

NQF SUPPORT LINK
READER FOR MODULE 3

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the use of the following extracts and thank the publishers and authors for making them available:

Module 1: Implementing the NQF

Van Schaik Publishers, Pretoria: Coetzee, M (2002) Getting your Accreditation. The quality assurance and assessment guide for education, training and development providers.

Module 2: The NQF and Strategic Governance

Reading 3: De Clerq, F. (2002). Decentralisation of Authority to Districts: Search for District development and/or Control? Wits School of Education, Johannesburg (Presented at the International Conference on Education and Decentralisation, African Experiences and Comparative Analysis).

Reading 4: Maclennan, A. C., Education Governance and Management in South Africa. Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, University of the Witwatersrand.

Reading 5: Day, Professor C. (1999) Professional Development and Reflective Practice: purposes, processes and partnerships. In *Pedagogy, Culture & Society* 7 (2), pp. 221-233.

Toolkit 4 and Toolkit 6: Pearson Education, Edinburgh: Adapted from Koch, R. (2000) The Financial Guide to Strategy: How to create and deliver a useful strategy.

Module 3: The NQF and Learning Programmes

Reading 2: Juta Academic Publishing: "Definitions of Curriculum" from Angelis, D., & Marock, C (2001). Curriculum implication for FET. In Angelis, D., Lolwana, P., Marock, C., Matthaela, P., Mercorio, G., Tsolo, S. & Xulu, S. The further education and training institutional readiness handbook: making learning work.

Toolkit 8 – Listening Techniques Listening Exercise from Hope, A. & Timmel, S. (1988). Community Workers' Handbook 2. South Africa: The Grail, Lumko Missiological Institute and the Federation of Dominicans of Southern Africa (FEDOSA).

Module 4: The NQF and Assessment

Readings 1-4: LGWSETA Code of Conduct

Reading 5: Falmer Press: Gipps, C. (1994) Beyond Testing, pp3-4.

Reading 6: Slippery Rock University: Governing Principles for Assessment of Student Learning.

Reading 7: Vivlia Publishers: Kramer, D. (1999) OBE Teaching Toolbox, pp. 58-63,

Reading 8: Pahad, M. Approaches to Assessment and Evaluation. Wits/IEB Coursebook, pp. 34-37.

Reading 9: Bulman, F. Peer Assessment in Groups. Portland State University Center for Academic Excellence (web site)

Module 5: The NQF and Learnerships

Readings 27-30: Knowledge Resources: Hattingh, S. Extracts from the ROADMAP Series to Learning and Skills Development, pp. 12-13.

Reading 31: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH: Extracts from Heitmann, W. "The action-oriented learning approach for promoting exemplary job performance and employability" (Unpublished article).

Readings CS 1-CS35: Charlene d'Hotman, Unpublished case study, Central Johannesburg College and Tshwane North College.

Reading 1

SUMMARIES OF LEGISLATION RELEVANT TO THE NQF AND FET

The Constitution: The Constitution's Bill of Rights essentially provides the foundation for educational transformation

National Education Policy Act (No. 27 of 1996): The National Education Policy Act was the first education and training law passed by the democratic government to change the education and training system. The major purpose of this Act is to lay the foundation for all national education policy.

Higher Education Act (No. 101 of 1997): The Higher Education (HE) Act allows for the establishment of a single co-ordinated higher education system, which promotes co-operative governance and provides for programme-based higher education. It further seeks to transform programmes and institutions to respond to the human resource, economic and development needs of South Africa in a manner that allows for redress of past discrimination, as well as equal access, to provide optimal opportunities for learning and the creation of knowledge.

Further Education and Training Act (No. 98 of 1998): The Further Education and Training (FET) Act aims to transform the further education and training sector. The Act provides for the establishment, governance and funding of public FET institutions (including the former public technical colleges) and for the registration of private institutions. The Act also aims to close the gaps between the worlds of education and work through transformed curricula aligned to the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

Adult Basic Education and Training Act (No. 52 of 2000): The Adult Basic Education and Training Act regulates the provision of Adult Basic Education and Training, and provides for the establishment and governance of adult learning centres and for the quality assurance of Adult Basic Education and Training. This Act places emphasis on redressing past imbalances.

South African Qualifications Authority Act (No. 58 of 1995): The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act makes provision for the establishment and implementation of a National Qualifications Framework. The integrated NQF is a cornerstone of transformation and links concerns for quality and equity. It requires that qualifications and standards must be nationally registered, and that all education and training must be quality assured.

Skills Development Act (No. 97 of 1998): The Skills Development Act (SDA) aims to address South Africa's skills needs across and within the country's social and economic sectors, and requires that skills development initiatives relate to the needs and demands of the economy and society; it establishes Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) to promote and organise learning; establishes learnerships and skills programmes; and says that by law, in the long-term, all learning must contribute towards qualifications and standards on the NQF.

Skills Development Levies Act (No. 9 of 1999): The Skills Development Levies Act (SDLA) sets up the rules for the collection of levies from employers to fund the development of the workforce, in line with the Skills Development Act.

Employment Equity Act (No. 55 of 1998): The Employment Equity Act requires that all employers eliminate unfair discrimination in the workplace and promotes greater representation of previously disadvantaged groups, including South Africa's black population, women and people with disabilities.

Reading 2

UNDERSTANDING WHAT A CURRICULUM INVOLVES

From Angelis, D., & Marock, C. 2001. Curriculum implication for FET. In Angelis, D., Lolwana, P., Marock, C., Matlhaela, P., Mercorio, G., Tsolo, S. & Xulu, S. *The further education and training institutional readiness handbook: making learning work*. Johannesburg: National Institute for Community Education Trust.

This section develops a broad definition for curriculum, and outlines two underpinning assumptions: that the curriculum is contested, and that education and training institutions should be organized in relation to curriculum needs. The definition of curriculum is placed in the context of a qualification and learning programme.

a) Defining the curriculum

The Department of Education (FET Curriculum Framework, 2001:1) makes the point that the curriculum is at the heart of the education process and has a crucial and strategic role to play in transforming education and training. It is therefore extremely important that the curriculum be restructured to reflect the values and principles of our new democracy. Curriculum, narrowly defined is a list of subjects to be taught and set of entries on the timetable. A slightly broader definition would equate curriculum with the syllabus. This gives it the meaning of a formal list of topics to be covered over a particular time-span within each subject area. Wider than this would refer to the totality of planned provision through which any organisation sets itself to achieve its educative purpose, a notion which would include what is often seen as ‘extra- curricular activities.’

Curriculum at its broadest would cover an institution’s total contribution to the students’ learning experience. Within the framework, a useful distinction is that of the explicit curriculum, which is about all the planned and visible things about the curriculum, things like the syllabus, the textbooks, the goals and aims, and so on, and the implicit curriculum. The implicit curriculum includes the hidden curriculum and the outcomes of the curriculum, which is taken to be the unofficial processes and outcomes of the curriculum. The hidden curriculum covers aspects such as the:

- Environment, which includes the seating arrangements, noise levels, colour in the class, and temperature factors that can be referred to as the ‘nurturant conditions’;
- Power relations between teachers and students;
- Competition amongst students;
- Status that particular forms of knowledge are accorded whereby high status knowledge is seen as abstract and unrelated to every-day experience and low-status knowledge is concrete and more oral and practical in nature;
- Particular forms of assessment as well as grading and reward systems: examinations are a big issue here and one that has a number of consequences for the organization and teaching and learning practices in institutions (Marsh, 1992).

SAQA describes curriculum as the process of learning. By its nature, it is tied up with achieving the values and beliefs of an ‘ideal’ society. SAQA is of the view that curriculum is more than syllabus documentation. It refers to all the teaching and learning opportunities and includes:

- the aims and objectives of the education system and the specific goals of the learning institution;
- what is taught (values, content, subjects, programmes, syllabus and what skills and processes are included);
- teaching and learning strategies;
- assessment and evaluation processes;
- support and resourcing of the curriculum (scheduling, materials);
- adequate reflections on the values of society, learners, community, employers, the economy and the nation.

In sum, the curriculum framework is therefore taken to include the rationale, scope and parameters, goals and purpose of the subject area, guidelines for course design, content and teaching and learning principles, guidelines for evaluation, criteria for accreditation, and future developments for the area.

Phrased differently, curriculum can be understood in relation to a learning programme and a qualification. SAQA describes a *learning programme* as the sequential learning activities, associated with curriculum implementation leading to the achievement of a qualification or part qualification. A particular qualification may be achieved through different learning programmes that meet the exit level outcomes and associated assessment criteria of the qualification. Learning programmes should be educationally transformative. Thus they should:

- be planned, coherent and integrated;
- add value, building contextually on learner’s existing frames of reference;
- be learner-centered, experiential and outcomes orientated;
- develop attitudes of critical inquiry and powers of analysis;
- prepare students for continued learning in a world of technological and cultural change.

SAQA describes a *qualification* as representing a planned combination of learning outcomes which has a defined purpose (s) and which is intended to provide qualifying learners with applied competence and a basis for further learning. Thus, a qualification adds value to the qualifying learner providing status, recognition, enhancing marketability and employability. It also adds value to society and the economy.

A qualification includes both the specific and critical cross-field outcomes that promote lifelong learning. It incorporates integrated assessment appropriate to ensuring that the purpose(s) of the qualification are achieved. It also specifies how Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can contribute towards achieving the qualification.

b) Underpinning assumptions

The 'contested' curriculum

This chapter approaches curriculum so as to include the totality of the student's learning experience. This approach is underpinned by a series of decisions that are required in order to develop the curriculum. The overarching decisions consider the type of knowledge to be included in the curriculum and the values that will be conveyed as part of the teaching learning process.

During the 1970s, a strong argument was developed that suggested that the curriculum is not neutral and objective, but that it reflects society's divisions and differences. This means that the curriculum contains those parts of knowledge and learning which support the interests of the powerful groups in society. It is not about 'what' knowledge but 'whose' knowledge that politicises the curriculum. Further, it is about the manner in which knowledge is transmitted.

This approach described much of the mainstream curriculum as alien to working class interests and experiences, in both its academic content and its didactic subject-based form (Hargreaves, 1994). In general, it was suggested that this form of curriculum leads to an increasing widening between 'school knowledge' and the knowledge required for life, work and leisure more broadly. This is experienced most acutely by the youth whose lived reality and curriculum reality seem not to link.

The extent that the learning process can reinforce divisions in society is illustrated by the following example. Anyon (1992) observed classes in two working-class primary schools, two middle-class primary schools, and two affluent primary schools in the USA. In the two working-class schools, most work activity involved following set procedures and rote learning. In the middle class schools there was more opportunity for student choice. In the affluent school, work activity commonly involved creative activity carried out independently by the students.

This example also illustrates the centrality of the 'hidden curricula' and the importance of ensuring that these issues are highlighted and openly considered. Cusick (1973), drawing on considerable research on this topic, argues that over two-thirds of the time in a learning institution is actually involved in maintenance (hidden curriculum) activities and that formal and hidden curricula are inevitably connected.

Curriculum-led institutions

At another level, there is a fundamental issue about how institutions are organized through the myriad of activities involved in the curriculum process. These can be conceptually organized as a combination of input, within-school and output factors (Campbell), so that each can be described in the table below.

Inputs	Resources for staffing, building and equipment, and learning materials
Within-school factors	The nature of the curriculum, teaching and learning styles, teacher expectations, school atmosphere and ethos, motivating learners, establishing learners needs, choosing appropriate teaching methods, planning and implementing programmes and lessons, etc (expanded in Walkin,1990)
Outputs	Academic attainment, social and moral development

Such an organizing framework points to differing levels of responsibilities within the system, which in reality are often a balancing act between those curricula aspects that serve as inputs or those that can be considered as within-school factors. For example, the curriculum framework may be considered as input into an institution. However the institution (the within-school factor) may make decisions that influence the curriculum framework such as the subject choice and the selection of learning materials.

A central point in this framework is to illustrate how the curriculum impacts on all aspects of the learning institution. This is explained as ‘curriculum-led’ institutional organisation and development (Shackleton). The interaction of responsibilities and the impact of the curricula on how these responsibilities are carried out can be illustrated as follows. Curriculum is about support services as much as it is about learning content and pedagogy, and support includes counseling and guidance for the student as well as a comprehensive management support system. This approach stresses the importance of the tie between the curricula planning process and concerns such as budgets and overall planning cycles.