



P . A . B

Professional Accreditation Body

CRITERIA FOR THE EVALUATION OF PROGRAMMES WITHIN THE PAB SCOPE OF ACCREDITATION

1. Introduction

As a definition, programme evaluation may lead to the acknowledgement of achievements towards programmes/ courses/ learnerships/ unit standards/ qualifications (herein after referred to as programmes) which fall within the PAB scope of accreditation. Programmes which are evaluated and are able to meet specified criteria may receive a status as “Approved by PAB”.

The PAB has developed this manual to serve as an enabling framework and a guide to specify the criteria for the approval of programmes within the PAB scope of accreditation. This document extracts in many aspects from the NSB’s Regulations.

We have used the NSB Regulations (RSA, 1998a) as they indicate a useful format for programmes for submission to National Standards Bodies (NSBs) for recommendation to SAQA. The document may further endeavour to provide a guide to the content and substance of programmes as well as the PAB criteria that might be used to evaluate the quality of the programme. This document will also provide the criteria, which PAB Evaluators will use to evaluate programmes. This document aims to be a valuable resource for PAB in the programme approval process. The needs and requirements may differ in certain areas when we look at the evaluation of programmes separately from the accreditation, monitoring and audit processes of providers within the PAB scope of accreditation.

2. Role and responsibility of PAB ETQA

PAB as an ETQA relates to several pieces of legislation, of which the Skills Development Act and the SAQA Act are the most prominent. The legislation outlines the role and responsibility of PAB.

In conducting our task as an Education and Training Quality Assurance Body, we believe that Quality Assurance should be seen as a tool that teaches rather than torments, as a tool for constructive change — the kind that is focused on specific issues and directed toward a particular outcome.

As an ETQA, PAB has also witnessed how providers have transformed themselves in the NQF and a new group of highly admired leaders is springing forth. These individuals have a strong focus on moving people forward and have provided us with great inspiration and motivation for the tasks ahead.

In order to promote our responsibilities as an ETQA, PAB will set the necessary criteria, monitor the consistency of delivery and assessment across the sector and establish a relationship with constituent providers.

In the current system there has been a need identified to develop a tool to evaluate the curricula and syllabi of providers as a possible separation to Institutional Accreditation. It is our belief that these two parts of the Quality Assurance process is intricately related and may at times be impossible to separate

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if one has to consider the system as a whole. Therefore, the process of Quality Assurance of training programme may also include checks and monitoring that the conditions of accreditation are being met in terms of institutional accreditation. For providers that have received institutional accreditation from another ETQA, PAB will interface closely with the Primary focus ETQA in this regard.

It is important to realize that registration of a qualification on the NQF does not constitute automatic accreditation or approval by an ETQA.

3. Qualifying applicants

Application is open to all levels of providers operating within the PAB scope of accreditation. A provider may apply for evaluation of one of its training programmes if the submission falls within the PAB scope of accreditation.

Providers eligible for programme evaluation by PAB are:

- PAB Constituent Providers (as part of their application for accreditation) i.e. providers that share primary focus with PAB;
- PAB Accredited Providers (in the case of extension of accreditation) to include new programmes in their scope of accreditation; and
- Providers accredited by another ETQA that provide education and training towards programmes which fall within the PAB scope of accreditation. In these cases, providers must apply through their primary focus ETQAs as per the stipulations contained within a MoU between PAB and the other ETQA.

4. Available assistance

The PAB Audit and Accreditation officer is available to guide and mentor you through this process.

One of the key principles for you to be able to complete the process successfully is empowerment. It is up to you to familiarize yourself with the SAQA and PAB guidelines, documents, policies and language.

Making a commitment to the understanding of the system, will make communication between the applicant and PAB one where value is added to the process.

PAB is able to provide guidance only and may never become involved in generating the documentation required for programme approval.

5. What is programme evaluation?

Evaluation in this sense is the recognition of a training programme by PAB if the training programme falls within the SAQA accreditation of PAB as an ETQA.

The main objective of the evaluation process is to promote the provision of quality education and training by competent providers to all learners in the PAB scope of accreditation.

PAB assess whether:

- the provider conducting the training programme has adequate staff and physical resources to conduct the training programme;
- the training programme being offered conforms to the PAB Continuing Professional Development policy and support of the NQF philosophy of learner portability;

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- the graduates of the training programme will have achieved the appropriate knowledge as required in industry.
- there is a relationship between programme content, the facilitator(s), the proposed learner audience and the provider delivering the programme.

5a. Main objective:

The evaluation process will ensure that providers maintain and improve the quality of learning provision and learning achievements of learners. It will also ensure that training provision and learner achievements are of a consistent high quality and standard across the sector.

In order to achieve this objective PAB may set specific conditions in the evaluation of programmes that contain references to other areas (as applicable) to relationships the programme has in respect to:

- Institutions
- Providers
- Workplaces
- Assessment houses
- Training programmes (this includes the development, delivery and evaluation of syllabi and curricula)
- Education, training and development practitioners (this includes assessors, moderators, facilitators, trainers, instructors, workplace mentors, coaches)

5b. Justification for programme evaluation

Quality assurance of training programmes as part of the PAB quality assurance system refers to the process where a syllabus and curriculum is assessed in order to ensure that learner assessment and learning processes:

- maintain a minimum standard;
- are valid, fair and appropriate.

The process may also include checks and monitoring that the conditions of Institutional accreditation are being met and that the relevant training resources are available.

The main areas in programme evaluation are:

1. Quality Assurance of the layout and formatting of the programme. To simplify, it relates to statements made on the rationale, level, total credits required, learning components, access, field, purpose, entry requirements, outcomes, comparability, RPL, articulation, moderation and assessment.
2. Quality Assurance of the language of the programme in relation to the complexity of the formulation of the programme. To simplify, it relates to the way the programme is written or what the programme is.
3. Quality Assurance of the form and substance of the programme in terms of comparison of programmes (across sub-fields and fields) through consistency in formatting.
4. Quality Assurance to ensure articulation of programmes with one another;
5. Quality Assurance that programmes are able to achieve credits aligned to SAQA NQF-registered unit standards/ qualifications;
6. Quality Assurance of the curriculum (design and content) to ensure the programme's ability to address the outcomes as stipulated in the unit standards/ qualifications on the NQF;
7. Quality Assurance of provider compliance with the broader PAB requirements and NQF principles i.e. integration, access, mobility, progression, quality, redress, and development (of the individual and society).

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- Refer to the Evaluator's Guide for detailed analysis.

6. PAB philosophy behind programme approval

The approval process is not simply an inspection exercise. It is a review process which begins with contact with the ETQA PAB who carries out the preliminary review to evaluate:

- Whether the programme appears to cover areas of professional teaching and learning activity;
- Whether the programme is of comparable effort and academic rigour to other programmes and pathways we have approved;
- Whether the programme is non-credit rated, the programme should still have a form of assessment, an external adviser/ moderator and have sufficient quality assurance mechanisms applied to it.

The main ethos behind approval is to establish and maintain a developmental dialogue with programme teams who wish to offer their programmes for review and evaluation against national guidelines and criteria. The process is based on open dialogue between organizations.

6a. Stimulus for quality improvement

Evaluation foremost is an ongoing process for understanding and improving learning. It requires clearly defined objectives and intended results at the curriculum and syllabus level, systematic gathering and analysis of evidence to verify that outcomes meets the objectives set by the training programme and the use of that information to make timely improvements.

The process of curriculum and syllabus evaluation by PAB (an important element of the approval process) can be used as an element in the quality control process of a provider. Presenting the curriculum and syllabus and its objectives to peers from all over South Africa is a very good learning experience.

6b. Acknowledgement of quality

Evaluation on a National level is an acknowledgement of quality, which can be of worth within the industry as well as in relation to other providers in the sector.

6c. South Africanisation

SAQA has declared that more comparability of providers and training programmes are necessary in relation to specific analysis of sectors.

More exchange of information about the curriculum and syllabus is needed.

6d. Learner exchange

An increasing amount of learners may want to continue their studies at other providers. In order to advise their learners and to acknowledge learning taken at other providers, providers require reliable information about the level and quality of training programmes of other providers.

Approval and the information available through evaluation can be of help here. Although less frequently at stake, the same arguments hold for lecturer exchange.

6e. Collaboration

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Collaboration between providers is essential in the sector especially if joint training initiatives are created. For effective and efficient co-operation detailed knowledge about how the training programmes and providers are working together is important. Evaluation can present part of this knowledge in a systematic way.

6f. Mission-based evaluation

Although there is an identified set of 'core elements' for programmes that fall within the PAB scope of accreditation, PAB evaluation takes into account the specific missions providers want to achieve. Each training programme is evaluated foremost against its own objectives.

7. How much does it cost?

The fee is charged to cover the costs of administrative support and the activities of the Professional Accreditation Body. The costs of the evaluation procedure are to be assumed by the provider applying for evaluation.

The cost depends on whether the provider is applying for training programme approval or provider accreditation or if the Provider has received provider accreditation previously.

There is a minimum payment required so PAB can meet its costs incurred with the evaluation process. Discounts are available on this cost if payment is made by the due date. Please contact PAB directly to discuss the process and cost.

8. Who are the evaluators?

There is a panel of evaluators drawn from the community of subject matter experts in the industry, as being qualified to assess a training programme. These are people with a background in both the subject matter and the design and delivery of training programmes.

Evaluation must be discipline-oriented, i.e. carried out by competent members of the discipline: this reduces a known tendency to excessively 'procedure-oriented' systems of evaluation. It is our conviction that peer group evaluation is an academic as well as a professional necessity.

8a. Clear perspective on the industry

Evaluation by PAB is based on a clear view of the essential elements of a training programme (laid down in the 'standards'). Programmes within the PAB scope of accreditation is seen as an interdisciplinary study and includes all the aspects of theory and practical application that come with it; this is meant to include the social and economic environments that affect it and are affected by it. It also embraces the understanding of democratic values.

Under the policies and procedures of the PAB ETQA, the ETQA is empowered:

- to appoint a panel, consisting of such members of the industry as may be determined by the ETQA, to conduct evaluations for approval of curricula and syllabi as may be relevant and acceptable to the profession;
- to appoint persons to represent it on any body or panel of evaluators which may be appointed by any institute, body or society for the time being representing the profession and to make recommendations in relation to any evaluations of syllabi and curricula for training programmes for recognition in the profession;

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- in line with the above functions, the PAB ETQA is responsible for determining the standard for entry into the profession and the evaluation of training programmes of study in the scope the ETQA is accredited for.
- for this purpose, the ETQA PAB will regulate all matters relating to education and training in our scope of accreditation.

9. Evaluation Requirements

PAB evaluation requires the following broad guide on information be provided to PAB, which is used in assessing that the training programme is meeting industry needs. It is imperative that all other related and relevant PAB policy documents be read in conjunction with the application. These documents will be made available to the applicant by the PAB as is necessary during the interface;

- Application forms;
- Sample of training programme syllabus and curriculum;
- Synopsis of training programme content according to template supplied;
- Self-evaluation Report;
- Additional information pertaining to aspects such as equipment and facilities.; and
- Policies and procedures as relevant to the application i.e. SAQA guideline documents and PAB policies and procedures.

If this information meets PAB requirements a status may be given to a provider. PAB requests further detailed information for training programme evaluation in the application documents, including some of the following:

- Delivery process;
- Details on the training programme if run previously, i.e. when established and how many times it has been run, along with a summary of the evaluations received on the training programme;
- Literature and Handouts;
- Details on materials and equipment used;
- Location of training programme and the preferred number of delegates on each training programme;
- Rationale behind the training methods used;
- Detailed training programme structure and content;
- Provider quality assurance procedures and philosophy;
- Attendees evaluation forms from previous training programme;
- Full information on training staff used in this training programme including external providers where appropriate.

10. Policy and criteria for evaluation of training programmes

The evaluation process is conducted once the application of the provider offering the training programme is made to the ETQA.

If the provider runs more than one training programme of study and wishes the training programme to be evaluated, the provider is required to apply for the evaluation of each of the training programme separately.

When there are shortcomings, the PAB ETQA may recommend provisional status for a period not exceeding two years during which the provider must take necessary corrective measures failing which the status will be withdrawn.

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Education and training should ensure that all graduates have knowledge and ability in the chosen field of study, including technical systems and requirements as well as consideration of health, safety and client needs; that they are provided the necessary theoretical and practical knowledge and skills to enable the learner to follow a productive career and to provide the required skills to enter the small business enterprise nationally and internationally in their field of study. By achieving the training programme, learners will have achieved advanced competence in a variety of theoretical and practical practices that will enable them to provide a professional service to clients. As such, a learner will be enabled to become a self-supportive and health conscious professional who is competent in applying a holistic approach to the wellness of clients.

Furthermore, it is also the purpose of the training programme to ensure that learners:

- operate at a conceptual as well as a practical level in designing new technologies, methodologies, skills and techniques for furthering the purposes and benefits of the profession;
- obtain and develop new knowledge in this field of training;
- keep up to date with the latest national and international changing needs of the profession and the market place; and
- maintain high professional and ethical standards.

The teaching staff must be sufficient in number and capability to ensure the quality of the training programme.

There must be adequate related facilities such as practical rooms, facilities for research, advanced studies, information and data exchanges for new technologies to enable learners to learn the use of modern tools and explore beyond the formal dictates of their specific training programme of study.

The training programme must have adequate access to provider support and financial resources to ensure the ongoing viability of the training programme.

11. Objectives of evaluation

- Evaluation of educational programmes in the PAB scope of accreditation seeks primarily to ensure that the standards attained by successful graduates of the programmes are adequate with regard to the design, technical and professional skills required for competent industry practice.
- Graduates from programmes which have been approved by the ETQA PAB shall be deemed to have satisfied the requirements of the profession.
- Towards this objective, the ETQA PAB assesses the programmes of study leading to the award of a professional qualification in the industry and evaluates programmes which are in line with the requirements of the industry.

12. How long does the process take?

Time frames for the programme evaluation process may differ in the following scenarios:

1. PAB-accredited providers:
2. Providers accredited by other ETQA's:
3. New applications:

Time frames may also change if problem areas are identified and site visits are required or if further documentary evidence is required.

The target to process an application is six weeks for a training programme evaluation from receipt of information to approval. Allowing time for PAB to arrange assessment of the documentation, from here

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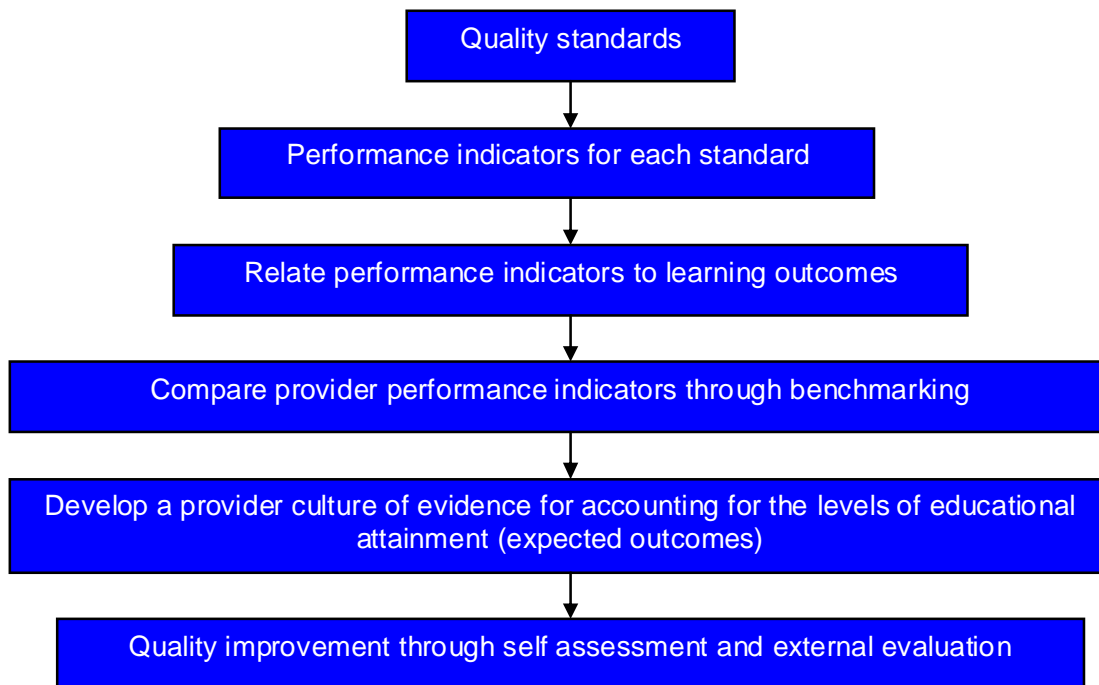
the application will be taken to our ETQA Advisory Committee and the final decision will be given from here.

This timeframe is dependant upon the timing of training programme it may be more or less dependant upon when training programmes are evaluated along with the required training material. Whilst going through this process, providing the evaluation documentation is acceptable, the provider will be granted a *provisional status allowing* the provider to utilize the benefits of PAB.

For training programme that require urgent evaluation please contact PAB directly to discuss options.

13. What are the benefits of training programme evaluation?

- Use of the PAB logo and evaluation statement. This provides peer and customer recognition of your competence in delivering education and training;
- Evaluation provides benchmarking for the development of future training within your activities as a provider or in partnership with others;
- It provides third party assurance to your clients of quality and consistency of approach, content and delivery;
- It is a useful marketing tool to demonstrate you commitment as a provider to excellence and competence in providing education and training;
- It allows you to take advantage of the PAB Marketing programme, the benefits of which include utilizing the PAB database allowing targeting of therapists in specific fields meaning the target market of your training programme can be contacted with minimal cost and achieve maximum benefit;
- Allows you to offer benefits to the attendees of your training programme such as automatically recording the credits gained through your training programme on their PAB learner record.
- Provide incentives for the development of training programme quality management systems that include references to:



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14. Conclusion

The PAB believes that preparation for a role in teaching and/or supporting learning in programmes within our scope of accreditation requires both sound theoretical understanding and practical experience. Therefore, in considering training programmes for evaluation, the PAB looks for training programme content which specifically aims to give staff an understanding of the professional issues relevant to their role in teaching and supporting learning, as well as a sound academic grounding in pedagogical issues.

15. Instructions

1. Self Evaluation Report completed with each submission.
2. Provider registration form.
3. Sample of training programme syllabus and curriculum;
4. Synopsis of training programme content according to template supplied;
5. Additional information pertaining to aspects such as equipment and facilities.; and
6. Policies and procedures as relevant to the application i.e. SAQA guideline documents and PAB policies and procedures.

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