills programmes and historic trades will continue to be quality assured in the manner as prescribed by the SETAs and NAMB respectively until the de-activation thereof, as per the *Ministerial Determination* dated 20 December 2020. Current quality assurance measures will apply until the last date of achievement. This also applies to the assessment procedures for NATED Report 190/191 programmes managed by the DHET.

5.10 Entry requirements to the final assessment

In order to qualify for entry to the EISA (full/part qualifications) or FISA (skills programmes) a learner must:

5.10.1 Learners must be enrolled or registered with an accredited Skills Development Provider or accredited Assessment Centre (including accredited Trade Test Centres), for either tuition or RPL purposes for a qualification, part-qualification or skills programme. Accredited Assessment Centres are only a requirement for the EISA, not for the FISA.

5.10.2 Be enrolled to the QCTO by the accredited SDP, or Quality Partner within 21 working days of commencing training, for qualifications and part-qualifications, and 5 working days after enrolments for skills programme.

5.10.3 Meet the entry requirements specified in the registered qualification, part-qualification or Skills Programme, when enrolling for tuition, or have been RPLed by the SDP or assessment centre, or Quality Partner as an RPL candidate.

5.10.4 Meet the competency requirements for all modules of the knowledge, practical and workplace (or application) components of the qualification, part-qualification or skills programme.

5.10.5 Meet the requirements and criteria for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL or ARPL), if applicable.

5.10.6 Present the SOR issued by the accredited SDP, accredited Assessment Centre or Quality Partner (in the case of RPL or ARPL), indicating successful completion of all compulsory modules as per rules of combination to the qualification, as well as the candidate's Identity Document at the EISA. For foreign learners, a valid study permit and passport must be presented.

5.11 Adherence to assessment assurance standards for final assessments

5.11.1 All quality assurance processes and standards set for approval of final assessments by the QCTO must be adhered to:

a) Timeous uploading of learner information.

b) Validation of Statements of Results issued.

c) Assessment instruments must be developed according to the set standards.

d) Validation and approval of final assessment instruments must be conducted prior to the session taking place.

e) Developer and Moderator Reports on the developed assessment instrument must be available.

f) Monitoring of EISA sessions must take place.

g) Monitoring of marking/practical assessment and moderation sessions must take place to ensure standardised marking and moderation.

h) Marker/Assessor and Moderator Reports on the marking and moderation done must be available.

i) Final learner results must be verified/quality assured before submission to the QCTO.

j) j) Timeous submission of final results for approval by the QCTO within 21 days.

k) All final assessments conducted must comply with these assessment standards for the completion of the QCTO Assessment Assurance Verification Report.

5.11.2 Development of final assessment instruments must be according to the following:

a) For registered full and part qualifications: The QAS Addendum grid as per the Exit Level Outcomes, based on the purpose and required occupational standards of the qualification for the EISA.

b) For historically registered qualifications: The Exit Level Outcomes of the historically registered qualification for the FISA.

c) For Skills Programmes: The assessment standards for the FISA as indicated in the Skills Programme document, as derived from the Exit Level Outcomes.

5.11.3 There must be adherence to acceptable invigilator, marking/assessor and moderation practices and standards at all times.

5.11.4 Irregularities, as well as any other forms of malpractice, must be dealt with as laid out in this policy

5.11.5 Recording and submission of final results must be done as per QCTO requirements.

5.11.6 Dissemination of final results to learners may be done only once approved by the QCTO.

5.11.7 Best practices amongst Quality Partners will be identified and shared as best practice models to be used to benchmark the management and conduct of final assessments.

5.11.8 Where the QCTO collaborates with a Quality Partner for the quality assurance of assessment functions, a Service Level Agreement will be signed.

5.11.9 The standards and requirements for final assessments as set by statutory professional bodies will be upheld and recognised as part of the overall quality assurance of final assessments.

5.11.10 The EISA and FISA instruments cannot be administered more than once. Therefore, it is necessary for a databank of instruments to be developed, validated and approved for administering.

5.12 Assessment Irregularities

5.12.1 Accredited Skills Development Providers and accredited Assessment Centres (including accredited Trade Test Centres), must have a valid accreditation letter and establish appropriate structures and guidelines to manage assessments and irregularities.

5.12.2 All final assessment irregularities (for both EISA and FISA) must be reported to the QP and the QCTO on the day of the irregularity, with specific reference to the nature and outcome of these irregularities.

5.12.3 Where the accredited Skills Development Provider conducts, marks and moderates any final assessment component, irregularities must be reported to the QCTO on the day of assessment.

5.12.4 Quality Partners must ensure that all irregularities are finalised before the submission of final results to the QCTO, where possible.

5.12.5 If the nature of an irregularity is such that it will not be finalised before the approval of results by the QCTO, the results of the relevant learner will be withheld, pending further investigation.

5.12.6 The following are regarded as irregularities, but not limited to:

a. Power Failure
b. Fire Alarm/emergency evacuation
c. Cheating/copying
d. Learners being rowdy during the assessment session
e. Administrative queries with the assessment instruments
f. Late arrival of learners / learners leaving early

5.13 Approval of Results

5.13.1 The QCTO approves final learner results to ensure that the learning that is specified in a qualification, part-qualification or skills programme or RPL route has been gained authentically by a candidate who is to be awarded the qualification, part-qualification or skills programme.

5.13.2 This activity is regulatory in nature and includes audit and monitoring strategies by the QCTO, but may also include other strategies such as verification, validation, and moderation processes that focus on whether appropriate judgements have been made about the level of achievement required to award a qualification.

5.13.3 The QCTO may also review accredited SDP internal assessments as well as Assessment Centre practices as the need arises.

5.13.4 Post-EISA/FISA monitoring will be conducted on QPs and SDPs who are not performing satisfactorily.

5.13.5 Any assessment quality assurance standard which is not satisfactorily complied with in any part of the process will be classified as non-compliance and a Decline Letter issued. Such non-compliance will be investigated by the QCTO and the necessary corrective actions must be put in place to ensure future compliance.

5.13.6 An Approval of Results letter will be issued by the QCTO for all results complying with the required assessment assurance standards.

5.13.7 Final quality assured, accurate learner results must be submitted to the QCTO for approval within 21 working days of the EISA conducted. Should this not be the case, an accompanying letter signed by the highest authority of the institution, motivating the delay of this requirement, must be submitted.

6 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following stakeholders are responsible for the implementation of the QCTO's Assessment Policy: Quality Partners (including NAMB), accredited Skills Development Providers, accredited Assessment Centres, assessment practitioners, and candidates.

6.1 Quality Partners

6.1.1 Quality Partners must ensure all functions as per the signed SLA between the QCTO and the QP are complied with.

6.1.2 Quality Partners must ensure EISAs are available for all registered qualifications (up to last date for achievement) allocated within their sector.

6.1.3 The Quality Partner is responsible for scheduling, administering, implementing, managing, and conducting final assessments (including marking/assessment and moderation practices).

6.1.4 Quality Partners will develop a management plan in conjunction with key strategies and persons involved in the external assessment process.

6.1.5 QPs must submit an EISA schedule to the QCTO for each full academic year, in advance, by the due date stipulated.

6.1.6 Required resources, including human resources, for the following must be available at the QP:

a)
a) Capacity and capability to plan, manage, and conduct final assessments.
b) Ensure all administrative practices/processes are in place.
c) Resources for the development, recording and moderation of assessment items (this includes assessment instruments and results).
d) Budget for the implementation, distribution and conduct of final assessments according to the published EISA schedule.
e) Capacity and capability for Quality Assurance of final results before submitting to the QCTO, including interrogation/investigation of all issues raised in Marker/Assessor or Moderator Reports.
f) Capacity and capability to Conduct Monitoring of EISA sessions at Assessment Centres.

6.1.7 Administrative processes and procedures must support the following functions:

a) Management Plans for final assessments.

b) Development of QAS Addenda for qualifications and part qualifications and assessment standards for Skills Programmes.

c) Developing a databank of assessment instruments in accordance with the required standards.

d) Accurate recording of final learner results.

e) Verifying learner enrolments.

f) The completion and submission of relevant developer, moderation and monitoring reports for each EISA session are submitted timeously to the QCTO.

g) Ensure the completion and submission of required documentation for all EISAs and the FISA (historic qualifications).

h) Contingency and disaster recovery plans for scheduled EISAs.

i) Training of QP staff members, invigilators, assessors, markers, moderators, subject matter experts, etc. in collaboration with the QCTO.

j) Continuous improvement and development plans.

6.1.8 Human Resources must include the following:

a) Subject Matter Experts from relevant industries, that are content specific experts of the qualification, part-qualification and skills programme;

b) Administrative and support staff to support the management, conduct and invigilator functions of the final assessment. The assessor/invigilator and moderator may not be the same person involved in the training of the candidate.

6.1.9 Collaborate with the QCTO on the development of items for the Assessment Item Databank (AIDB), by appointing developers and moderators that are Subject Matter Experts.

6.1.10 Submit EISA Notifications to the QCTO timeously – at least 3 months before the scheduled EISA.

6.1.11 Quality assurance of final assessments, and all relevant evidence before submission to the QCTO within 21 working days from the date of the EISA.

6.1.12 Record final results in the manner prescribed by the QCTO.

6.1.13 Enter into partnerships to align final assessments to facilitate the achievement of occupational standards.

6.1.14 Support and monitor the development of stakeholders involved in providing final assessment and the extent of adherence to the QCTO's Assessment Policy in their institutions.

6.1.15 Provide candidate support in the form of:

a) Publishing exemplars and memoranda or marking guidelines in order for the candidate to see what can be expected from the final assessment. The items published in the exemplar must not be part of the Assessment Item Databank (AIDB), or used in any subsequent EISA sessions.

b) Publishing annual assessment dates (EISA Schedule).

c) Learners' required access to the final assessment and procedures of the Quality Partner.

d) Access to brochures, or information on the Quality Partner's website that may assist the candidate in preparing for the final assessment.

e) Access to information that can address final assessment related queries, concerns, appeals, costs, etc.

6.1.16 Ensure that there is an approved RPL mechanism/toolkit and process in place for RPL/ARPL candidates.

6.1.17 Ensure Assessment Centres have been accredited prior to the conduct of all EISA sessions.

6.1.18 Investigate and recommend SDPs and Assessment Centres not complying with relevant standards to the QCTO for de-accreditation.

6.1.19 Applications for concessions for any special needs must be submitted by the QP to the QCTO before the EISA is conducted.

6.1.20 Ensure the security and confidentiality of all final assessment instruments.
6.1.21 No final assessment instrument may be used verbatim for any other sessions.

6.1.22 For any Computer-based or on-line final assessments, the QCTO must approve the QPs' application for such beforehand.

6.1.23 Establish an appeal process for final assessment candidates to engage with final assessment related judgements.

6.1.24 Ensure an equitable fee structure for all final assessments.

6.2 Accredited Skills Development Providers and Assessment Centres (including accredited Trade Test Centres), conducting final assessments:

6.2.1 Accredited Skills Development Providers and Assessment Centres conducting final assessments on qualifications, part-qualifications and skills programmes must be accredited by the QCTO, and ensure they have the necessary staff capacity to provide quality final supervised assessment practices.

6.2.2 Accredited Assessment Centres (Trade Test Centres) for trade occupational qualifications must inform the QCTO of any EISAs taking place at least a month prior to the EISA.

Infrastructure requirements for Assessment Centres:
As per Qualification Assessment Specifications

6.2.3 Ensure learners are registered for the EISA prior to the session taking place.

6.2.4 The accredited SDP is responsible for conducting formative and summative internal assessments per module, as indicated in this policy.

6.2.5 The accredited SDP and Assessment Centre must have documented internal quality assurance practices for the quality of training, and all forms of assessment taking place.

6.2.6 Issue the candidate with a Statement of Results (SoR), following successful completion of all compulsory modules through tuition or RPL/ARPL, which indicates the candidate's competency in the achievement of all modules in all components of the qualification or part-qualification.

6.2.7 Provide guidance, support and counselling services to assist candidates prior to, during and after the final assessment process.

6.2.8 SDPs conducting FISAs for Skills Programmes must establish an appeals process for candidates to engage with final assessment related judgements.

6.2.9 Conduct the final assessment professionally and in accordance with assessment conditions by ensuring:

a) All final assessment instruments used have been pre-moderated and approved for each session.

b) There are sufficient invigilators (for written assessments) and assessors (for practical assessments) during assessment sessions and that they have received appropriate training.

c) Ensure that invigilators, markers, assessors and moderators used for the EISA or FISA were not involved with the training of the learners at all.

d) There are no cases of malpractice before, during and after the final assessment.

6.2.10 Implement and administer the final assessment according to set quality assurance requirements.

6.2.11 The security and confidentiality of assessment instruments must be a priority, by collecting all printed copies and the destruction thereof within 24 hours of the final assessment.

6.2.12 Record final results in the manner prescribed by the QCTO.

6.3 Assessment Practitioners

6.3.1 QAS Addenda developers, Developers of EISA and FISA assessment instruments, markers, assessors and moderators must be industry Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) with assessment experience, since they focus on compliance to the set assessment standards.

6.3.2 Assessment instruments or items must be developed in accordance to the set assessment standards.

6.3.3 Assessors and moderators of practical assessments must be subject matter experts, and in the case of trade occupational qualifications, must be qualified artisans, and registered with NAMB.

6.3.4 Moderators must check that developed assessment instruments or items are developed according to the required assessment standards, as well as the implementation of the QCTO's Assessment Policy.

6.3.5 Moderators must ensure that all assessment instruments or items are fit for use and purpose prior to the final assessment.

6.3.6 Moderators must attest to the authenticity of the assessment process.

6.3.7 Invigilators and administrators are not necessarily subject matter experts, since they focus on compliance by ensuring that:

a) All relevant assessment policies, procedures and guidelines required for the quality assurance of assessments are implemented.

b) The procedure for verifying the identity of candidates prior to the EISA/FISA session has been adhered to.

c) Candidates are timeously seated for the assessment according to a seating plan or to prescribed protocols.

d) The duration of the EISA session is not allowed to be extended nor shortened.

e) The secure handling of assessment evidence (whether in the format of written answer scripts and/or assessment products) is followed.

6.4 Candidates' responsibilities

6.4.1 Accept co-responsibility as a party involved in assessment processes, which means taking responsibility of all of the learner's parts of the assessment process.

6.4.2 Participate in assessment processes in an honest manner, displaying integrity at all times.

6.4.3 Monitor their own learning towards readiness to sit for the final assessment.

6.4.4 If required, to follow the appeals procedures of the Quality Partners or assessment institutions concerned.

6.5 QCTO (Quality Council for Trades and Occupations)

6.5.1 Oversee, support, monitor and evaluate the assessment-related work for the OQSF. Overseeing and Monitoring includes:

a) Facilitating the development of assessment standards in the QAS Addendum.

b) Evaluating assessment standards developed in Skills Programmes.

c) Ensuring assessment taking place is in line with the QCTO's Assessment Policy.

d) Ensuring quality assurance of all final assessment practices.
e) Evaluating and disseminating the development and implementation of best practice within final assessments taking place.

6.5.2 The QCTO will sample monitor the development, management and conduct of final assessments.

6.5.3 Maintain and develop QCTO's electronic Assessment Item Databank (AIDB) by:

a) Ensuring a large number of items are available in the database to ensure a variety of alternative assessment instruments for the final assessments.

b) Making every effort to ensure questions/tasks are set according the required cognitive level, and time allowed. The items developed must be in accordance with the standards captured in the QAS Addendum.

c) Ensuring that the nature of the task/question methodology prescribed in the QAS Addendum makes provision for the type of competencies (knowledge and skills) to be assessed.

d) Ensuring that a variety of items are developed according to each required competence outcome. This ensures that set assessment standards are complied with. The cognitive and complexity of each task/question developed will therefore be consistent to ensure reliable testing for all candidates completing the final assessment.

e) Confirming that all items developed are moderated before use to ensure adherence to the QAS Addendum and set standards.

f) Providing a system that will randomly select the number of questions/tasks to make up the total number of tasks/questions contained in the QAS Addendum.

g) Providing a system that will generate final assessment instruments.

6.5.4 Advise/Train relevant role players on the implementation of required assessment practices.

6.5.5 Monitor the performance of Quality Partners (QPs) in terms of:

a) Capacity, planning, monitoring and evaluation of QP functions with regard to final assessments.

b) Quality assurance of marking/assessment and moderation practices, administrative records and reporting.

c) Irregularities, complaints and appeals procedures, and ongoing feedback to the QCTO on these processes.

d) Any verification or audit processes implemented by the QCTO.

6.5.6 Monitor the performance of Quality Partners, accredited Skills Development Providers (SDPs) and accredited Assessment Centres with respect to assessments conducted.

6.5.7 Monitor and ensure the development of feedback mechanisms so that what emerges from assessment is fed into improving curricula and teaching practices.

6.5.8 Conduct sample moderation of N4-N6 question papers and memoranda.

6.5.9 The QCTO must satisfy itself that all quality assurance processes have been met, and provision made for effective implementation and monitoring of final assessments. The QCTO reserves the right to appoint an external moderator on any aspects of the final assessment process.

7 APPEALS

7.1 The notice of an appeal must state the grounds on which the candidate is seeking the appeal.

7.2 Appeals about the final assessment process by candidates should be lodged at:

(a) For legacy trade tests and EISAs for trade qualifications and part qualifications: The accredited Assessment Centre and NAMB
(b) For Skills Programme FISAs: Accredited SDPs and QCTO
(c) For all other EISAs: Quality Partner.

7.3 The above institutions are responsible for processing the appeal and informing the candidate of the procedure to be followed.

7.4 Where an appeal cannot be addressed to the satisfaction of all parties concerned, then the matter must be referred to the QCTO.

7.5 The QCTO maintains a register of all irregularities and appeals.

7.6 The QCTO Appeals Committee will make the decision on what recourse is required to settle the matter and recommend the matter to the QCTO Council for approval.

7.7 The QCTO Council's decision is final.

8 REPORTING

8.1 Reporting by the accredited institutions and Quality Partners must be done in the manner as prescribed by the QCTO.

8.2 Where learner results are not submitted to the QCTO within 21 days of the date of the EISA or FISA, the QCTO reserves the right not to approve these results for certification. However, in extreme cases, the QP, accredited Assessment Centre or accredited SDP (in the case of skills programmes), must notify the QCTO in writing, by the highest authority in the organisation, if this is not done, stipulating:

a) The reason for the delay.

b) The action plan in place to address the problem.

c) A timeframe by which the results will be submitted for approval.

d) Contact details of the person(s) accountable for the submission of results in the prescribed QCTO format.

8.3 Quarterly and Annual reporting by the QCTO on the achievement of its Annual Performance Plan targets in relation to the quality assurance of the final assessments of occupational qualifications and part-qualifications; historically registered qualifications; and skills programmes.

9 NON-COMPLIANCE WITH POLICY

Non-compliance with the provisions of this policy shall be dealt with in accordance with QTCO procedures and regulatory framework.

10 POLICY REVIEW

This policy must be reviewed every three years unless urgent review is required.