ANNEXURE B NQF CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

National Qualifications Framework

Regulations Made in Terms of Namibia Qualifications Authority Act 29 Of 1996 Section 14 Regulations setting-up the National Qualifications Framework for Namibia, Government Notice 125 of 2006 (GG 3685) came into force on date of publication: 28 August 2006

THE CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM FOR THE REGISTRATION OF UNIT STANDARDS AND NAMING OF NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS ON THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK OF NAMIBIA

INTRODUCTION	APPROVAL DATE
This document presents information on the structure and management of a NQF Classification System. This system is a key structural dimension of the National Qualifications System in Namibia.	The NQF Classification System was approved by the Council of the Namibia Qualifications Authority 14 April 2005.

THE NEED FOR A CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM			
NQF LISTING REQUIREMENTS			
1	Qualifications will be placed on the NQF according to their level of certification and principal subject area. The scope of subject areas covered by a comprehensive NQF requires a mechanism to:		
	a	establish some consistency in the understanding of what is included within each subject area, and	
	b	to enable people to readily locate qualifications that may be of interest to them.	
2	The proposed NQF Classification System will enable such consistency and accession capabilities.		
3	Consistency of understanding of the scope of learning outcomes recognised by a qualification will be further enhanced by requiring the naming of national qualifications to include an approved item from the NQF Classification System. Registration criteria for national qualifications require qualifications to be named according to the following convention:		
	a	Course <Qualification Type> in/of <Classification System Item>	
4	There may be free text preceding and following the above format so long as the free text does not diminish or mislead as to the meaningfulness of the qualification title.		
5	Education and training institutions or organisations may wish to express the scope of services for which they seek accreditation in broad terms rather than by specific courses. The NQF Classification System offers a coherent mechanism through which a scope of accreditation could be expressed in terms of learning outcomes rather than course delivery. For example, a provider may apply for accreditation for:		
	a	All unit standards in the Subfield of Livestock Farming up to Level 5. Or	
	b	Programmes associated with the Subfield of Horticulture to Level 5 and the Domain Sports Turf to Level 3.	
6	Such specification may limit the need for continual application for expansions of accreditation. The NQA will have been assured that the quality management systems had sufficient capacity to cope with any programme within the scope defined.		
7	Qualification developers may wish to enable their qualifications to recognise diverse attainment contexts through elective sets of required outcomes of learning.		
8	The NQF Classification System provides a coherent mechanism to express such elective requirements. For example, the qualification requirements might include the following statement:		
	To gain this qualification:		
	a	Credit is required for all unit standards in the Compulsory List A; and	
	b	a minimum of 15 credits up to Level 4 are required from the Subfields in Elective List B.	

9	A Classification System that provides clarity regarding the scope of subject coverage of qualifications will be able to be used, particularly at the broadest level of the System, to share and/or compare learning and qualification attainment data with other agencies within Namibia (the Department of Statistics for Census purposes, for example) and with other countries.		
10	A need for such comparison may be amplified with the actualisation of a Regional Qualifications Framework envisaged by the Southern African Development Community (SADC).		
THE NQF CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM			
CLASSIFICATION TIERS			
1	The NQF Classification System shall have three tiers:		
	a	FIELDS of learning, being the broadest aggregation of learning outcomes with a coherent alignment,	
	b	Subfields of learning, being logical sub categorisations of FIELDS, and	
	c	Domains of learning, being the smallest coherent aggregation of learning outcomes, having a more narrow and specific alignment.	
2	Unit standards will be registered in a Domain.		
3	To illustrate the three tiers described above, the following, hypothetical example is given.		
	The FIELD of Agriculture and Nature Conservation could be divided into Subfields such as:		The Subfield of Livestock could be divided into domains such as:
	Horticulture Forestry and Wood Technology Livestock Arable Farming Fisheries Wildlife Management		cattle raising dairying sheep farming shearing pig raising goat farming animal husbandry etc.
4	A unit standard, *Milk cattle by hand* would be registered on the NQF in the domain of cattle raising. This domain would be a logical place for people to search for such a unit standard.		
5	Fields of learning have been determined by the Council of the NQA and may only be amended by them. This tight control is to protect the viability of the NQF Classification System to act as a mechanism for data sharing between agencies and countries. Such sharing is generally viable at the broadest categorisation of any taxonomy.		
6	The following twelve FIELDS have been approved as the broadest categorisation of learning outcomes on the NQF in Namibia:		
	No	NQF broadest Categorisation of Learning Outcomes	Comments
	1	Agriculture and Nature Conservation	Note: The above FIELDS have a nomenclature that closely aligns with those used in Botswana and South African qualification systems.
	2	Business, Commerce and Management Studies	
	3	Communication Studies and Language	
	4	Culture and the Arts	
	5	Education, Training and Development	
	6	Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology	
	7	Human and Social Studies	
	8	Law, Military Science and Security	
	9	Health Sciences and Social Services	
	10	Physical, Mathematical and Computer Sciences	
	11	Physical Planning and Construction	
	12	Services and Life Sciences	

7	Subfields and domains shall be nominated by qualification developers and/or recognised national bodies developing unit standards. The approval and subsequent management of the NQF Classification System shall be the responsibility of the Standard Setting section of the NQA.		
8	The Standard Setting section of the NQA shall ensure that nominated Subfields and/or domains retain high levels of obvious coherence with higher tiers of the NQF Classification System. They will also look to ensure that the nominated nomenclature is likely to be understood by the wider public and that there is no unnecessary duplication of terms.		
9	Management of the NQF Classification System shall be guided by the rules shown in Appendix A.		
SUBJECT NOMENCLATURE IN HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS			
1	It is common for higher education qualifications to include, in their titles, a:		
	a	Designator -	the broad area of learning recognised by the qualification, eg, a Bachelor *of* Arts;
	b	Qualifier -	the specialist area of learning recognised by the qualification, eg, a Bachelor of Arts *in* Anthropology.
2	It is common for the Designator to be prefixed by 'of' and for the Qualifier to be prefixed by 'in'. Additional sub-qualifiers may be added to show increasing subdivisions.		
3	The qualifier used must have a coherent alignment with the outcomes of learning covered by the qualification, especially those making up a sizeable part of the highest level of outcomes in the qualification.		
4	In general, the minimum volume associated with this subject area is 50 - 66% of the outcomes of learning at the highest level.		
5	As the use of Designators and Qualifiers assist commonality of understanding of qualification coverage across institutions, the assignation of allowable names is usually controlled by a central body.		
6	The NQF is a unifying tool for qualifications in Namibia. As the NQF Classification System is to be used to describe learning areas covered by the NQF, the existing system of Designators and Qualifiers will be incorporated within the Classification System.		
7	As the trends of globalisation and internationalisation of qualifications and associated delivery seems greatest in higher education, it is important for the Designators and Qualifiers to be a transparent feature within the NQF Classification System.		
8	Designators shall be treated as special cases of Subfields - *Designator Subfields* and will be grouped independently of other Subfields within a FIELD.		
9	The Council of the NQA shall, following a submission from a higher education qualification developer and following consultation with relevant stakeholders, approve Designator Subfields and place these within or across relevant FIELDS of the NQF Classification System.		
10	Care will be taken to ensure there is no unnecessary duplication of names with existing Subfields and that the name represents a meaningful description of the relevant outcomes of learning.		
11	Qualification developers may submit a name for a Qualifier when lodging a qualification for registration on the NQF. The NQA Council will approve such a Qualifier so long as there was a coherent and meaningful alignment with one of the approved Designator Subfields, and unnecessary duplication with any existing domains was avoided.		
12	The Qualifier will be treated as a domain of a Subfield - a qualifier domain, and would be grouped independently of other domains within a Subfield.		

APPENDIX A - MANAGEMENT OF THE NQF CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

Management of the NQF Classification System shall be guided by these rules

MANAGEMENT OF THE NQF CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

The Broad FIELDS of the NQF Classification System have been determined by the Council of the NQA in establishing the NQF. These FIELDS may only be altered with the approval of the Council.

Subfields and domains will be added and amended as the NQF grows and evolves. The following criteria shall guide the management of additions, deletions and alterations to the NQF Classification System.

Change requests shall be made using the prescribed form (attached).

ADDING ITEMS TO THE CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

The addition of a new item(s) on the NQF Classification System may be required when a new category of learning or work performance is:	Before submitting a new item(s), there must be a check that the proposed category:
• identified in the unit standards analysis process • identified in the qualification design process • requested by an industry sector as existing items are no longer fit for all purposes • identified through a review of unit standards or qualifications, and/or • proposed by the NQA to eliminate duplications and overlaps.	• conforms to the definitions of one of the two relevant levels of the classification system • contains more than one domain or coherent subject division if a Subfield is proposed • contains more than one unit standard (usually 10 - 30) if a domain is proposed • is unique, i.e., it doesn't duplicate an existing category name • is specific to the higher category (ie, the relationship is obvious) in which it will be placed (applies also to unit standards), and • is meaningful to the industry sector or qualification developer as a descriptor for the cluster of unit standards or domains.

DELETING ITEMS FROM THE CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

The deletion of an existing item(s) from the NQF Classification System may be required when the category of learning or work performance is:	Deleting an item will have an impact as the classification item may have a number of uses. Before submitting a request for a deletion of an existing item an Impact Report should be completed. This report must detail:
• identified in the unit standards analysis or qualification design process as no longer being needed • identified by an industry sector or qualification developer as an existing item no longer fit for purpose • identified as no longer required through a review of unit standards or qualifications, and • proposed by the NQA section to eliminate duplications and overlaps.	• the likely consequences on unit standard registrations, qualification structures, and institutions" accreditations, and • suggested actions to deal with any consequences.

1	A check must be made to see if any registered or draft unit standards and qualifications are in the category that is proposed to be deleted. If the category is empty, then the recommendation to delete will likely be able to be actioned quickly.
2	If the category is not empty, then a new home for any unit standards or qualifications in the category proposed for deletion must be suggested. A timeframe for moving the unit standards or qualifications into their new 'home' must also be provided.

3	A check must be made to see if any qualifications are affected by the proposed deletion. Alterations to the existence or placement of classification items may affect the integrity of a qualification; particularly where the qualification specifies required credits by a NQF Classification System category (ie x credits from domain Y. Deleting Y will affect learner ability to meet the requirements of the qualification).
4	If the integrity of any qualification is not affected by the proposed deletion, the recommendation to delete can likely be actioned quickly.
5	If the integrity of any qualification is likely to be affected, then a plan to restore the integrity of affected qualifications must be suggested by the group suggesting the deletion. The feasibility of the plan must be checked by the NQA before the deletion could be approved.
6	A check must be made with the NQA to determine the number of current accreditations that include the category proposed for deletion.
7	If there are no current accreditations inclusive of the category, then the recommendation to delete can likely be actioned quickly.
8	If accreditations exist for the category proposed for deletion, then a plan to protect the accreditation status of institutions and individuals must be attached to of included in the Impact Report. The NQA must check the feasibility of managing any accreditation transfers before changing the classification item.

MOVING EXISTING CLASSIFICATION ITEMS	**RENAMING AN EXISTING CLASSIFICATION**
As the NQF develops, an industry sector or qualification developer will perhaps gain a better appreciation of its own sector. They may find that some classifications (probably domains) are better placed under a different Subfield. The actions are the same as for deletions of Subfields or domains. A key requirement is the assurance that any accreditations are shifted as well and that the integrity of any affected qualifications is upheld.	The triggers for renaming Subfields or domains are similar to those outlined for adding items. Any renaming of Subfields or domains must meet the general requirements for classification categories. It is unclear if any NQF-related database systems will likely be able to readily action the effects of any renaming. There should, therefore, be some consideration of the complexity of any renaming in documentation related to qualifications, unit standards, accreditations, assessment guides and other unit standard support documents. These documents may have to be amended immediately or, preferably, at the next scheduled review of the affected unit standards or qualifications. This comment must be made in the impact report.