

POLICY & PROCEDURE MANUAL FOR REGISTRATION AND ENGAGEMENT OF REVIEWERS

Block 7, Plot 66450 Private Bag BO 340, Gaborone, Botswana
TEL: +267 365 7200 **FAX:** +267 395 2301
E-mail: customerservice@bqa.org.bw
Website: www.bqa.org.bw
Toll Free Line: 0800 600 934

SMS: (+267) 75671114
Twitter: @BQA_BWUpdates,
Facebook: BotswanaQualificationsAuthority, bqa
Skype : BQA_Botswana Qualifications Authority

POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL FOR REGISTRATION AND ENGAGEMENT OF REVIEWERS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

REVISION HISTORY	3
FOREWORD	4
PREAMBLE.....	5
1. PRELIMINARY	6
2. INTERPRETATION OF TERMS	6
3. POLICY STATEMENT	6
4. PURPOSE	7
5. OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY	7
6. SCOPE AND CONTENT	7
7. LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS	7
8. REGISTRATION PROCEDURES	8
9. REGISTRATION ON THE AUTHORITY'S APPROVED SUPPLIERS DATABASE	10
10. ENGAGEMENT PROCEDURES	10
11. PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS TOWARDS THE PROVISION OF REVIEWERS	11
12. TERMINATION OF APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION AS A REVIEWER	11
13. TERMINATION OF ENGAGEMENT AS A REVIEWER.....	12
14. DE-REGISTRATION AS A REVIEWER.....	12
15. REVIEWER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM	12
16. MAINTENANCE OF THE REVIEWERS' DATABASE.....	12
17. SERVICE FEES.....	13
18. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	13
19. REVIEW OF POLICY.....	14
20. APPROVAL.....	14

POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL FOR REGISTRATION AND ENGAGEMENT OF REVIEWERS



BOTSWANA
Qualifications Authority

POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL FOR REGISTRATION AND ENGAGEMENT OF REVIEWERS

REVISION HISTORY

Date	Summary of changes	Version

POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL FOR REGISTRATION AND ENGAGEMENT OF REVIEWERS

FOREWORD

In order to carry out its quality assurance role in the education and training sector effectively, the Botswana Qualifications Authority engages and collaborates with external reviewers. These reviewers are subject matter experts from academia, industries and professions who have expertise in different fields of learning, subfields, and domains. This policy serves to express and affirm the Authority's commitment to the proper selection and management of such reviewers. It also outlines the parameters under which such reviewers will function.

The policy applies to all Reviewers sourced both locally and internationally, and it is guided by the principles of integrity and transparency, as well as prevailing practices and standards.

As the Authority, we remain resolute in ensuring full implementation of this policy, in order to achieve positive impact in the delivery of our mandate.

Professor Botsalano Mosimakoko (Ph.D)

Date

Chief Executive officer

BOTSWANA
Qualifications Authority

POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL FOR REGISTRATION AND ENGAGEMENT OF REVIEWERS

PREAMBLE

Botswana Qualifications Authority (BQA) is a statutory body under the Ministry of Education and Skills Development (MoESD). It was established through the Botswana Qualifications Authority Act, 2013. The objectives of the Authority are to provide for and maintain a national credit and qualifications framework, and to co-ordinate the education, training and skills development quality assurance system. Section 4 subsection 2(w) of the Act mandates the Authority to “do all such things and perform all such functions as may be necessary for, or incidental to the attainment of the objectives of the Authority”. Section 10 (4) of the Botswana Qualifications Authority (Accreditation Of Learning Programmes) Regulations, 2016 further states that “The Authority shall conduct evaluation and verification of the new learning programmes and relevant inputs in collaboration with relevant stakeholders and subject matter experts.” To this effect BQA engages external reviewers to undertake this critical role. These are individuals from academia, industries and professions who have expertise in different fields of learning, subfields, and domains. They are engaged in the following processes of; registration and accreditation of Education and Training Providers (ETPs) and awarding bodies, evaluation of learning programmes for accreditation, auditing of ETPs and awarding bodies, quality assurance of qualifications, and any other service that the Authority may deem critical in advancing its mandate.

Quality assurance in education and training has become important in the national, regional, and global context. The need for the development of both internal and external quality assurance system has therefore been reinforced by this trend. External review for purposes of quality assurance is therefore vital as it ensures the maintenance of standards and quality in all aspects of education and training as well as consistency between internal quality assurance undertaken by ETPs and awarding bodies and external quality assurance undertaken by BQA.

A database of Reviewers who have been carefully selected through established criteria is maintained and managed by the Authority. The registered Reviewers are engaged as and when the Authority may require to undertake specific assignments.

POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL FOR REGISTRATION AND ENGAGEMENT OF REVIEWERS

1. PRELIMINARY

1.1 POLICY TITLE

The title of this policy is: **Policy and Procedure Manual For Registration and Engagement of Reviewers.**

2. INTERPRETATION OF TERMS

For the purposes of this the following terms and definitions shall apply:

“Act” shall mean the Botswana Qualifications Authority Act No. 24 of 2013;

“Authority” or **“BQA”** shall mean the Botswana Qualifications Authority;

“Direct procurement method”- means a sole source procurement method for requirements where exceptional circumstances prevent the use of competition;

“Reviewer” a person engaged by BQA to provide impartial and independent academic and/or professional expertise on the quality assurance processes of ETPs to guide BQA in decision-making and ensuring that BQA set quality and standards are met.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

The Authority recognizes and appreciates external reviewers as a necessary resource which serves to strengthen its capabilities. The Reviewers will be selected through established criteria, and subsequently engaged as and when the Authority may require to undertake specific assignments. They will be committed to the principles and practices of quality assurance in education and training, and will at all times endeavour to avoid any actual or perceived conflict of interest. The Authority shall ensure proper selection, registration, engagement and maintenance of all reviewers through the implementation of this policy.

POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL FOR REGISTRATION AND ENGAGEMENT OF REVIEWERS

4. PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to outline considerations made by the Authority when registering Reviewers into the BQA Reviewers Database, as well as engaging them in BQA quality assurance processes.

5. OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

The Objectives of this document are to:

- 5.1** guide the registration process of reviewers
- 5.2** guide the engagement process of reviewers
- 5.3** provide consistency, transparency, objectivity, and integrity in the selection process.

6. SCOPE AND CONTENT

- 6.1** The policy outlines the general principles governing the registration and engagement of reviewers, requirements for the registration and engagement processes, and the maintenance of reviewers' databases.
- 6.2** The policy is applicable for use by the Authority and all parties contracted by or in partnership with the Authority.

7. LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

This policy supports the regulatory framework outlined below:

- Botswana Qualifications Authority Act, 2013
- BOS ISO 9001:2015- Quality management systems – Requirements
- BQA Regulations
- any other legislation, policies and guidelines pertaining to use of suppliers.

POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL FOR REGISTRATION AND ENGAGEMENT OF REVIEWERS

8. REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

The registration process shall be employed for recruiting potential reviewers into the BQA database. This process shall include the following key stages/phases:

8.1 EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)

The Authority shall advertise, through issuance of an EOI notice, for individuals to express interest to be included in BQA's Reviewers Database.

8.2 APPLICATION

Individuals who are interested will apply online by completing an application form. The following documents are required for submission of an application:

- a) Motivation Letter
- b) Current detailed Curriculum Vitae
- c) Evaluation of Qualifications report
- d) Certified copies of certificates and transcripts
- e) Evidence of membership of a Professional Association or affiliations
(where applicable).

Applicants should have fully demonstrated, through traceable evidence, their credibility, knowledge, skill and competency within their respective areas of interest.

8.3 SELECTION AND VETTING

- 8.3.1 The selection and vetting of potential reviewers shall be carried out by an *Ad hoc* Committee.
- 8.3.2 The vetting process will be guided by a vetting matrix that will outline the criteria to be met.
- 8.3.3 During vetting, care will be taken to balance self-desires for an "ideal hire" with the functional requirements of the job and the realities of the

POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL FOR REGISTRATION AND ENGAGEMENT OF REVIEWERS

candidates for BQA Reviewers Database as stated in the Expression of Interest.

- 8.3.4** BQA reserves the right to approach individuals to supplement the database of selected Reviewers. Justification and approval for this approach should be provided prior to the registration of such individual(s).

8.4 EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME

- 8.4.1** Following successful vetting, applicants will be expected to attend a scheduled empowerment programme within 12 months of appointment. The objectives of the empowerment programme will be to:

- a) familiarise Reviewers with the BQA mandate and its key objectives, processes, and procedures.
- b) equip Reviewers with principles to be followed in carrying out quality assurance activities.
- c) familiarise Reviewers with all documentation used in Quality Assurance activities such as relevant regulations, criteria and guidelines, evaluation forms, application forms etc.
- d) capacitate Reviewers on methodologies and techniques used in carrying out their specific assignments.
- e) familiarize Reviewers with what BQA expects of them, and the code of conduct that applies to the activities.

- 8.4.2** Upon successful completion of the empowerment programme the Authority shall issue the Reviewer with a letter confirming attendance.

- 8.4.3** The Authority shall also provide refresher programmes from time to time.

8.5 SIGNING OF MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

- 8.5.1** An Applicant who has attended the empowerment programme will sign a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with the Authority. This is a legally

POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL FOR REGISTRATION AND ENGAGEMENT OF REVIEWERS

binding document between BQA and the Reviewer. The MoA will detail modalities of engagement between the two parties.

8.5.2 The contractual agreement shall commence on the date of signing and shall be valid for a period of three (3) years.

8.5.3 The Authority reserves the right to renew or not renew the contract, depending on the performance of the Reviewer and the needs of the Authority. Other factors such as number of assignments completed and or activity of the Reviewer, may be considered for renewal.

8.6 REGISTRATION ON REVIEWERS' DATABASE

8.6.1 The signing of the MoA shall trigger the reviewers' registration on the Authority's Reviewers Database.

8.6.2 A registered Reviewer will be issued with Registration letter which shall cite their Registration code.

9. REGISTRATION ON THE AUTHORITY'S APPROVED SUPPLIERS DATABASE

9.1 Only reviewers who have met the above criteria and have been registered on the Authority's Reviewers Database will be eligible to be added to the Approved Supplier Database administered by the Authority's Procurement Unit.

9.2 The registration on the supplier database will entail completing a supplier registration form and providing banking details. Account registration is necessary for processing payments after completion of assignments or at the end of every engagement.

9.3 The reviewer will be eligible to be considered for engagement for specific quality assurance assignment(s).

9.4 The Authority and Reviewers should ensure that the data and information about Reviewers are updated continuously.

10. ENGAGEMENT PROCEDURES

Conditions for appointment into Reviewers Panels are as follow:

POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL FOR REGISTRATION AND ENGAGEMENT OF REVIEWERS

- 10.1** The reviewer must have successfully completed the reviewer empowerment programme and registered in the BQA Database of Reviewers.
- 10.2** The reviewer should have relevant expertise and experience required for the specific assignment.
- 10.3** The reviewers should commit to availing their time to fulfil their responsibilities.
- 10.4** BQA reserves the right, in exceptional cases, to consider persons who do not meet one or more of the criteria specified above, for appointment to reviewer panels. In such cases the Authority will ensure that there is direct procurement for such.
- 10.5** The reviewers must accept the assignment and declare any conflict-of-interest prior to the engagement.
- 10.6** The reviewers engaged will be subjected to performance evaluation as determined by the Authority.
- 10.7** BQA will notify the ETP of the reviewers that will be engaged in the review process of its quality assurance processes to allow the ETP to declare any conflict of interest.

11. PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS TOWARDS THE PROVISION OF REVIEWERS

The Authority may approach both international and local institutions (e.g. Professional bodies, Regulatory bodies, Sector bodies etc.) directly for partnerships and collaborations towards the provision of Reviewers. The relationship should be clearly defined in a proposal and terms of reference shall be drawn to govern the relationship.

12. TERMINATION OF APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION AS A REVIEWER

A prospective reviewer's application will be terminated if the applicant:

- a) does not meet the criteria registration
- b) return the Reviewer Acceptance form
- c) fails to complete training
- d) fails to attend scheduled empowerment (only 2 chances will be given to a reviewer who fails to attend empowerment programme with reasons.)

POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL FOR REGISTRATION AND ENGAGEMENT OF REVIEWERS

- e) does not agree with the terms of the MoA
- f) Failure to register as a Supplier and register an account with BQA

13. TERMINATION OF ENGAGEMENT AS A REVIEWER

Reviewer's engagement with BQA will be terminated under the following circumstances:

- a) Failure to submit a report
- b) Failure to carryout assigned engagements
- c) Failure to respond to communication
- d) If there is evidence that the reviewer deliberately withheld information which may bring the Authority into disrepute.

In each of the circumstances stated above, the Authority shall produce a termination letter, and there shall be no payment made for terminated engagements.

14. DE-REGISTRATION AS A REVIEWER

A registered reviewer will be de-registered under the following circumstances:

- a) Failure to meet performance expectations
- b) Failure to adhere to ethical considerations and laws
- c) If there is evidence that the reviewer deliberately withheld information which may bring the Authority into disrepute.

15. REVIEWER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

BQA will have a Reviewer Management System. The system will inform the workload distribution for the reviewers at a given time.

16. MAINTENANCE OF THE REVIEWERS' DATABASE

The Authority and Reviewers will ensure that the data and information about Reviewers are updated continuously.

17. SERVICE FEES

BQA shall pay a service fee on the basis of the assignment and in accordance with the fee rates determined by BQA from time to time. The fees have been benchmarked in the region.

The fees are an annexure to this policy (DCEO.POL01.A02).

18. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

18.1 BQA'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The Authority's responsibilities shall include but not limited to the following:

18.1.1 Providing necessary induction and technical support.

18.1.2 Ensuring that Reviewers adhere to the Authority's code of conduct

18.1.3 Paying the set remuneration fees.

18.1.4 Maintaining all records pertaining to reviewers.

18.2 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is the Accounting Officer for the Authority duly charged with overseeing the formulation and implementation of policies under his/her jurisdiction.

18.3 DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The Deputy Chief Executive Officer (DCEO) as the Chief of Operations is responsible for the effective implementation of this policy.

18.4 HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS AND MANAGERS

Heads of departments and managers shall be responsible for the implementation of this policy in their respective units.

POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL FOR REGISTRATION AND ENGAGEMENT OF REVIEWERS

18.5 RESPONSIBILITY OF THE REVIEWER

The Reviewer's responsibilities shall include but not limited to the following:

- 18.5.1 Providing all information pertaining to personal, financial, education and training information to ensure that BQA has an up-to-date reviewer database.
- 18.5.2 Assessing applications for quality assurance according to legal frameworks and BQA approved quality assurance policies, quality assurance standards, and best practices.
- 18.5.3 Making the necessary judgements in the review in accordance with the purpose of the review and the totality of evidence presented, and to produce relevant reports on quality assurance activities according to the standards set by BQA.
- 18.5.4 Ensuring that all ethical considerations and laws are adhered to and maintained in all dealings with BQA.
- 18.5.5 Provision of advisory services on issues relating to quality assurance or any other activity the Authority may deem necessary.

19. REVIEW OF POLICY

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

20. APPROVAL

This policy was approved by and signed on behalf by:

Issue No:	Version	Name	Designation	Signature	Date
		Prof. B. Mosimakoko	Chief Executive Officer		