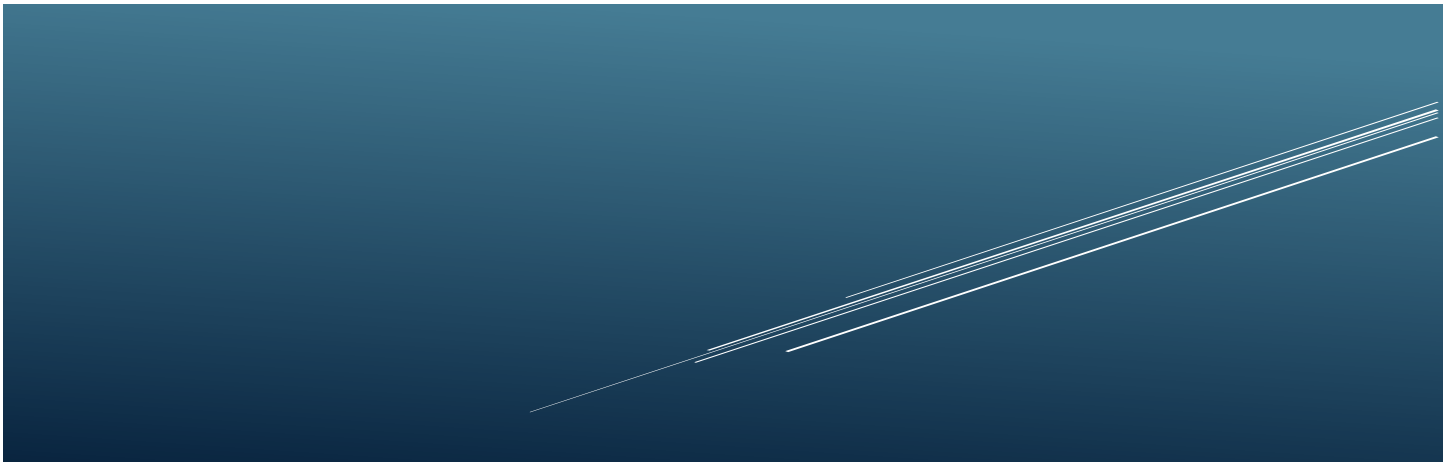
BOTSWANA
Qualifications Authority

NORMS AND STANDARDS FOR THE RECOGNITION OF INSTITUTIONS AND AWARDING BODIES

TRANSITION GUIDELINES



MARCH 2026

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The Botswana Qualifications Authority (BQA) is a State-Owned Enterprise (SOE) under the Ministry of Higher Education, established by the Botswana Qualifications Authority Act No. 24 of 2013, to provide for and maintain a national credit and qualifications framework and to co-ordinate the education, training and skills development quality assurance system.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Mandate of Botswana Qualifications Authority

Botswana Qualifications Authority (BQA) is a State-Owned Enterprise (SOE) under the Ministry of Higher Education, established by the Botswana Qualifications Authority Act No. 24 of 2013, to provide for and maintain the national credit and qualifications framework and to co-ordinate the education, training and skills development quality assurance system.

1.2 Establishment and Purpose of Norms and Standards

The Botswana Qualifications Authority has established Norms and Standards for Higher Education (HE) and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Sub-Frameworks to enhance existing quality assurance processes for institutions and Awarding Bodies.

1.3 Regulatory Purpose of the Transition Guidelines

This document establishes the guidelines designed to regulate and facilitate a structured, legally compliant, and expeditious migration for the Authority, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), TVET Institutions, and Awarding Bodies from the current registration and accreditation requirements and processes to the newly approved Norms and Standards.

1.4 Transition Assessment Basis

The Authority shall base its transition assessment on the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) submitted by HEIs, TVET Institutions, or Awarding Bodies.

1.5 Institutional Transition Plan Timeline

All registered and accredited HEIs, TVET Institutions, and Awarding Bodies shall submit an institutional transition plan within **12 months** from the commencement date of the Norms and Standards, in a manner determined by the Authority.

1.6 Commencement and Transition Period

The Norms and Standards were approved and came into force on **18 March 2026**, and they shall formally come into effect on a date to be published by the Authority, marking the commencement of a **36-months transition period** that expires therefrom.

1.7 Service Fees and Certificate Validity Options

Registered and accredited HEIs, TVET Institutions, and Awarding Bodies choosing to transition into the Norms and Standards dispensation by carrying over the residual validity period of their existing certificates shall be exempt from all transition-related service fees levied by the Authority; conversely, those choosing to forfeit their current validity periods to secure a fresh recognition term shall incur the full costs of all applicable transition service fees.

2.0 TRANSITION CLASSIFICATIONS FOR INSTITUTIONS AND AWARDING BODIES

The transition process for registered and accredited HEIs, TVET institutions and Awarding Bodies are categorized into three distinct classes based on the availability of appropriate infrastructure and graduate history.

2.1 Group 1: Established HEIs, TVET Institutions and Awarding Bodies with Graduate Provenance

Institutions with established infrastructure, and Awarding Bodies that have successfully produced a graduate cohort under their current registration and accreditation certificates, must submit a Self-Evaluation Report (SER) designating their intended statutory classification under the Norms and Standards. Upon satisfying all relevant requirement in the Norms and Standards, the Authority shall grant accreditation or Letter of Interim Authority (LIT) and issue the respective certificates.

2.2 Group 2: Operational Entities without Graduate History

Institutions with infrastructure and Awarding Bodies holding valid registration and accreditation certificates, but lacking a graduate cohort since certificate issuance, must submit SER to be granted a Letter of Interim Authority. These institutions and Awarding Bodies are legally mandated to apply for accreditation after producing their initial graduate cohort and prior to the expiration of the Letter of Interim Authority.

2.3 Group 3: Non-Operational Institutions With no Infrastructure

Any HEI, TVET institution or Awarding Body that failed to establish the requisite physical resources and infrastructure under its current registration and accreditation or recognition certificate shall be classified under Group 3, and the Authority shall summarily revoke its subsisting registration and accreditation certificates. Consequently, any HEI, TVET institution or Awarding Body within this group must submit a fresh application for registration and accreditation or recognition to secure future recognition by the Authority.

3.0 REGISTRATION OF NEW HEIs, TVET INSTITUTIONS, AND AWARDING BODIES

To register a new Higher Education Institution, TVET Institution, or Awarding Body, applicants must submit their applications to the Authority. The application must meet all requirements set out in the Norms and Standards for the Recognition of Institutions and Awarding Bodies.

4.0 STATUS OF ACCREDITED LEARNING PROGRAMMES

4.1 Continuity of Accreditation During Transition Period

Learning programmes validly accredited under any registered and accredited HEI or TVET institution shall preserve their accreditation status for the duration of the prescribed transition period.

4.2 Revocation for Non-Compliance and Mandatory Wind-Up

4.2.1 In the event that a registered and accredited HEI or TVET institution fails to adhere to the transitional requirements, process or timelines mandated by the Authority, the accreditation of all learning programmes accredited under such institution shall be summarily revoked.

4.2.2 Pursuant to Section 4.2.1 herein, the non-compliant institution shall execute a mandatory winding-up process in accordance with the guidelines prescribed by the Authority, which shall include the immediate activation of an approved teach-out plan.

4.3 Scope Limitations, Enrolment Cessation, and Approved Teach-Out Plans

4.3.1 Where a registered and accredited HEI or TVET institution is placed into a recognition category that restricts its current scope of accreditation, thereby disqualifying it from offering some previously accredited learning programmes, the institution shall immediately cease all marketing, admission, and enrolment of students into the affected learning programmes.

4.3.2 Pursuant to Section 4.3.1 herein, the institution is legally obligated to formulate and execute a comprehensive teach-out plan to safeguard the academic progression of currently enrolled learners.

4.3.3 No teach-out plan shall be implemented without the prior written review and formal approval of the Authority.

5.0 CONSEQUENCES OF NON-COMPLIANCE WITH TRANSITIONAL PROCESSES AND ARRANGEMENTS

5.1 Revocation and Mandatory Winding-Up

Where a registered and accredited HEI, TVET institution, or Awarding Body fails to comply with the transitional processes and arrangements prescribed by the Authority within the designated transition period, the Authority may revoke its registration and accreditation certificate. Consequent to such revocation, the non-compliant entity shall undergo a mandatory winding-up process in accordance with the processes and guidelines prescribed by the Authority.

5.2 Pre-Revocation Procedures and Notice Requirements

Prior to executing a decision to revoke the certificate of accreditation or registration and accreditation or recognition of an HEI, TVET institution, or Awarding Body, the Authority shall:

5.2.1 Issue a formal written notice to the affected HEI, TVET institution, or Awarding Body, explicitly setting forth the statutory or regulatory grounds for the intended revocation.

5.2.2 Grant the affected HEI, TVET institution, or Awarding Body a compliance window, the duration of which shall be determined by the Authority, to remedy the deficiencies and satisfy the transitional requirements.

5.3 Discretionary Extensions and Maximum Duration

5.3.1 Evaluation of Transition Failure

If an institution or Awarding Body fails to successfully transition by the expiration of the transition deadline, the Authority shall evaluate the underlying causes of the failure.

5.3.2 Discretionary Compliance Extensions

Where the Authority deems the justifications for the failure to be reasonable, it may, at its sole discretion, extend the compliance period for that specific HEI, TVET institution, or Awarding Body.

5.3.3 Maximum Extension Limit

Any compliance extension granted by the Authority under Section 4.3.2 herein, shall not exceed a maximum aggregate period of six (6) months.

5.3.4 Finality of Deadline Extension

Upon the expiration of the six-month extension period specified in Section 5.3.3 herein, no further extensions of time shall be granted under any circumstances.

5.3.5 Sole Admissible Ground for Transitional Delay

The sole admissible ground for a transitional delay shall be proof that the HEI, TVET institution, or Awarding Body submitted a complete and valid application within the prescribed timeframes, but the Authority failed to evaluate or determine the application prior to the expiration of the deadline.

5.4 Enforcement of Protection Enrolled Learners Policy

The Protection of Enrolled Learners Policy shall be strictly enforced against any registered and accredited institution that fails to comply with the transitional processes and arrangements prescribed by the Authority within the designated transition period.

6.0 APPEALS AGAINST THE DECISIONS OF THE AUTHORITY

Any institution or Awarding Body aggrieved by a decision of the Authority concerning the implementation of transitional processes, transitional arrangements, the application of Norms and Standards, or any matters incidental thereto, may lodge a written appeal to the Appeals Committee of the Authority. Such appeal shall be submitted, in the manner determined by the Authority, within twenty-one (21) days from the date of receipt of the notification of the decision

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