

**Namibia Vocational
Education Training
(VET) Policy
2005**

Background

Namibia intends to develop as a knowledge-based economy (KBE). In such an economy, people require access to both initial and ongoing education and training. This is often referred to as lifelong learning.

Vocational Education and Training [VET] will play a key role in assisting people to acquire the skills needed in this new economy. Besides promoting skills in traditional trades such as engineering, Namibia's VET system will foster skills development in emerging areas of employment such as tourism, as well as in new areas of learning required in a KBE, such as computing and design.

Over the past decade the VET system has experienced difficulties in responding to changing economic conditions due to factors such as isolation from the private sector, centralised management systems and limited institutional autonomy.













This has led to mismatches in the demand and supply of skills, inadequate training in key industries resulting in acute skill shortages and diminishing private sector confidence in the public VET system. These problems have been compounded by the low entry levels of early school leavers and Grade 10 and Grade 12 graduates into VET programmes. In general, the efficiency in the VET system, in terms of both human and capital resources, is very low and there is little accountability for the use of public resources. This has produced a situation in which relatively few young people are able to access training; many trainees drop out of VET programmes; and training costs per student are exceptionally high in most public institutions.

Although many workers in industry and business gain competency and skills through work and on-the-job training, there are few opportunities for these people to have their skills formally recognised and obtain the additional training required to become fully qualified and be remunerated accordingly.

Removal of barriers to training, employment, and economic and social development is a key priority of Government. To this end, Government has identified the following priority actions:

1. Engagement of the private sector in training;
2. Establishment of the Namibia Training Authority;
3. Devolution of the management of the Vocational Training Centres [VTCs];
4. Introduction of reforms to the financing of skills development through the establishment of a training levy; and the funding of training providers on the basis of performance and output;
5. Expansion of the number of student places and improvement of facilities in training institutions;
6. Curriculum reform through the introduction of competency-based education and training; and
7. Enhanced access to certification and qualifications through streamlining arrangements for the recognition of prior learning and enhanced articulation between community training centres, schools, VET providers and institutions of higher learning.

In summary the following system transformation is anticipated:

FROM		TO
Restricted access mainly for school leavers		Wide access, especially for existing workers and part-time students
Under-utilised facilities (when full-time students are not in class) and small class sizes		Optimum utilisation of facilities including weekends and after hours
Mainly full-time courses lasting several years		Range of short and long courses
Formal delivery style - theory followed by practice		Competency-based approach in a range of settings
Mainly public provision		Public, private and industry providers both competing and cooperating
Qualifications specific to formal VET system		VET qualifications as a respected part of the National Qualifications Framework
Teachers prepare their own curricula and materials		Curriculum and materials – and assessment tools – developed to meet agreed standards and professionally produced
High attrition rates from long courses		Modular approach to allow easier entry and exit
Public institutions delivering only set programmes and with central control		Entrepreneurial public institutions delivering a range of training services
Funding mainly from Government		More diverse funding from all stakeholders
Direction given mainly by Government Departments		NTA to provide effective role for all partners in policy and management

Such major reforms could not be undertaken within the confines of the Vocational Training Act, Act No. 18 of 1994. Accordingly, a new Vocational Training Bill will be presented to the National Assembly in 2005. This policy paper outlines the thinking that underpins the new Vocational Training Bill and describes Government's vision for the future development of vocational education and training in Namibia.

Introduction

1. An effective and efficient Vocational Education and Training system, responsive to industry and community needs, will contribute to the aims of Vision 2030 by ensuring that institutional and capacity building enhances the productivity of labour and addresses youth unemployment through an effective and sustainable system of skill formation.
2. This will be achieved through the establishment of the Namibia Training Authority (NTA) which will engage the private sector, civil society and Government in the reform of the VET system and the development of revitalised curriculum, as well as assessment and qualifications arrangements based on standards recognised by the Namibia Qualifications Authority (NQA). The system will be supported by a more open and flexible learning process; the diversification of training provision by granting semi-autonomy to public VTCs; encouraging the development of quality private training providers; and a special focus on bringing more people into the qualifications system at basic level.
3. Financing of VET is a partnership between Government, the private sector, development partners and learners and their families. Government will continue to encourage the diversification of VET financing whilst ensuring that no Namibians are unreasonably denied the opportunity to enhance their skills. Financing will be augmented through a training levy. The resources gathered through this levy will be allocated competitively based on performance.
4. The Ministry of Education (MoE), through the Directorate: Vocational Education and Training is responsible for development of the VET system. Two autonomous bodies under the MoE will play an increasingly important role in the development of the VET system in Namibia. These are:
 - The Namibia Training Authority (NTA) which is responsible for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of vocational education and training in Namibia, engaging industry; business; training providers; trade unions and other stakeholders in reforming the VET system, and ensuring that VET programmes and services meet the current and emerging needs of industry, business and the broader community.
 - The Namibia Qualifications Authority (NQA) which is legally responsible for the development and maintenance of the National Qualifications Framework through standards and qualifications setting, quality assurance, accreditation, equation of qualifications and assessment including the recognition of prior learning.

The NQA recognises the lead role of the NTA in vocational education and training, especially with regard to the development of standards, curriculum, assessment and qualifications as well as the accreditation of training providers. The two organisations have agreed, through a Memorandum of Understanding, to work cooperatively to promote the development of a vocational education and training system in Namibia that is responsive to industry, business and community needs.

Vision 2030

5. Vision 2030 is the expression of a national multi-pronged development process. It envisions *“to improve the quality of life of the people of Namibia to the level of their counterparts in the developed world by 2030”*. It pre-supposes a Namibia that is transformed into a healthy and food-secure nation, in which all preventable, infectious and parasitic diseases (including HIV/AIDS) are under secure control; people enjoy high standards of living, a good quality of life and have access to quality education, health and other vital services. All these aspirations translate into a long life expectancy and sustainable population growth.

6. Vision 2030 is premised on a diversified, open market economy, with a resource-based industrial sector and commercial agriculture. Greater emphasis is placed on skills development with capacity building vigorously pursued by both private and public sectors. The capacity building process (including institution building and restructuring, and the development of human resources) will continue to be promoted by the existence of a suitable and politically free and stable environment, with a sound legal system, economic resources and opportunities and social norms which are conducive to sustained development. The aim is to balance the supply and demand in the labour market and in that way achieves full employment.
7. President Sam Nujoma, in his Foreword to Vision 2030, said that:
“the country will operate a totally integrated, unified, flexible and high quality education and training system, that prepares Namibian learners to take advantage of a rapidly changing global environment ...”
8. Arising from the overall capacity building investments, Namibia will be transformed into a knowledge-based society, and changes in production and information technology will revolutionise all aspects of the manufacturing process. To that end, the business community will be challenged to make increasing contributions to the education and training sector, since it is the major recipient of the products of the system.
9. The overriding prerequisite for the achievement of dynamic, efficient and sustainable development in Namibia is Partnership. Partnership between government and civil society, between different branches of government, with the private sector, non-governmental organisations, community based organisations and the international community.
10. With regard to education and training, Vision 2030 sets out the following objectives and broad strategies, viz:

Objectives of Vision 2030

- (iii) *Develop a diversified, competent and highly productive human resources and institutions, fully utilising human potential, and achieving efficient and effective delivery of customer-focused services which are competitive not only nationally, but also regionally and internationally.*
- (iv) *Transform Namibia into an industrialised country of equal opportunities, which is globally competitive, realising its maximum growth potential on a sustainable basis, with improved quality of life for all Namibians.*

Broad Strategies for Vision 2030

- (i) *Maintaining an economy that is sustainable, efficient, flexible and competitive;*
- (iii) *Achieving full and gainful employment;*
- (vii) *Providing full and appropriate education at all levels;*
- (xix) *Achieving collaboration between public, private and civil society organisations, in policy formulation, programming and implementation.*

National Development Plan

11. The current national development plan, NDP2, (2002 to 2007) sets out the key challenges and objectives of vocational education and training.

VET Mission

12. In the education and training system between the end of primary education and tertiary education, VET will be:

An effective, sustainable system of skill formation closely aligned with the labour market that equitably provides the skills needed for accelerated development and the competencies needed by youth and adults for productive work and increased standards of living.

[Adapted from the Education and Training Sector Improvement Plan, page 50, 2005]

Policy Objectives

Objective	Positive Indicators	Negative Indicators
<p>1. Competent and employable workforce for a service focused and industrialised Namibia</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased national employment rate for women and men • Increased self employment rate for women and men • Increased % of women and men with nationally recognised qualifications, especially in small and medium enterprises • Increased standard of living of qualified and employed women and men • Increased participation of young people in VET programmes • Increased % of people engaged in skills upgrading that leads to nationally recognised qualifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased under and unemployment especially amongst qualified people • Increased youth unemployment • Decreased participation of young people in VET programmes • Standards of living of competent and qualified people do not increase significantly • Diminished proportion of qualified people in the Namibian workforce through HIV/AIDS, migration etc.
<p>2. A stable organisation and management system that clarifies roles and responsibilities and is accountable to the National Assembly through the Minister of Education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National VET strategy with clear and measurable targets • Annual report detailing verified achievement of set targets for NTA accepted by National Assembly, Economics Committee and Auditor General • Competent VET staff respected as functional professionals by all stakeholders • Low rate of staff turnover in NTA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent changes in VET system, structures and personnel (including loss of personnel through HIV/AIDS)

Objective	Positive Indicators	Negative Indicators
<p>3. Sustainable partnership between Government, private sector and civil society to resource the provision of VET</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training system resourced to meet priority demand from employers and the self-employed • Increased participation of government, private sector and civil society in VET system • Increased VET expenditure by private sector • Increased numbers of learners in initial, retraining and skills upgrading in vocational education and training • Reduced non-completion rates or drop out rates in government and private training providers • Increased VET expenditure by private sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholders reduce or withdraw support to partnerships
<p>4. Training system that is responsive to emerging needs, equitable in terms of access, a system that provides learning towards recognised qualifications</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of private sector employees engaged in company funded VET programmes • Increased participation in workplace and in-house training programmes that lead to national recognition • Increased proportion of population with some level of nationally recognised certification • Increased numbers of recognised courses and course providers for initial training, skills upgrading, skills updating and entrepreneurship • Increased rates of retraining, updating and upgrading of adults in employment • Increased pass rates of learners • Increased coverage of occupations and industry sectors by unit standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall in demand for training due to irrelevant courses, poor quality of training, unrealistic costs etc. • Increased non-completion rates or drop out rates in Government and private training providers • Decreased VET expenditure by private sector • Decreased number of private sector employees engaged in company funded VET programmes • Decreased participation in workplace and in-house training programmes that lead to national recognition • Decreased proportion of population with some level of nationally recognised certification • Static coverage of occupations and industry sectors by unit standards

Policies

13. The MoE is responsible for ensuring that VET contributes to the Government's objectives as outlined in Vision 2030. As such, the MoE has established the following policy framework to guide developments in vocational education and training:
 - 13.1 Basic numeracy and literacy skills are developed at the primary stage of education to encourage and support enquiry and creativity as a precursor to lifelong learning and entrepreneurship.
 - 13.2 All VET programmes are competency-based and set up in response to priority demands of business and industry, especially small and medium enterprises.
 - 13.3 VET programmes are integrated with other components of the education and training system and reflect broader social, economic and development goals including a special focus on HIV/AIDS.
 - 13.4 National unit standards for all major occupations and industries are set in compliance with NQA requirements, and in collaboration with industry, business, education and training providers and other social partners.
 - 13.5 VET programmes based on unit standards are offered at NQF Levels 1 – 5 by community, public and private training providers in a range of locations to meet diverse national needs.
 - 13.6 VET programmes articulate with higher and lower level qualifications offered by a range of training providers to form pathways that allow people to diversify into new occupations and continue career progression beyond NQF Level 5.
 - 13.7 National qualifications based on unit standards are available to people who successfully complete VET programmes. These modular qualifications will be endorsed by industry and business and will be formally recognised by the NQA and training providers.
 - 13.8 The development of formal and non-formal training institutions in the public and private sector in both rural and urban areas, with high quality teaching staff and management offering a range of open and flexible learning courses, is promoted and supported.
 - 13.9 A fair, equitable competency-based procedure for the selection of applicants for VET programmes ensures that marginalised groups such as girls and women, the physically and mentally challenged, as well as the rural and urban poor are encouraged to develop their skills.
 - 13.10 The Namibia Training Authority encourages and promotes an increase in relevant training opportunities for young people and the under- and unemployed which in turn will increase employment and self-employment opportunities and lessen the national skills shortage.
 - 13.11 A financially sustainable funding system is established with contributions from Government, the private sector through a training levy, community and NGO involvement, user fees and development partners.
 - 13.12 An accountability system operates at local, regional and national levels to ensure that intended learning outcomes are achieved through effective management and the efficient use of resources.
 - 1.13 Evaluation mechanisms are in place to ensure that feedback from the accountability system is used in reviewing and adapting VET policies thereby addressing emerging changes and needs.

Procedures

In order to achieve the policies outlined above, the following procedures have been adopted:

14. The Directorate: Vocational Education and Training in the Ministry of Education (MoE) works with policy makers in the education sector to ensure that the basic competencies for VET development are understood and incorporated into the primary and secondary curriculum. The Directorate also works with the Directorate: Higher Education in MoE to ensure close policy articulation of VET with the tertiary education sector.
15. The NTA works through its advisory committees to identify existing and future areas of priority skill shortages in both the formal and informal sectors and develops unit standards, curricula, learning materials and assessment instruments for the VET sector at Levels 1 – 5 of the NQF. The NTA also works with the HIV and AIDS Management Unit (HAMU) in the Education Ministry to develop and publish a competency-based approach to issues related to HIV/AIDS for all VET courses.
16. The NTA, through tripartite consultations and ongoing dialogue with all stakeholders, identifies the priority areas of skill formation and uses funding mechanisms to ensure that courses in those priority areas are provided by private and public training providers across a range of locations.
17. The NTA develops, and under delegation from NQA, approves unit standards for occupations and industries up to and including Level 5 of the NQF in consultation with industry, business, training providers, trade unions, the self-employed and other stakeholders.
18. The NTA, in consultation with industry, business, training providers, trade unions, the self employed and other stakeholders, develops and maintains curriculum, training programmes and assessment materials based on unit standards.
19. The NTA registers training institutions in accordance with public and transparent standards related to teaching, management and finance drawn up in consultation with employers, training providers, trade unions and other stakeholders.
20. The NTA, under delegation of the NQA, accredits VET programmes up to and including Level 5 of the NQF.
21. The NTA, in partnership with the NQA, accredits providers of VET programmes in line with NQA accreditation guidelines.
22. The NTA develops and publishes competency-based entry requirements for each VET programme. The NTA identifies courses which cannot be undertaken by people with disabilities on the grounds of safety to themselves or others. It further determines any special funding requirements needed to overcome barriers to access for those with disabilities or any other disadvantage.
23. The MoE appoints the Board of the NTA and funds the NTA to cover all its functions, including the funding of priority courses.
24. The MoE regularly reviews education and training policy and ensures that legislation and regulations are updated to respond to emerging needs of the economy and the education and training system.
25. The MoE reviews the five-year rolling strategic plan for VET developed by the NTA for inclusion in the National Development Plan.
26. The MoE reviews the annual work plan and costed budget developed by the NTA and assesses if this includes realistic targets, clearly defined responsibilities and is in line with the overall annual work plan of the education sector.
27. The Ministry of Education produces an annual report on VET and tables it in the National Assembly as part of the annual report on the education and training sector.
28. The strategic plan and annual plans are developed in consultation with the relevant national advisory bodies in education and training, labour and trade and industry.

29. The training levy is collected from employers in accordance with legislation and regulations and is utilised by the NTA in support of expansion, quality improvement and skills development in vocational education and training.
30. Government encourages development partners to support education and training by contributing to the overall Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP) by channelling their financial support through the State Revenue Fund rather than through separate project arrangements.
31. VTCs and Community Skills Development Centres (COSDECs) are encouraged to diversify their funding. VTCs are granted semi-autonomous status with greater control over income and expenditure.
32. Registered training providers are required to demonstrate to the NTA relevance of courses, quality standards of teaching, financial management and governance in relation to their size and range of courses offered.

Resources

In bringing about this transformation of the VET system, new resources in terms of systems, capacities and finance will be required.

33. The NTA will establish a system to identify priority skills development needs in collaboration with employers, the self-employed and the Ministries of Trade and Industry, and of Labour and Social Welfare.
34. Employers will identify a pool of capable and committed managers and technical specialists who will contribute to the identification of priority skills development needs, development of appropriate curricula and assessment approaches, entrepreneurship, organisational and financial management.
35. The NTA will establish and maintain systems for the development and maintenance of curricula as well as learning, assessment and professional development materials to ensure that training providers and trainees have ongoing access to up-to-date and industry approved training resources.
36. Training providers and potential trainees will need affordable access to the competency-based curricula, learning, assessment and professional development materials published and/or distributed by the NTA.
37. The NTA will create a network of education and training specialists to develop inclusive curricula, learning materials, assessment tools, train-the-trainer programmes, assessor training programmes and professional development programmes focusing on areas such as HIV/AIDS, supervision and entrepreneurship to enable the delivery of high quality curricula for identified priority skills development areas.
38. The NTA will create a network of competent and experienced planners, management specialists, financial specialists and information and knowledge managers to perform all its management functions.
39. Training providers will need a team of trainers and assessors able to deliver high quality competency-based training. To this end the NTA will actively support the training of trainers and assessors to ensure that, eventually, all trainers meet minimum professional and teaching standards as established by the NTA.
40. Training providers will need a management team capable of responding to ever-changing training needs and approaches to training. They will also need sound and transparent financing arrangements that are accountable to both trainees and the NTA. Larger training institutions will also need effective Boards of Management.

41. The MoE will need a network of staff to develop and evaluate policy and contribute to the drafting of appropriate legislation. It will also need the capacity to monitor the Board of NTA and hold it accountable to meet its performance targets and discharge its responsibilities effectively and efficiently.
42. The MoE will finance the development of the new VET system and the management functions of the NTA, as well as contributing an appropriate share towards the costs of training.

Key stakeholders: Roles and Responsibilities

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

43. Role

- Provide the policy and legal framework for VET within the education and training sector.
- Finance overall management and regulation of the system and access for disadvantaged groups.
- Ensure an effective governance structure linking and coordinating sub-sectors of education and training, other ministries, especially the National Planning Commission, the Ministries of Trade and Industry, Labour and Social Welfare, Finance and autonomous/statutory/parastatal bodies especially the NQA and NCHE; Regional Education Forums and National Education Advisory Council; employers organisations.

44. Responsibilities

- Monitor and evaluate relevance and success of policy framework in relation to socio-economic development as stated in Vision 2030.
- Account to Parliament and other stakeholders for the policy and legal framework, effectiveness of the NTA and use of public resources in management and provision of VET.
- Appoint the Board of the NTA and monitor and evaluate its effectiveness, whereby the State-Owned Enterprises Governance Council and the Central Governance Agency will play a supporting role.
- Facilitate open and effective communication between Government and the NTA with advisory bodies at regional and national level.

NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

45. Role

- To set up and administer a national qualifications framework.
- To set unit standards for any occupation, job, post, or position in any career situation.
- To set the curriculum standards required for achieving the occupational standards of a given occupation, job, post, or position in a career structure.
- To accredit persons, institutions and organisations providing education and courses of instruction or training meeting prescribed requirements.
- To evaluate and recognise competencies learnt outside formal education.

46. Responsibilities

- The NQA recognises the lead position of the NTA in VET to develop unit standards and qualifications, accredit programmes, conduct assessments - including the recognition of prior learning - and issue certification for all occupations covered by the vocational education and training sector, up to and including Level 5 in the National Qualifications Framework.
- The NQA co-manages with the NTA the accreditation of training providers for all occupations covered by the vocational education and training sector, up to and including Level 5 in the National Qualifications Framework.
- The NQA administers the accreditation function, collects fees and issues accreditation advice and documentation.
- The NQA provides timely and up to date advice and information on NQA policies and procedures related to the setting of standards and qualification, accreditation of programmes, certification, articulation and assessment, including recognition of prior learning.
- The NQA places all unit standards and national qualifications that are approved by the NTA in compliance with NQA policy and procedures, on the National Qualifications Framework.
- The NQA places all assessment outcomes based on unit standards that are reported by the NTA on the National Learning Record.
- The NQA Council nominates one representative each to the NTA Board and to the Standards and Curriculum Council of the NTA to provide expert advice on NQA policy, guidelines and issues relating to the setting of standards and qualifications, accreditation of programmes and training providers, certification, articulation and assessment, including recognition of prior learning.

NAMIBIA TRAINING AUTHORITY

47. Role

- To be the driving instrument in transforming VET into a dynamic component of Namibia's pursuit of higher standards of living through industrialisation and the development of a knowledge-based economy.
- To ensure constantly increasing effectiveness and efficiency of vocational education and training in producing a competent and employable workforce for an industrialised Namibia.
- To develop appropriate policies on vocational education and training in response to emerging priorities for skills development.
- To provide guidance in the interpretation and operationalisation of VET policy.
- To monitor regional and global developments in VET and apply these as appropriate to the Namibian VET system.

48. Responsibilities

- Develop a five-year strategic plan for the implementation and operationalisation of VET policy to increase access, equity and quality.
- Establish a high-level sub-committee, the Standards and Curriculum Council, which will perform the functions of a National Standards Setting Body for the vocational education and training sector up to and including Level 5 of the NQF.

- Establish Industry Skills Councils, which report to the Standards and Curriculum Council and act as Standards Generating Bodies for key industry sectors.
- Perform the following functions for all occupations covered by the VET sector, up to and including Level 5 of the NQF in line with NQA policies and procedures:
 - § develop standards and qualifications
 - § accredit programmes
 - § register assessors and conducting assessments including recognition of prior learning
 - § issue certification, and
 - § negotiate articulation arrangements.
- In conjunction with the NQA, co-manage the accreditation of training providers. The NTA will provide technical assessment of the suitability of organisations for accreditation.
- Provide the NQA with timely information on unit standards and qualifications for inclusion on the NQF, accreditation of programmes, technical assessment of organisations seeking accreditation as training providers, registration of assessors and assessment and certification outcomes for inclusion on the National Record of Learning.
- Support registered training providers to achieve national standards of training provision in terms of teaching, assessment, staff development, management, accountability and the use of resources through institutional and capacity development programmes.
- Fund priority training courses in response to identified areas for skills development and undertake analyses of the efficiency of priority training programmes.
- Monitor the effectiveness of training providers in terms of teaching quality and learning outcomes through an EMIS system, take appropriate action with regard to underperforming providers according to approved procedures and regulations and report annually to the Minister of Education.
- Investigate complaints and grievances from learners, training providers, employers, trade unions and other stakeholders.
- Present an annual report to the Minister of Education on performance targets in the strategic plan and the utilisation of Government funds, the training levy and other sources of income.
- Undertake appropriate research on VET issues arising from the implementation of policy, especially in relation to HIV/AIDS, equity and small and medium enterprises.

TRAINING PROVIDERS

49. Role

- Provide a range of high quality, relevant and flexible skills development programmes that will lead to formal qualifications recognised by the NQA.
- Maintain quality standards of teaching, management and financial stability under guidelines from the NTA.
- Ensure that the institution abides by the laws of Namibia.

50. Responsibilities

- Register and seek accreditation with the NTA for their programme of courses.
- Admit students to courses based on competencies set out by NTA.

- Admit students without regard to race, creed, gender or disability (except where a student may injure themselves or others).
- Provide a range of learning and teaching styles and allow students to follow their preferred learning style wherever possible.
- Provide regular feedback to students on their progress and assist those with special difficulties.
- Provide personal and career counselling to enable students to make the best use of their knowledge, skills and abilities.
- Provide a safe, secure and enabling environment.
- Recruit qualified, skilled and experienced staff relevant to courses provided and maintain a programme of staff development to ensure that all members of the teaching and management staff are up to date with regulations and best professional practice.
- Follow guidance and direction from their Management Board/ Trustees/Directors and the NTA.
- Allow inspection and collaborate with relevant authorities on the learning programmes, management and premises.

EMPLOYERS

51. Role

- Make clear their needs for skilled and trained people in key business sectors and functions over the medium term.
- Contribute to the development and implementation of policies and strategies to create a vibrant and effective vocational education system for Namibia.
- Nominate able, committed and dedicated persons to serve on the Board of the NTA, Industry Skills Councils and Management Boards of training institutions.

52. Responsibilities

- Appoint staff based on job related competencies (technical, supervision, management, financial).
- Provide or support the further training and development of staff competencies within the company, self-study or specific courses in consultation with trade unions.
- Offer and support appropriate apprenticeship/attachment programmes and establish links with nearby schools, training centres and colleges.
- Pay training levies on time.
- Contribute expertise to curriculum reform and other aspects of training delivery.

TRADE UNIONS

53. Role

- Ensure that the voice of vocational and technical staff on education and training is heard within companies and Government.
- Encourage and support staff to develop their skills and gain recognised formal qualifications.

54. Responsibilities

- Identify skills development needs and opportunities among groups of staff.
- Provide information and counselling to staff on education and training opportunities within companies, through self-study and job-specific training courses.
- Establish links with nearby schools, training centres and colleges to encourage young people to take up vocational and technical training as a path to a worthwhile career.
- Encourage and support apprenticeship/work attachment programmes and ensure that various members share their skills with trainees.

LEARNERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

55. Role

- Provide feedback on the relevance and standards of curriculum and teaching.
- Encourage a learning culture and actively participate in ensuring each learner's success.

56. Responsibilities

- Establish and maintain democratic and representative bodies of learners at institutional and national level in collaboration with other learners representative bodies.
- Represent interests of learners on management boards/boards of trustees, etc.
- Provide financial and moral support and assistance, a will to learn and to further one's own career and improve one's quality of life, thereby contributing to the overall socio-economic development of Namibia.

Organisation

57. The VET system in Namibia has embraced competency-based training and assessment. Under this new arrangements, unit standards, which describe the outcomes demanded by industry and the community, form the basis for curriculum, assessment and qualifications in the national VET system.

Unit Standards

58. Unit standards describe what learners need to know or what they must be able to achieve in a particular industry. In other words, unit standards are outcome statements. The unit standards for particular industry areas are developed in consultation with industry personnel, training providers and other subject experts.

Curriculum

59. The curriculum describes the learning required to attain the outcomes identified in one or more unit standards. The competency-based curriculum is modular thus enabling providers to structure flexible programmes that meet learner and industry needs; address the requirements of the formal and informal sectors of the economy; and facilitate lifelong learning. The VET curriculum will incorporate modules on HIV/AIDS Awareness in order to mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS on the Namibian society and entrepreneurship thereby promoting business growth and economic development.

60. The key features of competency-based curriculum are :
- it is based on unit standards
 - it is modular in structure
 - it provides for flexible entry and exit
 - it allows recognition of prior learning (RPL)/recognition of current competencies (RCC)
 - it allows training programmes of varying duration, and
 - it facilitates articulation and credit transfer, consequently promoting training pathways between school, VET and tertiary education programmes.

Assessment

61. Assessment involves collecting evidence and making judgements on whether competency as described in the relevant unit standard[s] has been achieved. The purpose of assessment is to ensure that learners can perform the work described in the unit standard to the level expected in the workplace. Competencies focused on HIV/AIDS prevention and management may be assessed separately or in conjunction with other unit standards.
62. Assessment practices must provide for RPL, i.e. skills acquired through work, life experience and informal learning gained through involvement in community development, job creation and youth development programmes.
63. NTA assessment arrangements will be underpinned by a quality assurance framework, which will ensure that:
- assessments will be conducted by trained and certified assessors
 - assessment tools will be based on the relevant unit standards
 - assessments will be moderated to ensure that different assessors, working in different locations, provide consistent decisions
 - assessments will be subject to systemic review to ensure that decisions are fair, accurate and consistent.
64. The National Assessment Centre in the NTA will administer all assessments against unit standards within the vocational education and training system. Through this Centre, which will progressively replace the existing National Trade Testing Centre [NTTC], learners and others who have achieved skills through work, informal learning and life experience will be able to:
- gain certification based on assessment against unit standards
 - accumulate unit standards and build a nationally recognised formal qualification.

Qualifications

65. Qualifications are formal certification that a person has attained a group of unit standards with a prescribed credit value that meet industry requirements for useful work.
66. Most qualifications issued at the successful completion of VET programmes will require learners to have achieved a mix of:
- generic unit standards;
 - core unit standards; and
 - specialist unit standards.

National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) within the National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

67. VET providers offer programmes that lead to qualifications within the National Qualifications Framework.
68. The NQF describes the different levels of education and training qualifications that are offered by school, VET and tertiary education institutions in Namibia. There are ten levels in the Framework with each level having a qualification title and a descriptor. Level 1 is the least complex and Level 10 is the most complex. The levels in the Framework reflect the complexity of learning - they do not equate to 'years spent learning' but instead reflect the content of the qualification. Generally Levels 1-3 reflect senior secondary education and trade training, Levels 4-6 are equivalent to advanced trades, technical and business qualifications and Levels 7 and above equate with advanced qualifications of graduate and postgraduate standard.
69. The levels, titles and descriptors are detailed in the chart in Annex II.
70. Qualifications in the Framework are based on unit standards. These are the building blocks of qualifications. In the VET sector, unit standards for particular occupations and industry areas are developed by the NTA in consultation with industry, business, training providers and other experts. All unit standards have a credit or point value.
71. Qualifications are issued when learners attain a group of unit standards with a specified credit value. For example, a learner would gain a qualification when he or she has been assessed as being competent against a particular group of unit standards with a specified total credit value.
72. All qualifications in the VET system will progressively be based on unit standards and learners will be issued with national qualifications drawn from the National Qualifications Framework. In most industries, these qualifications will range from Level 1 to Level 4 of the Framework.
73. Under the NQF, learners will be able to gain recognition and formal certification for a single unit standard and progressively build a national qualification. For example, a learner may gain one unit standard in a particular industry area, such as construction, by completing a programme at a COSDEC or other community provider. That learner may gain additional unit standards in this industry area over time by undertaking assessment at work, completing a distance delivery programme through NAMCOL or participating in a training programme at a VTC or a private training provider. When the learner has attained the required group of unit standards with the specified credit value s/he will be issued with the appropriate qualification. This learner may then decide to attain further unit standards and progressively build a higher level qualification. In other cases, learners will enrol in a full programme at a VTC or private training provider and attain all the unit standards required for a specific qualification.
74. Under the NQF, qualifications gained through the VET sector will articulate with relevant qualifications offered by tertiary education providers. Thus, VET qualifications will form part of an articulated pathway that links programmes offered by community organisations, schools, VET and tertiary education providers such as the Polytechnic and the University of Namibia.
75. Progressively the entry requirements for VET programmes will be expressed in terms of unit standards or standards based qualifications. Entry to level 1 qualifications will be open. In those cases where the demand exceeds the availability of places in VET programmes, the NTA will establish transparent and public selection criteria. Whilst entry requirements and selection criteria will be established for training programmes, there will be no restriction on people seeking to have their prior learning recognised by undertaking an assessment against any unit standard in the Framework upon payment of the appropriate fee.

Accreditation of private and public Training Providers

76. Unit standards established in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework will form the basis for accreditation, the determination of equivalencies of qualifications and the accreditation of trainers and assessors. The responsibility of establishing the accreditation process and criteria is assigned to the NQA. The accreditation of VET institutions is done in partnership with the NTA. The accreditation process will include validation of standards of teaching and assessment.

Financing

77. Government is, and will remain, the main provider of financial support to formal vocational education and training, although several in-company schemes and informal trainings take place which have not been costed. A National Training Fund (NTF) has been established under the NTA to channel all public, and eventually a significant proportion of development partner funds, to VET.

78. A Training Levy, based on overall payroll costs, will be collected from employers. Funds raised through the levy will be paid into the NTF. These funds will be utilised to:

- support learners on priority training courses
- register and accredit courses and training providers
- develop curriculum and learning materials
- research and develop new courses and qualifications
- manage the functions of the NTA.

79. The NTA will monitor the cost-effectiveness of NTF supported courses with a view to increase efficiency and to facilitate an expansion of VET in terms of the number and diversity of courses in response to priority needs.

80. The NTA will develop a formula-based funding mechanism to support new training initiatives and assist disadvantaged groups to gain equitable access to initial and in-employment training.

81. The NTA will provide guidance to VTCs, COSDECs and other training providers on the introduction and level of user fees for services and products outside priority courses.

82. All training providers will be required to account for funds provided by the NTF as a pre-condition for continuous funding.

83. Other financial reporting requirements are set out under the following section on Quality Assurance/Control - Financial Management.

Quality Assurance/Control

Learning outcomes

84. Training providers have the first responsibility to ensure that learning outcomes are achieved through high quality teaching and learning processes in accordance with the competency guidelines issued by the NTA. Learners also have a responsibility to see that they follow advice and guidance provided by their training provider.

85. The NTA, in collaboration with the NQA, ensures, through appropriate accreditation procedures, that training providers have the capacity to deliver high quality programmes and that training providers are aware of the support that the NTA can provide in assisting the achievement of specified learning outcomes.
86. The NTA, in collaboration with NQA, ensures that assessment and certification standards are clear and reasonable and that assessment procedures are quality assured across all unit standards.
87. The NTA analyses and publishes an annual report on learning outcomes, including analysis and comment on learning outcomes of marginalised groups, and those on retraining.
88. Learners and training providers can request a reassessment of a learner if they have grounds for believing the assessment was not accurate or fair, upon payment of a prescribed fee. The fee will be refunded if the original assessment is found to be defective.

Governance

89. The MoE is accountable to Cabinet and the National Assembly for the achievement of VET policies and targets.
90. The Minister of Education appoints the Board of the NTA, according to requirements of relevant acts and regulations. The Board appoints its own Chairperson.
91. The NTA Board convenes sub-committees in areas such as finance, curriculum and assessment to ensure that requirements/guidelines on representation are followed.
92. Training providers are registered and accredited by the NTA. Registration may include “interim authority to operate” for emerging training providers.
93. The NTA has the authority to initiate investigations on the quality of training provision including the right to access and monitor financial accounts funded by NTA.
94. Training providers will have approved boards of management/ trustees/directors. Providers of public-funded training programmes will be accountable to the NTA for sound management of finances, training programmes and staff development.

Financial Management

95. The MoE prepares and submits an annual work plan and budget to the National Assembly.
96. The MoE requires the NTA to submit a three-year rolling budget within the overall framework of the Education and Training Sector and the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) and costed annual plans within the three-year rolling plan.
97. The MoE requires the NTA to submit a statement of audited accounts and a report on performance targets within three (3) months following the end of the financial year in conformity with the State Finance Act, Act 31 of 1991 and as amended. If the Minister of Education is not satisfied with any aspect of financial management of the NTA, (s)he will have the authority to initiate an investigation under the chairmanship of an independent person.
98. The NTA holds all training levy monies in a separate bank account and provides a detailed account of the collection and expenditure of the training levy to employer organisations and other key stakeholders. If there is any dissatisfaction by employers on the training levy, they can appeal to the Minister of Education to initiate an investigation. The decision to initiate an investigation of any whatsoever nature remains the sole prerogative of the Minister of Education.

Annex I – Definitions

Articulation	The arrangements which facilitate the movement or progression of learners from one course to another, or from one education and training sector to another.
Assessment	A process of collecting and interpreting evidence of competence or achievement
Certification	Documentary evidence that a qualification is awarded
Competency	The knowledge, skills, attitudes and personal attributes combined through underlying understanding to perform in specified contexts and to specified standards of performance all or some of the duties and/or activities required by an occupation or function
Curriculum	The specifications for a course that comprises a collection or package of modules
Learning materials	Training materials in print and electronic form that are used by learners to acquire the outcomes specified in competency based curriculum and unit standards
Moderation	A process of ensuring the consistency of assessment processes and decisions to the required standard
National Standards Setting Body (NSSB)	Representative industry/occupational bodies which develop national standards in cooperation with the NQA
Qualification	Certification awarded to a person on successful attainment of required outcomes of learning to required levels of attainment following formal assessment on completion of a course in recognition of having achieved a particular group of unit standards
Recognition of prior learning	A process of acknowledging competencies obtained outside formal education and training or formal learning not previously certificated
Standards Generating Body	Industry or occupation based groups that undertake standards development on behalf of the relevant NSSB or the NQA
Unit standard	Nationally registered statements of quality assurance requirements of education and training outcomes and their associated performance criteria
Vocational education and training	Education and training focused on work, employment and industry competencies up to and including Level 5 of the National Qualifications Framework

Annex II – NQF Descriptors

Level	Descriptor
10	Comprehensive, systematic and in-depth mastery of a discipline/field's knowledge, research, analytical and/or creative requirements. Able to contribute ideas and to debate at the cutting edge of an area of specialisation. Highest level of research capabilities and/or in the creation of new knowledge, art or work. Provide through publication and/or presentation an original contribution to knowledge through research or scholarship, as judged by independent experts and peers applying international standards.
9	Comprehensive and systematic knowledge in a discipline or field with specialist knowledge in an area at the forefront of that discipline or field. Capacity for self-directed study and the ability to work independently. Planning and carrying out of a substantial piece of original research or scholarship to internationally recognised standards and involving a high order of skill in analysis and critical evaluation. Identification, analysis and proposed responses to real world or complex issues and problems drawing systematically and creatively on the principles, theories and methodologies of a particular discipline. Advanced information retrieval, processing, analytical, synthesising and independent evaluation of quantitative and qualitative data. Able to present and communicate academic or professional work effectively, catering for a wide range of specialist and non specialist audiences and/or in diverse genres.
8	Deepened, comprehensive and systematic expertise in a particular discipline. Developed research capacity using a coherent and critical understanding of the principles, theories and methodologies of a particular discipline. Selects research methods, techniques and technologies appropriate to a particular problem. Efficient and effective information retrieval and processing skills, involving critical analysis and independent evaluation of quantitative and qualitative data. Engages with current research and scholarly or professional literature. Able to present and communicate academic or professional work effectively, catering for a wide range of audiences and/or in diverse genres.
7	Knowledge of a major discipline with areas of specialisation in depth. Analysis, transformation and evaluation of abstract data and concepts in the creation of appropriate responses to resolve given or contextual abstract problems. Carry out processes that require a command of highly specialised technical or scholastic and basic research skills across a major discipline and which involve the full range of procedures in a major discipline. Application in complex, variable and specialised contexts. Planning, resourcing and managing processes within broad parameters and functions with complete accountability for determining, achieving and evaluating personal and/or group outcomes.
6	Demonstrates focussed knowledge and skills in a particular field using general principles and application and/or some specialised knowledge with depth in more than one area. Analysis, reformatting and evaluation of a wide range of information used in the formulation of appropriate responses to resolve both concrete and abstract problems. Carry out processes that require a command of wide-ranging highly specialised technical or scholastic skills and/or which involve a wide choice of standard and non-standard procedures, often in non-standard combinations, often in highly variable routine and non-routine contexts. Manages processes within broad parameters for defined activities. Complete accountability for determining and achieving personal and/or group outcomes.

Level	Descriptor
5	Broad, general knowledge based on general principles in a specific area with substantial depth in some aspects. Analytical interpretation of a wide range of data and the determination of appropriate methods and procedures in response to a range of concrete problems with some theoretical elements. Carry out processes that require a wide range of specialised technical or scholastic skills involving a wide choice of standard and non-standard procedures. Employed in a variety of routine and non-routine contexts. Self-directed and sometimes directed activity within broad general guidelines or functions. Full responsibility for the nature, quantity and quality of outcomes, with possible responsibility for the achievement of group outcomes.
4	Employing a broad knowledge base incorporating some theoretical concepts or in-depth applied knowledge and skills in a specific area. Analytical interpretation of information. Making informed judgement and offers a range of sometimes innovative responses to concrete but often unfamiliar problems. Carry out processes that require a wide range of technical or scholastic skills and/or that offer a considerable choice of procedures. Often employed in a variety of familiar and unfamiliar contexts. Applied in self-directed activity under broad guidance and evaluation. Complete responsibility for quantity and quality of output, with possible responsibility for the quantity and quality of the output of others.
3	Employing some relevant theoretical knowledge and interpretation of available information. Uses discretion and judgement over a range of known responses to familiar problems. Carry out processes that require a range of well-developed skills and offer a significant choice of procedures within a range of familiar contexts. Applied in directed activity with some autonomy. Under general supervision and quality checking, though with significant responsibility for the quantity and quality of output, with possible responsibility for the output of others.
2	Employs basic operational knowledge using readily available information. Uses known solutions to familiar problems with little generation of new ideas. Carry out processes that are moderate in range, are established and familiar and offer a clear choice of routine responses. Applied in directed activity under general supervision and quality control. Some responsibility for quantity and quality, with possible responsibility for guiding others.
1	Employs recall and a narrow range of knowledge and cognitive skills. No generation of new ideas. Carry out processes that are limited in range, repetitive and familiar, and employed within closely defined contexts. Applied in directed activity under close supervision with no responsibility for the work or learning of others.

Annex III – Abbreviations

COSDEC	Community Skills Development Centre
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ETSIP	Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme
HAMU	HIV & Aids Management Unit
KBE	Knowledge Based Economy
MoE	Ministry of Education
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
NCHE	National Council for Higher Education
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non Government Organisation
NSSB	National Standards Setting Body
NTA	Namibia Training Authority
NTF	National Training Fund
NQA	National Qualifications Authority
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
RCC	Recognition of Current Competencies
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VTC	Vocational Training Centre

