



BOTSWANA
Qualifications Authority

POLICY ON RECOGNITION OF QUALIFICATIONS (LOCAL AND EXTERNAL)

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POLICY ON RECOGNITION OF QUALIFICATIONS (LOCAL AND EXTERNAL)

1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to promote consistency and transparency in the evaluation of both local and external qualifications towards recognition and to make information about the evaluation of qualifications publicly available.

2.0 SCOPE AND CONTENT

BQA evaluates qualifications from any country in the world primarily for, employment, further studies, and registration with a professional body. However, in the event that required information of qualification cannot be found or obtained, the evaluation shall not be conducted and the applicant or requesting agency will be duly notified.

3.0 LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

- 3.1 Botswana Qualifications Authority (herein after referred to as The Authority) is mandated through Section 4 (1) of the Botswana Qualifications Authority Act, 2013, “To provide for and maintain a national credit and qualifications framework (NCQF) and to coordinate the education, training and skills development quality assurance system”.
- 3.2 One of the functions of the Authority is to develop standards for the recognition of external qualifications and to evaluate qualifications (local and external) in terms of Section 4 Subsection 2(h) and (i) of the BQA Act, 2013.
- 3.3 The NCQF is a tool that will be used as a benchmark for the recognition of external qualifications.
- 3.4 One of the objectives of the NCQF is to facilitate access and progression within education and training and career path, as stated in the Botswana Qualifications Authority (National Credit and Qualifications Framework) Regulations, 2017 Regulation 3 (b). It is in this regard that Regulation 13 of the same also requires the Authority to develop criteria and guidelines for the evaluation of external qualifications for recognition purposes.
- 3.5 It is intended that the transparency and provision of information underlying evaluation and recognition should promote collaboration among those involved in the recognition of qualifications. It should also benefit the qualification holder hoping to study or work in Botswana, or any other purpose for which they may wish to use it. In providing the evaluation of qualifications service, the Authority shall consider the following but not limited to:
 - 3.5.1 Botswana Qualifications Authority Act, 2013
 - 3.5.2 NCQF Architecture [Annexure B of Botswana Qualifications Authority (National Credit and Qualifications Framework) (Amendment) Regulations, 2017].

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- 3.5.3 NCQF Level Descriptors [Annexure A of Botswana Qualifications Authority (National Credit and Qualifications Framework) Regulations, 2017].
- 3.5.4 Botswana Qualifications Authority (Fees) Regulations, 2016.
- 3.5.5 Southern African Development Community Qualifications Recognition Manual SADC-QR Manual (approved in 2022).

3.6 Given the growing global economy, BQA recognizes the importance of linking its evaluation of qualifications principles to models of best practice. Therefore, this policy is informed by legal instruments often led by UNESCO such as the Addis Convention of 2014, the Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education and qualifications, and recognition practices from other countries that have mature and robust systems.

4.0 PRINCIPLES FOR THE EVALUATION OF QUALIFICATIONS

In accordance with international best practice, the Authority abides by the following general principles for the evaluation of qualifications:

- 4.1 Evaluation performed without any form of discrimination.
- 4.2 Provision of accurate, clear, and accessible information to the public.
- 4.3 Accord all applicants the right to appeal against the evaluation results.
- 4.4 Clear rationale and reliable qualifications evaluation criteria and procedures to ensure all applicants receive fair consideration of their applications.
- 4.5 Periodically review evaluation of qualifications criteria and procedures in order to adapt to developments in the education and training sector and in the field of qualifications recognition.
- 4.6 The general approach to qualifications and how they are compared to the NCQF qualifications should take into account the diversity of educational traditions in the world.

5.0 CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION OF QUALIFICATIONS

The following criteria for the evaluation of qualifications will be applied:

- 5.1 An application for evaluation of qualifications must meet all the requirements stipulated in the Evaluation of Qualifications Application Form.
 - 5.1.1 An applicant must provide BQA with a complete and credible set of documents to enable the evaluation.
 - 5.1.2 BQA may request the relevant education and training provider or awarding body to provide additional information to conduct a fair evaluation of a qualification.

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- 5.2 Considering that education and training systems change, the evaluation of qualification will consider the historical context within which the qualification was issued.
- 5.3 A qualification (Local or external) will be recognised after it has been determined that:
- 5.3.1 The awarding institution was recognised, or accredited (whichever term applies) by the relevant authority in the country of origin, in accordance with the relevant laws, policies or generally accepted practice in that country at the time of the award.
 - 5.3.2 The qualification awarded was part of the formal education system.
 - 5.3.3 The institution that awarded the qualification was authorised to award the qualification.
 - 5.3.4 The qualification holder has successfully completed all the requirements for the award of the qualification as confirmed by the awarding body.
 - 5.3.5 The documentation in respect of the qualification submitted to BQA is authentic, with no evidence of alterations or variations.
- 5.4 The external qualification shall be placed within the national education and training system to which it belongs, in order to understand how the national system compares with the NCQF:
- 5.4.1 Where the national system is a qualifications framework system, the framework will be compared with the NCQF in order to place the external qualification on the NCQF in terms of Sub-Framework, NQF Level, Field, and Sub Field of learning.
 - 5.4.2 Where the country does not have a qualifications framework, the national qualifications system will be compared with the NCQF in order to place the external qualification on the NCQF.
 - 5.4.3 Recognition decisions and practices in similar cases shall be recorded in order to ensure consistency. Substantial changes in practices shall be justified and recorded.
 - 5.4.4 Recognition decisions will be based on the information available at the time of evaluation. New information may result in a change in the recognition decision.

6.0 PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES FOR THE EVALUATION OF QUALIFICATIONS

- 6.1 The guidelines below are followed to guide the evaluation of qualifications.
- 6.1.1 Processing time will be determined in accordance with the relevant legislative instrument.
 - 6.1.2 In cases of delay, the applicant shall be informed of the reasons for the delay and, if possible, the time required for reviewing the qualification
- 6.2 Information requirements

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6.2.1. The evaluation process should provide standardized information on the criteria and procedure for the evaluation of qualifications. This information should be given to all applicants as well as to persons making inquiries about the evaluation of qualifications, including the following:

- 6.2.1.1 documentation required.
- 6.2.1.2 role of awarding bodies and ETPs in the evaluation process
- 6.2.1.3 approximate time needed to process an application
- 6.2.1.4 Fees charged and
- 6.2.1.5 process for appealing recognition decisions.

6.3 The responsibility for providing the information is shared by the Authority, the applicant, the ETPs, and awarding body where the qualification in question was earned.

- 6.3.1. The Authority is responsible for providing the applicant with complete information regarding its requirements for the evaluation of qualifications.
- 6.3.2 The applicant is responsible for providing documents and information required for the evaluation of their qualifications.
- 6.3.3 Awarding bodies and ETPs are responsible for providing information about the qualification they awarded to the applicant.

6.4 Fees

- 6.4.1. The fees for the evaluation of qualifications are in accordance with the legislative instrument.

6.5 Translation

- 6.5.1 Translation should be limited to key documents (educational certificates or letters of award and transcripts).
- 6.5.2 Original documents, including the title of the qualification, should be provided in the original language.
- 6.5.3 The translation of educational documents should be done by the awarding body that has issued the originals. If this is not possible, a recognised authority in the country of origin or a locally recognised translator may be engaged to translate such that the contents are identical to the original, i.e., every word and page should be translated not only the essential part of the document.

6.6 Document Requirements

- 6.6.1 The following documents are required for evaluation:
- 6.6.2 Certified copy of each qualification certificate to be evaluated.
- 6.6.3 Certified copy of official academic record/ transcript of each qualification to be evaluated.
- 6.6.4 Verification information for the qualification to be evaluated issued by the awarding body.
- 6.6.5 Certified copy of certificate and transcript of qualification preceding the one that has been submitted for evaluation.
- 6.6.6 Letter of award if the certificate has not yet been issued.

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- 6.6.7 Certified copy of Identity Document (Omang) or birth certificate for children under the age of 16 for citizens or Passport for non-citizens.
- 6.6.8 Translations (if applicable) together with the documents in the original language prepared by a sworn translator.
- 6.6.9 Proof of change of name, (where applicable), in the event that documents submitted bear different names, an affidavit will be required to attest.

6.7 Fraudulent or altered documents.

The presence of alterations should lead to non-recognition of the qualification. The issue together with suspect documents will be referred to the relevant authorities for further investigation.

6.8 Appeal

The Authority shall inform the applicant of the basis for the recognition decision and the right to appeal in accordance with the BQA Evaluation of Qualifications Appeals policy.

6.9 The evaluation of the qualifications report

- 6.9.1 The BQA Evaluation of Qualifications Report shall have a standard format. The recommendation made on the evaluation report shall be seen as advisory only.
- 6.9.2 The Evaluation of the Report remains the property of BQA.

6.9 Revocation of recognition decision

In accordance with the Revocation policy, the evaluation of the qualifications recognition decision shall be revoked if it has been proven that its integrity and validity have been debased.

7.0 TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

This policy comes into effect on the date of publication in the BQA Quality Management System (QMS). It replaces Standards for Recognition of Qualifications DBD.EQD.GD01 Issue 2.

8.0 REVIEW OF POLICY

This policy will be reviewed every five (5) years, or earlier if necessary.

8.1 POLICY APPROVAL

8.1.1 This Policy was Approved by the Board and Signed on behalf by:

Designation	Name	Signature	Date



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