

## 2. What is the difference between a learning programme and a curriculum framework?

A curriculum framework generally refers to the broader principles overarching learning programme content. It includes factors such as the aims and objectives of the education and training system, underlying values, the organization of fields of knowledge, and strategies and approaches to teaching and learning.

We can define the curriculum framework as the overarching design structure within which a provider designs a learning programme. It includes:

- Understanding and applying the guiding principles of the NQF
- Implementing government human resource development strategy guidelines, for example, aligning delivery to qualifications and groups of learners targeted in the appropriate Sector Skills Plan
- Researching local needs and using the information gained to offer programmes relevant to needs
- Translating needs into outcomes and ensuring programmes are aligned to unit standards and qualifications registered on the NQF
- Researching learner profiles and offering versions of programmes suited to different identified target groups

Once the overall curriculum framework has been researched, sector needs have been linked to targeted groups of learners, and certain qualifications and unit standards have been selected for delivery, there are a number of further decisions that the provider must make about what will be covered in the learning programme, and how it will be delivered.

These decisions include:

- Outcomes, and the way they will be clustered for delivery and assessment
- Content, including coverage of essential embedded knowledge and references and examples from the context of the appropriate sector
- Methods, including broad teaching, learning and assessment strategies
- Modes of delivery, including learning programme types to be offered and kinds of materials and support to be made available (multimedia, workplace-based, face-to-face, etc.)

You will find more information in the SAQA publication available on the website ([www.saqa.org.za](http://www.saqa.org.za) under Documents > Criteria and Guidelines), "Developing Learning Programmes for NQF-registered qualifications and unit standards (2005)" and in the NQF Support Link Reading, "Understanding what a curriculum involves", in the Useful Guidelines section.

[Answer to FAQ 2, The NQF and Learning Programme, the NQF Gateway]