



Criteria and Standards for Combined Initial Evaluation and Programme Validation

There are altogether 23 standards under 11 criteria for combined **Initial Evaluation and Programme Validation**. They are:

Criteria	Standards
1. Organisational Management	<p>1.1 The organisational structure supports the effective operation of learning programmes and services for learners.</p> <p>1.2 Policies and procedures exist to ensure that the management of the organisation and the training operations are effective.</p>
2. Staffing and Staff Development	<p>2.1 Adequate and competent staff are employed to fulfil the functions of office administration, management and training responsibilities.</p> <p>2.2 Programme development and training staff have relevant qualifications, industry experience and training experience.</p> <p>2.3 Programme development and training staff have understanding of QF levels and QF standards.</p> <p>2.4 Staff performance is monitored to ensure effective programme delivery.</p> <p>2.5 Skills and knowledge of training staff are up-to-date.</p>
3. Financial and Physical Resources (This criterion on finance is only reviewed by a Financial Specialist appointed by the Council)	<p>3.1 The operator has adequate financial and physical resources to meet its training responsibilities.</p> <p>3.2 Policies and procedures exist to appropriately allocate financial and physical resources for its training operations.</p> <p>3.3 The programme is financially viable.</p> <p>3.4 Training materials, equipment and facilities are adequate and appropriate.</p>
4. Programme Development, Management & Review	<p>4.1 The operator ensures that the programmes address community/industry needs and are aligned with the Generic Level Descriptors of the QF.</p>

Criteria	Standards
	<p>4.2 The operator monitors and evaluates the programme to ensure the programme content, learning outcomes and assessments are current, valid and effective in meeting the training objectives.</p> <p>4.3 Roles of staff in developing, managing and reviewing of the programme are clearly defined.</p>
5. Programme Objectives and Learning Outcomes	<p>5.1 The programme has competency-based learning outcomes which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ are consistent with the Generic Level Descriptors (GLD) of the relevant QF qualification level and ▪ reflect the stated programme objectives.
6. Programme Content and Structure	<p>6.1 The design of the programme enables learners to achieve the stated learning outcomes and the required QF standards.</p> <p>6.2 The programme provides up-to-date contents to meet the programme objectives.</p>
7. Training and Learning	<p>7.1 Training methodology is compatible with the programme objectives and appropriate to the learners' capabilities and learning needs.</p> <p>7.2 Workplace attachment, if applicable, is structured and managed to meet the programme objectives.</p>
8. Learner Assessment	<p>8.1 Learner assessment is valid and reliable to assess the learner's attainment of the intended learning outcomes.</p>
9. Admission Requirements and Learner Selection	<p>9.1 Admission requirements and selection criteria ensure learners have the knowledge and skills to undertake the training activities and achieve the intended learning outcomes.</p>
10. Learner Support Services	<p>10.1 Learners are effectively guided and supported throughout their course of training to ensure the successful completion of the programme.</p>
11. Learner Records and Information Management	<p>11.1 Learner records are safely protected based on written procedures.</p>

To help your preparation, we list below the possible sources of evidence under each standard. You may wish to submit additional evidence if you think that will help the Panel better understand your organisation's situation.

Criteria and Standards	Possible sources of evidence
1. Organisational Management	
<p>1.1 The organisational structure supports the effective operation of learning programmes and services for learners</p>	<p>1.1.1 Organisational chart and information on the roles and responsibilities of the management staff, training staff and administrative / support staff</p> <p>1.1.2 Information on the roles and responsibilities of the governing boards / committees, if any, terms of reference and membership list(s)</p> <p>1.1.3 Schedule of management meetings and samples of meeting records</p> <p>1.1.4 Where appropriate, document the relationship between the programme offering unit and the parent company</p> <p>1.1.5 Plan of learning programmes to be offered in the coming year including types of programmes, QF Levels, number of classes etc</p>
<p>1.2 Policies and procedures exist to ensure that the management of the organisation and the training operations are effective</p>	<p>2.1.1 Policies and / or procedures on staff deployment, financial allocation and programme management relevant to the training provision</p> <p>2.1.2 Policies and guidelines on how to handle cases of conflict of interest</p> <p>2.1.3 Information about how the policies and procedures are communicated to those involved in management and training operation</p>
2. Staffing and Staff Development	
<p>2.1 Adequate and competent staff are employed to fulfilled the functions of office administration, management and training responsibilities</p>	<p>2.1.1 Recruitment policies and criteria for staff appointment of different positions including management, training and administration staff</p>
<p>2.2 Programme development and training staff have relevant qualifications, industry experience, and training experience</p>	<p>2.2.1 A list of the relevant training staff and CV on relevant qualification, industry experience and training experience</p>
<p>2.3 Programme development and training staff have understanding of QF levels and QF standards</p>	<p>2.3.1 Mechanisms / Practices used to help programme development and training staff in understanding the QF levels and standards.</p> <p>2.3.2 Evidence showing that the programme development staff can apply their understanding of the QF standards and that training staff are well aware of the intended learning outcomes and have</p>

Criteria and Standards	Possible sources of evidence
	understanding of QF levels to carry out their duties.
2.4 Staff performance is monitored to ensure effective programme delivery	<p>2.4.1 Means for evaluating staff performance and records of evaluations</p> <p>2.4.2 Practices to ensure alignment of training practices among part-time and full-time training staff (e.g. trainers' handbook, training guides)</p>
2.5 Skills and knowledge of training staff are up-to-date	2.5.1 Measures to ensure that staff are engaged in continuous professional development to keep abreast of the latest industry trends (e.g. relevant policies and record of development activities attended by individual training staff for the past two years)
3. Financial and Physical Resources (This criterion on finance is only reviewed by a Financial Specialist appointed by the Council)	
3.1 The operator has adequate financial and physical resources to meet its training responsibilities.	<p>3.1.1 Audited accounts, management account, tax return, etc of the past two years. Education establishments offering formal education are required to have an accumulated surplus necessary for two years' operation</p> <p>3.1.2 [For new start-ups] (1) Annual return (if not available, incorporation details showing share capital), (2) monthly management accounts (balance sheets, profit loss and/or cash flow statements since inception), and (3) budget with forecast assumptions</p> <p>3.1.3 [If the operator receives financial support from its parent company or other sources] Evidence to demonstrate the relevant financial arrangements (e.g. agreement detailing the financial arrangements between the parties. Parent company's financial status may need to be verified.</p> <p>3.1.4 [If the operator runs in a deficit for the past two years] Financial projections and business plans to show that the operator's business initiatives will lead to a stable source of income adequate for its training operation.</p> <p>3.1.5 Inventory of physical resources relevant to the programme(s) seeking accreditation.</p>
3.2 Policies and procedures exist to appropriately allocate financial and physical resources for its training operations.	3.2.1 Guidelines and/or procedures for budgeting to show that the operator conducts ongoing planning and resource allocation based on its training goals
3.3 The programme is financially viable.	3.3.1 Budget for the investment and running costs of the programmes, (2) tuition fees and (3) the breakeven number of learners, to demonstrate that the programme can be self-sustained.

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3.4 Training materials, equipment and facilities are adequate and appropriate.	3.4.1 Where the training materials and equipment are provided under contract with an external organisation, contractual arrangements ensure the accessibility and availability of the equipment etc.
4. Programme Development, Monitoring and Review	
4.1. The operator ensures that the programmes address community/ industry needs and are aligned with the Generic Level Descriptors of the QF	<p>4.1.1 Records to demonstrate practices for collecting opinions from the industry to ensure that the programmes continue to address community / industry needs. Evidence of seeking different input at different stages of programme delivery and review.</p> <p>4.1.2 Processes used to ensure the planned programmes are benchmarked against appropriate QF level(s)</p>
4.2 The operator monitors and evaluates the programme to ensure the programme content, learning outcomes and assessments are current, valid and effective in meeting the training objectives	<p>4.2.1 Programme monitoring measures (e.g. completed learner feedback forms or class observation forms)</p> <p>4.2.2 Records of programme review practices, demonstrating the operator has considered the learner retention rate, graduation rate, attendance rate, and level of learner/graduate satisfaction for programme review</p> <p>4.2.3 [Operators offering formal education] Where appropriate, evidence of employer satisfaction, graduate success in advanced studies, learner success in gaining other certifications, or graduate employment rate as part of the programme review practices</p> <p>4.2.4 Mechanism/processes for communicating and following up of programme review results. Relevant records on follow-up actions</p>
4.3 Roles of staff in developing, managing and reviewing of the programme are clearly defined.	<p>4.3.1 Responsibilities of programme development and training staff in programme development, management and review</p> <p>4.3.2 Guidelines and/or other evidence that there is appropriate involvement of programme development and training staff in the following areas: programme development; selection of programme materials, equipment and other educational resources; evaluation and revision of the curriculum; and assessment of learners' learning outcomes.</p> <p>4.3.3 If the responsibility of programme development is contracted out to a third party: credentials of the other party, terms of agreement, and contingency plan that ensures the programme will not be adversely affected by contractual changes.</p>

Criteria and Standards	Possible sources of evidence
5. Programme Objectives and Learning Outcomes	
<p>5.1 The programme has the competency-based learning outcomes which (1) are consistent with the Generic Level Descriptors (GLD) of the relevant QF qualification level and (2) reflect the stated programme objectives</p>	<p>5.1.1 Intended learning outcomes are developed for the programme and individual modules. The outcomes are aligned with the programme objectives and the relevant GLD intended for the programme/individual modules</p> <p>5.1.2 [For SCS-based programmes] Intended learning outcomes for the programme and individual modules are developed according to the Qualifications Guidelines</p>
6. Programme Content and Structure	
<p>6.1 The design of the programme enables learners to achieve the stated learning outcomes and the required QF standards</p>	<p>6.1.1 Curriculum outlines of the individual modules demonstrate that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the sequencing and study hours are appropriate to the subject matter (b) pre-requisites or co-requisites are stated where appropriate (c) advanced level modules build on concepts covered in lower level modules (d) the programme achieves reasonable balance between practical application of “how” and conceptual application of “why” where appropriate (e) for programmes which lead to certification, licensing, or registration which are mandatory for employment in a specific career field, the curricula contain the necessary course work to enable learners to develop the necessary skills and competencies (f) [For SCS-based programmes] The programmes are based on the relevant UoCs according to the “Qualifications Guidelines”. Where certain modules are not SCS-based, they are also given credits and developed according to the GLD of relevant QF level. <p>6.1.2 Where applicable, appropriate balance between contact hours and self-study is achieved according to the nature of the programme. Self-study arrangements enable learners to achieve the intended learning outcomes.</p>
<p>6.1 The programme provides up-to-date contents to meet the programme objectives.</p>	<p>6.2.1 Training materials demonstrate that the programme content is reflective of the programme objectives and consistent with contemporary industry standards.</p> <p>6.2.2 Arrangements for programme content review and updating.</p>

Criteria and Standards	Possible sources of evidence
7. Training and Learning	
7.1 Training methodology is compatible with the programme objectives and appropriate to the learners' capabilities and learning needs.	<p>7.1.1 Training methods and learning activities used in individual courses lead to the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.</p> <p>7.1.2 Training staff to learner ratio for individual programmes shows that the ratio is reasonable in keeping with generally accepted delivery modes and programme content.</p> <p>7.1.3 Module outlines, training plans and competency tests of modules at major and exit levels demonstrate that training in groups, laboratories, and workplace etc is effectively organised.</p>
7.2 Workplace attachment, if applicable, is structured and managed to meet the programme objectives.	<p>7.2.1 Training plan for learners in workplace attachment includes the particular objectives, learning outcomes, and experiences for the learners.</p> <p>7.2.2 Evidence showing that the operator collaborates with the industry partners to monitor the progress of the learners and evaluate the effectiveness of the workplace attachment.</p>
8. Learner Assessment	
8.1 Learner assessment is valid and reliable to assess the learner's attainment of the intended learning outcomes	<p>8.1.1 Assessment plan shows that assessments are appropriate to the programme objectives and the nature of the programmes to ensure that learners achieve the intended learning outcomes.</p> <p>8.1.2 Samples of assessment, completed tests (testing knowledge and concepts), and graded assignments / projects / portfolios, practice tests (assessing practice and application skills) together with associated assessment criteria.</p>
9. Admission Requirements and Learner Selection	
9.1 Admission requirements and selection criteria ensure learners have the knowledge and skills to undertake the training activities and achieve the intended learning outcomes.	<p>9.1.1 Requirements on prior learning (including languages, numeracy etc, as appropriate), technical/practical skills, years of relevant work experience. Sample application form and records.</p> <p>9.1.2 [For SCS-based programmes] The specific requirements (e.g. prior knowledge, pre-requisites or co-requisites), if any, stated in the relevant UoC(s).</p> <p>9.1.3 Records showing different means of learner selection, e.g. interview, skills tests.</p>

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10. Learner Support Services	
10.1 Learners are effectively guided and supported throughout their course of training to ensure the successful completion of the programme.	10.1.1 Information on learner support services, including services for advising on progression and employment opportunities where relevant. 10.1.2 Where applicable, information on counselling and learner development services.
11. Learner Records and Information Management	
11.1 Learner records are safely protected based on written procedures.	11.1.1 Records showing (1) the kinds of learner records and (2) how these records are stored, e.g. use of storage devices, duplicate physical or digital records, security files, etc. 11.1.2 Guidelines on access right to learner records.