



COUNCIL ON HIGHER EDUCATION (CHE)

SCHEDULE 8

MINIMUM ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

2021

The CHE is a statutory body founded by the Higher Education Act, 2004. It is a national quality assurance agency responsible for enhancement of quality in the provision of higher education in Lesotho and for advising the Minister of Education on higher education issues.

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List of Acronyms

CHE	Council on Higher Education
EQA	External Quality Assurance
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IQA	Internal Quality Assurance
NQAA	National Quality Assurance Agency
OERs	Open Educational Resources
LQF	Lesotho Qualifications Framework
SER	Self-Evaluation Report

Glossary of Terms

Accreditation Cycle: A period or time interval after which mandatory programme accreditation takes place. The CHE accreditation follows a 5 - year cycle and a 10-year cycle for the tuition provider.

Accreditation: A process by which a competent authority carries out a systematic review of a programme or tuition provider to ascertain whether or not it meets minimum accreditation standards. Accreditation confers a status on a programme or tuition provider. The status could be 'Exceeds Minimum Standards (EMS)', 'Meets Minimum Standards (MMS)', 'Partially Meets Minimum Standards (PMMS)', 'Does Not Meet Standards (DNMS)', or 'Accreditation Withdrawn (AW)'. When accreditation is granted, a certificate is issued and this certificate of accreditation is valid for a period of 5 years for a programme and 10 years for a tuition provider, after which another round of review is carried out.

Articulation: A transformative element of the LQF and implies that curriculum planning and design needs to consider the nesting and integration of qualifications and training programmes to facilitate streamlined efficiencies and promote student progression. It is the process of forming possibilities of connection between qualifications and/or part-qualifications to allow for the vertical, lateral and diagonal movement of learners through the formal education and training system and its linkages with the world of work.

Corporate Governance: Pertains to a collection and implementation of management principles, policies, regulations and practices. They have been designed in accordance with local, regional and international good practices to ensure that an organisation or institution achieves its stated objectives.

Credit accumulation and transfer (CAT): A process that provides students with agreed and consistent credit outcomes for components of a qualifications that can be transferred to another matched qualification or learning outcomes.

Discipline: A broad knowledge domain within which one or more programmes lead to different qualifications.

E-Learning: Any teaching and learning approach done outside a traditional classroom that utilises mainly electronic technologies.

Exit level outcomes refer to the knowledge, skills and attitudes that a learner should have obtained or mastered on completion of a qualification and against which the learner is assessed for competence.

External Quality Assurance (EQA): A process by which, working on behalf of a National Quality Assurance Agency (NQAA) (e.g., CHE) or a professional body, a team of reviewers visits a department/faculty/institution with a view to validate the claims made in the self-evaluation report for the programme or tuition provider, in the case of a programme review or tuition provider review or for the institution in the case of an audit. EQA reviewers, besides making a recommendation on the accreditation status of a programme or tuition provider, also provide advice on what can be done to enhance the quality of the programme, tuition provider or an institution.

Faculty: A group of two or more departments offering higher education programmes leading to qualifications within at least two distinct disciplines.

Franchise: An arrangement where one institution with degree awarding powers (Franchiser) allows another institution (Franchisee) to offer its programme without substantially adapting the programme to local contexts. The franchiser, to a large extent and in compliance with the host country's requirements, controls the qualifications requirements.

Higher Education Institution: A recognised public or registered private institution offering higher education programme(s) leading to qualifications from Levels 5 through 10 of the Lesotho Qualifications Framework (LQF).

Higher Education Programme: A programme leading to a qualification from Levels 5 through 10 of the LQF.

Improvement Plan: A plan developed by an institution that has been audited or an institution offering a programme (s) that has just undergone review or a tuition provider that has been accredited. The plan provides details of measures to be taken to address the recommendations contained in the Review Report.

Internal Quality Assurance (IQA): A process by which an institution measures and monitors its own policies, systems and processes to ensure that it achieves its own teaching and learning goals. Through IQA, the institution maintains a robust quality that is compliant with the minimum standards set by CHE.

Lesotho Qualifications Framework (LQF): is a comprehensive system, approved by the Cabinet of Ministers for the maintenance, qualification design, quality assurance of education and training provision, classification and registration of qualifications and part-qualifications.

Levels descriptors: The statements describing the relative complexity and/or depth and the learning outcomes and assessment criteria that are appropriate to a qualification at each of the LQF levels from 1 – 10.

Progression pathways: Opportunities that allow students to move through qualification levels with full or partial recognition for the qualifications and/or learning outcomes they already have. See also credit, credit transfer, recognition of prior learning and articulation.

Qualification title: The nomenclature used for an LQF qualification that denotes the type, level, credit loading and field of study/discipline of the qualification.

Quality Assurance: A systematic process of assessing and verifying inputs, processes, outputs, and outcomes as a way of safeguarding quality and standards. Through quality assurance, institutions are guided and supported in operating effective systems premised on compliance, enhancement and increased accountability while enabling comparability of standards across academic programmes and institutions.

Recognition of prior learning (RPL): An assessment process that involves assessment of an individual's relevant prior learning (including formal, informal and non-formal learning) to determine the credit outcomes of an individual application for credit towards gaining certification for further studies or placement at work.

Registration: The process of ascertaining whether a private higher education institution that has applied for permission to operate meets set conditions, including the granting of such permission where appropriate.

Review Panel: A group of professionals appointed by the CHE to assess whether the programme or tuition provider submitted for review meets minimum standards set by the CHE.

Review Report: A report written by the review panel detailing the extent to which the programme meets minimum standards set by the CHE, recommendations for improvement, and a clear recommendation on whether to accredit the programme.

Self-Evaluation Report (SER): A document prepared by the review team within the institution in preparation for either programme review or institutional audit. In the report the team reflects on and discusses the degree to which it achieves its quality assurance goals and meets the minimum standards set by the CHE.

Self-Evaluation: A process by which an institution to be audited, tuition provider or an institution offering or proposing to offer a programme systematically reflects upon

its own practice and gathers evidence to assess whether the programme, institution or tuition provider meets the minimum standards set by the CHE. The process results in the development of the Self-Evaluation Report (SER).

Site Visit: The visit to an institution by members of the Review Panel, Audit Panel or Registrar of private institutions to gather more information and verify the claims made either in the Self-Evaluation Report or in the application for registration.

Standard: A set of attainment levels that each programme, tuition provider or institution under review/ audit must meet.

Student is a person enrolled in a formal programme of learning in an educational institution and/or a workplace setting.

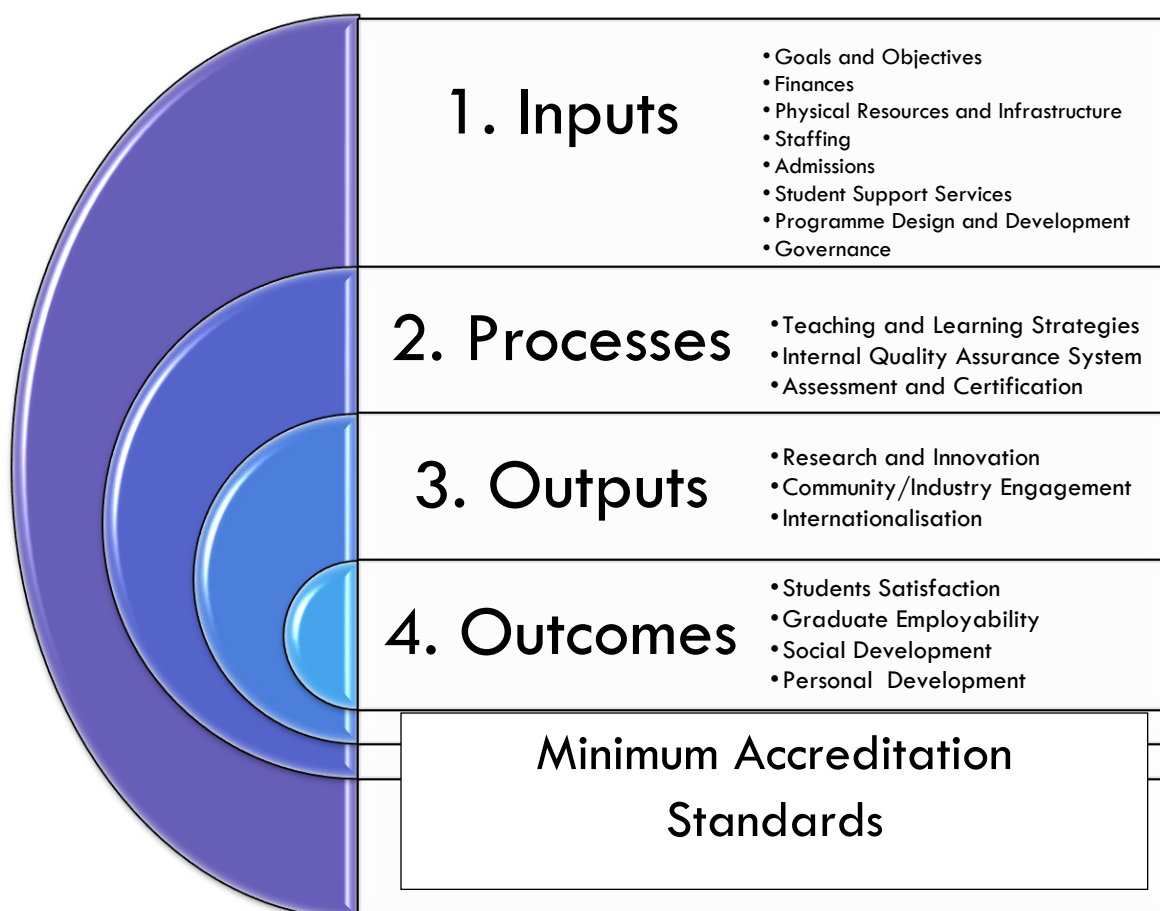
Tuition Provider: A recognised public or registered private institution offering higher education programme(s) that are leading to qualifications from Levels 5 through 10 of the Lesotho Qualifications Framework (LQF) and have been developed by another institution.

1.0 FOREWORD

The Council on Higher Education in Lesotho (CHE) was founded by the Higher Education Act of 2004. In addition to advising the Minister of Education and Training on matters pertaining to provision of the higher education in Lesotho, CHE has a mandate to ensure that the quality of higher education programmes provided in Lesotho is high, contributes to effective learning outcomes and meets regional and international standards. Specifically, CHE has a mandate to:

- a) Promote quality and continuous improvement in higher education so that it responds effectively to future challenges and opportunities;
- b) Audit institutions to assure the integrity of awards and to ensure that the internal quality assurance processes are of an acceptable quality and academic standards;
- c) Accredite programmes and tuition providers, and seek reaffirmation of accreditation status on a five-year cycle and ten-year cycle respectively;
- d) Provide a context for evaluating the accuracy and consistency of descriptors of qualifications to be awarded and their registration on the Lesotho Qualifications Framework (LQF);
- e) Safeguard high standards and promote public confidence on the quality of the education provided by higher education institutions in Lesotho.

In order to promote and enhance the quality of programmes offered in institutions of higher learning, CHE has developed minimum standards and criteria to help institutions to reflect upon, evaluate and demonstrate their capacity to offer the programmes. These standards are grouped under four main distinct but interdependent clusters.



Each standard consists of a scoping statement that describes an overview of the standard and criteria in a precise and measurable way. These standards shall apply to all programmes leading to qualifications/awards such as certificates, diplomas, degrees, postgraduate qualifications, and doctorates, including professional programmes but excluding those offered via Open and Distance Learning (ODL) or other modes of delivery. They shall also apply to tuition providers who wish to offer a programme or programmes that have been accredited. In essence, the standards are designed to evaluate the programmes leading to qualifications registered at Levels 5 through 10 of the Lesotho Qualifications Framework (LQF) and offered via a face-to-face mode of delivery. They exclude small tuition providers who support students who are registered on cross-border professional programmes.

2.0 MINIMUM ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

2.1 Inputs

2.1.1 Goals and Objectives of the Programme

SCOPE

The goals and objectives of the programme form part of the strategic plan to achieve a stated mandate of the institution, are aligned with the institution's mission and vision, are relevant, appropriate, and address national, regional and international priorities.

CRITERIA

- i. The goals and objectives of the programme are aligned with the mission and vision of the institution;
- ii. The goals and objectives of the programme are well-articulated, relevant and consistent with the priorities of the country and the profession;
- iii. The goals and objectives of the programme are relevant to employment, and further education opportunities;
- iv. The goals and objectives of the programme focus on the development of problem-solving, independent thinking, critical thinking, and communication skills;
- v. The goals and objectives of the programme align with staff qualifications and experience, the learning outcomes, as well as instructional and assessment strategies;
- vi. The tuition provider/institution has a strategic plan to enhance students' learning opportunities with measurable objectives and realistic timeframes;
- vii. The tuition provider/institution has put measures in place to monitor implementation of the programme strategic plan.

2.1.2 Finances

SCOPE

The institution or tuition provider has enough financial resources to run the programme, and there are sound policies and procedures to effectively manage the resources needed to run the programme in a sustainable way.

CRITERIA

- i. Given the projected student enrolment, the provider has sufficient financial resources to run the programme and ensure its sustainability, as well as the

- academic and support staff complement needed to run the programme effectively;
- ii. There is evidence of upfront investment in ensuring quality management of the programme, including provision of course materials, student portals, and learner support systems;
 - iii. The institution/tuition provider has a well-developed business plan showing projected student enrolments, recurrent expenditure, and the details of how tuition provision will be financed;
 - iv. The budget for the activities of the institution/tuition provider will follow a defined process and procedure;
 - v. The tuition provider/institution has a transparent system for the distribution of resources needed to support the programme;
 - vi. The tuition provider/institution has a risk management policy for responding to, and managing financial emergencies and unforeseen occurrences;
 - vii. The tuition provider/institution demonstrates sound financial management practices as evidenced by the existence of unqualified audit reports produced on a regular basis;
 - viii. Attention is paid to costs of library and course materials for students so that the cost of instructional materials is effectively balanced with the cost of on-line access.

2.1.3 Physical Resources and Infrastructure

SCOPE

The infrastructure and physical resources used or to be used in the delivery of the programme are suitable for the intended purpose and have the potential to enable the programme to achieve its stated objectives.

CRITERIA

- i. Depending on the type of programme and student enrolment, adequate space and buildings exist to accommodate teaching staff, management staff, support staff, and the processes of teaching and learning;
- ii. The available infrastructure and teaching facilities enable use of a variety of innovative teaching and learning methods;
- iii. All students have access to suitable and sufficient library resources, including the provision of Open Educational Resources (OERs), and where these resources belong to other institutions, there are formal agreements (or Memoranda of Understanding [MOU]) signed between tuition providers/institutions and owners of learning facilities;

- iv. Both on-campus and off-campus students have secure access to libraries, ICT facilities and other learning facilities during the day and after hours, and are supported by competent staff dedicated to serve a wide variety of learners;
- v. The information technology system provides access to appropriate electronic information, as evidenced by the ratio of students to computers of 1:6 or better, including situations where students have own computers;
- vi. In line with the nature of the programme, suitable and sufficient Information Technology (IT) infrastructure are available at all sites of learning;
- vii. A system is in place for the proper maintenance and upgrading of infrastructure;
- viii. Depending on the type of programme and projected student enrolments, the available teaching materials and related equipment enable use of the most effective delivery methods;
- ix. Structures, policies, plans and processes exist to ensure that the management and maintenance of infrastructure and resources continuously create an enabling environment for attaining high standards of content delivery;
- x. All buildings meet the health and safety requirements of a competent and relevant authority;
- xi. All buildings available for students' accommodation enable a safe and conducive living and learning environment;
- xii. Arrangements have been made to ensure that all students living with physical disabilities (special needs) have unfettered access to learning facilities and are adequately supported.

2.1.4 Staffing

SCOPE

The calibre of staff recruited in the programme/tuition provider, working conditions in place, and the professional development mechanisms in place or proposed, and the level of productivity enable the programme to meet its stated objectives.

CRITERIA

- i. The tuition provider/institution has a clear procedure for recruitment of teaching and support staff, and this procedure is applied consistently;
- ii. There is an adequate number of teaching and administrative staff to address the educational, academic and social needs of the students enrolled in the programme;
- iii. The selection and recruitment policies ensure that the most highly qualified and experienced academic and support staff members are recruited in an objective, transparent and non-discriminatory manner;

- iv. Except for those teaching in a programme leading to the highest qualification in a discipline (e.g., PhD. or special programmes), at least 90% of teaching staff hold a qualification higher than the programme's exit level;
- v. A transparent and equitable performance appraisal system is in place to enhance the performance of academic and support staff;
- vi. The tuition provider/institution ensures that adequately-qualified academic, technical and support staff are employed to meet the institution's objectives for student learning, and that this is the case at all sites of delivery;
- vii. Staff development policies and plans exist, and are implemented fairly and consistently to ensure that all staff continually get professional support in order to sharpen and update their skills;
- viii. A staff development system is in place, as a proactive measure to ensure that staff stay abreast with latest trends in the use of relevant technology and other innovative methods of delivery;
- ix. At least 60% of the teaching staff is employed on a full-time basis;
- x. Part-time staff are sufficiently inducted to familiarise them with the teaching and learning requirements of the programme/tuition provider, and their roles are clearly articulated;
- xi. The promotion criteria linked to a performance appraisal system are fairly implemented and focused on a wide range of factors, including impact assessment of teaching, research, publications and community outreach activities;
- xii. New staff members are taken through an induction programme that covers staff rights, responsibilities, institutional expectations, performance appraisals, promotion criteria, and tips on how to manage the challenges of working in the institution or tuition provider;
- xiii. Staff members are monitored and supported for the specialised roles and tasks they perform, including the design, management and delivery of technology-supported programmes;
- xiv. The roles, responsibilities and job descriptions of staff are clearly specified, and respond to the learning needs of students enrolled in the programme;
- xv. Where current staff do not have the required expertise, there is evidence that the institution can contract a specialist on flexible and effective terms;
- xvi. There are clear commitments and corresponding structures to provide continuing professional development of staff.

2.1.5 Admissions

SCOPE

The process of admitting students into the programme is appropriate, well-documented, transparent, efficient, and ensures that the most deserving candidates are admitted into the programme.

CRITERIA

- i. The admission policy is documented, well-articulated, and effectively communicated to the public;
- ii. Admission strictly adheres to enrolment plans or admission quotas, in line with regulatory requirements;
- iii. Subject to the availability of infrastructure, human resources and regulatory requirements, all qualifying local students have an equal opportunity to access the programme irrespective of race, nationality, gender, physical ability, religious or political affiliation, and geographical location;
- iv. Depending on the admission quota for foreign students, all qualifying foreign students have an equal chance of being admitted irrespective of race, nationality, gender, physical ability, religion or political affiliation;
- v. The admission criteria accommodate arrangements for credit transfer and recognition of prior learning. They also adhere to the requirements of the sending country, where applicable;
- vi. Admission and registration processes can be executed effectively and within timeframes that enable uninterrupted teaching to commence on a set date;
- vii. The admission criteria are adequately benchmarked with those for similar programmes offered by leading higher education providers/institutions in the international world;
- viii. The number of students enrolled in the programme does not exceed the capacity of the staff, or the administrative infrastructure available to provide support for student learning and assessment;
- ix. Upon orientation into technology-driven programmes, students are provided with accurate information about what they have to supply in addition to the materials supplied in the programme.

2.1.6 Student Support Services

SCOPE

Medical, recreational, pastoral, career and academic student support services enable a conducive teaching and learning environment enable employability and attainment of the stated objectives of the programme.

CRITERIA

- i. The library service has appropriate up-to-date materials to support the programme, and an appropriate library management system that enables easy access to materials;
- ii. The students have secure access to electronic information appropriate for the programme and its purpose, as evidenced by the required ratio of the number of computers to the number of students;
- iii. Students' support staff include tutors and counsellors to provide initial orientation to students, including the use of IT for learning, and access to the latest developments that enhance students' learning and well-being;
- iv. The provider/institution has a student advisor and a personal tutorship system set up to ensure that students have access to expert advice at each crucial stage of the programme;
- v. There are opportunities for students' individual academic support, either by telephone, on appointment or online;
- vi. The student representative body, or part thereof, represents the students at key decision-making structures of the provider/institution;
- vii. The students have access to counselling, career and employability services provided by qualified staff to ensure eligibility for future career prospects, equity, and where needed, support for those with learning difficulties or disadvantaged socio-economic and cultural backgrounds;
- viii. Students have access to counselling for personal difficulties and for academic problems;
- ix. Where support is online, students know who to contact for support, and the best time to establish contact;
- x. The students have access to a clinic or medical facility that provides basic medical services;
- xi. The students have access to spiritual, sporting and recreational facilities;
- xii. A clear students' grievance handling procedure exists. It is well known to the students and staff, and is being implemented accordingly;
- xiii. Where appropriate, the development of competence in the use of ICT is built into the learning outcomes of the programme;
- xiv. Obligations and responsibilities of students in the programme are clear at registration. It is clear what resources and equipment the provider/institution will supply, and what each student will have to supply;
- xv. Library support includes access to wider electronic knowledge resources, as well as the information literacy skills required to handle these resources appropriately. Particular attention is given to provide access to students working from workplaces or homes;
- xvi. Adequate provisions are also made for students with one or more disabilities;

- xvii. Where a programme makes extensive use of educational technologies, staff members are assisted to design courses that facilitate synchronous or asynchronous electronic communication, so that they can build different forms of mediated learning into the designed learning materials, and thereby provide opportunities for peer support and peer teaching in an electronic environment;
- xviii. Care is taken that students admitted into a programme that requires the use of technology have sufficient access to that technology which enables them to succeed in the programme.

2.1.7 (a) Programme Design and Development [Programme Review]

SCOPE

Programme design procedures ensure the maintenance of academic standards, authenticity of awards and ensure that students attain expected learning outcomes. The programme design meets requirements of the Lesotho Qualifications Framework and addresses the needs of the work place and industry.

CRITERIA

- i. Principles and guidelines needed for the process of programme development are in place and well-known to staff;
- ii. The title of this programme is adequately aligned to the LQF and provides a clear indication of the area and level of study;
- iii. The credit loading is appropriate and covers face to face sessions, practical work, clinical experience and students' independent work, where appropriate and relevant;
- iv. The content and exit level outcomes are clearly articulated and pitched at the appropriate level of the LQF;
- v. The design of the programme structure offers alternative progression pathways for students.
- vi. The programme design process depicts a clear management of credit accumulation and transfer procedures that cater for intra and inter institutional transfers.
- vii. There is evidence of sufficient investment in quality programme development, course design and materials development;
- viii. Systems are in place for the regular review of programmes and relevant educational technologies to ensure that they are kept abreast with changes in consultation with stakeholders including the relevant industry partners and professional associations;

- ix. The process of development and approval of the programme was rigorous and thorough as evidenced by the documentation showing the extent of consultations with internal and external stakeholders, including benchmarking;
- x. The programme has been formally approved by the relevant and appropriate internal governance structures;
- xi. The programme design shows a good balance in the development of theoretical, practical, problem solving and experiential skills, and is in line with the requirements of specific disciplines and the purpose of the programme;
- xii. Where relevant, the programme is closely aligned with current professional practices and shows potential to develop the required professional competencies in line with the national needs and the needs of the regional and international labour market where appropriate;
- xiii. The programme and its proposed activities show explicit links with the worlds of work, business, industry and community;
- xiv. Where a programme is offered across national borders, its qualification has been registered in the LQF, its curriculum is appropriate for the host context and the rigour of the programme is not diluted irrespective of the mode of delivery;
- xv. Where cross-border programmes are offered, as much as possible, the programme adheres to the internationally accepted guidelines and procedures for Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education;
- xvi. A clear internal and external audit/ review schedule for the programme is available and the institution has capacity to implement it;
- xvii. The intended exit level competencies of those who complete the programme are clearly articulated, appropriate for the purpose of the programme and aligned with the programme design and the assessment criteria;
- xviii. The content is based on the latest theories and findings gleaned from related research literature, promote critical thinking and effectively integrate relevant examples and applications.

2.1.7 (b) Programme Design and Development [Tuition Provider Review]

SCOPE

The Tuition Provider is able to provide evidence that programme design procedures ensure the maintenance of academic standards, authenticity of awards and ensure that students attain expected learning outcomes. The programme design meets requirements of the qualifications framework of the country of origin and addresses the needs of the work place and industry.

CRITERIA

- i. Principles and guidelines used for the process of programme development are made available to relevant internal and external stakeholders, including reviewers;
- ii. The programme is registered in the qualifications framework in its country of origin;
- iii. The title of this programme provides a clear indication of the area and level of study;
- iv. The credit loading is appropriate and covers face to face sessions, practical work, clinical experience and students' independent work;
- v. The content and exit level outcomes are clearly articulated and pitched at the appropriate level of the LQF;
- vi. The intended purpose and expected exit level outcomes of the programme are clearly stipulated by the owner of the programme and known to the provider;
- vii. The design of the programme structure offers alternative progression pathways for students.
- viii. The programme design process depicts a clear management of credit accumulation and transfer procedures that cater for intra and inter institutional transfers.
- ix. There is evidence of sufficient investment in quality programme development, course design and materials development;
- x. The provider shows evidence of a system used by the owner for the regular review of programmes and relevant educational technologies to ensure that they are kept abreast with changes in consultation with stakeholders including the relevant industry partners and professional associations;
- xi. There is evidence that process of development and approval of the programme was rigorous and thorough as evidenced by the documentation showing the extent of consultations of the owner with internal and external stakeholders, including benchmarking;
- xii. The programme has been formally approved by the relevant and appropriate internal governance structures;
- xiii. The programme design shows a good balance in the development of theoretical, practical, problem solving and experiential skills, and is in line with the requirements of specific disciplines and the purpose of the programme;
- xiv. Where relevant, the programme is closely aligned with current professional practices and shows potential to develop the required professional competencies in line with the national needs and the needs of the regional and international labour market where appropriate;
- xv. The programme and its proposed activities show explicit links with the worlds of work, business, industry and community;

- xvi. Where a programme is offered across national borders, its curriculum is appropriate for the host context and the rigour of the programme is not diluted irrespective of the mode of delivery;
- xvii. Where cross-border programmes are offered, as much as possible, the programme adheres to the internationally accepted guidelines and procedures for Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education;
- xviii. The intended exit level competencies of those who complete the programme are clearly articulated, appropriate for the purpose of the programme and aligned with the programme design and the assessment criteria;
- xix. The content is based on the latest theories and findings gleaned from related research literature, promote critical thinking and effectively integrate relevant examples and applications.

2.1.8 Governance

SCOPE

The tuition provider/institution is a properly-constituted entity whose governance structures and functions are well-defined, relevant to its mandate and functions, well-understood by those delivering the programmes, in line with the stated goals and objectives of the provider/institution, and are able to create a conducive environment for the delivery of a high-quality programme.

CRITERIA

- i. The tuition provider/institution is either registered under the Companies Act and under the Ministry of Education and Training or founded under an Act of Parliament;
- ii. In collaborative arrangements, the tuition provider/institution has a formal permission to run the programme whether it is a franchise or run-in collaboration with a relevant institution or professional body;
- iii. There is a robust quality assurance process to monitor the standard and quality of collaborative arrangements where ownership rests with a parent institution rather than the local provider/ institution;
- iv. The tuition provider/institution has high calibre, experienced and competent management teams with clearly-defined roles and responsibilities reflecting strategic vision and leadership as evidenced by their resumes, nature of operational plans, and appropriateness of the institution's policy documents;
- v. The tuition provider/institution has a formally-constituted governing board/council that plays an oversight role in the provision of tuition, in line with best practices;

- vi. The governance structure (board/council) has a schedule of meetings that focus on substantive issues which are articulated and prioritized in an agenda;
- vii. The tuition provider/institution has a board, committee or similar structure that provides academic oversight by developing, monitoring, and reviewing policies and programmes to ensure high standards of delivery and adherence to national standards and professional requirements;
- viii. The governing structures of the tuition provider/institution show potential to enable timely and effective decision-making that ensures effective delivery of the programme;
- ix. The governance structures have set out for each committee, the composition, terms of reference, delegation, powers and reporting relationships;
- x. The tuition provider/institution has adopted a strategic plan that is guiding institutional decisions and allocation of resources;
- xi. The tuition provider/institution's internal structures give priority to its educational role in comparison to other activities;
- xii. In its running of the programme, the provider/institution shows sound corporate and academic governance practices that are consistent with best practices;
- xiii. The tuition provider/institution has autonomy to direct resources in order to achieve its purpose and the objectives of its programme;
- xiv. The tuition provider/institution reviews and updates structures, functions and policies that relate to education, training and continuation of professional development in order to rectify deficiencies and meet changing needs;
- xv. The students are represented in the relevant governance structures of the tuition provider/institution;
- xvi. The tuition provider/institution has adopted clear provisions for ethics, academic integrity and management of conflict of interest.

2.2.0 Processes

2.2.1 Teaching and Learning Strategy

SCOPE

The teaching and learning strategy is adequately benchmarked against best practices, appropriate for the type of programme offered, and is in line with the context for teaching, types of students served, and available resources. The teaching and learning processes are adequately monitored and evaluated, and the teaching staff have access to continual professional development and support.

CRITERIA

- i. Class size enables effective utilisation of the teaching and learning resources available at the study site, and is appropriate for the programme purposes;
- ii. Depending on the type of programme, appropriate student-tutor ratios or workloads are maintained and rationalised to enable continuous material development and other forms of support to student learning;
- iii. The teaching and learning strategies employ a variety of innovative pedagogical approaches, including approaches suited to learners of different learning styles, abilities and ages (andragogy);
- iv. The teaching strategy is consistent with the content to be taught, current knowledge, emerging concepts, as well as practical and fundamental theoretical/conceptual aspects of the discipline or profession;
- v. Work Integrated Learning (WIL) is effectively built into the teaching strategy, where appropriate;
- vi. The teaching and learning strategy is clearly articulated and appropriate for the programme's purpose;
- vii. A variety of appropriate teaching and learning resources are available, including timely access to Information Technology (IT) facilities for teaching staff and the students;
- viii. Where appropriate and relevant, laboratory experiments, workshops and seminars are hands-on and investigatory, and are adequately resourced for the number of students being taught;
- ix. There is a system for monitoring and evaluating the process of teaching, that is linked to a professional development strategy;
- x. Feedback on tutors is regularly solicited from students, and gathered information is analysed for use in mounting systematic staff development initiatives;
- xi. A system exists for ensuring that students fulfil their academic obligations, and this system is adequately linked to a right to sit for examinations;
- xii. Where appropriate and relevant, the provider/institution demonstrates that the workplace experience is included as soon as it is practically possible to facilitate early engagement with the professional context;
- xiii. The teaching and learning strategy support the development of professional skills, time management, analysis, synthesis of issues, and peer support;
- xiv. Where the e-learning strategy involves inputs from several agencies, the tuition provider/institution takes full responsibility for the delivery, assessment and support of students;
- xv. To minimise the dropout rate, a system is in place to track and support students who are not progressing as expected;

- xvi. There are policies that promote sufficient input into the teaching strategy from teaching staff, students, professional bodies, and relevant external stakeholders;
- xvii. Teaching resources, research facilities and other favourable working conditions enable teaching staff to meet their performance targets.

2.2.2 Internal Quality Assurance System

SCOPE

The tuition provider/institution of the programme takes responsibility for its own quality and academic standards. There is a sound and well-articulated internal quality assurance policy, system, procedures and tools that indicate that the provider/institution is capable of acting in full compliance with the requirements of External Quality Assurance (EQA) to enhance its programme offering.

CRITERIA

- i. ¹The qualification resulting from the programme is either registered or is comparable to a registered qualification in the Lesotho Qualifications Framework (LQF), where relevant and appropriate;
- ii. The programme has been accredited by the relevant authority in its country of origin, the National Quality Assurance Agency (NQAA), and/or a relevant local professional body, where appropriate and relevant;
- iii. The tuition provider/institution offering the programme is regulated by relevant legislation and other statutes that apply to professional programmes where appropriate and relevant;
- iv. The programme delivery is guided by a comprehensive institutional quality assurance policy that clearly defines the main goals, procedures and tools that should be used to monitor its quality;
- v. The quality assurance policy is consistent with the general institutional policies, values, ethos and practices;
- vi. A quality management mechanism is in place to ensure that the tuition provider/institution delivers and enhances the quality of all programmes, policies and processes accordingly, and is in full compliance with the national quality requirements;
- vii. A formal self-appraisal system exists for monitoring the performance of administrative, teaching and support staff, including line manager evaluation, peer reviews, classroom observations and student feedback;

¹ This will be applicable only after the LQF has been approved and is fully implemented.

- viii. Internal quality assurance unit is constructive, focused on compliance, and regularly improves the quality of teaching and learning outcomes, including employability;
- ix. A process is in place to ensure provision of constructive feedback on academic standards, academic progression and grievance procedures;
- x. Data gathered from the monitoring of teaching and learning meaningfully feeds back into programme planning and development processes to ensure continuous improvement;
- xi. Where programmes are offered across borders, there is adherence to meeting local quality assurance requirements in line with internationally accepted guidelines and good practices;
- xii. Quality assurance mechanisms are in place to ensure that the programmes from sending countries to receiving countries are not lower in quality but are a catalyst for innovation and improvement on parallel programmes offered, and that there is full compliance with the national quality criteria of the receiving country;
- xiii. If the programme is supported online, mechanisms for monitoring student participation and performance are integrated in the programme design and online learning platforms, making it possible to track indicators such as:
 - Time spent by different students on components of materials;
 - Student participation in online discussions;
 - Nature of tutor feedback given online;
- xiv. Academic standards and regulations of conduct are implemented, including those relating to intellectual property, copyrighted materials, and the avoidance of sexual misconduct and other forms of harassment and violence;
- xv. Technological support is efficiently managed by qualified staff to ensure the smooth running of technical equipment;
- xvi. Staff and students at all sites of delivery are fully aware of the quality assurance requirements of the provider, owner of the programme, and the national quality assurance agency;
- xvii. Staff and students at all sites of delivery take part in the review and revision of quality assurance tools;
- xviii. Strategic partnerships are developed with other tertiary institutions, professional organisations, research collaborators, and the industry to enhance the quality of the programme;
- xix. To ensure that provisions of the programme remain current and valid, there are continuous reviews of research findings in professional practice, technological progression, teaching pedagogy, and assessment.
- xx. There is proper alignment between what is advertised about the programme and the actual policies and practices.

2.2.3 (a) Assessment & Certification [Programme Review]

SCOPE

Assessment for the programme is guided by a policy, system and tools to ensure that it is valid, efficient, fair, secure, and employs appropriate quality control mechanisms designed to protect the intellectual credibility of the programme.

CRITERIA

- i. Appropriate assessment policies and procedures exist to ensure high attainment levels that are transparent to staff, students and the general public;
- ii. Assessment items are consistent with the expected exit level outcomes of the programme;
- iii. Mechanisms are in place to ensure that assessment of students is rigorous, credible, and uniform across all sites of delivery, and internal policies and processes exist to ensure that students' performance is closely monitored, regularly updated, and the students are accordingly advised on the progress they are making in their studies;
- iv. The necessary internal moderation system and peer review mechanisms exist and enable refinement of examination systems and tools prior to externalisation, where applicable;
- v. There is sufficient evidence of attention to improving retention and completion rates;
- vi. Close monitoring of each student's progress is accompanied by evidence of communication of constructive comments that are communicated on time and professionally;
- vii. An appropriate external examination system exists and the selection of the external examiner follows clear guidelines supported by an institutional policy to ensure that action is taken on the basis of feedback from external examiners;
- viii. The institution/tuition provider offering the programme has policies and enforcement systems that ensure zero tolerance for cheating, copying or any form of examination malpractice that threatens the integrity and authenticity of the examination process;
- ix. Where online assessment is used to support the programme, it is rigorous and covers high level cognitive skills relating to analysis, synthesis and evaluation, and mechanisms are in place to ensure that students with correct credentials seamlessly go through the assessment tasks;
- x. Mechanisms for appealing examination results are in place, and are being judiciously implemented;
- xi. End of year assessment and grading processes are efficiently executed and within timeframes that enable the next academic year to commence smoothly,

- and assessment timeframes are communicated in time, and flexible enough to accommodate a range of circumstances for learners;
- xii. A system is in place to ensure safe storage and timely retrieval of students' results, as well as the issuing of valid and secure certificates;
 - xiii. Marking procedures for both formative and summative assessment promote consistency and accuracy of the examination system;
 - xiv. There are plagiarism checks for student assessments;
 - xv. The relative weightings used for continuous assessment of students are well-rationalised;
 - xvi. The institution/tuition provider clearly documents its assessment and progression requirements/regulations, and these documents are accessible to all staff and students;
 - xvii. By using validated instruments to track the progress of students who are attached to a workplace, the institution measures experience based on knowledge, skills, attitudes and other applicable competences;
 - xviii. The institution/tuition provider has processes and mechanisms for timely identification of underperforming or at-risk students, and has the capacity to implement appropriate remedial strategies;
 - xix. For the institution with multiple teaching sites/campuses, the scope and standards of assessment practices and processes are applied consistently across all campuses;
 - xx. The certification offered by the tuition provider/institution offering the programme is secure, unambiguous, authenticable, replaceable and protected against fraudulent use.

2.2.3 (b) Assessment & Certification [Tuition Provider Review]

SCOPE

The Tuition Provider is able to provide evidence that the assessment for the programme is guided by a policy, system and tools to ensure that it is valid, efficient, fair, secure, and employs appropriate quality control mechanisms designed to protect the intellectual credibility of the programme.

CRITERIA

- i. Appropriate assessment policies and procedures exist to ensure high attainment levels that are transparent to staff, students and the general public;
- ii. There is an assurance that assessment items are consistent with the expected exit level outcomes of the programme;
- iii. The tuition provider is able to provide details of how assessment items are quality-assured, benchmarked with best practices and regularly updated by the owner of the programme to ensure their authenticity;

- iv. Mechanisms are in place to ensure that assessment of students is rigorous, credible, and uniform across all sites of delivery, and internal policies and processes exist to ensure that students' performance is closely monitored, regularly updated, and the students are accordingly advised on the progress they are making in their studies;
- v. There is sufficient evidence of attention to improving retention and completion rates;
- vi. Close monitoring of each student's progress is accompanied by evidence of communication of constructive comments that are communicated on time and professionally;
- vii. The tuition provider is able to provide details of an appropriate external examination system used by the owner of the programme and the procedures used for selection of the external examiners, and that action is taken on the basis of feedback from external examiners;
- viii. The provider has policies and enforcement systems that ensure zero tolerance for cheating, copying or any form of examination malpractice that threatens the integrity and authenticity of the examination process;
- ix. Where online assessment is used to support the programme, there is an assurance that it is rigorous and covers high level cognitive skills relating to analysis, synthesis and evaluation, and mechanisms are in place to ensure that students with correct credentials seamlessly go through the assessment tasks;
- x. Mechanisms for appealing examination results are in place, and are being judiciously implemented;
- xi. End of year assessment and grading processes are efficiently executed and within timeframes that enable the next academic year to commence smoothly, and assessment timeframes are communicated in time, and flexible enough to accommodate a range of circumstances for learners;
- xii. A system is in place to ensure safe storage and timely retrieval of students' results, as well as the issuing of valid and secure certificates;
- xiii. The assessment system has adequately integrated aspects of formative and summative assessment to ensure that teaching is not solely focused on summative examination;
- xiv. There are plagiarism checks for student assessments;
- xv. The relative weightings used for formative and summative assessment of students are well-rationalised;
- xvi. The provider clearly documents assessment and progression requirements/regulations, and these documents are accessible to all staff and students;
- xvii. By using validated instruments to track the progress of students who are attached to a workplace, the provider measures experience based on knowledge, skills, attitudes and other applicable competences;

- xviii. The provider has processes and mechanisms for timely identification of underperforming or at-risk students, and has the capacity to implement appropriate remedial strategies;
- xix. For the provider with multiple teaching sites/campuses, the scope and standards of assessment practices and processes are applied consistently across all campuses;
- xx. The certification offered for the programme is secure, unambiguous, authenticable, replaceable and protected against fraudulent use.

2.3.0 Outputs

2.3.1 Research and Innovation

SCOPE

A research and innovation component of the programme keeps teaching staff on the cutting edge of knowledge creation, addresses industry and community needs, and supports the attainment of the objectives of the programme.

CRITERIA

- i. Policies, systems, and structures are in place to ensure the high quality of research conducted in the institution, and to build the capacity of those working in the programme;
- ii. Staff and students prioritise research in order to inform their teaching and learning experience;
- iii. The research infrastructure, including equipment, ICT resources and other resources enable a desirable research output of the institution/tuition provider;
- iv. From inception all programmes have a system put in place to ensure that a human subject research ethics training and assessment is undertaken by students and staff carrying out field research locally or internationally;
- v. The contents and methods of delivery of new programmes that are research-based, have an innovation component that meets or surpasses the current standards of research and knowledge development in the region and globally;
- vi. New programmes have a suitable method of teaching and learning that nurtures ability to think and deliver ingeniously in contexts where research, development and innovation are needed;
- vii. The amount of research funding available to staff and students for already existing and new programmes is proportionate to the institutional budget;
- viii. Research funding is enough to enable general institutional research;
- ix. The institution/tuition provider gets enough research grants and commissioned studies to supplement the departmental budget;

- x. The institution/tuition provider, teaching staff and students are members of professional organisations through which their research can be published in reputable journals where appropriate and relevant;
- xi. The research output of the institution/provider is commensurate with the academic credentials of those populating the institution/tuition provider;
- xii. The programme makes significant impact on development in the community, industry and private sector, as evidenced by patents, membership of research networks, and the number of post-graduate students;
- xiii. There is a plan in place to regularly evaluate research goals of the institution/tuition provider;
- xiv. The staff use their research findings to inform teaching.

2.3.2 Community/Industry Engagement

SCOPE

The programme is adequately linked to community, industry and the private sector in terms of educational projects and research activities, and these working relationships enable the programme to attain its stated learning outcomes.

CRITERIA

- i. The programme has a community engagement component and at least one educational project serving the community;
- ii. The institution/tuition provider has built partnerships with the government, community, industries and private organisations to advance its educational agenda;
- iii. Old and new programmes, especially in the social sciences, have a civic engagement component in their curriculum and departmental pedagogy, where relevant and appropriate;
- iv. There is evidence to show that research, consultancy and extension services are actively promoted to build linkages with industries, relevant development partners, professional associations, and other related institutions;
- v. There is evidence that the institution/tuition provider learns from its stakeholders and uses this knowledge to improve its capacity to serve the needs of stakeholders;
- vi. The institution/tuition provider regularly engages in a publicity campaign to inform stakeholders of its educational programmes;
- vii. The programme has attained or has potential to attain its community engagement goals as articulated in the strategic plan;
- viii. There are appropriate plans and procedures to facilitate and encourage consultancy services to the wider community

2.3.3 Internationalisation

SCOPE

Programme content and activities are adequately globalized, and the students and staff frequently engage in various forms of international engagements to enrich their learning experiences.

CRITERIA

- i. There is evidence that the institution/tuition provider has effected significant changes in the programme, which are designed to increase the international content of the curriculum where appropriate and relevant;
- ii. The institution/tuition provider aims to or already has learning and research partnerships with international institutions for the purpose of student study abroad and knowledge sharing;
- iii. The students have a range of opportunities to interact with international scholars and learners;
- iv. Groups of learners and staff have undertaken or are able to undertake exchange visits to regional and international institutions/tuition providers;
- v. The institution/ tuition provider has a system in place to ensure that their efforts towards internationalisation do not discriminate on the basis of racial, tribal, economic & social class, or national identity;
- vi. The institution/ tuition provider has engaged international teaching staff;
- vii. The institution/tuition provider has established a process to support culture diversity;
- viii. Where relevant and appropriate, art and social science programmes have a curriculum track that entails the option of taking language classes as a requirement for graduation;
- ix. The staff and students are supported to conduct collaborative research with students and staff from other institutions/providers.
- x. There is evidence of existing partnerships with regional and international institutions/tuition providers, and these partnerships have impacted or carry potential to impact positively on teaching and research in the institution;
- xi. The institution/tuition provider has put in place processes, procedures, and policies to ensure mobility of students, credit accumulation and transfer.

2.4.0 Outcomes

2.4.1 Student Satisfaction

SCOPE

There is a clear system to monitor and improve the welfare of students, and the students are generally satisfied with their experiences in the programme. As a benchmarking tool, the student survey results are used to improve the well-being of current and prospective students.

CRITERIA

- i. There is a system to assess the quality of instruction, accessibility of instructors and the knowledge and preparation of courses by instructors;
- ii. There's a periodic assessment to ascertain if students are satisfied with the institution's method of decision making;
- iii. Students are satisfied with the process of student recruitment, provision of scholarship and general on-campus job recruitment;
- iv. The institution/tuition provider works closely with the student representatives to address issues pertaining student welfare;
- v. Student concerns are attended to with utmost priority;
- vi. There's a streamlined process of documenting and archiving the report of all forms of student concerns and the efforts made to address them;
- vii. Students are satisfied with security measures put in place by the institution/tuition provider;
- viii. Students are satisfied with the career development structures that have been made available to them by the institution/tuition provider;
- ix. A student's survey used at course completion stage is designed appropriately, and ethical standards of privacy and confidentiality are observed;
- x. Action is taken by the institution/tuition provider on the basis of survey feedback obtained;
- xi. Students, individually and collectively, have easy access to the governing body;
- xii. A clear student grievance handling procedure exists, it is well known to students and staff, and there is evidence of implementation.

2.4.2 Graduate Employability

SCOPE

The promotion of employability is the strategic direction that the institution/provider has adopted, and programme activities are geared towards promotion of self-employment and a greater engagement of students with their career pursuits.

CRITERIA

- i. Employability is addressed in the rationale for offering the programme;
- ii. The pedagogy is designed in such a way that students have the capacity to develop self-employment or employment;
- iii. There is alignment of programme's exit level outcomes with relevant qualification descriptors and core competencies;
- iv. Potential employers and career prospects are linked to students' experiences in the programme;
- v. Employability development opportunities are available to students;
- vi. Tracer studies are conducted and used to maintain the relevance of the curriculum;
- vii. Students are provided with opportunities for entrepreneurial development in the local, social and regional clusters;
- viii. Mechanisms are in place to foster working relationships among internal and external stakeholders;
- ix. Institution/tuition provider recognises and awards external stakeholders that bring additional skills and employability opportunities for students.

2.4.3 Social Development

SCOPE

Programme activities, exit level outcomes, procedures and systems are geared towards attainment of social development in line with current national, regional and global strategic priorities.

CRITERIA

- i. Programme objectives address the current social development priorities as articulated in the national, regional and global strategic documents;
- ii. Social development is recognised as a critical outcome of the programme;
- iii. Strategic and operational documents of the programme reflect the social development focus of the programme;
- iv. Policies, systems and procedures ensure that programme activities lead to social development;
- v. Research and consultancies services of those providing the programme have generated ideas that can be used to drive the social development agenda;
- vi. Research innovations/patents arising from the activities of those running the programme have led to social development;
- vii. Community engagement initiatives have led to or have potential to lead to positive changes in the development of the society;

- viii. The projects developed by students carry potential to contribute to social development;
- ix. Milestones attained by those working in the programme in their quest to contribute to social development are well documented.

2.4.4 Personal Development

SCOPE

The programme is geared towards development of personal skills, including positive attitudes, ethical conduct, emotional intelligence, leadership skills, conflict resolution and responsible citizenship.

CRITERIA

- i. Some exit level outcomes of the programme are explicitly focused on the personal development of those enrolled in the programme;
- ii. Learning activities/experiences promote ability to competently communicate the concepts learned in written and spoken English or vernacular in both formal and informal contexts;
- iii. Programme activities prepare students for life-long learning, continuing research and innovation;
- iv. Programme activities empower the learner with the skills needed to make progress in their professional career;
- v. The programme equips the students with the skills, attitudes and professional ethics that enable them to work in multicultural and global environments;
- vi. The programme equips the learner with the skills needed to work with others as a team;
- vii. The programme enables the learners to perform effectively in technical and non-technical environments;
- viii. Some objectives of the programme are designed to nurture the values of academic integrity and avoidance of examinations fraud and other forms of academic malpractices;
- ix. Life-long learning skills are integrated into the exit level outcomes of the programme, including leadership and conflict resolution skills applied in various contexts.

3.0 ACCREDITATION DECISIONS

3.1 Eligibility for Review

These standards will be used to review any existing or new higher education programme offered via the conventional face-to-face mode of learning, including professional programmes. They will also be used to evaluate the capacity of institutions/providers to offer accredited franchise programmes.

3.2 Review Process

- i. Institution writes a Self-Evaluation Report (SER): This is a process whereby an institution/provider critically reviews the quality of its provisions against a set of Minimum Accreditation Standards. Institutions/tuition providers are required to provide candid and honest feedback. This process is expected to take up to 6 months.
- ii. CHE appoints a Review panel: To ensure objectivity, the panel members appointed by CHE should be external to the programme to be reviewed so that there are no conflicts of interest. The choice of the members of the review panel must be informed by merit. Candidates serving in the panel should be qualified by discipline and/or experience. Members should be pulled from peers involved in tuition of similar programmes, professional bodies and the industry. The report submitted by the institution/provider should be accorded an appropriate level of confidentiality.
- iii. Full Review: This is where the Review Panel undertakes the initial assessment of the institution/tuition provider's SER. There is a prior briefing of the Review panel on expectations and on how to conduct the exercise. A panel of at least 4 reviewers evaluates the programme by reading the SER together with supporting documents. Following this, a site visit is conducted to meet with faculty, staff and students and to verify the contents on the SER. This review applies to existing programmes or proposed programmes to be offered by existing institutions/tuition providers.
- iv. Desk Review: This is when the Review panel undertakes a desk-based analysis of documentation. A panel of at least 4 reviewers evaluates the programme by reading the SER together with supporting documents and compiles a review report without having conducted a site visit. All new programmes submitted by providers who have filed for registration will normally be subjected to a desk review.

- v. Site Visit: This occurs when the Review panel goes to the institution/provider to meet with Faculty, staff and students to verify the claims made in the SER. The size and complexity of the institution/provider will determine the length of the site visit which ranges from 1 to 3 days. During the visit, the team scrutinises the institution/tuition provider's ability to meet the requirements by using the minimum standard set by CHE as reference points and by comparing the SER against the visual evidence observed during the site visit. A series of interviews with key stakeholders are also carried out to triangulate the data.

For re-accreditation or second review, the panel examines the extent to which the institution/provider has addressed previous recommendations made in the last review and whether the institution/provider continues to meet minimum standards.

- vi. Production of Review Report: The moderation and finalisation of the expert judgement of the review panel are contained in a report which is written within two weeks after the site visit. This judgement should be premised on evidence, highlighting the strengths of the programme or institution/tuition provider, and areas for improvement and enhancement. A draft report is sent to the institution or provider to enable identification and correction of factual errors before a final report is produced.

3.3 Critical Standards

As a result of their importance in the provision of quality higher education, the following categories of standards are designated as "Critical Standards". That is, no programme shall be granted accreditation if minimum expectations are not met in the following standards, irrespective of the numerical score awarded for the programme:

- Programme Design and Development
- Staffing
- Quality Assurance System

3.4 Accreditation Decision Framework

To review either a programme or tuition provider, numerical scores and feedback will be provided across all the 18 standards. However, the decision on the accreditation status of a programme or tuition provider will depend upon performance on the first 11 standards categorized under "Inputs" and "Processes".

The Decision Framework consists of 5 levels: Exceeds Minimum Standards (EMS), Meets Minimum Standards (MMS), Partially Meets Minimum Standards (PMMS), Does Not Meet Standards (DNMS), Accreditation Withdrawn (AW). Each of these levels are described below.

a. Exceeds Minimum Standards (EMS):

The following conditions must be met:

- i. The programme/tuition provider must attain a score of 75% - 100%. This total Score should be a cumulative total drawn from the two categories of standards: Inputs and Processes;
- ii. The programme/tuition provider attains a minimum 75% in at least 2 critical standards;
- iii. Good practices are identified and recommendations for the future may be given;
- iv. The programme/tuition provider must attain a minimum of 60% in each of the two categories of standards: Inputs and Processes.
- v. The institution/tuition provider develops and implements an improvement plan;
- vi. The institution/tuition provider shall reapply for accreditation after 5 years if it is an existing programme or after 2 years if it is a new or proposed programme.

b. Meets Minimum Standards (MMS):

The following conditions must be met:

- i. The programme/tuition provider must attain a score of 60% - 74%. This total score should be a cumulative total drawn from the two categories of standards: Inputs and Processes;
- ii. The programme/tuition provider attains a minimum of 60% in at least 2 critical standard
- iii. Good practices are identified and recommendations for the future may be given;
- iv. The programme/tuition provider must attain a minimum score of 50% in each of the two categories of standards: Inputs and Processes.
- v. The institution/tuition provider develops and implements an improvement plan;
- vi. The institution/tuition provider shall reapply for re-accreditation after 5 years if it is an existing programme or after 2 years if is a new or proposed programme.

c. Partially Meets Minimum Standards (PMMS)

The following conditions must be met:

- i. The programme/tuition provider must attain a score of 50% - 59%. This total score should be a cumulative total drawn from the two categories of standards: Inputs and Processes;
- ii. The programme/tuition provider attains a minimum of 50% in all the critical standards;
- iii. Good practices are identified and recommendations for the future may be given;
- iv. The programme/tuition provider must attain a minimum of 40% in each of the two categories of standards: Inputs and Processes.
- v. The institution/tuition provider develops and implements an improvement plan;
- vi. The institution/tuition provider shall reapply for re-accreditation after 5 years if it is an existing programme or after 2 years if is a new or proposed programme.

- vii. If the outcome is PMMS after the second review for an existing programme and third review for a new programme, accreditation is withdrawn and the conditions listed in (e) shall apply.

d. Does not Meet Standards (DNMS):

- i. The programme/tuition provider scores a cumulative total of 0% - 49% across the two categories of standards: Inputs and Processes;
- ii. The institution/tuition provider does not have the minimum resources to provide the services required;
- iii. The programme/tuition provider does not meet critical standards;
- iv. The institution/tuition provider shall not be allowed to enrol students if this is a new programme or shall teach out existing enrolments if this is an existing programme;
- v. The institution/tuition provider can re-apply for re-accreditation after 2 years if it is an existing programme and after 6 months if it is new or posed programme.

e. Accreditation Withdrawn (AW):

- i. A previously accredited programme/tuition provider either attains the DNMS result described in (d) or no longer meets minimum standards;
- ii. The institution/tuition provider shall not be allowed to enrol new students and shall teach out existing students;
- iii. The institution/tuition provider may re-apply for re-accreditation after 2 years.

3.5 Registration Decision Framework

This section describes the decision framework for registration of qualifications in the Qualifications Framework. The Programme Accreditation Decision Framework is logically linked with the Registration Decision Framework. Any qualification that results from a programme that does not meet programme accreditation cannot be registered in the Lesotho Qualifications Framework (LQF).

The Registration Decision Framework consists of 3 levels: Registration Granted (RG), Registration Rejected (RR), and Registration Withdrawn (RW):

a. Registration Granted (RG)

- i. The programme that results in this qualification either Exceeds Minimum Expectations (EMS), Meets Minimum Standards (MMS) or Partially Meets Minimum Standards;
- ii. The programme that results in this qualification meets all design requirements of the LQF;
- iii. The provider of the qualification meets standards for registration of qualification;

- iv. The institution or entity that has submitted for registration, develops and implements an improvement plan to be monitored by the CHE;
- v. The qualification shall remain registered unless its registration is withdrawn subject to the conditions for withdrawal as stipulated in section 3.5 (d).

b. Registration Rejected (RR)

- i. The programme that results in this qualification does not meet Minimum Programme Accreditation Standards;
- ii. The programme that results in this qualification does not meet design requirements of the LQF;
- iii. The institution or entity resubmits the programme 6 months after notification of the outcome of the review process.

c. Registration withdrawn (RW)

- i. The accreditation of a programme that results in this qualification has been withdrawn;
- ii. The provider of the qualification no longer meets minimum standards;
- iii. The programme that results in this qualification have major changes that require re-registration;
- iv. The provider has requested for withdrawal of its registered qualification;
- v. The programme that results in this qualification had no enrolments for a period exceeding 10 years;
- vi. The validity of any completed qualification will not be affected by the withdrawal of its qualification.



4.0 AFTER THE REVIEW PROCESS

After the review process, the report is shared with HEQAC which will make recommendations to Council for approval. The decision of Council, together with the final report is then shared with the institution. After the final report has been submitted to the provider, the provider can decide whether or not to appeal against the accreditation decision. The Appeals Panel, would be set up in line with CHE's Appeals Policy to listen to the appeal and decide whether the appeal should be upheld or rejected.

In the case of a withdrawal of accreditation status or deregistration of a qualification, the Minister may be advised to facilitate the closure of the programme/tuition provider while arrangements are made by the institution/tuition provider to transfer students to a suitable programme or tuition provider or teach out existing enrolments.

5.0 ACCREDITATION CYCLE

Programme accreditation will follow a 5-year cycle. That is, a previously accredited programme will be re-accredited after every 5 years. Similarly, the accreditation of tuition providers will follow a 5-year cycle. That is, a previously accredited provider will be reviewed after every 5 years. The registration of qualifications resulting from existing and new/proposed programmes will follow a schedule predetermined by the CHE.

Chief Executive: 

Date: **11th November 2021**