



Annexure B

The Classification System for the Registration of Unit Standards and Naming of National Qualifications on the National Qualifications Framework of Namibia

Introduction

Purpose of this document

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.

Adoption of the NQF Classification System

The NQF Classification System was approved by the Council of the Namibia Qualifications Authority 14 April 2005.

The Need for a Classification System

Placement of qualifications

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:

- establish some consistency in the understanding of what is included within each subject area, and
- to enable people to readily locate qualifications that may be of interest to them.

The proposed NQF Classification System will enable such consistency and accession capabilities.

Naming of national qualifications

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:

<Qualification Type> in/of <Classification System Item>

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.

Defining scope of accreditation

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:

All unit standards in the Subfield of Livestock Farming up to Level 5.

or

Programmes associated with the Subfield of Horticulture to Level 5 and the Domain Sports Turf to Level 3.

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.

Expressing qualification requirements

Qualification developers may wish to enable their qualifications to recognise diverse attainment contexts through elective sets of required outcomes of learning. 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:

- Credit is required for *all* unit standards in the Compulsory List A; and
- a *minimum* of 15 credits up to Level 4 are required from the Subfields in Elective List B.
-

Data sharing and comparison

A NQF 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.

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

Three tiered system

The NQF Classification System shall have three tiers:

1. FIELDS of learning, being the broadest aggregation of learning outcomes with a coherent alignment
2. Subfields of learning, being logical sub categorisations of FIELDS, and
3. Domains of learning, being the smallest coherent aggregation of learning outcomes, having a more narrow and specific alignment.
4. Unit standards will be registered in a Domain.

Illustrative example of tiers

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:

- Horticulture
- Forestry and Wood Technology
- Livestock
- Arable Farming
- Fisheries
- Wildlife Management

The Subfield of *Livestock* could be divided into domains such as:

- cattle raising
- dairying
- sheep farming
- shearing
- pig raising
- goat farming
- animal husbandry
- etc.

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.

Control of FIELDS of learning

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.

FIELDS of learning

The following twelve FIELDS have been approved as the broadest categorisation of learning outcomes on the NQF in Namibia:

FIELDS of Learning

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agriculture and Nature Conservation• Business, Commerce and Management Studies• Communication Studies and Language• Culture and the Arts• Education, Training and Development• Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Human and Social Studies• Law, Military Science and Security• Health Sciences and Social Services• Physical, Mathematical and Computer Sciences• Physical Planning and Construction• Services and Life Sciences |
|---|--|

Note: The above FIELDS have a nomenclature that closely aligns with those used in Botswana and South African qualification systems.

Subfields and domains 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.

Management of Subfields and domains 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.

Management of the NQF Classification System shall be guided by the rules shown in Appendix A.

Subject Nomenclature in Higher Education Qualifications

Designators and qualifiers It is common for higher education qualifications to include, in their titles, a:

Designator – the broad area of learning recognised by the qualification, eg, a Bachelor ***of Arts*** ;

Qualifier – the specialist area of learning recognised by the qualification, eg, a Bachelor of Arts ***in Anthropology***.

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.

Naming aligns with outcomes of learning 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.

In general, the minimum volume associated with this subject area is 50 - 66% of the outcomes of learning at the highest level.

Control of naming As the use of Designators and Qualifiers assist commonality of understanding of qualification coverage across institutions, the assignment of allowable names is usually controlled by a central body.

Unified system 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.

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.

Designators as special Subfields Designators shall be treated as special cases of Subfields – *Designator Subfields* and will be grouped independently of other Subfields within a FIELD.

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.

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.

**Qualifiers as
special
domains**

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.

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

Need for management

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.

Making change requests

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

Adding items to the Classification System

Reasons for adding items

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:

- 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.

Requirements for adding items

Before submitting a new item(s), there must be a check that the proposed category:

- 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

Reasons for deleting an item

The deletion of an existing item(s) from the NQF Classification System may be required when the category of learning or work performance is:

- 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.

Impact of deleting an item

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:

- the likely consequences on unit standard registrations, qualification structures, and institutions' accreditations, and
- suggested actions to deal with any consequences.

Impact on unit standards

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.

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.

Impact on Qualifications

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).

If the integrity of any qualification is not affected by the proposed deletion, the recommendation to delete can likely be actioned quickly.

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.

Impact on provider accreditation

A check must be made with the NQA to determine the number of current accreditations that include the category proposed for deletion.

If there are no current accreditations inclusive of the category, then the recommendation to delete can likely be actioned quickly.

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 or 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

Reasons for moving items

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.

Actions needed 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.

Renaming an existing classification

Reasons for renaming items 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.

Consequences of renaming 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.

Appendix B - Application Form: Change Request for the NQF Classification System

Name of Group Submitting	
Change Request:	_____
Contact Person:	_____
Contact Address:	_____ _____ _____
Contact Phone:	_____
Contact Email	_____
Date:	_____

SECTION 1 – The new or changed classification required

Subfield

No change	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Add new subfield	<input type="checkbox"/>	New subfield name: _____
Designate existing subfield <i>Lapsing</i> and create a new subfield	<input type="checkbox"/>	Existing subfield name: _____ New subfield name: _____

Domains

Add new domain	<input type="checkbox"/>	New domain name: _____
Designate existing domain <i>Lapsing</i> and create a new domain	<input type="checkbox"/>	Existing domain name: _____ New domain name: _____
Designate existing domain <i>Lapsing</i> and move domain name to a different subfield	<input type="checkbox"/>	Existing subfield location: _____ New subfield location: _____

Rationale for the new or changed classification

Please provide a brief rationale for the addition or change. For example, a new category of learning or training has been identified; industry terminology has changed; rationalisation or expansion of existing classification categories is required.

For a new classification, list the draft titles of the new unit standards that will be classified in each new domain (or attach the list to this form)

SECTION 2

Impact of the change on existing unit standards, accreditations, and qualifications

Please complete the three impact sections below

Impact on existing unit standards

List the registered unit standards affected by the change to the classification system.

Existing classification

Subfield	Domain	Id

New classification

Subfield	Domain	Id

Impact on existing provider accreditations

List the domains and/or subfields for which providers currently hold accreditation and indicate how accreditation will be extended to take account of the change to the classification system.

Current Accreditation for			Accreditation will be extended to		
Nature of accreditation	Classification	Level	Nature of accreditation	Classification	Level
Field			Subfield/Domain/Id		
Subfield			Subfield/Domain/Id		
Domain			Domain/Id		

Impact on existing qualifications

List the registered qualifications that contain a changed classification (domain or subfield) in an elective set.

Qualification title	Subfield or Domain
National Certificate/Diploma in [Ref: xxxx]	

Other comments
(Optional)