



BOTSWANA
Qualifications Authority



CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES FOR APPROVAL OF NON CREDIT BEARING SHORT COURSES

	CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES FOR APPROVAL OF NON CREDIT BEARING SHORT COURSES	Document No.	QAS6
		Issue No.	01
		Effective Date	04/01/2017

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION A	1
1. PREAMBLE.....	1
2.0 PURPOSE	2
3.0 INTERPRETATION.....	2
CRITERION 1: REGISTRATION AND ACCREDITATION STATUS OF THE ETP	5
CRITERION 2: NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND RATIONALE	5
CRITERION 3: SHORT COURSE GENERAL INFORMATION	5
CRITERION 4: COURSE CONTENT & DELIVERY.....	6
CRITERION 5: ASSESSMENT AND CERTIFICATION.....	6
CRITERION 6: MODES OF DELIVERY	7
CRITERION 7: MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW.....	8
CRITERION 8: RESOURCES	8
CRITERION 9. RECORD MANAGEMENT	9
CRITERION 10. BENCHMARKING, COMPARABILITY AND REFERENCING	10
SECTION C: SHORT COURSE APPROVAL PROCESS	10
1.1 SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION	10
1.2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF APPLICATION	11
1.3 DESK EVALUATION	11
1.4 APPOINTMENT OF SUBJECT MATTER EXPERT	11
1.6 DECISION ON APPROVAL	11
1.7 APPEALS	11
SECTION D - POST APPROVAL ACTIVITIES.....	12
1.1 ADVERTISING AND USE OF BQA LOGO.....	12
1.2 RENEWAL OF APPROVAL OF SHORT COURSES	12
1.3 NOTIFICATION OF SIGNIFICANT CHANGES	12
1.4 WITHDRAWAL OF SHORT COURSE APPROVAL	13

 BOTSWANA Qualifications Authority	CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES FOR APPROVAL OF NON CREDIT BEARING SHORT COURSES	Document No.	QAS6
		Issue No.	01
		Effective Date	04/01/2017

SECTION A

1. PREAMBLE

1.1 BACKGROUND

Botswana Qualifications Authority (BQA) has been in the past accrediting all learning programmes including non-credit bearing short courses (NCBSC). With the introduction of the National Credit and Qualifications Framework (NCQF) it has become impossible to accredit non-credit bearing short courses as they do not fall within the ambit and the intended scope of NCQF.

While BQA is mandated by the Botswana Qualifications Authority Act, 2013, to accredit learning programmes across all the education sub-systems - General Education (GE), Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and Higher Education (HE), it sees the need to give recognition to non-credit bearing short courses as they play an important role in the development and upskilling of human resource. Some short courses are company/ work-specific and are designed and delivered to meet the need for skilled persons in highly specialised areas, or to train employees to apply new technologies or operate new machinery. Other courses are general and the knowledge and skills can be applied across different sectors of the economy. It is therefore critical that they are subjected to the rigors of quality assurance and approval processes regardless of the fact that they do not lead to a full/part qualification.

The Authority requires that any registered and accredited Education and Training Provider (ETP) wishing to offer a non-credit bearing short course must apply for its approval with BQA.

The criteria and guidelines for non-credit bearing short courses is not a stand-alone document as it supports other BQA documents dealing the registration and accreditation and quality of Education and Training Providers.

1.2 AIMS FOR APPROVAL OF NON CREDIT BEARING SHORT COURSES

Approval of Non Credit Bearing Short Courses aims to:

- 1.2.1 ensure quality teaching and learning provision,
- 1.2.2 ensure that education and training standards are continuously maintained;
- 1.2.3 enhance provision of quality service.

 BOTSWANA Qualifications Authority	CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES FOR APPROVAL OF NON CREDIT BEARING SHORT COURSES	Document No.	QAS6
		Issue No.	01
		Effective Date	04/01/2017

2.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to set out criteria and offer guidance on the process of approval of short courses not leading to full/part award. It will also ensure that the process of approval of short courses is completely structured, transparent and consistent. This document therefore hopes to clarify and formalize non-credit bearing short courses provisioning so that it can take its rightful place in the development of this country's human resources.

The document further represents the standard that must be met by the applicant and the basis upon which BQA will approve non credit bearing short courses. BQA grants this approval when satisfied that the applicant meets these criteria.

3.0 INTERPRETATION

The terms listed below are as defined in the Act, and others as generally used in the global context.

“Accreditation”- a process of ensuring that ETPs and any programme of education and training offered, conform to any quality assurance standards set by the BQA.

“Approval of short courses”- means a process of recognising short courses to ensure that they satisfy the minimum quality standards set by BQA

“Act” - means the Botswana Qualifications Authority Act, 2013;

“Assessor” –means a person who collects evidence of learners work to measure and make judgement about achievement or non-achievement of specified NCQF standards or qualifications;

“Assessment” means the process of collecting evidence of learners work to measure and make judgement about achievement or non-achievement of learning outcomes of a short course.

“Authority” – means Botswana Qualifications Authority (BQA) established under section 3 (1) of the Botswana Qualifications Authority Act, 2013;

“Benchmarking”- means a process through which a course is evaluated and compared against internal and external, national and international reference points for the purpose of accountability and improvement.

 BOTSWANA Qualifications Authority	CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES FOR APPROVAL OF NON CREDIT BEARING SHORT COURSES	Document No.	QAS6
		Issue No.	01
		Effective Date	04/01/2017

“Course Review” - means an internal quality assurance procedure that an ETP uses to monitor and reflect on the outcome of the education it provides through a course.

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

“Field” - means a particular area of learning used as an organising mechanism for the NCQF

“Learning outcomes” - means statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process, which are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes;

“Learning programme” - means the sequential learning activities, associated with curriculum implementation, leading to the achievement of a particular qualification;

“Moderation” – means a process which ensures that assessment of outcomes described short course are fair, valid, reliable and consistent.

“Registration and Accreditation of an ETP” – means a process that an ETP shall undertake with the Authority as a pre-requisite for learning programme accreditation and or approval of short course to ascertain the ETPs capacity to provide for a defined scope of education and training in accordance with the Act;

“Regulations” – means Botswana Qualifications Authority (Registration and Accreditation of Education and Training Providers) Regulations 2016.

“Subject Matter Expert” -means a person in the field who has specific knowledge concerning a subject

“Sub-field” - means a specific area of education or training at qualifications level within a field

“Summative assessment” - means a formalized assessment which is used to certificate the attainment of a certain level of education.

“Formative assessment” - means the type of assessment used to improve learning and to give feedback to learners on progress made.

“Non-Credit Bearing Short Course (NCBSC)” - means a type of short learning programme for which no credits are awarded in relation to unit standards or (part) qualifications depending on the purpose and/or assessment of the programme.

 BOTSWANA <small>Qualifications Authority</small>	CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES FOR APPROVAL OF NON CREDIT BEARING SHORT COURSES	Document No.	QAS6
		Issue No.	01
		Effective Date	04/01/2017

“Credit-Bearing Short Course (CBSC)” - means type of short learning programme for which credits, in relation to the course’s contribution to a unit standard and/or (part) qualification, are awarded. A credit-bearing short course usually contains less than 120 credits.

“Short course” - means a type of short learning programme through which a learner may or may not be awarded credits, depending on the purpose of the programme

 BOTSWANA Qualifications Authority	CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES FOR APPROVAL OF NON CREDIT BEARING SHORT COURSES	Document No.	QAS6
		Issue No.	01
		Effective Date	04/01/2017

SECTION B – THE CRITERIA

This section provides all requirements to be met by ETPs for approval of non-credit bearing short courses which do not lead to a qualification.

CRITERION 1: REGISTRATION AND ACCREDITATION STATUS OF THE ETP

BQA seeks to ensure that the applicant is registered and accredited with the Authority as an ETP

The applicant shall:

- a) Provide evidence of registration and accreditation with BQA;
- b) Ensure that the short course approval application is within the ETP approved scope of accreditation.

CRITERION 2: NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND RATIONALE

BQA seeks to establish that the ETP has done the necessary needs assessment to ensure that the short course is relevant to the country's social, political and economic needs.

The applicant shall:

- a) provide evidence that skills needs assessment has been undertaken including but not limited to; engagement of industry, review of labour market survey reports, , and analysis of relevant jobs;
- b) clearly indicate areas of skills needs and levels of operation for which provision is to be made;
- c) ensure that the rationale and purpose for the short course is informed by skills needs assessment report.

CRITERION 3: SHORT COURSE GENERAL INFORMATION

BQA seeks to ensure that key information such as title and aims about the short course for which approval is sought is clearly articulated.

The applicant shall:

- a) provide the name of the ETP, title, duration of course, (in weeks/months/year), month and year developed, and due date for review;
- b) ensure the title of the short course is appropriate and reflects the subject area or focus.
- c) indicate the learning field and subfield within which the short course falls;

 BOTSWANA Qualifications Authority	CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES FOR APPROVAL OF NON CREDIT BEARING SHORT COURSES	Document No.	QAS6
		Issue No.	01
		Effective Date	04/01/2017

- d) ensure that the entry requirements are consistent with the nature of the short course, and that the requirements do not pose any unreasonable barrier to potential learners.

CRITERION 4: COURSE CONTENT & DELIVERY

BQA seeks to ensure that the short course content and delivery methods are adequate and appropriate given the learning outcomes.

The applicant shall:

- a) ensure the course has been modularised or organised into learning units and the scope of content for each unit is appropriate;
- b) group the topics in line with the titles of the modules or units;
- c) show that the courses constitute the scope required for achievement of the stipulated course exit outcomes;
- d) ensure alignment of learning outcomes to course exit outcomes;
- e) present content in a logically sequenced manner and ensure congruence between topics and sub-topics;
- f) stipulate teaching and learning strategies and methods consistent with learning outcomes;
- g) ensure that the teaching and learning methods are learner centred;
- h) stipulate delivery methods consistent with the envisaged maturity level and the required competence development expected of the target group.
- i) ensure practical, field-based or work-based components of relevant short courses are integrated into the main courses, and are linked directly to the learning outcomes of the respective courses.
- j) provide the proposed delivery schedule of the course

CRITERION 5: ASSESSMENT AND CERTIFICATION

BQA seeks to establish that participants' progression in relation to the learning outcomes of the course are assessed.

The applicant shall:

- a) clearly outline assessment strategies for the short course consistent with the exit level outcomes;
- b) ensure that the assessment strategies provide for; equity and access, communication with and involvement of learners in planning for assessments, use of appropriate assessment

 BOTSWANA Qualifications Authority	CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES FOR APPROVAL OF NON CREDIT BEARING SHORT COURSES	Document No.	QAS6
		Issue No.	01
		Effective Date	04/01/2017

- methods and integration to avoid disruption of workplace activities, where applicable, and duplication of demands on the learners;
- c) ensure that schedules, methods and processes of assessment are communicated to participants at the beginning of a course.
 - d) ensure that assessment strategies and techniques integrate assessment into the teaching and learning process in order to optimise the relatively short time allocated to short courses.
 - e) ensure the level of complexity, scope and sequencing of assessment activities adequately capture the learning outcomes for programme;
 - f) ensure assessment strategies adhere to the principles of objectivity, fairness, transparency, validity, reliability, authenticity, practicality and flexibility.
 - g) ensure that less structured formative methods of assessment are used at all stages of the delivery of short courses to assess participants' progression in relation to the learning outcomes. Such methods include question and answer sessions, group discussions, self-assessment questionnaires, class quizzes, class presentations, and homework.
 - h) ensure the participants are provided with timely, constructive and fair feedback on their progress in relation to the learning outcomes of the respective courses.
 - i) administer summative assessment if applicable, depending on the type and of course and nature of learning outcomes. Where this done special attention is given to the accurate recording of, and fair reporting on, the performance and achievement of short course participants.
 - j) conduct moderation of assessment where summative assessment will be used to declare learners competent
 - k) ensure there are clear and efficient arrangements in place for the integrity of certification processes.
 - l) ensure that the certificate clearly indicates the nature or focus and scope of the course and are secure;
 - m) ensure certificate clearly and accurately states the full name of course, name of the person, and date of issuance;
 - n) ensure that certificate refer by name, to the ETP and any relevant quality assurance body: and displays the signatures of relevant persons from such bodies
 - o) issue certificates of attendance or participation to participants who have attended and/or participated in classes and other learning activities associated with the respective short courses, including formative assessments or
 - p) issue certificate of competence where formal summative assessments have been conducted and signify that the participants have attained the required learning achievement from the specific short courses.

CRITERION 6: MODES OF DELIVERY

BQA seeks to establish that delivery modes are consistent with the nature of the learning outcomes for course

 BOTSWANA Qualifications Authority	CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES FOR APPROVAL OF NON CREDIT BEARING SHORT COURSES	Document No.	QAS6
		Issue No.	01
		Effective Date	04/01/2017

The applicant shall ensure that:

- a) the proposed modes of delivery are appropriate for the nature of course and target learners;
- b) the methods, activities and resources are appropriate for effective engagement of learners to develop cognitive and non-cognitive skills;
- c) the delivery modes allow for flexibility, access and equity.

CRITERION 7: MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

BQA seeks to establish that there is adequate course evaluation and review and the ETP's capability to support the course; monitoring improvement following evaluation and review and processes for determining whether the course can be continued to be offered.

The applicant shall ensure:

- a) there is a clear policy, system and procedures for course review and evaluation;
- b) there is clarity of roles, responsibilities and levels of accountability of stakeholders in course review and evaluation;
- c) there is provision for involvement of learners, graduates and other key stakeholders in the review and evaluation of short courses;
- d) that the frequency of reviews and evaluation is consistent with the policies of the ETP;
- e) they administer course evaluation questionnaires to participants, employers and/or sponsors provide critical information on all aspects of the design and delivery of short courses. They also provide information on overall participants' experience, as well as on the impact of the courses on participants' attitude, behaviour and performance outside the teaching and learning environment;
- f) the results of monitoring and review processes inform the development of quality improvement plans that cover the entire short course value chain; from course design, through course delivery to course evaluation and assessment of impacts.

CRITERION 8: RESOURCES

BQA seeks to establish that the ETP has the capability and capacity to support sustained delivery of the course in all delivery modes, with regard to appropriate academic staffing, teaching and learning facilities, finance, physical resources and support services.

The applicant shall:

 BOTSWANA Qualifications Authority	CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES FOR APPROVAL OF NON CREDIT BEARING SHORT COURSES	Document No.	QAS6
		Issue No.	01
		Effective Date	04/01/2017

- a) provide information on the required minimum qualification and experience of teachers, assessors and moderators (where applicable), consistent with staffing and eligibility requirements typical of the short course;
- b) ensure that qualifications and experience of teacher to offer short courses are verified and evaluated by BQA before they are engaged
- c) ensure that enrolment projections are consistent with the resources to be made available for the course;
- d) ensure projected staffing levels and enrolments are consistent with applicable teacher learner ratios;
- e) provide information on funding for the short course and evidence of availability of such funds;
- f) provide a list of resources required or available, including equipment and specialist facilities where applicable, for implementation of the course consistent with the enrolment projections proposed for the course;
- g) ensure the environment is conducive to teaching and learning and facilities accessible and inclusive of all learners;
- h) ensure teaching and learning facilities are adequate and comply with the applicable laws relating to the occupational health and safety of persons on the premises and have licenses as issued by the relevant authorities.

CRITERION 9. RECORD MANAGEMENT

BQA seeks to ensure that there is commitment to the maintenance of complete and accurate records of courses and participants as critical in enhancing the credibility, reputation, integrity and value of the short courses offered by an institution. The long term integrity of course and participant records is essential; and is dependent on securing them from the possibility of being tampered with, and being damaged.

The applicant shall ensure:

- a) that comprehensive and accurate records on relevant aspects, including registration, attendance, participation and achievement in assessments, complaints, compliments and course completion are kept.
- b) that files containing copies of all publicity and advertising material used for the purpose of marketing short courses are kept
- c) that all records are integrated into a limited-access database for short courses which is maintained and managed centrally as a subset of the overall information management system of the ETP.
- d) the records and data management system is designed in such a way that reports on participants' attendance and/or achievements in any particular course, can be generated and made available to participants and/or their sponsors, upon request.

 BOTSWANA <small>Qualifications Authority</small>	CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES FOR APPROVAL OF NON CREDIT BEARING SHORT COURSES	Document No.	QAS6
		Issue No.	01
		Effective Date	04/01/2017

CRITERION 10. BENCHMARKING, COMPARABILITY AND REFERENCING

BQA seeks to establish that the ETP has conducted benchmarking in the development of the course to promote comparability.

The applicant shall:

- a) provide information on benchmarking and comparability of the course with similar courses offered nationally, regionally and internationally;
- b) provide a list of references and other publications consulted when developing the course.

CRITERION 11. THIRD PARTY ARRANGEMENTS

BQA seeks to establish that where there are arrangements between an ETP and third parties for course development and assessments, they legal and will facilitate quality teaching and learning.

The applicant shall:

- a) ensure that there is memorandum of agreement with the third party showing start and end dates as well as clearly articulating the roles of the ETP and those of the third party.
- b) provide evidence that the third party is duly recognised in the country of origin.

SECTION C: SHORT COURSE APPROVAL PROCESS

1.1 Submission of Application

A customer who is ready to apply will complete an application form that will be accompanied by documents stipulated by this Criteria and Guidelines.

Most of the documents that are required are policy documents and each policy area must address the following as a minimum

- introduction or rationale
- policy statements;
- statements of procedures to be followed in relation to the policies;
- resource allocations;
- associated documents
- accountabilities; and

 BOTSWANA Qualifications Authority	CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES FOR APPROVAL OF NON CREDIT BEARING SHORT COURSES	Document No.	QAS6
		Issue No.	01
		Effective Date	04/01/2017

- evaluation and review mechanisms.

Application documents will be checked for completeness, and a payment invoice prepared to enable the customer to pay for the application.

1.2 Acknowledgement of receipt of application

The Authority will acknowledge receipt of complete application and capture it on its database.

1.3 Desk Evaluation

The Authority will conduct desk evaluation on application documents to satisfy itself that the application meets specific requirements, and may request for additional information from the applicant.

1.4 Appointment of subject matter expert

The Authority will appoint an expert to evaluate the course and undertake validation at the ETP where necessary. An evaluation report will be produced for consideration by the Authority.

1.5 Consideration of the report

The recommendation will be processed through the Authority's review and decision making structures.

1.6 Decision on approval

Following consideration of recommendation, relevant structure within the Authority will make the decision, and the applicant will be notified about the decision. Where approval has been granted a letter of approval/ certificate will be issued to the applicant within 30 days.

1.7 Appeals

An applicant may submit a written letter for appeal within 14 days of receipt of the decision letter as per the BQA Appeals Procedure.

 BOTSWANA <small>Qualifications Authority</small>	CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES FOR APPROVAL OF NON CREDIT BEARING SHORT COURSES	Document No.	QAS6
		Issue No.	01
		Effective Date	04/01/2017

SECTION D - POST APPROVAL ACTIVITIES

To maintain approval of a short course, an ETP must continue to comply with these criteria and guidelines. The primary responsibility for managing compliance lies with the ETP itself, as part of its on-going self-assessment.

1.1 ADVERTISING AND USE OF BQA LOGO

Permission for the use of the logo in cases of registered and accredited ETPs will be granted by the Chief Executive Officer of BQA after a written application/request before the printing or publication of any commercial or non-commercial material.

BQA will respond in writing approving or disapproving use of the logo and will guide the Institution on acceptable use of the logo. Training institutions are reminded that the BQA logo cannot be used on the certificates they award.

1.2 RENEWAL OF APPROVAL OF SHORT COURSES

1. Short courses will be approved for a period not exceeding three (3) years. An ETP shall, within six (6) months before the period approval for the short course expires, apply for renewal.
2. An application for renewal shall be made to the Authority on Renewal of Approval for NCBSC Form.
3. The application shall be accompanied by a non-refundable fee and relevant documentation and information.

1.3 NOTIFICATION OF SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

Major changes to short course have the potential to impact on the provision of teaching and learning and the ETP's capacity to meet the requirements in the Criteria and Guidelines for NCBSC Approval and must be reported to BQA. Major changes may be planned or due to circumstances which are unplanned. If any changes in circumstances of the short courses occur or changes are proposed or likely, an ETP should notify BQA as early as possible to confirm the process to be followed and the level of approval required. Significant changes include the

 BOTSWANA Qualifications Authority	CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES FOR APPROVAL OF NON CREDIT BEARING SHORT COURSES	Document No.	QAS6
		Issue No.	01
		Effective Date	04/01/2017

following, but not limited to:

- a) a change in the name of short course;
- b) a change in the duration of a course;
- c) a change in the content of short course of more than 30% of the core components;
- d) discontinuation of a short course;
- e) a change in funding sources;
- f) a change in any franchising or partnership arrangements;
- g) a change in learner-teacher ratio;
- h) a change in teaching staff composition
- i) a change in the mode of delivery of course and assessment.

1.4 WITHDRAWAL OF APPROVAL OF SHORT COURSE

The Authority may withdraw approval of a short course where:

- a) where the Authority has good cause to believe that the approved short course no longer meets the criteria set for short course approval;
- b) in a case where the Authority decides to withdraw approval of a short course, a written notice shall be issued to the ETP outlining the conditions of withdrawal.