

Introduction

This report has been drafted by the EQAVET National Reference Point of Malta and describes the main quality assurance arrangements in vocational education and training.

SECTION A - DESCRIPTION OF QUALITY ASSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS

1. Initial VET (IVET)

Introduction

IVET in Malta is provided through the two state VET providers: the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) and the Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS), through private VET providers, and also as part of compulsory schooling. Both MCAST and ITS are regulated by the Education Act in Malta which ensures that the composition of their boards includes different key stakeholders in VET: employers, social partners and other professionals with a background in VET; and, in the case of ITS, in hospitality.

1.1 Quality assurance arrangements at system level in IVET

- National Framework for quality assurance in initial VET – who is in charge of what?
The Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education (DQSE), a department within the Ministry for Education and Employment, leads, coordinates and monitors the provision of VET as well as developing curricula, teaching and training methods and certification.

IVET is provided at both secondary and post-secondary level. The National Curriculum Framework emphasises employability by widening the spectrum of educational opportunities for secondary school students by introducing a vocational dimension to the secondary curriculum. The National Commission for Further and Higher Education (NCFHE) was established in 2012 as an amalgamation of the Malta Qualifications Council (MQC) and the National Commission for Higher Education (NCHE). NCFHE is responsible for implementing the NQF, carrying out Further and Higher Education provider and

programme accreditation, issuing licenses for Further and Higher Education Institutions and carrying out quality assurance audits.

- **Statutory stakeholder involvement in quality assurance in initial VET systems**
Social partners are represented through unions and employment Boards of the Employment & Training Corporation (ETC) as well as the governors of the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST). IVET courses are accredited after due diligence is carried out by NCFHE. Direct employer support for IVET has been difficult to quantify in the past but support has been provided by the government through the ETC through TAF, financed by the European Social Fund 2007-2013. It has been succeeded by another training aid scheme financed by the ESF 2014-2020. NCFHE will continue to support CVET providers to develop robust IQA systems through training seminars including those co-financed through Restricted Call 46/2015.

A significant step was the launch of the National Quality Assurance Framework for Further and Higher Education. The draft framework was launched during a Consultative Conference with stakeholders on the 25th July 2014 that ushered in a three-month consultation period. As a result of the feedback received, this was revised and concluded in October 2014. The official launch took place during the concluding conference held in July 2015. The Framework provides the conceptual context for this work, and situates it in the paramount need to develop a national quality culture. In the first stage the scope of the Framework is to implement the provisions on internal quality assurance and periodic external quality assurance audits. The Framework is based on the standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the ESG and enriched by the EQAVET perspective. The scope of the Framework is to implement the provisions on internal quality assurance and periodic external quality assurance in Legal Notice 296 of 2012. The law does not oblige providers to comply with EQARF or EQAVET but this has been included in the National Standards. The Framework is applicable, among others, to IVET.

- **Requirements for evaluation and review**
Introduction of self-assessment at provider level and related to that the willingness to enhance the quality assurance culture at provider level.
- **Identification of training needs**
The Ministry has overall responsibility for the identification of training needs among young people entering the IVET system. However, there is no specific institutional framework for the anticipation of skill needs in Malta. Labour market statistics are produced by the National Statistics Office (NSO) in Malta, the NSO also publishes employment related administrative data collected by the ETC. Currently, a skill gap survey is being coordinated between the NCFHE, the ETC and Ministry for Education and Employment. The forecasting of labour market need in various sectors is based on one-off and ad hoc studies, which occasionally come about as a result of new policies.

Predictions about future VET training needs are made in conjunction with social partners (employer organisations and trade unions) and the main state IVET providers (MCAST and ITS).

- **Who can deliver VET and under what conditions – accreditation or other requirements on VET providers**
According to Legal Notice 296 of 2012 on the Licensing, Accreditation and Quality Assurance of Further and Higher Education, only licensed institutions

can provide vocational education and training in or from Malta. Before applying for a license to operate in or from Malta a provider needs to apply to the NCFHE for a provider quality audit and a programme quality audit. Providers seeking accreditation also need to have in place an internal quality assurance system, which must be designed specifically to ensure the provider, and their programmes, are fit for purpose.

Provider accreditation is granted by the Commission upon application by the provider in one or more of the following categories:

- University
- Higher Education Institution
- Further Education Institution
- Further Education Centre

Programme accreditation is granted by the NCFHE upon application by the provider, in one of the following categories:

- Further Education Programme
- Further Education Module
- Higher Education Programme
- Further Education Module
- Approved Foreign Further Education Programme
- Approved Foreign Higher Education Programme

Two VET providers, MCAST and ITS, are self-accrediting institutions; they have the necessary internal structures to accredit their own programmes.

- Certification – assessment and validation of learning (system level)
- Monitoring, inspection and use of indicators

The NCFHE carries out periodic external quality assurance audits of all further and higher education institutions operating in or from Malta, including VET institutions. External Quality Assurance takes one of the following forms:

- provider quality audit conducted for the purpose of first-time provider accreditation;
- a programme quality audit conducted for the purpose of first time accreditation of programmes;
- periodic provider and programme quality audits conducted for the purpose of confirming or revoking the accreditation previously granted.

In making arrangements for quality audits, the NCFHE adheres to the following procedures:

- it requires the provider to undertake a self-assessment, internal evaluation or comparable procedure at provider or programme level;
- it appoints external experts to carry out quality audits, including, as appropriate, one or more students, ensuring that experts are chosen on the basis of their expertise and with no conflict of interest;
- a site visit by the external experts, which involves the governing bodies, staff and students of the provider, as appropriate;
- it publishes the report of the quality audit, including any decisions, recommendations, conditions or other formal outcomes; and

- it establishes with the provider a follow-up procedure to review actions to be taken by the provider for the implementation of recommendations and conditions imposed on the provider.

In making arrangements for quality audits, the NCFHE adheres to the following standards:

- quality audits are designed specifically to ensure the fitness for purpose of providers or programmes and to assess whether they achieve the aims and objectives set for them;
- quality audits examine the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance processes used by the provider, including an examination of the system's structure, the documentation it produces and the evaluations of quality conducted by the provider;
- quality audits examine compliance by providers with obligations of licence holders under these regulations, where applicable, as well as any conditions or restrictions imposed by the NCFHE on the licensee under these regulations;
- terms of reference, aims and objectives of any quality audit are determined before the undertaking of any quality audit and are published with a description of the procedures to be used;
- providers are allowed to comment on the composition of the panel of external experts which undertake the quality audit and the NCFHE considers such comments before a final decision on the expert panel is made;
- quality audits apply the relevant European and international Standards, Guidelines and Criteria for external quality assurance applicable to the subject of the evaluation and are based on written material and discussion with proponents of the provider; and
- provider quality audits include appropriate investigatory mechanisms to ensure financial probity, and where the provider is a corporate entity, ensure that the members, the legal representative and the persons occupying a headship position are fit and proper persons to become a provider of further or higher education and to deliver further or higher education programmes. The NCFHE may also seek additional expert advice to assess the financial capacity of the provider.

After every external quality assurance audit the NCFHE will publish a report in accordance with the following standards:

- the report is published and written in a style which is clear to the intended reader in terms of any decisions, commendations or recommendations made;
- in the report, the experts indicate areas where the provider should further develop its system and advise as to whether the system as a whole is satisfactory;
- reports containing recommendations for action or which require a subsequent action plan, determine a follow-up procedure which is to be implemented consistently; and
- the NCFHE sends the report to the provider, which is allowed a time limit of six weeks to submit its views (response).

If, from the report of the quality audit and after the provider has submitted its views, the NCFHE finds fundamental defects concerning the provider or the programme, the provider will be allowed a reasonable time period, as determined by the NCFHE, to undertake measures to rectify such defects. The NCFHE monitors, reviews and analyses the outcomes of periodic quality audits of providers and programmes and produces periodic system-wide summary reports describing and analysing the general findings of its quality audit and accreditation procedures.

- How is the quality assurance implementation monitored?
Quality assurance implementation is monitored through cyclical external quality assurance. Entities undergo external quality assurance on a cyclical basis according to NCFHE guidelines, at least once every five years.

1.2 Quality assurance arrangements at provider level in IVET

- Planning at VET provider level (including identification of training needs)
MCAST consults with industry in relation to the effectiveness of its programmes. The MCAST Quality Assurance Office has also implemented an online employer satisfaction survey, which seeks to obtain information from employers about MCAST graduates. Employers also have the opportunity to highlight their needs. This is initially followed up by the Quality Assurance Office to determine the necessary course of action required. Institute directors also hold regular meetings in their respective sector. This feedback is channelled towards the improvement of courses to ensure that these are effective and that industry standards are being met. These inputs apply both at IVET and CVET level.

According to stakeholders, there are a number of EQAVET indicators which VET institutions use to help them with the planning of their courses and which ensure that they plan quality training. Training needs to be relevant to the sector targeted and learners must acquire those skills which are required by the sector. Institutions must also collect and maintain records of how they ensure this quality training.

With regards to the identification of training needs, local methods may be adopted by VET Institutions.

- Requirements for monitoring and review (self-assessment)
The NCFHE encourages VET providers to evaluate the outcomes of training provided. This can be carried out during or after the training. The following aspects are examined as a part of the quality assurance process:
 - Is periodic evaluation (internal and external) within an agreed framework carried out and does it identify where improvements can be made?
 - Does the evaluation and review take account of a full range of views including learner satisfaction and staff performance?
 - Does it gather the views of both internal and external stakeholders?
 - Is there a system(s) to predict problems or issues?

Continual improvement, including actions to remedy issues identified in the process of evaluation, is also strongly encouraged by the NCFHE in all VET Internal Quality Assurance systems. This includes:

- How is learner feedback on individual learning experiences and on the learning and teaching environment collected? How is this information, together with teachers' feedback, used to take further action?
- Are the outcomes of any review made public?
- Are reviews planned and how are they used to improve training provision?
- Are the outcomes of reviews shared widely in order that appropriate action plans may be put in place?

The EQAVET indicators are also used, with related processes and initiatives that aim to generate primary and secondary data in relation to each indicator.

- Certification, assessment and validation of learners
VET qualifications are offered up to Level 5 of the Malta Qualifications Framework (MQF). These are comparable with the European Qualification Framework (EQF) 8-tier system. The MQF enables users to accredit programmes and institutions and ensure quality within the educational process. Most assessment is formative through project work and other hands-on activities. All qualifications are linked to the MQF, which helps facilitate the recognition of the level of qualification achieved in vocational institutions. External verifiers review the internal quality assurance policies in line with the NCFHE policy document on quality assurance.

The NCFHE system (Legal Notice 294 of 2012) is replacing the trade-testing carried out by ETC where the knowledge, skills and competences of individuals were validated in relation to a number of occupations. Individuals who successfully completed this “trade test” were awarded a Certificate of Competence. However, with the introduction of the Legal Notice 294/2012, the validation certificate now carries an MQF level rating.

- Stakeholder involvement
VET institutions are required to ensure that VET involves external and internal stakeholders, including teachers, management, employers, students, trade unions, sectoral representatives. Stakeholder involvement at provider level is institutionalised. Institutions ensure cooperation at local level between VET institutions and the labour market. In some institutions, employers are engaged in the examination of students. In others, they are involved at director level or even at decision-making level.

2. Continuous VET (CVET)

Introduction

The provision of CVET in Malta continues mainly through MCAST and ITS, offering English courses in various sectors and leading to different skills. However, there has been a surge in private provision of short and focused VET courses accredited by the NCFHE. In addition to adult classes in basic skills, a number of vocational subjects are provided as evening classes by the Directorate for Lifelong Learning (DLLL) within the Ministry for Education and Employment. The Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) also provides VET training for the unemployed.

2.1 Quality assurance arrangements at system level in CVET

- National Framework for quality assurance in CVET – who is in charge of what?
The National Reform Programme (linked to EU2020) provides the key objectives for raising the general qualification level through CVET. A strategy for lifelong learning is also in development by the Ministry’s Directorate for Lifelong Learning. With regard to CVET, the main law relating to this is the Employment and Training Services Act 1990, which provides the legal framework for the National Employment Authority to establish the ETC which provides training to those registering unemployed, employed persons and inactive persons. The ETC is one of the main provider of CVET in Malta. As a CVET provider, the ETC uses different sources of information to collect data in relation to labour

skill shortages. Sources of information include vacancies received by the ETC from employers, skills profile of jobseekers, labour and skills surveys and feedback received from stakeholders during both formal and non-formal meetings.

The Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) is another CVET provider through its part-time evening courses. MCAST Gateway to Industry Ltd (MG2i), the commercial arm of the College, was set up in 2008 by a Memorandum of Association dated 22nd August 2008 in order to support, enhance and complement the operation of MCAST. This Mission Statement reinforces the conviction of MCAST that the interests of student is the predominant *raison d'être* of the College. Equally important is supporting the academic staff through continuous academic professional development and through industrial exposure to keep abreast of relevant industrial innovation. The core business of the company is the provision of vocational part-time courses in response to the needs of industry, both locally and overseas.

CVET is also offered by various private vocational education and training institutions. Private providers are covered under the recent Legal Notice 296 of 2012.

- **Statutory stakeholder involvement in quality assurance in CVET systems**
Among employers, there is a high level of awareness of the need for CVET and the continuous updating of skills and competencies. The possible challenge could be that, as yet, CVET programmes are not necessarily accessed by all categories of workers. It appears, however, that this issue is being addressed by the social partners through collective agreements about granting CVET rights to workers. Social partners are represented through unions and employment Boards of the ETC as well as the governors of MCAST. Direct employer support for CVET has been difficult to quantify in the past but support has been provided by the government through the ETC through the TAF, financed by the European Social Fund 2007-2013. It has been succeeded by another training aid scheme financed by ESF 2014-2020. The NCFHE will continue to support CVET providers to develop robust IQA systems through training seminars including those co-financed through Restricted Call 46/2015.
- **Requirements for evaluation and review**
The same principles that are applicable to IVET around evaluation and review are also applicable to CVET. In accordance with the Legal Notice 296 of 2012, the NCFHE acts as the external verifier for VET providers.
- **Identification of training needs**
The Ministry has overall responsibility for the identification of training needs among young people entering the CVET system. However, there is no specific institutional framework for the anticipation of skill needs in Malta. Labour market statistics are produced by the National Statistics Office (NSO) in Malta, the NSO also publishes employment-related administrative data collected by the ETC. Currently, a skill gap survey is being coordinated between the NCFHE, the ETC and the Ministry for Education and Employment. The forecasting of labour market needs in various sectors is based on one-off and ad hoc studies, which occasionally come about as a result of new policies.

Predictions about future VET training needs are made in conjunction with social partners (employer organisations and trade unions) and the main state VET providers (MCAST; the ITS; and the ETC).

- Who can deliver VET and under what conditions – accreditation or other requirements on CVET providers

According to Legal Notice 296 of 2012 on the Licensing, Accreditation and Quality Assurance of Further and Higher Education, only licensed institutions can provide vocational education and training in or from Malta. Before applying for a license to operate in or from Malta a provider needs to apply to the NCFHE for a provider quality audit and a programme quality audit. Providers seeking accreditation also need to have in place an internal quality assurance system, which must be designed specifically to ensure the provider and their programmes are fit for purpose.

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Two VET providers, MCAST and the ITS, are self-accrediting institutions; they have the necessary internal structures to accredit their own programmes.

- Certification – assessment and validation of learning (system level)

Validation of learning in CVET is still a work in progress. Through Legal Notice 294 of 2012, the NCFHE was entrusted with the Validation of Informal and NonFormal Learning. The new NCFHE system will replace the trade-testing carried out by ETC wherein the knowledge, skills and competences of individuals were validated in relation to a number of occupations. Individuals who successfully completed this “trade test” were awarded a Certificate of Competence.

The Malta Qualifications Recognition Information Centre (MQRIC) is responsible for the issuing of statements of recognition for qualifications obtained nationally and internationally. Such statements of recognition specify whether the qualification obtained by the applicant is recognised in Malta and its level on the Malta Qualifications Framework.

MCAST has also secured ESF funding and will be implementing project ESF2139 entitled “Increasing Accessibility, Flexibility and Innovation to MCAST Life-Long learning Course Offer”. This project aims to introduce new learning options that encourage more adults to continue learning. It will introduce:

- Accreditation of Prior Learning: MCAST will be giving those engaged in employment the possibility of facilitating further education opportunities by identifying any previous qualifications they may have acquired and assessing whether these can serve to exempt the prospective student from certain modules within a programme.
- E-Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning: A system that awards prospective students credit for learning based on prior experience.

- Monitoring, inspection and use of indicators

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- a site visit by the external experts, which involves the governing bodies, staff and students of the provider, as appropriate;
- it publishes the report of the quality audit, including any decisions, recommendations, conditions or other formal outcomes; and
- it establishes with the provider a follow-up procedure to review actions to be taken by the provider for the implementation of recommendations and conditions imposed upon the provider.

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- quality audits examine the compliance by providers with obligations of licence holders under these regulations, where applicable, as well as any conditions or restrictions imposed by the NCFHE on the licensee under these regulations;
 - terms of reference, aims and objectives of any quality audit are determined before the undertaking of any quality audit and are published with a description of the procedures to be used;
- providers are allowed to comment on the composition of the panel of external experts which undertake the quality audit and the NCFHE considers such comments before a final decision on the expert panel is made;
- quality audits apply the relevant European and international Standards, Guidelines and Criteria for external quality assurance applicable to the subject

of the evaluation and are based on written material and discussion with proponents of the provider; and

- provider quality audits include appropriate investigatory mechanisms to ensure financial probity, and where the provider is a corporate entity, ensure that the members, the legal representative and the persons occupying a headship position are fit and proper persons to establish a provider of Further or Higher education and deliver Further or Higher education programmes. The NCFHE may also seek additional expert advice to assess the financial capacity of the provider.

After every external quality assurance audit the NCFHE will publish a report in accordance with the following standards:

- the report is published and written in a style which is clear to the intended reader in terms of any decisions, commendations or recommendations made;
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- reports containing recommendations for action or which require a subsequent action plan, determine a follow-up procedure which is to be implemented consistently; and
- the NCFHE sends the report to the provider, which is allowed a time limit of six weeks to submit its views.

If, from the report of the quality audit and after the provider has submitted its views, the NCFHE finds fundamental defects concerning the provider or the programme, the provider will be allowed a reasonable time period, as determined by the NCFHE, to undertake measures to rectify such defects. The NCFHE monitors, reviews and analyses the outcomes of periodic quality audits of providers and programmes and produces periodic system-wide summary reports describing and analysing the general findings of its quality audit and accreditation procedures.

2.2 Quality assurance arrangements at provider level in CVET

- Planning at CVET provider level (including identification of training needs)
Together with the Employment and Training Corporation and Malta Enterprise the NCFHE has embarked on a research project on skill needs as well as the supply and demand for workers in different sectors of the labour market in Malta. This research forms part of the Erasmus+ project “Promoting the Bologna Process in Malta 2014-2016”.

The objective of this research is to collect solid evidence about the number of employees in different sectors of the Maltese economy and undertake a skills forecast in terms of the number of staff required / not required in the medium and long-term. Besides that, the survey collects data on recent recruitments, types of vacancies that are hard to fill and the reasons for such situations. It also aims to collect data on the level of qualification held by employees in different sectors of the Maltese economy, their knowledge, skills and competences as well as their training needs during their employment. The data collection will be carried out among a representative sample of employers in Malta during the first quarter of 2016 through an online survey. The findings of this research will be published in the first half of 2016.

In addition, and specifically for CVET, MCAST led the ESF project entitled 'Linking Industrial Needs and Vocational Education & Training (VET) to Optimise Human Capital' (ESF 2.85). The overall objective was to increase the number of persons trained with the aim of addressing emerging trends and developments in the labour market in Malta. This project addressed the Government's policy of targeting investment by providing appropriate and flexible skills to enable human resources to shift from declining to expanding sectors, by improving the adaptability potential hence ensuring better employability.

- Requirements for monitoring and review (self-assessment)

Self-assessment is a requirement of learning providers in the CVET. At the ETC, the Training Programme Design and Quality Assurance Unit is responsible for the development of new courses and updating of current courses, applies to the NCFHE to obtain programme accreditation, and performs quality checks on the training delivery. The ETC outsources some training delivery and applies the same quality assurance standards to the ETC and to the subcontracted providers.

Quality assurance is undertaken by the Quality Assurance Executives within the ETC, which includes:

- establishing the eligibility of teacher trainers before, during and after training, if required;
- evaluating the feedback obtained from teacher trainers through progress reports, and learners through evaluation sheets. Similarly other licensed entities delivering CVET are obliged to carry out self-assessment measures in line with the requirements of the National Quality Assurance Framework;
- desk-based documentary checks.

- Certification, assessment and validation of learners

IVET qualifications are offered up to Level 5 of the Malta Qualifications Framework (MQF). These are comparable with the EQF 8-tier system. The MQF enables users to accredit programmes and institutions and ensure quality within the educational process. Most assessment is formative through project work and other hands-on activities. All qualifications are linked to the MQF, which helps facilitate the recognition of the level of qualification achieved in vocational institutions.

External verifiers review the internal quality assurance policies in line with the NCFHE policy document on quality assurance.

The NCFHE system (Legal Notice 294 of 2012) is replacing the trade-testing carried out by ETC where the knowledge, skills and competences of an individual were validated in relation to a number of occupations. Individuals who successfully completed this "trade test" were awarded a Certificate of Competence. However, with the introduction of Legal Notice 294/2012, the validation certificate now carries an MQF level rating.

- Stakeholder involvement

Social partners are represented through unions and employment Boards of the ETC as well as the governors of MCAST. Direct employer support for CVET has been difficult to quantify in the past but support has been provided by the government through the ETC.

Among employers, there is a high level of awareness of the need for CVET and continuous updating of skills and competencies. The main challenge is that, as yet, CVET programmes are not accessed by all categories of workers. This issue could be addressed by social partners through collective agreements about granting CVET rights to workers.

SECTION B – INTERACTION BETWEEN NATIONAL QUALITY ASSURANCE AND EQAVET

- National Reference Point – Introduction

The NCFHE has taken over the responsibility of the NRP: it represents Malta and attends meetings with the EQAVET secretariat. The NCFHE has also implemented the NQF and EQF. The implementation resulted in the announcing of the Malta Qualifications Framework. The NCFHE provides also accreditation of quality assurance in FE and HE. As an information centre, NCFHE also recognises foreign qualifications and collects statistics on FE and HE in Malta. The main perceived added value of the NRP is to support informing the general public about quality assurance activities, and being a single point of contact.

- National approach to enhance quality assurance

In 2015 the NCFHE continued developing quality assurance procedures through the ESF Project 1.227 'Making Quality Visible' which started in 2013. Some of the key deliverables of the project in 2015 were:

1. The publishing of the External Quality Audit Manual of Procedures The Manual sets out step by step the procedures and timeline for the implementation of the external quality assurance audits, from when an institution is informed of the upcoming audit to the final publication of the external audit report and its aftermath.
2. The development of three pilot external quality audits at University of Malta, MCAST and ITS.

All three entities are being supported individually to prepare their internal quality assurance procedures and their self-evaluation document in the context of the external audits. Pilot external audits are another important step for the NCFHE to achieve full membership in ENQA, which will itself enhance the international reputation of quality assurance procedures and education provision in Malta. The audits were all in line with the established Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) and also in line with EQAVET parameters. All three reports have been published on the NCFHE website.

In addition, Malta is involved with a LdV project (QA-VET) for which they have organised a range of information seminars for teachers and academics, industry representatives and the general public to inform them about quality assurance developments. This has been a positive programme of information, which has been well received.

- Influence of EQAVET on national developments of quality assurance

EQAVET, its related predecessors, and quality assurance in general have been on the national agenda since 2003. The EQAVET Recommendation "helped to trigger more awareness-raising". The new law on vocational and education training (2012) has helped to cement the importance of quality assurance at the

national and provider level. The EQAVET framework is considered to have been very useful and has been used in the development of strategies as mentioned above.

A significant step was publishing of National Quality Assurance Framework for Further and Higher Education. The draft framework was launched during a Consultative Conference with stakeholders on the 25th July 2014 that ushered in a three-month consultation period. As a result of the feedback received, this was revised and concluded in October 2014. The official launch took place during the concluding conference held in July 2015. The Framework provides the conceptual context for this work, and situates it in the paramount need to develop a national quality culture. In the first stage the scope of the Framework is to implement the provisions on internal quality assurance and periodic external quality assurance audits. The Framework is based on the standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the ESG and enriched by the EQAVET perspective. The scope of the Framework is to implement the provisions on internal quality assurance and periodic external quality assurance in Legal Notice 296 of 2012. The law does not oblige providers to comply with EQARF or EQAVET but this has been included in the National Standards.