

Enhancing the implementation of the South African NQF

**Comments on the
findings of the NQF Act Implementation Evaluation**

Joe Samuels, CEO of SAQA

DHET Research Colloquium,
12-13 September 2017,
Emperors' Palace



What NQF Hacks See!



What NQF Phobics See!



What Study Report shows!



Purpose of the Evaluation



- To assess the implementation of the NQF Act relative to its goals and objectives
- To identify successes and challenges in NQF implementation, and offer recommendations to enhancing NQF Act implementation in the future

EVALUATION CRITERIA



- Relevance
- Effectiveness
- Efficiency
- Emerging impact

Relevance



1. Confirm that the **NQF is increasingly accepted as a key part** of South Africa's educational architecture,
2. **Some agreement** amongst key stakeholders on the purpose of the NQF
3. **Education and training institutions are generally positive and appreciate the importance of the NQF Act** in achieving the broader goals of the education and training system
4. **Alignment** with PSET policy is variable
5. There are concerns about the **clarity of direction for the TVET sector**

Effectiveness



1. **Most policies published**, and **stakeholders realise** that SAQA and the QCs have invested effort in developing the NQF policy framework and there is much policy alignment
2. and “robust NQF Sub-Frameworks”
3. System of Collaboration: no disputes declared; **goodwill** between NQF partners
4. **Growth** in the register of qualifications; size/ completeness of NLRD
5. **Demand** for verifications
6. **Increase** in Professional Bodies

Effectiveness (continued)



7. **Increased number of court-cases** shows that NQF apparatus is working
8. **75% + +** rated NQF influence as “positive”/”significantly positive”
9. **CAT is widely accepted in principle, and institutions have developed inter-institutional agreements to accommodate transferring students**
10. Some **articulation/ learning pathways** working well; some less understood (National Articulation Baseline Study + 4th NLRD Trends Report show more)

Effectiveness (continued)



- **There are some differences** between (a) DHET & SAQA policies on one hand, and (b) the policies of the QCs on the other
- **Resourcing + what success looks like** – not shown in most NQF policies
- **Resourcing NQF entities**
- **RPL** rollout variable

Efficiency



- 1. NQF Act helped to clarify roles of DHET, DBE, SAQA, QCs** [– reporting lines need to be clearer]
- 2. Qualifications standards** help to bridge the gap between NQF Level Descriptors and qualifications design
- 3. Strengthened quality assurance**
- 4. Around 70%** of stakeholders found new QCTO qualifications development process “successful” / “highly successful”

Efficiency



1. More communication needed re NQF policy

2. Areas for development:

- (1) AET routes to NQF L4 in GFETQSF ,
- (2) Coordination of TVET policy development ,
- (3) Length of certification time in TVET ,
- (4) Vocational/ professional pathways in/between OQSF and HEQSF,
- (5) Time taken for accreditation ,
- (6) Time taken to develop qualifications

Emerging Impact



1. Reforms introduced by NQF Act **are being embedded** in the education and training system
2. **There is evidence of partnerships being built to enable articulation** between the NQF Sub-Frameworks
3. **There is need for more guidance**

Recommendations

- **Recognise the road already travelled -**
“this evaluation does not seek to fundamentally restructure or change the NQF. Rather its recommendations focus on improving efficiency in parts of the system and enhancing the effectiveness of the framework”
- **Some of the recommendations are need to be clarified and further analysis i.e. 4, 8, 15, 21, 22, 25**

In Conclusion



1. **This study has helped us to see the NQF as the lion it is**
2. NQF Impact Studies are very difficult to do – countries all over the world are struggling to do this kind of study well. The DPME study used a linear model and came to the conclusion that **“a nested theory of change”** is needed – SAQA is in agreement with this

In Conclusion

- The **way forward** towards enhancing NQF Act implementation needs to include:
 - Adequate Resourcing NQF entities, and mindful use of resources
 - Establishing clear foci in relation to addressing the NQF goals/ specific gaps, and specific responsibilities for each of the NQF entities involved
 - Recognising realistic timelines given the size and complexity of the system
 - Better coordination of the developmental initiatives and implementation plans
 - Overall guidelines, advocacy, and monitoring

In Conclusion

- There are not so much “different understandings” of the NQF and its implementation, as “**different levels of understanding**”. The **analyses in the DPME study need to be carried out carefully**, and the final report **compiled mindfully**, to do justice to the different parts of the system, the different voices of the role-players, and the differing levels of understanding that exist.

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