

## NQF Support Link: Summary of Technical Coverage

The following is a summary of the technical coverage provided for specialists in the digital version of the NQF Support Link, Module 6, Unit 3.

### General Overview of Unit 3

Unit 3 is a technical unit that examines the data that is actually stored in the NLRD from both research and interface implementation perspectives and how the data gets into the NLRD. This unit is therefore going to be of interest and relevance to specialists only, and others may well not understand the detail.

Because this Unit is aimed at those who will need to work with NLRD data, and therefore at people who will be working in a digital environment, it is recommended that participants who wish to engage closely with this material use this digital version of the programme, as it will provide the animations and simulations that will explain the processes more vividly. The print version will enable the learner to work through the material in outline only and is designed to provide an overview of the content of this Unit for non-specialists.

A model of the data is introduced and discussed. How data flows into and out of the NLRD is covered in more detail than in Unit 1. There is also more detail on the NLRD system and a description of who the role-players are and what their roles in the flow of NQF data are.

Thus, this unit is particularly useful for education or training sector researchers, IT staff and administration staff who are responsible for transferring data directly and indirectly to and from the NLRD. There is also detail for the IT specialists on how the local IMS data should interface with the NLRD.

Unit 3 covers the following:

### The NLRD Core Data and Supporting Information

The NLRD, like most large databases, contains data concerning its core functionality (learners' achievement records) as well as data used for categorisation and supporting information. Specifically, the NLRD contains:

- learners and their achievements data;
- data on qualifications and unit standards;
- data on ETQAs, service providers and assessors;
- lookup or categorisation data; and
- data on NQF structures and bodies (SAQA, SGBs and ETQAs).

## Uses of NLRD Data

The NLRD is the national repository of learners and their achievements. It serves the learners, training providers, industry, workers, government and researchers. It fulfils these functions:

- Learners and employers will have access to verified records of their qualifications.
- Registered qualifications and standards are available over the web.
- Accredited providers can be queried.
- Training providers and employers will be able to search for and see lists of registered qualifications and standards, determine under which ETQA they fall and find appropriate assessors.
- Organisations, researchers, policy makers, government departments and providers will all have access to summary level information available from the NLRD.

## NLRD Data Model

A data model is like a plan prepared by an architect before building a house. It will specify all the data that will be stored in the database and the relationship between these blocks of data. As would be expected, just such a model exists for the NLRD. This is a complex technical document, which will be of great value to researchers who want to understand the structure of the NLRD data, and IT people with responsibility for getting data out of a local IMS and into a format for forwarding to an ETQA. Others should have a look at it as it does give the main subject headings, together with sub-categories, for data stored in the NLRD.

## NQF Processes and Information Flows

The key processes of the NQF have been implemented by the writing of programs to provide the necessary functions within the NLRD system. These functions support loading learners, achievements, updating codes and entering new qualifications and unit standards etc. These functions are used internally at SAQA, within SAQA substructures, ETQAs and the public.

## The Source of Data and how it gets into the NLRD

There is a series of detailed animated diagrams explaining how the data get into the NLRD and how they are maintained. These diagrams cover:

- Maintaining the Lookup and NQF Structures in the NLRD
- Entering and Maintaining Qualifications & Unit Standards Data in the NLRD
- Entering and Maintaining Provider & Assessor Data in the NLRD

- Entering and Maintaining Learner & Achievement Data in the NLRD, and Extracting Data from A IMS for Transfer to the appropriate ETQA.
- Entering and Maintaining Learner & Achievement Data in the NLRD and
- Extracting Data from a IMS for Transfer to the Appropriate ETQA

The final section deals with the extraction of data from an IMS and the transfer to the relevant ETQA for quality assurance and onward transfer to the NLRD. It concentrates on the data required for the NLRD as this is the data common denominator.