

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NOTICE 281 OF 2017**



Council for Quality Assurance in
General and Further Education and Training

**POLICY AND CRITERIA FOR THE QUALITY ASSURANCE, ACCREDITATION
AND MONITORING OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS AND PRIVATE
ASSESSMENT BODIES**

ISBN: 978-0-9947107-0-3

POLICY NOTICE OF 2017**GENERAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING QUALITY ASSURANCE ("UMALUSI")**

GENERAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING QUALITY ASSURANCE ACT, 2001 (ACT NO. 58 OF 2001)

APPROVAL OF THE COUNCIL FOR GENERAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING QUALITY ASSURANCE ("UMALUSI") POLICY AND CRITERIA FOR THE QUALITY ASSURANCE, ACCREDITATION AND MONITORING OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS AND PRIVATE ASSESSMENT BODIES

1. I, Professor John David Volmink (Chairperson), hereby, in terms of *sections 17A(2)(a) and 23(1) of the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, 2001 (Act No. 58 of 2001), and section 27(i) of the National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008 (Act No. 67 of 2008)*, approve the *General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Council ("Umalusi's") Policy and Criteria for the Quality Assurance, Accreditation and Monitoring of Independent Schools and Private Assessment Bodies*.
2. The document referred to in paragraph 1 is available on the Umalusi website: www.umalusi.org.za



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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

GFET	General and Further Education and Training
GFETQSF	General and Further Education and Training Qualifications <u>Sub-Framework</u>
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NSC	National Senior Certificate
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
QC	Quality Council
SASA	South African Schools Act

CHAPTER 1

DEFINITIONS, PURPOSE AND APPLICATION OF THE POLICY FRAMEWORK

The purpose of this glossary is to define the terminology used in developing this policy.

1. Definitions

In this **[document]** policy-

- (a) any word or expression to which a meaning has been assigned in the *National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008 (Act No. 67 of 2008)* and the *General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act 2001, (Act No. 58 of 2001)*, has the same meaning, unless the context indicates otherwise; and
- (b) the singular shall include the plural and *vice versa*-

“acknowledgement of receipt of application for accreditation” – means Umalusi has received a completed self-evaluation report from an independent school;

“accreditation” – means the outcome of a quality assurance process of evaluating-

- (a) a private assessment body to determine whether its capacity, systems, processes and products are of the appropriate quality to deliver valid, reliable, fair and credible assessments and**
- (b) an independent school to determine whether it has, in accordance with the policy and criteria for quality assurance as set out in this policy, the capacity to offer a qualification or programmes leading to a qualification on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework;**

“accredited provider” – means a legally established independent school that has been recognised by Umalusi Council as having the capacity or provisional capacity to offer a qualification or part-qualification registered on the GFETQSF at the required standard;

“assessment” - means the process of identifying, gathering and interpreting information about a learner’s achievement in order to-

- (a) assist the learner’s development and improve the process of learning and teaching; and
- (b) evaluate and certify competence in order to ensure qualification credibility. Assessment includes national examinations, end-of-term and/or once-off end-of-year examinations in order to ensure a national standard across providers;

“assessment body” - means a juristic body accredited by Umalusi Council to quality assure internal assessment and conduct external examinations, and includes a department of education;

“certification” - means the formal recognition by Umalusi Council of a qualification or part qualifications awarded to a successful learner;

“Council” – refers to Umalusi, the Quality Council for General and Further Education and Training; as contemplated in the *National Qualifications Framework, 2008 (Act No. 67 of 2008)*, and the *General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act 2001, (Act No. 58 of 2001)*;

“curriculum” - means a statement which encompasses three components: intended curriculum, enacted curriculum and assessed curriculum; curriculum framework and CAPS, and means the same as programme;

“examination centre” – means an independent school registered by the relevant Provincial Education Department and accredited by Umalusi, and registered by a public or accredited private assessment body as a venue for their candidates to write the National Senior Certificate examination or a centre other than an independent school registered and managed by a private accredited or public assessment body in line with Umalusi’s requirements as a venue for their candidates to write the National Senior Certificate examination;

“exit point” - means a point in General and Further Education and Training at which a learner is required to demonstrate competence with a view to obtaining documentary proof of proficiency;

“external assessment” - means assessment conducted by a public or accredited private assessment body, the outcomes of which count towards the achievement of a qualification;

“Further Education and Training” - means all learning and training programmes leading to qualifications from Levels 2-4 of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), which levels are above general education and training but below higher education;

“General Education and Training” - means all learning and training programmes leading to a qualification on Level 1 of the National Qualifications Framework, which level is below further education and training;

“General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-Framework” - means the Sub-framework of the NQF for General and Further Education and Training that is developed and managed by Umalusi;

“Head of Department” – means the head of a department responsible for education in a province;

“independent school” - means a school registered or deemed registered in terms of section 46 of the South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No. 84 of 1996);

“Internal assessment” – means any assessment, conducted by an education institution, the outcomes of which count towards the achievement of a qualification (section 1 of the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance (Act No. 58 of 2000));

“Letter of intent” – means the independent school or private assessment body’s indication of its intent to apply for accreditation as contemplated in paragraphs 11 and 18(2)(a);

“minimum outcomes and standards” as contemplated in the *National Curriculum Statement, Grades R–12*, published in *Government Gazette No. 34600* of 12 September 2011, and any other policies promulgated by the Minister pertaining to qualifications on the General and Further Education and Training Sub-framework of Qualifications and their provision;

“Minister” - means the Minister of Basic Education **[or Minister of Higher Education]**;

“National Senior Certificate” as contemplated in the policy **[document]**, *National policy pertaining to the programme and promotion requirements of the National Curriculum Statement, Grades R–12*, published in *Government Gazette No. 34600* of 12 September 2011;

“National Qualification Framework” (NQF) is a comprehensive system approved by the Minister of Higher Education and Training for the classification, registration, publication and articulation of quality-assured national qualifications (National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008 (Act No. 67 of 2008));

“pilot study” – means, within the context of this policy, a small sample study conducted within the jurisdiction of an independent school and private assessment body to be used by Umalusi with the aim of establishing whether these institutions have complied with their respective quality assurance requirements to be awarded accreditation;

“private education institution” as contemplated in the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, 2001 (Act No. 58 of 2001);

“processes and procedures for the assessment of learner achievement” as contemplated in the National Curriculum Statement, Grades R -12, published in Government Gazette No. 34600 of 12 September 2011;

“provisional accreditation” - means the granting of accreditation for a limited time to either an independent school or a private assessment body that has applied for accreditation to enable such independent school or private assessment body to comply with the requirements to offer or assess respectively a qualification or programmes leading to a qualification on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework;

“qualification” - means qualifications types and variants as defined on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-Framework

as contemplated in the National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008 (Act No. 67 of 2008);

“quality” – means meeting the set criteria, standards and requirements;

“quality assurance” - means the process of measuring, evaluating and reporting on quality against standards, and monitoring for ongoing improvement in the qualification, the curriculum/programme, the assessment, the implementation and delivery of the curriculum/programme and the capacity of the institution or assessment body to offer and/or assess the qualification;

“Quality Council (QC)” - means a Quality Council contemplated in *sections 24-27* of the *National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008 (Act No. 67 of 2008)*;

“registered qualification” - means a qualification registered on the National Qualifications Framework by SAQA in terms of *section 13(1)(h)* of the *National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008 (Act No. 67 of 2008)*;

“registered independent school” – means an independent school registered by the provincial department of education in which the school is located in terms of *section 51* of the *South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No. 84 of 1996)*;

“registration of an independent school” – means the process of registration that independent schools must undertake with Provincial Departments of Education in order to operate in South Africa in accordance with the requirements of the Constitution of South Africa and the *South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No. 84 of 1996)*;

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Government Gazette Staatskoerant

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA
REPUBLIEK VAN SUID AFRIKA

Vol. 622

7 April
April 2017

No. 40772

PART 6 OF 6



N.B. The Government Printing Works will not be held responsible for the quality of "Hard Copies" or "Electronic Files" submitted for publication purposes

ISSN 1682-5843



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“**requirements**” - means requirements as outlined in the *National Curriculum Statement, Grades R-12* and requirements established by this policy as determined by Council in respect of the quality assurance of independent schools and assessment bodies;

“**Umalusi**” – means, the Quality Council for General and Further Education and Training established by the *General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, 2001 (Act No. 58 of 2001)*. In terms of the *National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008 (Act No. 67 of 2008)*, it is tasked to support the achievement of the objectives of the NQF and to develop and manage the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-Framework.

2. Purpose of the policy

1. The *General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, 2001 (Act No. No. 58 of 2001)* enables Umalusi to-
 - (1) Develop policy and criteria for the quality assurance, accreditation and monitoring of private education institutions; including independent schools.
 - (2) Develop policy for the accreditation of assessment bodies other than departments of education and to submit it to the Minister for regulation.
 - (3) Monitor private and public assessment bodies in accordance with a set of regulated accreditation criteria.
2. In accordance with *sections 17A(2)(a)-(c), 23(1), 23(2) and 24(1)(b)* of the *General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, 2001 (Act No. 58 of 2001)*, the aim of this policy is to-

- (1) regulate the process for accreditation of an independent school or private assessment body seeking to offer a qualification registered on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework through a quality assurance process that may lead to accreditation. The aim is to establish whether such independent school has the capacity to offer and manage the quality of such a qualification and its related curriculum/programme and whether it implements the curriculum and its assessment at the required standard; or whether such private assessment body has the capacity, systems, processes and products of the appropriate quality to deliver valid, reliable, fair and credible assessments and examinations;
- (2) regulate the basis upon which, subject to the outcome of the accreditation process as contemplated in *sub-paragraph 1* above, Umalusi grants accreditation, provisional accreditation, no accreditation, or withdrawal of accreditation to the independent school or private assessment body that has applied for such accreditation;

3. Application of the Policy

- (1) This policy applies to-
 - (1) independent schools which are registered in accordance with the *South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No. 84 of 1996)* and offer qualifications which are registered on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework.

- (2) **[Public and]** private assessment bodies that **[manage]** quality assure formal internal assessment and conduct external assessment in accordance with the regulatory framework outlined in the national policies and regulations that govern the qualifications they assess. In the case of the National Senior Certificate these include-
- (a) National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12,
which comprises-
- (i) Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements for all approved subjects listed in the National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12;
- (ii) National policy pertaining to the programme and promotion requirements of the National Curriculum Statement Grades R – 12; and
- (iii) National Protocol for Assessment Grades R – 12;
- (b) Regulations pertaining to the National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12;
- (c) National policy pertaining to the conduct, administration and management of the National Senior Certificate examination; and
- (d) *Regulations pertaining to the Conduct, Administration and Management of assessment for the National Senior Certificate examination.*

- (2) In the event of a conflict between the *National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008 (Act No. 67 of 2008)*, the *Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act No 101 of 1997)*, the *Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act No 97 of 1998)* and the *General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, 2001 (Act No. 58 of 2001)*, the *National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008*, must be given preference.

CHAPTER 2

LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

4. Underpinning Legislation

- (1) The *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act No. 108 of 1996)* and the *South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No. 84 of 1996)* provides for the establishment of independent schools and public schools. Independent schools are required to register with the relevant provincial department of education.
- (2) The *National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008 (Act No. 67 of 2008)* provides for the establishment of Umalusi as a Quality Council that is responsible for the development and management of a Sub-framework of qualifications at Levels 1-4 of the National Qualifications Framework and the related quality assurance processes. The said *Act* determines that the Quality Council must, in respect of quality assurance within its Sub-framework, be responsible for the following-
 - (a) develop and implement policy for quality assurance;
 - (b) ensure the integrity and credibility of quality assurance; and
 - (c) ensure that quality assurance as is necessary for the Sub-framework is undertaken.
- (3) In order to determine and maintain the standard of qualifications in the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework, Umalusi as Quality Council must ensure the following-
 - (a) qualifications are registered on the National Qualifications Framework, and the General and Further Education and Training Sub-framework;

- (b) education institutions, including independent schools, that offer provision towards the achievement of such qualifications are quality assured and accredited to offer the curriculum/programme that support such qualifications;
 - (c) assessment bodies and systems that externally examine such qualifications are accredited to do so and monitored; and
 - (d) the conduct of national external examinations for qualifications on the sub-framework is monitored and moderated.
- (4) The *General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, 2001 (Act No. 58 of 2001)* assigns, in terms of *section 23(2)(a)* of the said *Act*, responsibility for the quality assurance of the independent schools and the accreditation to offer the curriculum/programme of a qualification on the General and Further Education and Training Sub-framework to Umalusi.

5. Functions assigned to Umalusi

In line with the aim of the *General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, 2001 (Act No. 58 of 2001)*, namely, to enhance the quality of general and further education and training, Umalusi was established with the purpose of maintaining norms and standards in General and Further Education and Training and as such its mandate is confirmed as follows-

- (1) developing and maintaining a sub-framework of qualifications for General and Further Education and Training;
- (2) quality assurance of all exit point assessment of such qualifications;
- (3) certification of learner achievements;
- (4) accreditation of private assessment bodies; and
- (5) quality assurance of independent schools and accreditation to offer a qualification and its associated curriculum/programme of a

qualification on the General and Further Education and Training
Sub-framework

- (a) Curriculum in this context means the underpinning policy provided for a qualification to facilitate a more general understanding of its implementation in an educational system and encompasses three components-
- (i) the intended curriculum: the documented curriculum for a qualification that provides a more detailed description in terms of the depth, breadth and level of difficulty and cognitive demand of what is required for the purpose of the qualification to be fulfilled. The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements for all approved subjects listed in the *National Curriculum Statement, Grades R-12* form an integral part of the curriculum;
 - (ii) the enacted curriculum: the delivery of the curriculum in an institution which includes leadership and management, the ethos and values, teaching and learning, extra-curricular activities, learner support, institutional performance and the management of quality towards improvement; and
 - (iii) the assessed curriculum: the internal assessment and the external examination of the intended curriculum.
- (b) The curriculum policy and its Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements for all approved subjects listed in the *National Curriculum Statement, Grades R-12*, provide the information necessary for the enactment of the curriculum in the institution and the necessary framework for assessment.

6. Supplementary documents

This policy must be read in conjunction with the following documents-

- (1) the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework, promulgated in Government Gazette No. 36006 of 14 December 2012, as amended in Government Gazette No. 36803 of 30 August 2013, and published on 8 September 2014;
- (2) Standard Setting and Quality Assurance of the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework, Umalusi, 2014;
- (3) A Policy for the Management of Qualifications on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Framework, a Sub-framework of the National Qualifications Framework;
- (4) policy and guidelines pertaining to the *National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12* which underpins the National Senior Certificate; and any other policy pertaining to a qualification on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Framework as applicable.
- (5) other related legislation as appropriate to the various education and training sectors Umalusi is mandated to work in;
- (6) the regulations pertaining to qualifications on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework that are developed by the Department of Basic Education and promulgated by the Minister on assessment and certification including those that are promulgated by provincial legislatures; and
- (7) any other relevant policies and directives issued by the Council.

CHAPTER 3**QUALIFICATIONS ON THE GENERAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING QUALIFICATIONS SUB-FRAMEWORK****7. Qualifications on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework**

- (1) In terms of *section 3* of the *National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008 (Act No. 67 of 2008)*, every qualification or part-qualification, offered in the Republic by education institutions, must be registered on the NQF in accordance with the said Act.
- (2) In accordance with the aim of the *National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008, (Act No. 67 of 2008)*, Umalusi's mandate is limited to qualifications and part qualifications which are registered on the Sub-framework of qualifications for General and Further Education and Training at Levels 1-4 of the NQF.
- (3) The qualifications and part-qualifications are used as benchmarks of quality in the education and training system. Standards are embedded in qualifications, their related curricula/programme and assessment requirements, and in the type and extent of knowledge, skills and competence that the learner is expected to acquire as expressed in these documents.

CHAPTER 4**QUALITY ASSURANCE OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS****8. Quality Assurance Process**

(1) Umalusi Council is required to quality assure independent schools which means that such schools are required to participate in a process that measures against standards, the school's capacity to deliver a qualification and its supporting curriculum/programme, and the quality of the implementation of such, at the required standard.

(3) If the institution meets the standards as contemplated in sub-paragraph (1), the institution is accredited to offer the specific qualification registered on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework.

(4) Continued meeting of the standards, as contemplated in sub-paragraph (1), is monitored for ongoing improvement.

[20. Umalusi may withdraw accreditation if the independent schools if the independent school is found to be non-compliant with the requirements of this policy.]

[21. Quality assurance of independent schools is carried out through processes that include:

(1) expression of interest to seek accreditation to offer a qualification on the sub-framework;

- (2) self-evaluation by the institution to enhance an internal culture of quality management and ongoing improvement;
- (3) A desktop evaluation by Umalusi of the self-evaluation report;
- (4) external validation to ensure that the independent schools meet the regulated criteria, national policy and regulations and to ensure a bench marked standard of provision and school improvement;
- (5) granting of accreditation or provisional accreditation or no status by Umalusi; and
- (6) monitoring to ensure maintenance of standards and continued improvement.]

9. Quality Assurance of Independent Schools

- (1) The criteria for the accreditation of independent schools, as contemplated in Chapter 6 of this **[document]** policy, are intended to assess, *inter alia* the effectiveness of the implementation of the curriculum/programme of a qualification on the Sub-framework and includes its internal assessment.
- (2) Based on the outcome of the quality assurance process as contemplated in paragraph **2[1](2)** of this **[document]** policy, and subject to the compliance with the criteria for accreditation contemplated in *Chapter 6* of this policy, accreditation may be granted to an independent school by Umalusi.
- (3) Compliance with the criteria for accreditation of independent schools, is determined through a desktop evaluation by Umalusi of a self-evaluation report with supporting evidence provided by the

accreditation applicant. The desktop evaluation is followed up with a verification site visit to the independent school.

- (4) Compliant independent schools are accredited to offer the *National Curriculum Statement, Grades R-12*-leading to a qualification on the General and Further Education and Training Sub-framework of qualifications and the related curriculum/programme **[for a period of seven years]** and are subject to **[biennial]** monitoring to ensure improvement and maintenance of standards.
- (5) Independent schools that are granted provisional accreditation are required to address areas of partial compliance within a period not exceeding **[one year]** two years.
- (6) The official register of accredited independent schools is available on Umalusi's website.

CHAPTER 5

THE REGISTRATION AND ACCREDITATION OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

[22. Independent schools are required to obtain interim registration with the Provincial Departments of Education before applying for accreditation with Umalusi. Independent schools that receive interim registration must apply to Umalusi for accreditation within two months after interim registration has been granted by the relevant province. Accreditation is considered within a period of one year after the date of receipt of the application for accreditation. Once an independent school has been accredited Umalusi will recommend it for final registration. Recommendation for final registration is informed by the accreditation of the independent school to offer qualifications registered on the General and Further Education and Training sub-framework of qualifications.]

[23. Provincial Departments of Education are required to register independent schools in accordance with the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act No. 108 of 1996)* and in terms of *section 46(1) of the South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No. 84 of 1996)*. Independent schools are only able to operate legally in South Africa subject to registration by the relevant Provincial Department of Education.]

10. Registration process

(1) Independent schools are only able to operate legally in South Africa subject to registration by the relevant Provincial Department of Education.

- (2) Registration of independent schools in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act No. 108 of 1996) and in terms of section 46(1) of the South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No. 84 of 1996) by Provincial Departments of Education is a pre-requisite for accreditation by Umalusi.
- (3) Independent schools must, subject to sub-paragraph (2), obtain registration in terms of the conditions as determined by the Provincial Department of Education, before applying for accreditation with Umalusi.

11. Accreditation process

- (1) Independent schools offering a qualification on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework that received registration, as contemplated in paragraph (10)(1), must apply to Umalusi for accreditation within **one year** after registration.
- (2) Accreditation is considered within a period of **one year** after the date of receipt of the application for accreditation.
- (3) Once an independent school has been informed about the outcome its application for accreditation, Umalusi will advise the Head of Department of the relevant Provincial Department of Education on the outcome of the application of the independent school for accreditation.

12. Accreditation process criteria

Quality assurance of independent schools is carried out through processes that include-

- (1) application for accreditation to offer a qualification on the Sub-framework;
- (2) self-evaluation by the independent school to enhance an internal culture of quality management and ongoing improvement;
- (3) a desktop evaluation of the self-evaluation report;
- (4) external validation to ensure that the independent schools meet the regulated criteria, national policy and regulations and to ensure a bench marked standard of provision and school improvement;
- (5) granting of accreditation or provisional accreditation or no accreditation by Umalusi; and
- (6) periodic monitoring to ensure maintenance of standards and continued improvement.

13. The conduct of external assessments by independent schools

- [24. In order for an independent school to conduct external assessments for a qualification on the General and Further Education and Training Sub-framework such a school, besides being registered as a school and accredited to offer a registered qualification, must also be registered as an examination centre with an accredited private assessment body or the state.]
- [25. Independent schools must be accredited to offer a qualification on the General and Further Education and Training Sub-framework of Qualifications before they are registered as examination centres with the relevant public or accredited private assessment bodies. The registration of independent schools as examination centres is determined by the fulfillment of Umalusi's requirements for accreditation and the requirements of the assessment body which is either the state or a private assessment body accredited by Umalusi.]
- [26. Institutions offering the National Senior Certificate or Senior Certificate as a second chance opportunity to unsuccessful Grade 12 learners must ensure that they have been accredited by Umalusi and that their institutions have been registered by the Provincial Departments of Education as independent schools. These institutions must also be registered as examination centres with either an accredited private assessment body or the state.]
- (1) In order for an independent school to conduct external assessments for a qualification on the General and Further Education and Training Sub-framework, such a school must be-

-
- (a) registered as a school in terms of Section 46 of the South African Schools Act, 1996;
- (b) accredited by Umalusi to offer a registered qualification; and
- (c) registered as an examination centre with an accredited private assessment body or the relevant Provincial Education Department.
- (2) Subject to sub-paragraph (3), independent schools must be accredited to offer a qualification on the General and Further Education and Training Sub-framework of Qualifications before they are registered as examination centres with the relevant public or accredited private assessment bodies.
- (3) The registration of independent schools as examination centres is determined by the fulfillment of Umalusi's requirements for accreditation and the requirements of the assessment body which is either the relevant Provincial Education Department or a private assessment body accredited by Umalusi.

CHAPTER 6
CRITERIA FOR THE QUALITY ASSURANCE, ACCREDITATION AND
MONITORING OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

14. Minimum standard of compliance for accreditation by independent schools

The set of criteria for the accreditation of independent schools, constitutes the minimum standard that independent schools are expected to comply with. The standard is evaluated in three inter-related areas, namely:

- (1) Input criteria focus on the standard of input factors which include management and leadership, resources and all other enablers of a conducive environment for effective teaching and learning.
- (2) Process criteria are used to assess the effectiveness of internal quality management and standards of curriculum implementation and assessment as well as any other processes that are intended to lead to the achievement of the school's stated goals.
- (3) Output criteria focus on the quality of assessment outcomes or results as well as other indicators of success.

15. Criteria for the accreditation of an independent school to offer a qualification on the General and Further Education and Training Sub-framework

The criteria for the accreditation of an independent school to offer a qualification on the General and Further Education and Training Sub-framework are as follows-

(1) Criterion 1: Leadership, management and communication

- (a) The school's leadership is instructive and provides strategic direction and governance oversight based on acceptable practices.
- (b) The school is sufficiently resourced and sustainable.
- (c) The management strategies, policies and processes are effective in facilitating the achievement of the school's stated objectives and national objectives, and in raising school performance.
- (d) The management leads, monitors and continuously improves the capacity of the school as well as the quality and standard of the implementation and delivery of the curriculum/programme.
- (e) School resource, financial and management records, as well as learner records are comprehensive, authentic and reliable.
- (f) The school leadership and management consult and communicate effectively with all stakeholders in respect of strategic and management related matters.

(2) Criterion 2: School ethos

The school gives expression to an ethos that promotes and is not in conflict with the values of the South African Constitution and displays values that reflect the specific character of the school, as articulated in the school's vision and mission statement, with specific attention to safety and discipline as required in the *South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No. 84 of 1996)*.

(3) Criterion 3: Teaching and learning

- (a) The school is professionally staffed to support the qualifications it offers.
- (b) The school implements the curriculum/programme and assessment requirements at the required standard and in accordance with the policy requirements of the qualifications registered on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework.
- (c) The school provides appropriate learner support.
- (d) The school manages and conducts internal continuous assessment of an acceptable standard and provides developmental feedback to learners.
- (e) Where appropriate, the school is registered as an examination centre that undertakes external assessment in compliance with the directives of the national policy that governs the qualification, policies and directives of Umalusi Council and the relevant assessment body.
- (f) An appropriate and developmental extra-curricular programme is implemented.

(4) Criterion 4: School Results

The quality of school performance is evaluated and used to inform continuous improvement in the quality of provision with specific reference to the quality of learner achievements and assessment outcomes, and stakeholder satisfaction levels.

CHAPTER 7

QUALITY ASSURANCE OF PRIVATE ASSESSMENT BODIES

16. Accreditation requirement

- (1) In terms of *section 17A(2)(a)* of the *General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, 2001 (Act No. No. 58 of 2001)*, the Council must develop policy for the accreditation of assessment bodies other than the departments of education for Ministerial approval.
- (2) Subsequent to *paragraph 16(1)* above, the Minister must in terms of *section 17A(2)(b)* of the said *Act* make regulations in which the policy for accreditation is set out and in accordance with these regulations the Council must accredit a private assessment body.

17. Accreditation status

- (1) Private assessment bodies are required to obtain accreditation with Umalusi to assess a qualification on the General and Further Education and Training Sub-framework of Qualifications.
- (2) Accreditation is granted to a private assessment body if such assessment body-
 - (a) has the capacity to manage or coordinate national examinations and assessment of learner achievement in respect of qualifications it offers. Private assessment bodies must demonstrate the capacity to conduct, administer and manage national examinations and assessments of learner

achievement in respect of qualifications they offer as stipulated in the Directives of Umalusi; and

- (b) assesses a qualification on the General and Further Education and Training Sub-framework which includes all the processes involved in the setting and administration of external examinations and internal assessment for the full period of the qualification as required by the policies and regulations that govern such a qualification.

18. Accreditation process to be followed by the applicant

- (1) The accreditation of private assessment bodies is a process of evaluating a private assessment body to determine whether its capacity, systems, processes and products are of the appropriate quality to deliver valid, reliable, fair and credible assessments and examinations.

[35. The accreditation process for private assessment bodies is as follows:

- (1) **the lodging of an expression of intent to seek accreditation to assess a qualification registered on the General and Further Education and Training Sub-framework of Qualifications at least 18 months before the pilot examination is envisaged;**
- (2) **establishing the need for an assessment body to assess such qualification and motivating the need through a feasibility study;**

- (3) application for accreditation to assess a qualification on the General and Further Education and Training Sub-framework of Qualifications. The application is only processed if the following is evident:
- (a) The assessment body is a juristic person independent of any provision of education and training and is registered as a company in terms of the Companies Act 2008 (Act No 71 OF 2008);
 - (b) Is able to provide proof that the income of the applicant is sufficient to sustain its assessment regime in an acceptable manner;
 - (c) The applicant has a stable financial position that will enable it to maintain operational continuity;
 - (d) The applicant can provide proof that it has established financial surety or guarantee to ensure that it is able to meet its obligations to the learners registered for its examinations and assessment services; and
 - (e) The applicant has sufficient professional expertise in education and assessment in order to provide assessment services for the qualification it is seeking to offer.
- (4) submission of a self-evaluation report and supporting evidence to Umalusi;]

- (2) The accreditation process comprises the following procedures to be followed by private assessment bodies-
- (a) submitting an application for accreditation to assess a qualification listed on the General and Further Education and Training Sub-framework which will only be processed if the applicant-
- (i) complies with the following-
- (aa) is a juristic person independent of any provision of education and training and is registered as a company in terms of the *Companies Act 2008 (Act No 71 of 2008)*;
- (bb) is able to provide proof that its income is sufficient to sustain its assessment regime as based on criteria determined by Umalusi;
- (cc) has a stable financial position that will enable it to maintain operational continuity;
- (dd) can provide proof that it has established financial surety or guarantee to ensure that it is able to meet its obligations to the learners registered for its examinations and assessment services; and
- (ee) has sufficient professional expertise in education and assessment in order to provide assessment services for the qualification it is seeking to offer;
- and
- (ii) adheres to the following requirements-
- (i) lodges an expression of intent to seek accreditation to assess a qualification registered on the General and Further Education and Training Sub-framework of Qualifications at least

18 months before the pilot examination is envisaged;

(ii) establishes the need for an assessment body to assess such qualification and motivating the need through a feasibility study;

(b) submitting a self-evaluation report and supporting evidence to Umalusi;

(c) undertaking a site verification conducted by Umalusi;

(d) conducting an exit examination pilot study;

(e) receiving provisional or no accreditation;

(f) applying for accreditation;

(g) conducting a full exit examination; and

(h) receiving accreditation or no accreditation.

19. Umalusi's role in the accreditation process

- [(5) evaluation by Umalusi of the applicants capacity including its policy framework, assessment systems and standards through a desk-top evaluation of the self-evaluation report, state of readiness evaluation and verification site visits;**
- (6) demonstrated competence by the applicant through a pilot in the development of assessment products and administration of an examination at the required standard;**

- (7) **awarding of accreditation or provisional accreditation or no status by Umalusi.**
- (8) **immediately after accreditation has been granted, planning for a lead time of 12 months before the first formal examination is conducted.**
- (9) **ongoing monitoring to ensure credible, fair and valid internal and external assessment of learner achievement at exit points.]**
- (1) Umalusi must evaluate the applicant's capacity to conduct, administer and manage examinations. This will include evaluation of the policy framework, assessment systems and standards, the self-evaluation report, state of readiness and verification site visits.
- (2) Umalusi must determine the competence of the applicant in the development of assessment products and administration of an examination at the required standard, demonstrated through a pilot study.
- (3) Based on the outcome of Umalusi's evaluation as contemplated in *sub-paragraphs (1) and (2)*, Umalusi may award either provisional accreditation or no accreditation.
- (4) After provisional accreditation has been granted by Umalusi, the applicant must commence with immediate planning for a lead time of 12 months before the first formal examination is conducted.
- (5) Umalusi must conduct monitoring to ensure credible, fair and valid internal and external assessment of learner achievement at exit points.

20. Provisional accreditation

- [37. Provisional accreditation may be granted to private assessment bodies for a period of three years during which time the assessment body must meet all the requirements of accreditation. If the assessment body fails to meet these requirements it may not continue to offer national examinations for qualifications registered on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework.
38. Provisional accreditation of an assessment body may not be extended unless the Umalusi Council decides to do so under exceptional circumstances and in that case only for one additional year.
- (1) Private assessment bodies that have successfully completed the initial desktop evaluation, state of readiness evaluation and verification site visit will be granted “provisional accreditation to conduct a pilot study”.**
- (2) Following the successful completion of a pilot study, the applicant may be granted provisional accreditation to conduct examinations for a period of three years during which time the assessment body must meet all the requirements of accreditation.]**
- (1) Private assessment bodies that have satisfactorily completed the pilot study may be granted provisional accreditation for a period of three years during which time the assessment body must meet all the requirements of accreditation.

- (2) Provisional accreditation of an assessment body may be extended by the Umalusi Council on reasonable grounds..
- (3) If the assessment body fails to meet all the requirements of accreditation as contemplated in *sub-paragraphs (1) and (2)*, it will be awarded a status of “no accreditation” and it may not continue to offer national examinations for qualifications registered on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework.

21. Accreditation of private assessment bodies

- (1) Accreditation is granted to a private assessment body to assess a qualification on the General and Further Education and Training Sub-framework which includes all the processes involved in the setting and administration of external examinations and quality assuring internal assessment for the full period of the qualification as required by the policies that govern the qualification. In the case of the National Senior Certificate, which is a three-year, qualification this means grades 10, 11 and 12.
- [39. Accreditation is granted for an unlimited period and private assessment bodies are monitored annually to ensure ongoing compliance with policies and regulations, improvement and maintenance of standards.**
- 40. Accredited private assessment bodies are monitored and reported on annually.**
- 41. Umalusi may periodically undertake in depth evaluations and report on both the state and private assessment systems.**

42. The state assessment bodies, while not accredited, are annually monitored and reported on to ensure compliance with the same set of standards.]

(2) Private assessment bodies will be monitored and reported on annually to ensure ongoing compliance with policies and regulations, improvement and maintenance of standards.

(3) To ensure consistency in the national assessment system, Umalusi sets common criteria for the state and private assessment bodies.

(4) An accredited private assessment body must perform the functions with regard to external assessment as set out in *section 18* of the *General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, 2001 (Act No. No. 58 of 2001)*.

[22. The registration of learners for home education

14. The registration of learners for home education]

[27. Section 51 of the *South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No. 84 of 1996)*, provides for the registration of learners to be educated at home.]

[28. Umalusi may accredit an assessment body to set, administer or manage assessments for the home based education system. Such an assessment body must establish and register assessment centres to conduct external examinations for home-based candidates. Alternatively, such candidates may be registered as private candidates at existing, registered

examination centres for which the assessment body is responsible.]

[29. Learners to be educated at home in terms of *section 51 of the South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No. 84 of 1996)* will be regarded as part-time candidates and must-

- (1) comply with the requirements as stipulated in the policy document, *National policy pertaining to the programme and promotion requirements of the National Curriculum Statement Grades R–12*; and
- (2) must register with an accredited assessment body to ensure that such learners comply with the National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12 requirements as stipulated in the policy documents, *National policy pertaining to the programme and promotion requirements of the National Curriculum Statement Grades R–12*, and *National Protocol for Assessment Grades R–12*.]

22. Registration of examination centres

Public or accredited private assessment bodies may register examination centres on condition that they-

- (1) comply with the registration requirements for independent schools as determined by the relevant Provincial Education Department and accreditation by Umalusi;
- (2) assess the National Senior Certificate examination; and

- (3) in the case of independent schools have met all the requirements of regulations pertaining to the conduct and administration and management of an examination in respect of a qualification as contemplated in Regulation 26(A) and 27 of the Regulations pertaining to the conduct, administration and management of assessment for the National Senior Certificate, Government Notice No. R872 in Government Gazette No. 31337 of 29 August 2008.
- (4) in the case of centres other than independent schools, are managed by the assessment body and have met all the requirements of regulations pertaining to the conduct and administration and management of an examination in respect of a qualification as contemplated in Regulation 27 of the Regulations pertaining to the conduct, administration and management of assessment for the National Senior Certificate, Government Notice No. R872 in Government Gazette No. 31337 of 29 August 2008.

[24. Registration of local examination centres]

- [45. Accredited private assessment bodies may register accredited independent schools as examination centres, and must ensure that Umalusi's requirements are met and the requirements of the qualification being assessed are fulfilled both in terms of internal assessment and external examinations.]
- [47. In an effort to ensure consistency in the national assessment system, Umalusi sets common criteria for the state and private assessment bodies-]

CHAPTER 8

CRITERIA FOR THE ACCREDITATION OF PRIVATE ASSESSMENT BODIES

23. Standard for compliance

(1) The quality of national external examinations is critical in determining standards in public and private education and training. The quality assurance and monitoring of assessment processes of such examinations are central to upholding the standards embodied in national qualifications. These roles are undertaken by both the state and private assessment bodies.

(2) Accreditation is granted to private assessment bodies where such organisations satisfy the requirements for accreditation as indicated in this policy and supporting regulations, policies and directives as established by the Council.

[(3) The state assessment system is monitored and reported on against the criteria of this policy and the supporting policies and directives as established by the Council and policies and regulations promulgated by the Minister.]

24. Criteria for the accreditation of private assessment bodies to assess a qualification on the General and Further Education and Training Sub-framework of Qualifications

The criteria for the accreditation of private assessment bodies to offer a qualification on the General and Further Education and Training Sub-framework are as follows-

- (1) Several broad criteria pertinent to the accreditation of assessment bodies are grouped into three focus areas:
 - (a) strategic leadership and management;
 - (b) assessment standards; and
 - (c) administration of assessment.

- (2) The set of criteria for the accreditation of a private assessment body is outlined as follows-

(a) Criterion 1: Leadership, planning and management

- (i) The assessment body's leadership is instructive and provides strategic direction and governance oversight based on acceptable practices.
- (ii) The strategic initiatives, interventions, policies and procedures of the assessment body promote fair, valid and reliable assessments.
- (iii) The assessment body is sustainable and financially viable.
- (iv) The assessment body demonstrates commitment to quality improvement in providing feedback annually to the institutions that are its examination centres.
- (v) The assessment body is sufficiently and professionally staffed.
- (vi) The leadership and management identify and manage the organisational risks effectively.

(b) Criterion 2: Assessment standards

- (i) The assessment body's assessment approach and systems are credible in that assessments are administered against the policy requirements and standards of qualifications registered on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Framework and their intended curricula.
- (ii) The assessment body produces assessment products of an acceptable standard and oversees the quality of internal and external assessment of all its registered examination centres.
- (iii) Assessment standards and practices are benchmarked and quality assured.
- (iv) Standards of assessment are maintained and improved through appropriate and effective monitoring and moderating mechanisms.

(c) Criterion 3: Research and development

- (i) The work of the assessment body is informed by appropriate research and assessment approaches are innovative, benchmarked and fit for purpose.
- (ii) Research findings are used to improve assessment products, systems and approaches as well as to provide feedback to education institutions in order to drive the improvement of teaching, learning and internal assessment.

- (iii) The capacity of professional and administrative staff employed in the assessment process is developed.

(d) Criterion 4: The conduct and administration of examinations

- (i) The assessment body conducts credible external examinations in that it is effective and efficient in the management of all administrative and logistical processes associated with the conduct of examinations.
- (ii) Learners are registered for the examination at the commencement of the qualification (in the case of the National Senior Certificate, Grade 10) by the private assessment body.
- (iii) Security systems with a low tolerance for irregularities are implemented and irregularities are reported and dealt with as required in Umalusi policy.
- (iv) The assessment body meets all Umalusi's requirements in respect of the registration, resulting and certification system and is able to submit learner datasets that meet Umalusi specifications.
- (v) The assessment body has efficient and reliable systems for the capture, storage and management of learner achievement data and is ethical in reporting and safeguarding the accuracy and security of learner results.
- (vi) The assessment body ensures that it has full ownership of its data from inception.
- (vii) All the requirements of policy and regulations pertaining to the conduct, administration and management of an

examination in respect of a qualification apply and are met.

- (viii) Delivery of the examination is monitored and evaluated with the purpose of supporting continuous improvement.

(e) Criterion 5: Resulting systems and processes

The assessment body-

- (i) encapsulates the reliable and accurate processing and issuing of results; and
- (ii) complies with policy to maintain the integrity of the system.

CHAPTER 9**WITHDRAWAL OF ACCREDITATION****25. Rationale**

- (1) Private assessment bodies accredited in terms of the policy developed by the Council and approved by the Minister in terms of *section 17A2(a) of the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, 2001 (Act No. No. 58 of 2001)*, must be monitored by the Council in terms of *section 25(1) of the said Act*, to ensure continued compliance with the policy set out in this policy.
- (2) Where a private assessment body is found to be non-compliant, the Umalusi Council reserves the right to place the assessment body under close monitoring.
- (3) Umalusi may withdraw accreditation if the assessment body is found to be non-compliant with the requirements of this policy.

26. Procedures to be followed in the event of non-compliance by private assessment bodies

[56. In the case of non-compliance with this policy Umalusi will:

- (1) **Serve notice of administrative action to withdraw the accreditation of the private assessment body concerned at an appropriate time so as to minimize implications for existing and future learners.**

- (2) **determine a reasonable period within which the private assessment body must comply with the policy set out in this document**
- (3) **at the expiry of the period evaluate the steps taken by the private assessment body ; and may affirm or withdraw accreditation of the private assessment body.]**
- (1) In the event of non-compliance with this policy as contemplated in paragraph 27(2), Umalusi will-
- (a) determine a reasonable period within which the private assessment body must comply with the policy set out in this policy;
- (b) evaluate at the expiry of the period the remedial steps taken by the private assessment body;
- (c) based on the decision taken in terms of sub-paragraph (1)(a), Umalusi may affirm or withdraw accreditation of the private assessment body; and
- (d) in withdrawing accreditation, serve notice of administrative action to withdraw the accreditation of the private assessment body concerned at an appropriate time so as to minimise implications for learners.
- (2) Once a decision to withdraw accreditation has been made and communicated, the private assessment body will not be permitted to register learners for the next examination cycle **[and must]**. The private assessment body must notify its clients of the decision with

immediate effect and ensure that all past and present learner data and records are secured and transferred to Umalusi in the manner prescribed by Umalusi.

27. Procedures to be followed in the event of non-compliance by independent schools

- (1) In terms of *section 16(5) of the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, 2001 (Act No. No. 58 of 2001)*, the Council must perform any function consistent with the said *Act* that the Minister may determine, and must therefore in the case of non-compliance with the policy set out in this **[document]** policy by an independent school -
 - (a) notify the independent school in writing and set out the nature and extent of the failure; and
 - (b) determine a reasonable period within which the independent school must comply with the policy set out in this **[document]** policy.
- (2) At the expiry period contemplated in sub-paragraph (1)(b), the Council must-
 - (a) evaluate the steps taken by the independent school; and
 - (b) affirm or withdraw accreditation of the independent school.
- (3) Accreditation may be withdrawn if the independent school is found to be non-compliant with the requirements as stipulated in this policy.
- (4) Withdrawal of accreditation of an independent school must be preceded by a notification of the Head of Department or Registrar concerned.

28. Appeals procedure

The withdrawal of accreditation status may be appealed through a formal appeals process established **[and overseen by the Appeals Committee of Umalusi Council]** by Umalusi.

CHAPTER 10

FUNDING

29. Provision for funding by the Council

Section 13(1)(c) of the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, 2001 (Act No. No. 58 of 2001), makes provision for funds received by the Council in respect of fees charged for services. Accordingly, Umalusi determines annual quality assurance fees for all its services including accreditation and related processes.

CHAPTER 11

TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND COMMENCEMENT OF POLICY

30. TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

- (1) The implementation of this policy **[document]**, becomes effective with immediate effect on the date of publication in the *Government Gazette* thereof;
- [(2) Independent schools that are currently registered but are not accredited must apply for accreditation with Umalusi within one year from the date of publication of this policy in the Government Gazette;]**
- [(3) Independent schools that are registered and provisionally accredited will receive verification site visits and will be considered for full accreditation if they meet the requirements, commencing on the publication of this Government Gazette;]**
- (2) Accredited and registered independent schools, and accredited private assessment bodies must take all reasonable steps to comply with the implementation of this policy as contemplated in *subparagraph (1)*.

31. SHORT TITLE

This Policy may be cited as the *Policy and Criteria for the Quality Assurance of Independent Schools and Private Assessment Bodies* and will commence on the day of its promulgation in the *Government Gazette*.

