

# The Evolution of the South African National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

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# SOUTH AFRICA





## WHAT IS SAQA?

THE SOUTH AFRICAN QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY IS A STATUTORY BODY  
ESTABLISHED IN TERMS OF THE SAQA ACT AND CONTINUING IN  
TERMS OF THE NQF ACT

### THE NQF ACT MANDATES SAQA TO



DEVELOP  
& IMPLEMENT



ADVANCE THE  
OBJECTIVES



CO-ORDINATE  
SUB-FRAMEWORKS

OF THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK





Oversee NQF  
implementation and  
collaborate with the Quality  
Councils (QCs)



Provide advice on NQF  
matters to the Minister of  
Higher Education, Science  
and Technology



Develop and  
implement NQF  
policies and criteria



Maintain a National  
Learners' Records  
Database



Register qualifications and  
part-qualifications, and  
professional designations  
on the NQF



Provide evaluation  
and advisory services  
for foreign qualifications



Recognise  
professional  
bodies



Undertake research  
and collaborate with  
international counterparts



Inform the  
public about  
the NQF



SAQA  
SOUTH AFRICAN QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY



TAICEP  
The Association for International  
Credential Evaluation Professionals®

## WHAT IS THE NQF?

THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (NQF)  
IS A SINGLE INTEGRATED SYSTEM FOR THE



CLASSIFICATION



CO-ORDINATION



REGISTRATION






PUBLICATION

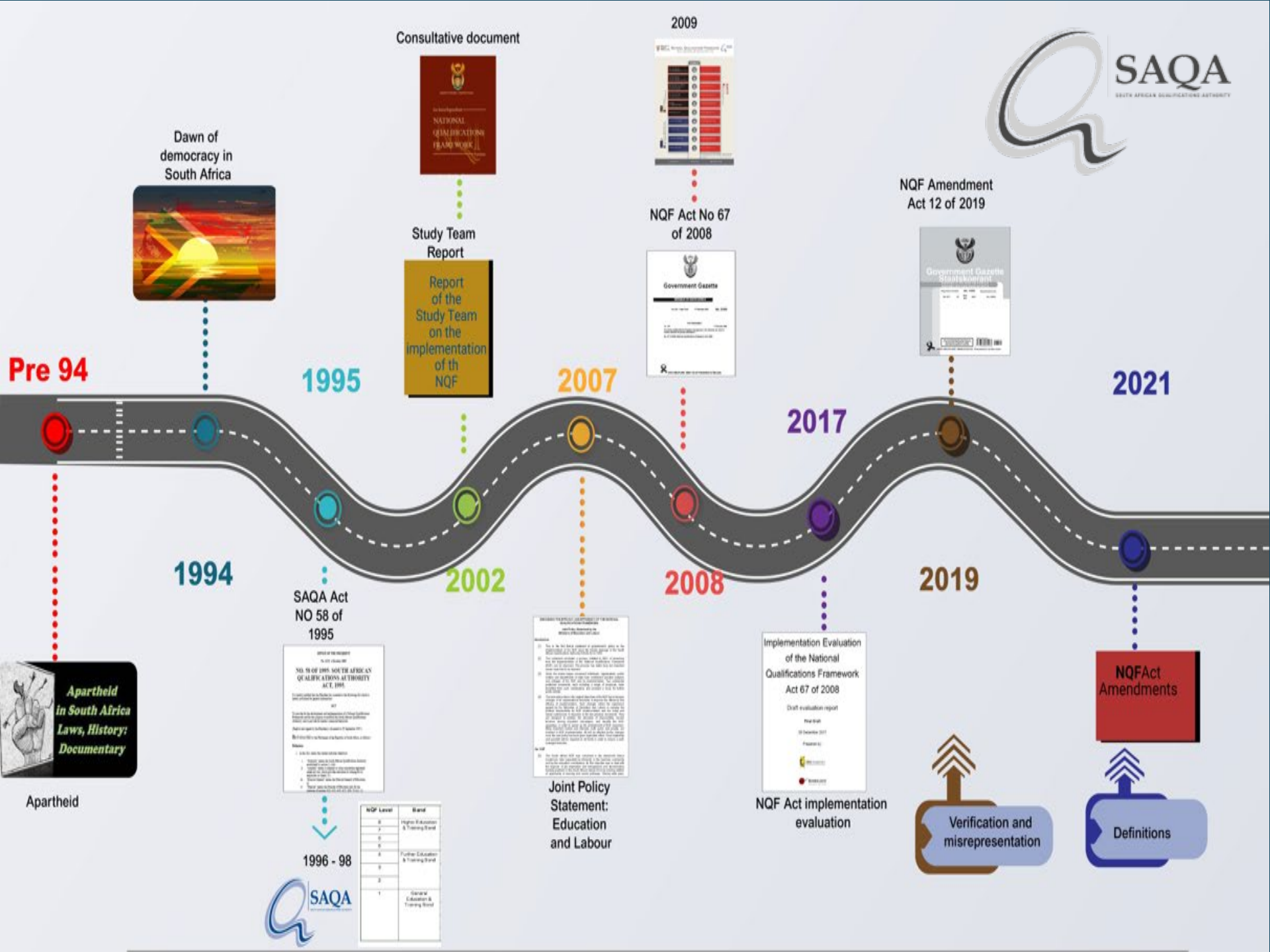


ARTICULATION

OF QUALITY ASSURED NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS



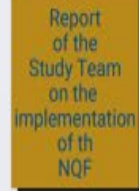
		NQF LEVELS		
<b>HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS SUB-FRAMEWORK</b>  	DOCTORAL DEGREE DOCTORAL DEGREE (PROFESSIONAL)	10	-	 <b>QCTO</b> Quality Council for Trades & Occupations <b>OCCUPATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS SUB-FRAMEWORK</b>
	MASTER'S DEGREE MASTER'S DEGREE (PROFESSIONAL)	9	-	
	BACHELOR HONOURS DEGREE POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA BACHELOR'S DEGREE	8	SPECIALISED OCCUPATIONAL DIPLOMA	
	BACHELOR'S DEGREE ADVANCED DIPLOMA	7	ADVANCED OCCUPATIONAL DIPLOMA	
	DIPLOMA ADVANCED CERTIFICATE	6	OCCUPATIONAL DIPLOMA	
<b>GENERAL FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING QUALIFICATIONS SUB-FRAMEWORK</b>  	HIGHER CERTIFICATE	5	HIGHER OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATE	
	NATIONAL CERTIFICATE	4	NATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATE	
	INTERMEDIATE CERTIFICATE	3	INTERMEDIATE OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATE	
	ELEMENTARY CERTIFICATE	2	ELEMENTARY OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATE	
	GENERAL CERTIFICATE	1	GENERAL OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATE	



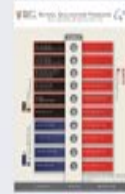
Consultative document



Study Team Report



2009



NQF Act No 67 of 2008



NQF Amendment Act 12 of 2019



2021

NQF Act Amendments

Verification and misrepresentation

Definitions

Dawn of democracy in South Africa



1995

2007

2017

2019

1994

2002

2008

SAQA Act NO 58 of 1995



Joint Policy Statement: Education and Labour



NQF Act implementation evaluation

Apartheid in South Africa Laws, History: Documentary



Apartheid

1996 - 98



NQF Level	Band
8	Higher Education & Training Band
7	
6	
5	Further Education & Training Band
4	
3	
2	General Education & Training Band
1	



# SAQA & the South African NQF



## 1995 - 2008

- 1995: SAQA Act No. 58 of 1995
- 1996: SAQA established/ first SAQA Board meeting
- 1996 – 2008: SAQA legislated quality assurance functions, including development of qualifications, accrediting ETQA's and delegating certification
- 1996 – 2008: SAQA developed and implemented first NQF policies
  - Quality assurance and Standard setting
  - RPL
  - Assessment

## 2009+

- 2009: Quality Councils est.
- 2009 – present: SAQA coordinating the three NQF Sub-Frameworks and Foreign qualification evaluation and advice
- 2009-present: Intensive research in support of NQF policy development
- 2010 – 2012: Development and oversight of the NQF Policy Suite
- 2015: Full FQ evaluation
- 2017: eSCOE (paperless by 2021)
- 2021 – 2022 – Organisational review and downscaling



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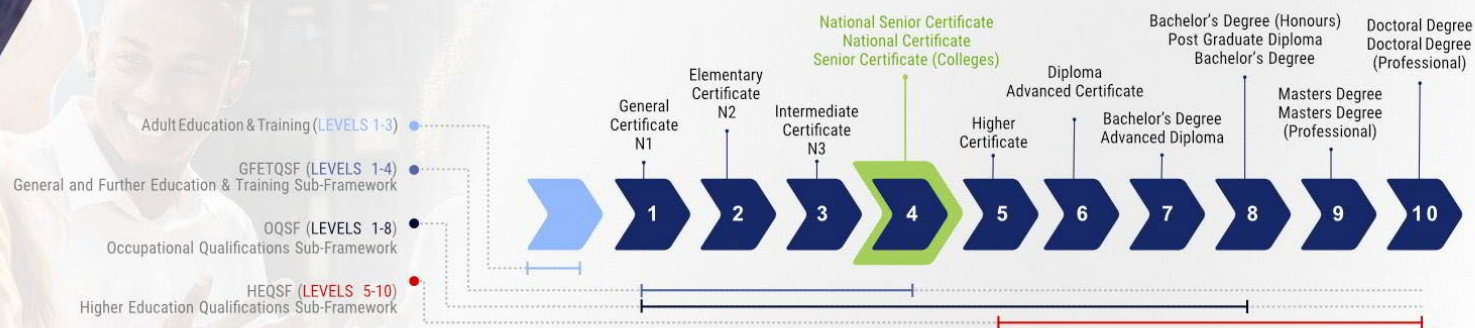
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# SAQA & the South African NQF



## NQF LEVELS & QUALIFICATION TYPES



### General and Further Education

- Three (3) Streams model
- Pilots: GETC to replace ABET 4 and Implementation of the 'Adult Matric' NASCA
- 23 000 public schools
- 2 200 private schools

### Occupational Education and Training

#### **2013 OQSF Policy**

- Occupational qualification per level

#### **2021 OQSF Policy**

- Aligned qualification titles to those of the other sub-frameworks
- Approx 26 Quality assurance Partners
- Approx 774 Skills Providers

### Higher Education

#### **2022 HEQSF Review**

- Shifting unit of accreditation from programme to qualification
- Flexible delivery modes and access
- Move away from level descriptors
- 26 public Universities
- 160 private Higher education institutions





## Lebogang



1980: Lebo is born



1998: Lebo finishes 12 years of school



2001: Lebo completes a 3 year Degree



2008: Lebo completes a Foreign Qualification



2015: Lebo registers as a professional



## NQF

1998: 8 Level NQF Established

2009: 10 Level NQF

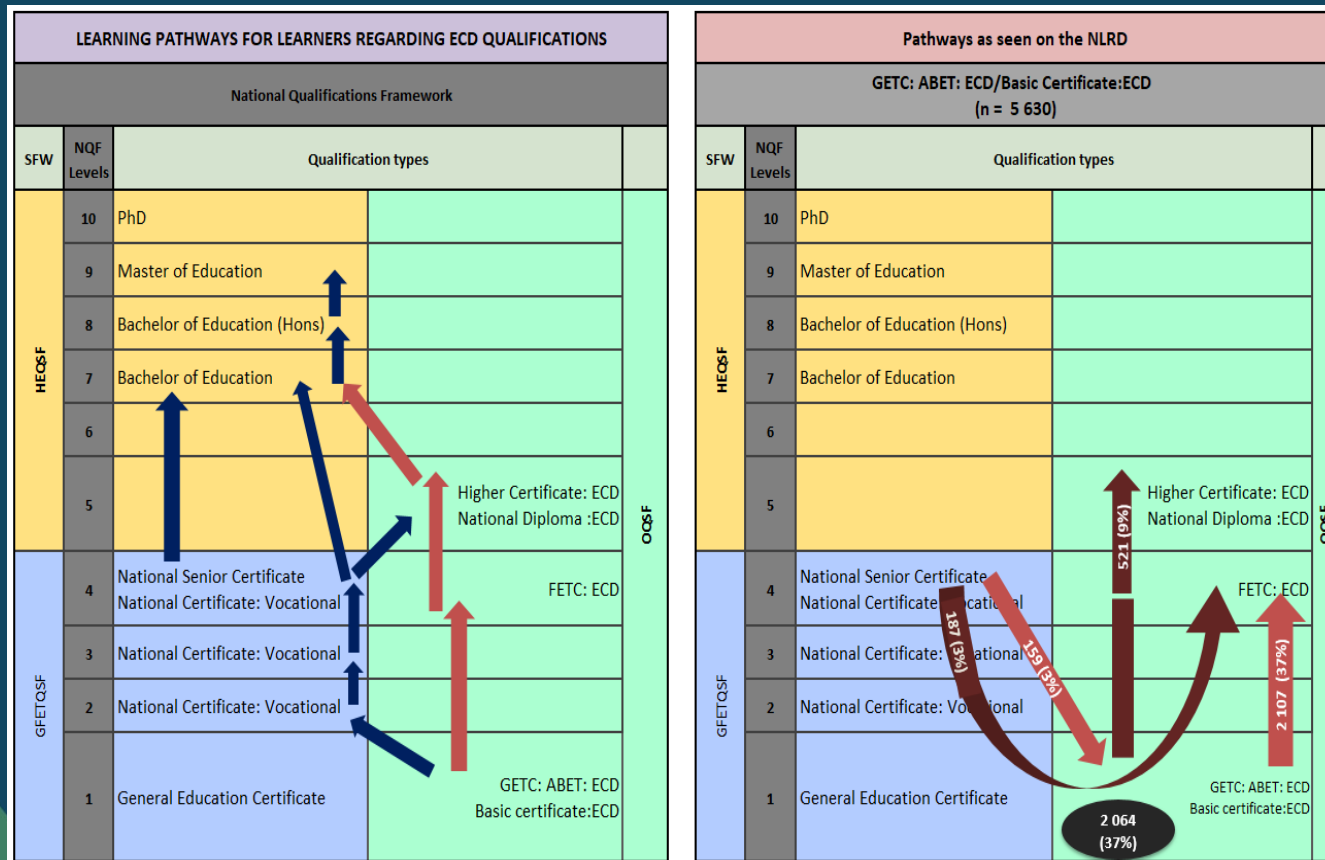
2012: Professional body recognition

**NQF MIS**



# The NQF MIS: Learning Pathways

- Tracking of articulation and progress made in implementing Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
- Learning pathways have been analysed and developed





# Professional bodies and the NQF

Inclusion of Professional bodies and designations on the National Qualifications Framework

National regulation including criteria for transformation, access and continuous professional development

Approximately 1.2 million designated professionals on the SAQA NLRD

Promoting public understanding of, and trust in, qualifications and professions through the establishment of a nationally regulated system

Ability to track individual's qualification and designation pathway



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# Advantages that SAQA Recognition has brought to the Professional Body



Response Item (multiple response option)	Number of Responses	% of Responses
Alignment to the values in the South African Constitution	55	66,3%
Alignment to NQF values, structures and processes	67	80,7%
Enhanced status	60	72,3%
Enhanced public visibility	44	53,0%
Enhanced credibility	67	80,7%
Enhanced public trust	53	63,9%
Access to support for flexible pathways	34	41,0%
Access to NQF-related information	61	73,5%
Access to NQF-related support	46	55,4%



# NQF 2025

Strengths  
Centralised database  
System of  
Collaboration  
Mature NQF

Challenges  
ICT infrastructure  
Digital divide  
Digitisation funding  
Legislative framework

Conceptual  
review

Regulatory  
parameters

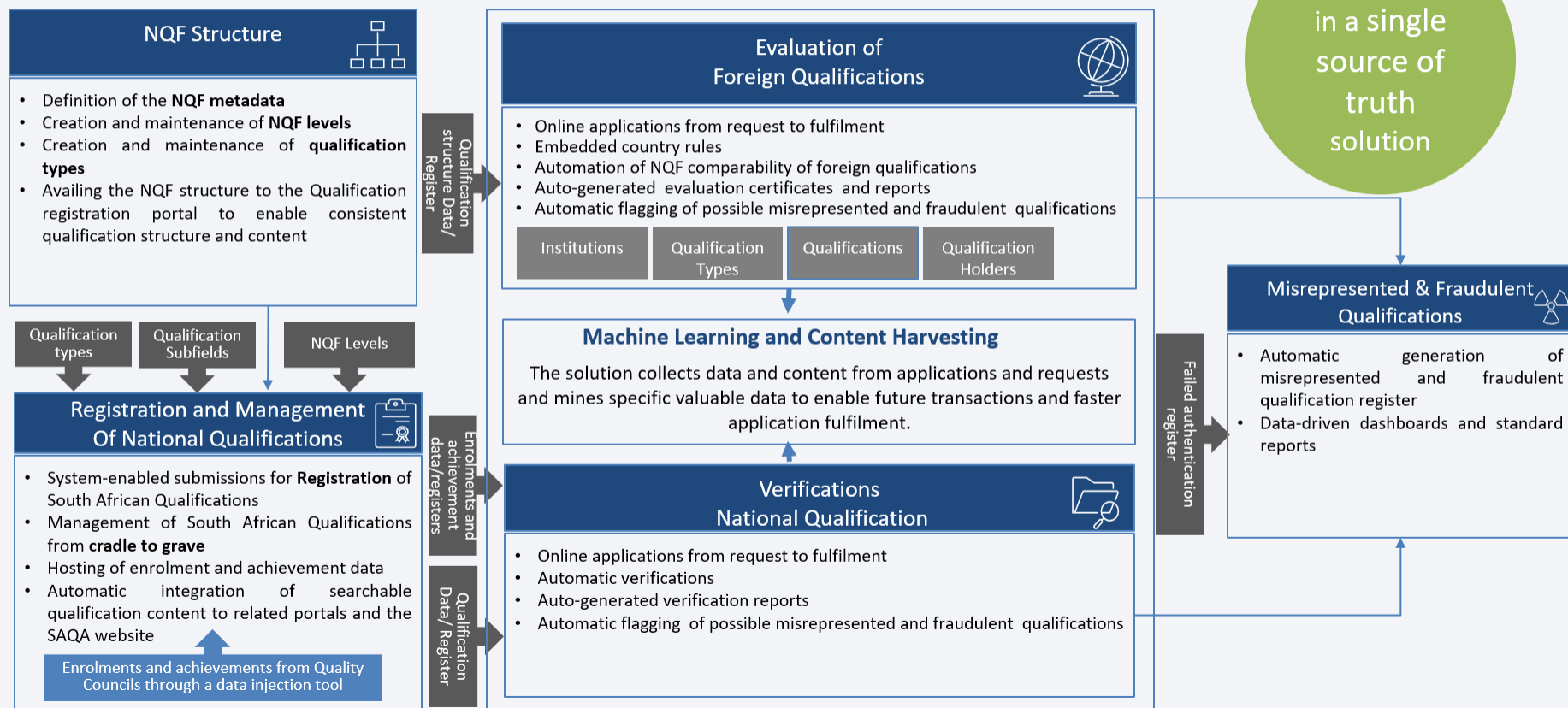
Investments  
in  
technology

Learner-  
centricity and  
agency

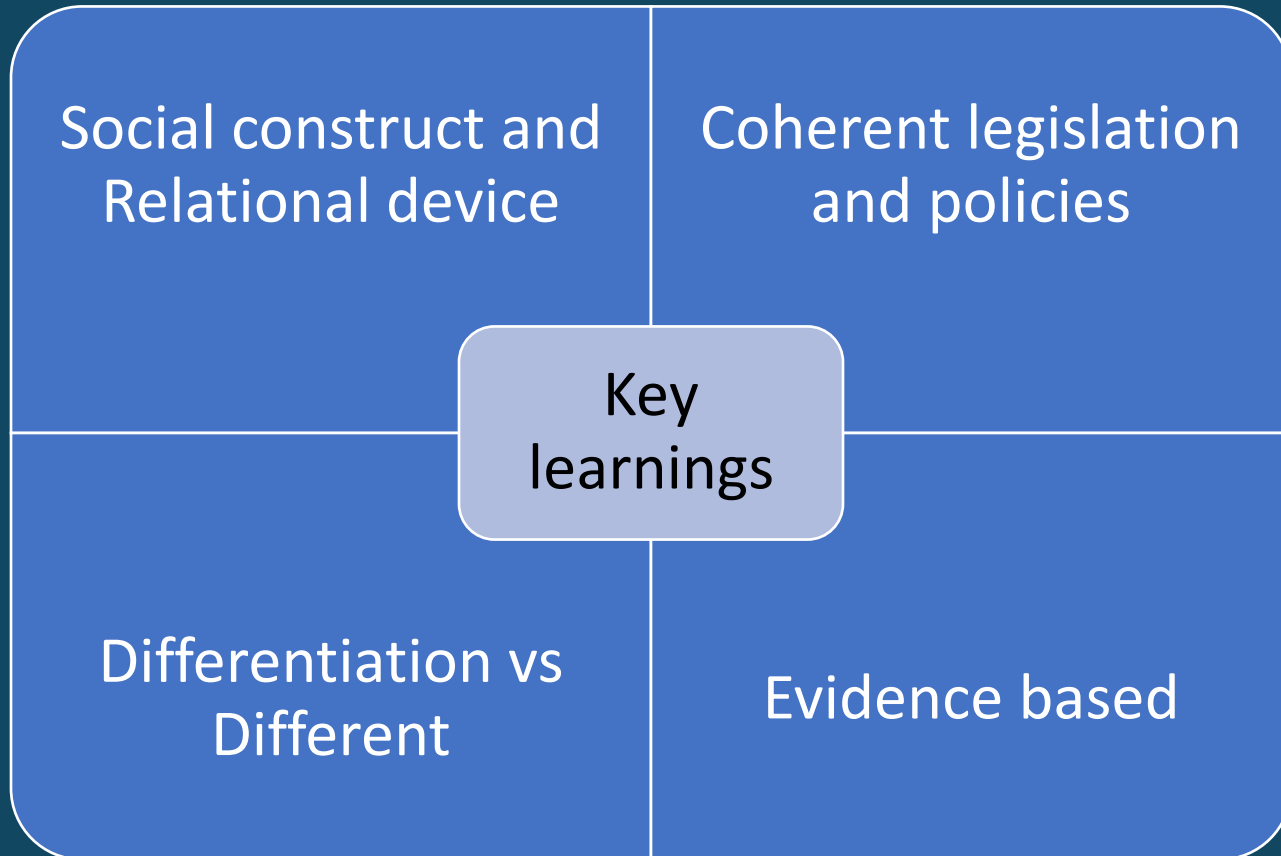


# Automation

- A fully online and integrated solution that enables intelligent NQF through system functionality, APIs and machine learning.
- Data is shared by all interrelated and interdependent processes across the various SAQA functions and systems







# Parting thoughts

- QF's are contextualised. Comparisons and policy adoption should be done with caution
- QF evolution is constant
- Consultation and communication is key (legislated system of collaboration)
- Sub-framework differentiation is critical, but central principles must be retained

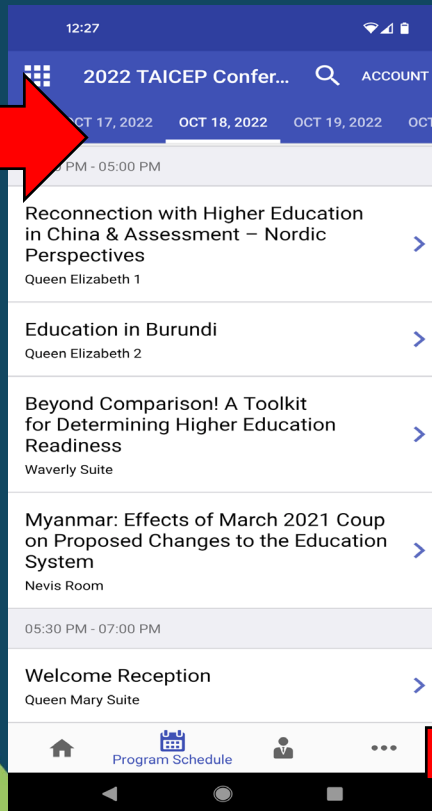
# Please Complete a Session Survey

Open Session Details  
in the Website or  
Mobile App Schedule

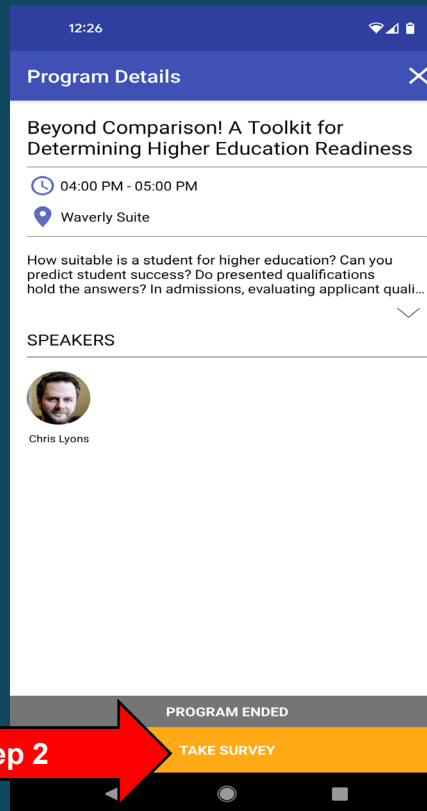
“Take Survey” Button  
Available 10 Minutes  
Before Session Ends

“Submit” (Then...go find  
coffee!)

Step 1



Step 2



Step 3

