POLICY FOR THE DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF ASSESSMENTS FOR QUALIFICATIONS AND PART-QUALIFICATIONS REGISTERED ON THE NATIONAL CREDIT AND QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

"Building a seamless Education and Training System"

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

REVISION HISTORY

Date	Summary of changes	Version

FOREWORD BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The Botswana Qualifications Authority has a mandate to provide for and maintain a National Credit and Qualifications Framework (NCQF) and to coordinate the quality assurance system of education, training, and skills development from early childhood to tertiary education.

This policy highlights and elaborates on principles of assessment. It also addresses outcomes-based assessment, which emphasises that learners' achievements should be based on learning outcomes.

The Policy for the Design and Implementation of Assessments for Qualifications and Part-Qualifications on the National Credit and Qualifications Framework sets minimum standards, provides guidance, ascertains quality, and outlines the roles of the different stakeholders.

BQA wishes to acknowledge valuable input made by the Assessment Policy Technical Committee, Botswana Qualifications Authority staff, and all stakeholders that were involved in the drafting of this policy.

I thank you.

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Boitumelo Watlhaga (Acting CEO)   Date

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PREAMBLE

Botswana Qualifications Authority (BQA) is a statutory body under the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE). It was established through the Botswana Qualifications Authority Act, 2013.Through this Act, BQA is mandated to provide for and maintain a National Credit and Qualifications Framework (NCQF) and to coordinate the quality assurance system for education, training, and skills development. In fulfilling this mandate, BQA ensures that assessment practices across all qualifications and part-qualifications are credible, inclusive, and aligned with national and international standards ad best practices. To this effect BQA developed this policy as a standard and quality assurance measure for assessment of qualifications and part qualifications registered on the National Credit and Qualifications Framework.

Recognising the pivotal role of quality assurance in safeguarding educational standards, this Assessment Policy establishes a consistent, transparent, and equitable methodology for the evaluation of learner competencies and institutional practices. This policy is grounded in the principles of Outcomes-Based Assessment (OBA) and the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), which together promote learner-centred approaches that value both formal and informal learning experiences. This approach aims at ensuring the maintenance of quality, relevance, as well as consistency of assessments between different Education and training Providers.

Through this policy, BQA reaffirms its commitment to promoting inclusive, transparent, and outcomes-focused assessment practices that support the development of a competent and skilled workforce in Botswana. This attempts to ensure that assessments accurately reflect the knowledge, skills, and abilities that qualifications are intended to certify. For successful implementation of this policy, it should be read I conjunction with the RPL and CAT policies.

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1.0 ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BQA	Botswana Qualifications Authority
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
ETP	Education and Training Provider
NCQF	National Credit and Qualifications Framework
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
OBA	Outcomes-Based Assessment
RNPE	Revised National Policy on Education
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Science and Cultural Organisation

2.0 DEFINITION OF TERMS

2.1 **"Act"** means the Botswana Qualifications Authority Act, 2013.

2.2 **"Accreditation"** is a process of ensuring that education and training providers, and any learning programme of education and training offered, conform to quality assurance standards set by the Authority.

2.3 **"Assessment"** means the process of collecting evidence of learners 'work to measure and make a judgement about achievement or non-achievement of specified National Credit and Qualifications Framework standards and qualifications.

2.4 **"Assessment Centre"** refers to an entity registered by the Authority for the purpose of conducting assessments for specified NCQF registered qualifications and part qualifications.

2.5 **"Assessor"** is a person registered and accredited by the Authority in accordance with established criteria to collect evidence of learners' work to measure and make a judgment about achievement or non-achievement of specified NCQF standards or qualifications.

2.6 **"Authority"** refers to The Botswana Qualifications Authority which was established under Section 3 (1) of the Botswana Qualifications Authority Act, 2013.

2.7 **"Awarding body"** means an organisation, recognised by the Authority, which awards accredited qualifications.

2.8 **"Credit"** refers to the amount of learning recognised through qualifications and unit standards registered on the NCQF is measured in terms of notional learning hours.

2.9 **"Curriculum"** means an interactive system of instruction and learning with specific goals, contents, strategies, measurement, and resources, whose outcome is the successful transfer and/or development of knowledge, skills, and competencies.

2.10 **"Education and Training Provider (ETP)"** means person or entity that provides or organises a programme of education and training, including the provision of professional development services.

2.11 **"Evidence"** is what has been generated and/or assembled by a learner to make an assessment judgement.

2.12 **"Learning outcome"** is a statement that specifies what a learner will know or be able to do as a result of a learning activity.

2.13 **"Moderation"** is the process which ensures that the assessment of outcomes, as described in the NCQF standards or qualifications, is fair, valid, reliable, and consistent.

2.14 **"National Credit and Qualifications Framework (NCQF)"** refers to an instrument developed under section 4 (2) (d) for the classification of qualifications according to a set of criteria, for specified levels of learning achieved.

2.15 **"Outcomes-based assessment"** is a type of evaluation or measurement approach used in various educational and professional settings to assess a person's knowledge, skills, or competencies based on specific learning outcomes.

2.16 **"Qualification"** means a formal outcome of an assessment and validation process which is obtained when an assessor and moderator determine that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to given standards.

3.0   POLICY STATEMENT

To achieve the intention of the policy, all ETPs, Awarding Bodies, and Assessment Centres conducting assessments are bound by the requirements of this policy.

4.0   PURPOSE

The purpose of the Policy for the Design and Implementation of Assessments for Qualifications and Part-Qualifications Registered on the National Credit and Qualifications Framework is to:

3.1   Set minimum standards and guidelines for effective, valid, reliable, transparent, fair, and appropriate assessments.

3.2   Stipulate requirements for the development and implementation of assessment policies, processes, and procedures across the three sub-framework structures (General Education, Technical and Vocational Education and Training, and Higher Education).

3.3   Ensure quality and uniformity of assessments to satisfy the standards and learning outcomes of qualifications and part qualifications.

3.4   Develop a shared understanding of best practice principles to which assessments should adhere.

5.0   SCOPE

The Policy for the Design and Implementation of Assessments for Qualifications and Part-Qualifications on the National Credit and Qualifications Framework applies, but not limited to:

4.1   BQA accredited ETPs, Awarding Bodies, Workplaces, and Assessment Centres across the three sub frameworks.

4.2   All qualifications and part qualifications registered on the NCQF.

4.3   Statutory and non-statutory recognised Professional Bodies with their professional designations.

4.4   Learners.

4.5   Practitioners and all role players involved in assessments.

6.0   RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1   Policy administrator: CEO, BQA

6.2   Policy implementation: Deputy CEO, BQA

6.3   Overall: Director, NCQFS

6.4   Assistance: Manager Assessment

6.5   Training: Assessment Team

6.6   Quality Management: Assessment Team

6.7   Audit: BQA Institutional Audit Team

6.8   Quality Assurance: Director Quality Assurance

6.9   Policy advice: Ministry of Higher Education; BQA; Board Committees

6.10 Policy effective from publication in the Government Gazette.

7.0   INTRODUCTION

7.1   Botswana Qualifications Authority Mandate

The Botswana Qualifications Authority (BQA) is tasked with quality assurance of education and training through the development and implementation of standards and criteria for validation of learner achievement. The objectives of the Authority are to provide for and maintain a National Credit and Qualifications Framework (NCQF) and to coordinate the education, training, and skills development quality assurance system. The NCQF is a single integrated system comprising three distinctive but coordinated sub-frameworks, namely General Education, Technical and Vocational Education and Training, and Higher Education.

7.2   The credibility of the NCQF depends on:

7.2.1 Assessment practices are relevant to what needs to be assessed.

7.2.2 Optimising assessment opportunities, methods, time, resources, and evidence to show a candidate's abilities.

7.2.3 All stakeholders have confidence that assessment methods and outcomes are proof of a candidate's abilities.

7.3   The Policy for the Design and Implementation of Assessments for Qualifications and Part-Qualifications on the National Credit and Qualifications Framework sets

minimum standards, provides guidance, ascertains quality, and outlines the roles of the different stakeholders.

7.4 The following policies are aligned with and need to be read in conjunction with the Policy for Designing and Implementing Assessment:

7.4.1 Botswana Qualifications Authority National Credit and Qualifications Framework (NCQF) Level Descriptors.

7.4.2 Botswana Qualifications Authority Policy for the Implementation of the Recognition of Prior Learning.

7.4.3 Botswana Qualifications Authority Policy for Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT).

7.5 Legislative and Regulatory Framework

7.5.1 The Botswana Qualifications Authority Act, 2013 mandates BQA to design methods of validating the achievement of learners (Section 4 (2) q) and to recognise and validate competencies for purposes of certification (Section 4 (2) r. Furthermore, section 31 (f) mandates the Authority to regulate the manner of assessment and testing within the National Credit and Qualifications Framework.

7.5.2 The need for assessment reform is echoed in many local and international recommendations and past Government interventions:

a) The Education and Training Sector Strategic Plan (2015 - 2020) addresses the development of appropriate assessment patterns through setting up a National Assessment Framework to better organise school-based assessment and measuring skills, linking with national assessment.

b) The Revised National Policy on Education (RNPE, 1994) defines, as part of the overall objectives of national education, the need to assume (page 5) more effective control of the examination mechanism to ensure that the broad objectives of the curriculum are realised. The policy further recommends that (page 23 b) continuous assessment be weighted to contribute to the final grade. The RNPE further advises that teachers be given adequate training to handle continuous assessment.

c) Botswana's Vision 2036 visualises a Botswana society which is knowledgeable, with relevant quality education that is outcomes-based, emphasising technical and vocational skills as well as academic competencies (education with production). To achieve this, access to quality education will be compulsory, and students will progress having satisfied the minimum requirements.

d) The BQA Accreditation of Learning Programmes regulations, 2016 require the Authority to 7 (2) develop criteria and guidelines for the design and implementation of outcomes-based assessment and moderation systems. Furthermore, the Authority shall undertake quality assurance of assessment and moderation systems implemented by education and training providers and awarding bodies for accredited learning programmes 7 (5).

e) Botswana's Inclusive Education Policy (2011) states that Botswana will achieve an inclusive education system which provides children, young people, and adults with access to relevant, high-quality education which enables them to learn effectively, whatever their gender, age, life circumstances, health, disability, stage of development, capacity to learn or socio-economic circumstances. Inclusive education is also echoed in the following international policies: SDG 4; Education for All (EFA) initiative; Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education; UNESCO Guidelines on Inclusion in Education and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

7.0   ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Roles and responsibilities for key stakeholders: BQA, education and training providers, awarding and assessment centres, awarding bodies, professional bodies, assessment practitioners and learners are outlined in the policy guidelines.

8.0   ASSESSMENT DESIGN AND APPLICATION

The Botswana Qualifications Authority (Accreditation of Learning Programmes) Regulations, 2016, section 7 require that:

8.1 Assessment design and administration for qualifications on the Framework shall be based on learning outcomes and requirements stipulated for the qualifications, as determined by the Authority.

8.2 The Authority shall develop criteria and guidelines for the design and implementation of outcomes-based assessment and moderation systems.

8.3 An education and training provider shall develop and implement policies, processes and procedures to ensure credibility in assessment and conformity to criteria and guidelines referred to in sub-regulation (2).

8.4 Assessment and moderation for accredited learning programmes shall be undertaken by registered and accredited assessors and moderators in a manner determined by the Authority.

9.0 OUTCOMES-BASED ASSESSMENT

9.1 Outcomes-Based Assessment (OBA) is a process that measures learners' knowledge and skills, in addition to providing continuous improvement in teaching and learning with meaningful and relevant learning experiences.

    9.1.1 OBA is not only focused on learner grades but also the overall potential of students in various aspects, especially in professional achievement and soft skills.

    9.1.2 Assessment should discover what has been learnt, rather than what has been taught.

    9.1.3 Assessment, therefore should reflect as closely as possible the actual tasks performed, termed authentic or performance assessment

9.2 Underlying Principles of Outcomes-Based Assessment

All ETPs, Awarding Bodies, and Assessment Centres are required to ensure strict adherence to principles of assessment, namely validity, reliability, fairness, explicitness, appropriateness, integration, systematicity, accountability and flexibility. These principles are applicable to all forms of assessment.

9.3 Outcomes Based Assessment and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

9.3.1 OBA and RPL can be complementary in that RPL helps individuals demonstrate that they have already achieved the learning outcomes defined in an OBA framework.

9.3.2 Both RPL and OBA are often described as learner-centred, as they emphasise learners' prior knowledge and experiences and tailor the learning process to their specific needs.

9.3.3 OBA can guide the RPL process, ensuring that the assessed prior learning aligns with the desired learning outcomes.

9.3.4 By using RPL within an OBA framework, institutions can recognise and validate prior learning while ensuring that learners meet the required standards.

10.0 TYPES AND APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT

ETPs, Awarding Bodies, and Assessment Centres must make provisions for the use of a variety of assessments to make informed decisions about learning strategies as well as learner performance.

10.1 Formative assessment

10.1.1 Assessment for Learning

Formative assessment, also referred to as assessment for learning, focuses on monitoring the quality of the learning process and on providing continuous feedback to guide learning and teaching. It should be designed to feed further learning through the identification of gaps in the learning process. Assessment results are recorded and count towards the grading of the qualification or part qualification.

10.1.2 Assessment as Learning

Assessment as Learning is another form of formative assessment. Learners are encouraged to monitor their own learning through goal setting, peer assessment, self-assessment, and reflecting on results.

10.2 Summative Assessment

10.2.1 Summative assessment, also known as Assessment of Learning, is aimed at assessing the extent to which outcomes have been achieved at the end of a learning process.

10.2.2 Its aim is the evaluation and/or the certification of learning that has already taken place, and the extent to which learning has been successful in respect of learning outcomes.

10.3 Integrated Assessment

10.3.1 Integrated assessment should assess the ability to combine key fundamental, practical and reflexive competences with some soft skills outcomes.

10.3.2 Education and Training Providers, awarding bodies, and assessment centres are encouraged to move towards increasingly integrated assessment practices.

10.3.3 Assessment must build on real-world activities in realistic contexts.

11.0 ONLINE ASSESSMENTS

Online assessments are conducted over the internet using available web technologies. Before adopting and administering online assessments, ETPs, Awarding Bodies, and Assessment Centres should ensure the environment is conducive and IT-related measures are in place.

12.0 ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

12.1 Assessment Strategy document shall be developed, stating the requirements for assessment for each qualification and part qualification.

12.2 Assessment instruments should be developed in accordance with the assessment strategy for each qualification, part qualification, and learning programmes.

12.3 Assessment methods should be spelt out in the assessment strategy.

12.4 Assessment methods must be appropriate, fair, integrated, and manageable.

12.5 Appropriate strategies for Assessment as Learning, Assessment of learning, and Assessment for Learning should be used.

13.0 MODERATION OF ASSESSMENT

Botswana Qualifications Authority (registration and accreditation of education and training providers) regulations, 2016 Section 8 states that;

13.1 An awarding body shall undertake quality assurance of the delivery of learning programmes and associated assessment, and moderation processes as specified by the Authority.

13.2 ETPs, Awarding Bodies, and Assessment Centres shall undertake both internal and external moderation of assessments.

14.0 ASSESSMENT FEEDBACK

Feedback given to learners should be timely, specific, actionable, and constructive.

15.0 ASSESSMENT RECORDS

Awarding Bodies and Assessment Centres should maintain a system for recording evidence, assessment judgments, and decisions for learners. The record-keeping system should be integrated with other administrative systems and compatible with the national learner records database.

16.0 ASSESSMENT MALPRACTICE

Botswana Qualifications Authority (Registration and Accreditation of Education and Training Providers) Regulation 9 states that;

16.1 An awarding body shall ensure that there is no malpractice or maladministration within each of the education and training providers that have entered into an agreement with the awarding body in accordance with regulation 5 (3) regarding assessment and moderation.

16.2 An awarding body shall implement appropriate mitigation strategies where malpractice or maladministration, as referred to under regulation 9, occurs within the

education and training provider with which it has entered into an agreement in accordance with regulation 5 (3).

16.3 Assessment malpractice may include cheating, plagiarism, collusion, fabrication, improper assistance

17.0 ASSESSMENT FRAUD

17.1 Awarding Bodies, Assessment Centres and ETPs shall ensure that there are no incidences of assessment fraud, which may include:

17.1.1 Impersonation.

17.1.2 Falsifying qualifications or certificates.

17.1.3 Tampering with assessment records or results.

17.1.4 Bribery or corruption to influence assessment outcomes.

17.2 Structures and clear procedures should be put in place for handling assessment fraud cases in the event they occur.

18.0 NULLIFYING ASSESSMENT

18.1 Unforeseen circumstances such as gross misconduct, disruptions, power failure, technical failure, or illness of candidates may necessitate the nullification of the assessment.

18.2 ETPs, Awarding Bodies, and Assessment Centres must have in place clearly documented procedures and conditions for nullifying assessments, which must be communicated in time. Alternative arrangements must be made timeously.

19.0 APPEALS

ETPs, Awarding Bodies, and Assessment Centres must have clear and transparent procedures for appeals of assessment-related grievances, which should be made known to learners before assessments are conducted.

20.0 DATA PROTECTION

20.1 BQA's Data Protection Policy, issued under the mandate of the BQA Board, underscores the Authority's unwavering commitment to maintaining the highest standards of integrity, accountability, and regulatory adherence.

20.2 The policy ensures protection of natural persons regarding the processing of personal data, free flow of personal data in the provision of services, protect fundamental rights and freedoms of natural persons insofar as they relate to privacy and the protection of personal data.

21.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The implementation of the Policy for Assessment will be monitored and evaluated to ensure its effectiveness, relevance, and alignment with national qualification frameworks and standards. The M&E process will focus on:

21.1 **Compliance:** Assessing adherence to the assessment guidelines, procedures, and quality standards set by BQA.

21.2 **Effectiveness:** Measuring the extent to which assessment processes achieve intended outcomes, including fairness, reliability, and validity of assessment results.

21.3 **Stakeholder Feedback:** Gathering input from learners, assessors, and educational institutions to identify gaps and areas for improvement.

21.4 **Continuous Improvement:** Using evaluation findings to inform policy updates, capacity-building initiatives, and enhancements in assessment practices.

21.5 **Reporting:** Documenting M&E findings in periodic reports to guide decision-making and ensure accountability.

This M&E framework ensures that assessment practices remain rigorous, transparent, and responsive to the evolving needs of Botswana's education and training system.
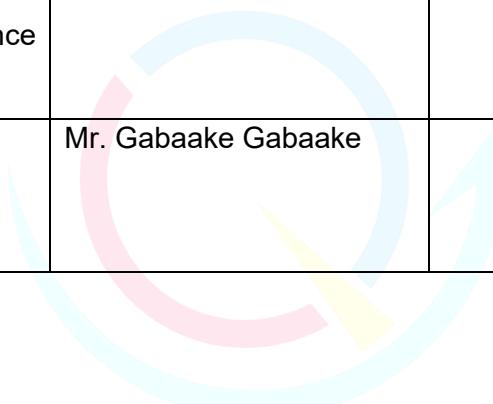
22.0 POLICY REVIEW

This policy shall be reviewed in consultation with relevant stakeholders at least every three (3) years. The review shall entail benchmarking with and referencing to other NQF systems to ensure regional and international alignment and comparability.

23.0 APPROVAL

This policy was approved by the Board and signed on behalf by:

DESIGNATION	NAME	SIGNATURE	DATE
Chief Executive Officer (Acting)	Ms. Boitumelo Watlhaga		18/11/25
Quality Assurance and Framework Maintenance Committee Chairperson	Prof. Richie Moalosi		18/11/25
Board Chairperson	Mr. Gabaake Gabaake		18/11/25