GUIDELINES FOR CPD CREDIT ACCUMULATION AND AWARD
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SECTION 1 CPD SYSTEM – BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

The provision of continuing professional development in Namibia is undergoing major changes in its approach. We are implementing a credit- and outcomes-based approach which is designed to be accessible, inclusive, flexible, responsive, targeted and effective. The goal is to offer educators opportunities that recognise the widest possible range of quality assured professional and academic achievements that can be converted into qualifications or awards – without the participants having to leave their places of work.

This approach is focused on delivering the best possible outcomes for both educators and learners.

What continuing professional development means for educators

It is recognised that many educators and education managers already possess the basic qualifications required for their jobs. However, they do not work in a static environment. Therefore, the dynamics and dynamism of their work entail that employers and qualification designers must keep pace with the changing dynamics of the education environment and use these to develop innovative, flexible and fit-for-purpose awards / qualifications which address the specific needs of educators and education managers and are aligned to regional and national priorities as well as the national professional standards.

Within this context, it is recognised that competent practice among educators requires consistent and on-going commitment from all education professionals. Qualification and certification as an educator does not guarantee that competence and proficiency will be maintained for the rest of the educator’s life. This is because a) a lot of knowledge becomes out-dated, and b) new frontiers of knowledge are being carved out constantly and rapidly.

This new knowledge is not always and / or easily communicated to educators. CPD is therefore a vehicle that facilitates the acquisition of new knowledge and skills that enable educators to remain current and maintain certain levels of competence in their areas.
To support this approach to teacher development, the National Professional Standards for Educators advocate Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and education as the means through which educators can maintain and update their professional competence.

Also, CPD is a means to ensure that educators aspire to the highest standards of excellence, and addresses emerging needs in the education sector, needs relevant to the education priorities of the country. Furthermore, CPD ensures that education professionals provide the best possible service to the beneficiaries of the education system.

All these elements are line with worldwide trends and best practice in education, and the philosophy of lifelong learning.

Who is responsible for providing CPD?

The National Institute for Education Development (NIED), Programme Quality Assurance (PQA) and the University of Namibia’s Faculty of Education (collectively known as the CPD Consortium), are the core organisations responsible for CPD provision. NIED and the PQA are primarily the programme developers, while UNAM underwrites these programmes.

In addition, selected and approved quality assured national and international providers will offer activities, which will be published in a national CPD calendar. The inclusion of national and international CPD providers is intended to extend coverage, depth, and opportunities that will provide genuinely flexible, fluid and complete CPD experiences and programmes.

The CPD system described above is administered and monitored by the national CPD Unit, supported by the CPD Consortium.

Who determines what CPD activities are relevant?

An independent Teaching Professions Board / Council will regulate the teaching profession in its entirety, determining competences for pre-service teacher education and CPD for serving teachers to ensure coherence between the two. In the area of CPD, the Council will establish It establishes regulations for CPD participation, such as:

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1 It is important to mention that the CPD Unit is a management unit, it is not itself a CPD provider.
• determining conditions relating to CPD activities and programmes to be undertaken by all educators;
• determining and approving the nature, types and extent of such CPD activities and programmes to be undertaken by educators in order for them to remain current;
• having a say in educator development curricula;
• determining the criteria for recognition of CPD activities and programmes, and institutions / persons offering such activities and programmes;
• determining the CPD cycle, the number of CPD hours to be accumulated by educators per year / per cycle;
• determine the manner in which CPD hours accruing to educators will be reported and recorded;
• licensing teachers and maintain a register of licensed teachers. [Teachers are licensed on the basis of participation in continuing professional activities and programmes];
• approving (accredits) CPD providers and activities;
• determining the awards that can be issued through the CPD route;
• approving the institutions / persons offering CPD activities and programmes.

About these guidelines

The guidelines presented in this document are developed to support the implementation of the national CPD model adopted [insert names & dates]. They are premised on the Concept Paper ‘Creation of a National CPD System’, which makes specific reference to the ‘development [of] a credit award system whereby all training programmes accrue credit hours certified by UNAM so that professionals can accelerate completion of certification and advanced degree requirements.’ (Item 7.4, page 14)

The guidelines provide a broad framework within which all organisations / stakeholders involved in implementing the national CPD system must work. We have designed them to help all stakeholders and partners involved in CPD provision and administration to understand the new approach to continuing professional development, specifically the related matters of credit accumulation and credit transfer.

In this guide we will therefore:

• define the general background upon which the CPD system is premised;
• describe the two types of continuing professional development, i.e., CPD for updating purposes, and CPD for upgrading purposes;
• explain credit bearing CPD, the principle of credit accumulation and credit transfer, and how they facilitate learning and ensure standards;
• show how the principle will work in practice by explaining how credits awarded, accumulated and recorded through structured CPD activities may lead to a qualification or award.

The guidelines are informed by international best practice in educational quality assurance in general, and credit accumulation, award and recording in particular. They fall within the frameworks and regulations established by quality assurance systems in Namibia, namely, the Namibia Qualifications Authority, the National Qualifications Framework, and the National Council for Higher Education.

The guidelines are relevant to all stakeholders engaged in the provision and administration of continuing professional development, and the specifications described below form the basic components of a common framework within which systems for the use of credit (e.g., credit determination, credit allocation, credit accumulation, credit transfer) can be developed and implemented for CPD activities and programmes.
SECTION 2 STRUCTURE OF CPD ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMMES
– a different way of thinking

CPD structure

The CPD system consists of two elements. One element deals with CPD for updating. The other element deals with CPD for upgrading. While the two terms are related, they are not the same. Below is an overview of the system, underpinned by the basic principles of qualifying educators and lifelong learning.

Figure 1 Architecture of the CPD System

CPD for updating (non-credit bearing CPD) – why it matters

CPD for updating consists of short, often one-off, non-continuous activities, but which do not articulate into or lead to a formal qualification. However, these activities MUST be relevant to education and the educator. These activities are demand-driven and are generally based on needs and / or priorities identified by schools and regions (through Regional CPD Committees). The needs / priorities may also be identified at national level.2

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2 These types of CPD activities will be used to determine the ‘currency’ of educators and are a requirement for them to be licensed and kept on the national educators register, as stipulated in the National Professional Standards, and as required by the Teaching Professions Board / Council.
CPD for updating is based on the educator accumulating the required number of continuing professional education hours (CPEs) in a given [e.g.: 2 year, 3 year -------------- period]. Accumulated CPEs will be valid for a period of - - - - months, as determined by the Board / Council.

Rationale for CPD for updating

Although acquiring qualifications plays an important part in continuing educator development, this is not, and should not be the sole objective for educators to participate in CPD activities. A very essential part of CPD is that of educators participating in professional development activities so that they can continually enhance [their classroom] practice and improve learner achievement. Thus, CPD for updating is premised on two main reasons:

1. It ensures that education professionals keep on learning. In this set-up, educators should aim to have a balance of at least (specify number of CPE units) - in their CPE ‘account’ per year.

2. It is a condition for [educators] to be licensed and to remain on the national educator register.

QUESTION

Licensing: What about educators at UNAM? And educational managers?

CPD for upgrading (credit-bearing CPD)

This element of the CPD system differs from CPD for updating in that it will consist of formal, structured learning programmes that are undertaken at (an) approved / accredited institution(s) of higher learning. Such learning programmes will have specific outcomes that are formally assessed.

Rationale for CPD for upgrading

The Concept Paper ‘Creation of a National CPD System’, upon which the national CPD model is premised, makes specific reference to the ‘development [of] a credit award system whereby all training programmes accrue credit hours certified by UNAM so that professionals...
can accelerate completion of certification and advanced degree requirements.’ (Item 7.4, page 14)

This departure from traditional modes of learning and issuing qualifications stems from the recognition that Namibia does not have enough educators participating in further professional learning beyond their initial qualifications. The result of this is skills shortages and knowledge gaps within the education field. Credit bearing CPD aims to correct this by:

- widening educator participation in educator development activities and programmes
- providing opportunities for educators to obtain qualifications in scarce fields, or new and high demand areas.

Within this context, CPD for upgrading will consist of planned, structured courses which are undertaken over a period of time and have specific, designated and verifiable outcomes that are formally assessed by an accredited institution. These courses can either articulate into a formal programme at an approved / accredited institution of higher learning, or, upon completion of all the required units / modules they lead to a qualification / award.

CPD for upgrading is underpinned by the following values:

- **accessibility and inclusiveness** – in that it promotes wider participation by all educators
- **flexibility** – in that it promotes better progression and articulation routes for educators at all levels. It will also clarify and define the relationship existing between individual units and the range of qualifications offered by higher education institutions.
- **responsiveness** – in that it allows employers and programme developers to rapidly respond to emerging needs within the profession and design programmes that can quickly upskill educators
- **quality assurance** – in that all educator development programmes of learning and CPD providers will be vetted by the Council before being - - -

In a nutshell, credit bearing CPD is intended to provide educators with opportunities that recognise the widest possible range of quality assured professional and academic achievements that can be converted into qualifications – without the participants having to leave their places of work.
SECTION 3  CATEGORIES OF CPD LEARNING PROGRAMMES

All CPD activities and programmes, regardless of whether they are for updating or upgrading purposes, broadly fall into two-three categories, namely, educator-initiated professional development activities, and site-led professional development activities, and employer-initiated CPD.

Educator-initiated professional activities are those activities that are selected by the educators themselves for their own development. Here, an educator could identify a CPD activity happening at another (national) site, or outside the country, such as a conference or seminar, and request to attend such an event.

Site-led CPD is determined at site level. These activities are agreed upon by the ‘site’ and are implemented either with local expertise at the site (eg, a school), or external expertise might be sought.

Employer initiated CPD activities and programmes have a national character. These activities and programmes are determined at national level according to national priorities. For example, the MoE, after studying and using evidence from reports (such as SAT data, SACMEC), may decide that there is need for updating / upgrading all Social Studies teachers, or that all teachers must undergo an English Language Proficiency Programme.

All three categories of CPD activities and programmes are linked to a hierarchy of learning, consisting of three levels of learning, as described below.

**Hierarchy of learning activities**

The CPD system consists of three levels of learning, namely, Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3. Levels 1 and 2 fall within the CPD for updating category, and Level 3 falls under CPD for upgrading.

**Level 1**
These activities fall within the CPD for updating category; they do not have (a) measurable outcome(s). They tend to be presented as one-off events. CPEs for these activities are allocated according to the amount of time educators spend on them.

Level 1 activities include but are not limited to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Number of CPEs (eg)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Presentations</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Formally organised special purpose peer-teaching / cross-curricula</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teaching and assessment (this excludes normal teaching)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Formally arranged departmental or inter-departmental discussions on</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relevant topics, eg, how to use SATS data to improve instruction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Formally arranged mentoring / supervision of a novice employee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Attendance (not presentation) at local and international events that</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>do not have a measurable outcome, such as conferences, symposia, seminars,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>refresher courses, short courses, etc. These events must be approved by</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Board / Council and must be relevant to the teaching? Education?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profession field</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Presentation at local and international events that do not have a</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>measurable outcome, such as conferences, symposia, seminars, refresher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>courses, short courses, etc. These events must be approved by the Board</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ Council and must be relevant to the teaching? education? Field*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Educators may attend non-accredited conferences, seminars, workshops, etc, subject to approval by the Board / Council. However, in order to claim CPEs for an accredited event, certificates of attendance at specific events must be produced. The Board will then determine the number of CPEs for such an event.

Level 2

Level 2 activities revolve around education, training, research and publications. These activities have a demonstrable outcome / product, and they include but are not limited to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Number of CPEs (eg)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PUBLICATIONS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1st author of peer reviewed publication or book chapter</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Co-author of peer reviewed article of book chapter</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Review of article of book chapter</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Paper in published conference proceeding – major author</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Paper published in conference proceeding – other authors</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Full length articles in non-reviewed professional journals</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Published research reports</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unpublished full / final research reports publically accessible, etc.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### ASSESSMENT

- External examiner of Masters thesis
- External examiner of Doctoral thesis
- Examiner in national examinations
- Moderator in national examinations, etc.

### CONFERENCE / SEMINAR / WORKSHOP / CPD PRESENTATIONS

- Keynote speaker or plenary session speaker
- Facilitator / chair at conference / seminar / workshop
- Presenter at CPD activities, etc.

### TEACHING / LECTURING

- Guest / visiting educator at non-home institution, etc.

### SPECIAL PROJECT AT SITE / COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Identifying and assisting a learner to complete / achieve - - -
- Mentoring a colleague
- Engagement in community projects
- Engagement in a site ‘change project’, etc.

### ACADEMIC / RESEARCH SUPERVISION

- Non-academics supervising post-grad research project, etc.

### WRITTEN PAPERS / MATERIALS

- Materials written for use in - - -
This level of CPD learning consists of structured courses which are undertaken over a period of time, have specific outcomes and these outcomes are formally assessed by an accredited institution. These courses can either articulate into a formal programme at an institution of higher learning, or, upon completion of all the required units / modules they lead to a qualification or award.

This level of learning also consists of accredited:

1. Post graduate degrees / diplomas / certificates that are recognised as advanced / further / supplementary qualifications by the Board / Council.

2. Competency short courses with a minimum of direct contact time, with additional professional hands-on training, plus a formal assessment of the outcome.

In and of themselves, these activities do not accumulate CPEs. However, in the case of programme studies, at the end of each year of study (not exceeding the normal duration of a qualification), an educator may be awarded CPEs upon submitting an academic report on progress. Additional CPEs may be awarded upon successful completion of a qualification / award.

Recording of learning activities

All educators will be registered on a national database that is linked to the Education Management Information System (EMIS), and all learning activities undertaken by educators, at all levels, will be recorded on an individual educator transcript.

When an educator has participated in an approved CPD activity, the provider concerned MUST provide evidence of the educator’s attendance / completion to the CPD Unit in order to have the event and hours recorded on the database.

A CPE transcript could look like this:
INDIVIDUAL EDUCATOR TRANSCRIPT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Provider</th>
<th>CPEs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15-02-2013 – 19-02-2013</td>
<td>Workshop on SATs</td>
<td>NIED / FoE</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-03-2013 – 23-03-2013</td>
<td>Summit on Transformation &amp; Governance in Basic Education</td>
<td>AMC International</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-06-2013</td>
<td>Award: Working with Hearing Impaired Learners</td>
<td>IUM</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-07-2013 – 30-07-2013</td>
<td>Moderation of NSC Business</td>
<td>SELF</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01-10-2013 – 07-10-2013</td>
<td>Guest teacher at Sauyemwa Secondary School - - -</td>
<td>??</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUB-TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td><strong>20</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Activities that do not qualify for CPEs**

The activities below do not qualify for CPEs:

- Time spent in planning, organising, or facilitating activities that form part of an educator’s normal functions
- Letters to editors of magazines / newspapers
- Written assignments
- Compilation of materials for own use in subject area
- Staff and / or administrative meetings
- Membership of professional bodies or associations
- Holding a portfolio on a professional body / association’s executive or council
- Serving on Boards, etc.
SECTION 4 CPD FOR UPGRADING - PRINCIPLES AND
GUIDELINES FOR CREDIT BEARING CPD

Assumptions underpinning credit bearing CPD

The Concept Paper, 'Creation of a National CPD System', sees credit bearing CPD (CPD for upgrading) as a means through which educators can accelerate completion of advanced qualifications.

Credit-bearing CPD is premised on the following assumptions:

1. that the needs of teachers and education managers are first determined by the employer (MoE), based on the professional standards;
2. that service providers / programme developers translate such needs into quality assured programmes / curricula / modules / units / awards with properly determined credits and levels – in collaboration with UNAM;
3. that programmatic direction and decisions set by the MoE;
4. UNAM underwrites the programmes;
5. that there is a credit framework agreed between participating partners / CPD providers.

What is a credit framework? What is its role of credit framework in CPD provision?

A credit framework is an agreed set of principles by participating partners within which systems for the use of credit. It consists of the following components and / or principles:

1. credit determination and credit allocation
2. credit accumulation
3. credit transfer
4. determination of equivalence (ie, articulation between academic learning programmes undertaken in different contexts)
5. use of generic level descriptors, and
6. use of learning outcomes and assessment criteria

The framework is a critical tool that will help participating CPD providers to address the needs expressed in the Concept Paper, and competencies defined in the National Professional
Standards for Teachers in Namibia. These documents call for different approaches to CPD conceptualisation and implementation which will foster upskilling, mobility, and lifelong learning. A credit framework will lay the basis for describing the weight and scope of learning, and determine comparability / equivalences and compatibility of and between learning offered by different providers.

All structured programmes of learning will be based on a credit framework developed and agreed between participating providers. The credit framework is designed using the principles encapsulated in the National Qualifications Framework for Namibia. This means that all structured CPD learning will have credits and levels attached to them. This learning, along with the credits and levels, will be recorded on an educator credit transcript. It is envisaged that CPD activities and programmes will eventually be designed to fit into that framework.

Benefits of a credit framework

There are a number of benefits to having a credit framework in place. Primarily, provides a common language that describes all learning and achievement. This common currency allows participating education providers to value, describe, measure, recognise and quantity learning outcomes achievable in notional learning hours at a specific level. Additionally, a credit framework ensures that education providers, employers, and educators have a very clear picture of the level and scope of learning achieved. Having a credit framework also ensures that equivalencies within programmes of learning are easily established.

Who is an accredited CPD provider?

An accredited CPD provider is an institution which has been approved by the CPD Consortium to offer quality assured, credit bearing CPD learning programmes.

Currently, the CPD Consortium forms the core of accredited CPD providers. As the CPD’s credit framework / system evolves and becomes fully developed, agreements may be entered into with other training institutions who may offer courses / programmes the Consortium finds appropriate, provided that the courses / programmes offered follow the design principles of the credit framework.

What is a credit bearing learning programme?
A credit bearing learning programme is a structured course of study, either a short course or a more sustained programme of study which has specified outcomes that are assessed and have a credit value ascribed to them.

Completion of the outcomes of such a programme may lead to an award (eg, Certificate in Working with Visually Impaired Learners) or a Qualification (eg, Diploma in - - - ). The individual units within a learning programme are also credit bearing on their own in that they are individually assigned a credit value and can be certified as credit bearing in their own right.

**What is credit?**

Credit is a way of formally recognising learning achievement. It is awarded to a learner for achieving defined / prescribed learning outcomes at a specified level.

Credit is assigned a numerical value, which is a quantified indicator signifying the intellectual rigour required to achieve the credit (level) and scope or volume learning involved (number of credits).

The level of learning ascribed to a learning programme is determined through notional hours learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria, which are underpinned by NQF level descriptors.

All teacher development learning programmes will have credits assigned to them.

**What are notional hours?**

Notional learning hours represent the number of hours it is expected an average learner will spend to achieve the specific learning outcomes of a learning programme at a specific level. Notional learning hours measure the volume of work and level of effort involved in a learning programme.

It is on the basis of notional hours that programme developers are able to assign a credit value to a learning programme.

When a learning programme is designed, it should take into account ALL the learning relevant to the achievement of learning outcomes, not just ‘contact’ time.

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3 The norm is that one credit represents 10 notional hours.
What are the NQF level descriptors?

NQF level descriptors are guiding statements which describe the generic learning demand required of a learner at each level. They are presented in Table 2 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Descriptor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Comprehensive, systematic and in-depth mastery of a discipline/field’s knowledge, research, analytical and/or creative requirements. Able to contribute ideas and to debate at the cutting edge of an area of specialisation. Highest level of research capabilities and/or in the creation of new knowledge, art or work. Provide through publication and/or presentation an original contribution to knowledge through research or scholarship, as judged by independent experts and peers applying international standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Comprehensive and systematic knowledge in a discipline or field with specialist knowledge in an area at the forefront of that discipline or field. Capacity for self-directed study and the ability to work independently. Planning and carrying out of a substantial piece of original research or scholarship to internationally recognized standards and involving a high order of skill in analysis and critical evaluation. Identification, analysis and proposed responses to real world or complex issues and problems drawing systematically and creatively on the principles, theories and methodologies of a particular discipline. Advanced information retrieval, processing, analytical, synthesizing and independent evaluation of quantitative and qualitative data. Able to present and communicate academic or professional work effectively, catering for a wide range of specialist and non-specialist audiences and/or in diverse genres.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Deepened, comprehensive and systematic expertise in a particular discipline. Developed research capacity using a coherent and critical understanding of the principles, theories and methodologies of a particular discipline. Selects research methods, techniques and technologies appropriate to a particular problem. Efficient and effective information retrieval and processing skills, involving critical analysis and independent evaluation of quantitative and qualitative data. Engages with current research and scholarly or professional literature. Able to present and communicate academic or professional work effectively, catering for a wide range of audiences and/or in diverse genres.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Knowledge of a major discipline with areas of specialization in depth. Analysis, transformation and evaluation of abstract data and concepts in the creation of appropriate responses to resolve given or contextual abstract problems. Carry out processes that require a command of highly specialized technical or scholastic skills across a major discipline and which involve the full range of procedures in a major discipline. Application in complex, variable and specialized contexts. Planning, resourcing and managing processes within broad parameters and functions with complete accountability for determining, achieving and evaluating personal and/or group outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Demonstrates focused knowledge and skills in a particular field using general principles and application and/or some specialized knowledge with depth in more than one area. Analysis, reformating and evaluation of a wide range of information used in the formulation of appropriate responses to resolve both concrete and abstract problems. Carry out processes that require a command of wide-ranging highly specialized technical or scholastic skills and/or which involve a wide choice of standard and non-standard procedures, often in non-standard combinations, often in highly variable routine and non-routine contexts. Manages processes within broad parameters for defined activities. Complete accountability for determining and achieving personal and/or group outcomes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Commented [CM7]: A decision among participating partners has to be made whether unitisation is an appropriate approach at these levels.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Broad, general knowledge based on general principle in a specific area with substantial depth in some aspects. Analytical interpretation of a wide range of data and the determination of appropriate methods and procedures in response to a range of concrete problems with some theoretical elements. Carry out processes that require a wide range of specialized technical or scholastic skills involving a wide choice of standard and non-standard procedures. Employed in a variety of routine and non-routine contexts. Self-directed and sometimes directive activity within broad general guidelines or functions. Full responsibility for the nature, quantity and quality of outcomes, with possible responsibility for the achievement of group outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Employing a broad knowledge base incorporating some theoretical concepts or in-depth applied knowledge and skills in a specific area. Analytical interpretation of information. Making informed judgment and offers a range of sometimes innovative responses to concrete but often unfamiliar problems. Carry out processes that require a wide range of technical or scholastic skills and/or that offer a considerable choice of procedures. Often employed in a variety of familiar and unfamiliar contexts. Applied in self-directed activity under broad guidance and evaluation. Complete responsibility for quantity and quality of output, with possible responsibility for the quantity and quality of the output of others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Employing some relevant theoretical knowledge and interpretation of available information. Uses discretion and judgment over a range of known responses to familiar problems. Carry out processes that require a range of well-developed skills and offer a significant choice of procedures within a range of familiar contexts. Applied in directed activity with some autonomy. Under general supervision and quality checking, though with significant responsibility for the quantity and quality of output, with possible responsibility for the output of others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Employs basic operational knowledge using readily available information. Uses known solutions to familiar problems with little generation of new ideas. Carry out processes that are moderate in range, are established and familiar and offer a clear choice of routine responses. Applied in directed activity under general supervision and quality control. Some responsibility for quantity and quality, with possible responsibility for guiding others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Employs recall and a narrow range of knowledge and cognitive skills. No generation of new ideas. Carry out processes that are limited in range, repetitive and familiar, and employed within closely defined contexts. Applied in directed activity under close supervision with no responsibility for the work or learning of others.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These descriptors serve three functions. They guide learning programme writers:

1. to develop learning outcomes and related assessment criteria for units;

2. as to the type of generic learning demands required of learners at the different levels. They thus represent the intellectual skills and attributes that an educator must exhibit to be certified competent at a particular level;

3. to allocate a unit to a level – this happens through a unit’s learning outcomes and related assessment criteria.
All CPD learning programmes will use the NQF level descriptors as a basis for developing learning programmes of varying complexity.

In order for CPD learning programmes to address the needs expressed in the Concept Paper, it is necessary for them to be unitised. This is the key to accessible, flexible, inclusive and responsive learning programmes.

What is unitisation?

Unitisation is a principle which acknowledges that a learner has started a journey of learning achievement that can contribute towards a qualification or award. It describes potential achievement in learners in terms of units or units of assessments.

These units (or units of assessment) are the smallest basic building blocks of all awards / qualifications obtained through the CPD credit accumulation and award system. Each unit (not just the qualification) represents a coherent learning package and has a level and credit value. The level represents the effort it takes to complete the unit, while the credit value represents the amount of time it takes an average educator to complete the unit.

Benefits of unitisation

Educators in Namibia tend to obtain qualifications through one of two ways. They either leave their employment to go and study full-time, or they will study through the distance education mode. In either case, an educator has to complete a full programme of study before any learning achievement is recognised or given credit. Smaller chunks of learning are not recognised. In the current set-up, most people (and institutions) tend to think of learning achievement in solely in terms of programmes for which qualifications (certificates) are awarded. In other words, unless a person has completed an entire programme, their learning journey towards the completion of such a programme is not taken into account.

In credit bearing CPD, smaller units of learning are recognised ie, given credit.

Because unitisation focuses on smaller blocks of learning, it provides educators and education managers with accessible, inclusive, flexible, motivating and responsive opportunities that recognise the widest possible range of quality assured professional and academic achievements.
that can be converted into qualifications – **without the participants having to leave their places of work**.

In addition, because units tend to focus on smaller blocks of learning, they:

- are easier to change, update and customise than whole modules and / or programmes. In this way both employers and programme providers are able to respond more rapidly to the changing needs and demands of the workplace;
- enable learning goals to be achieved more efficiently by learners;
- allows educators to quickly learn and / or adapt skills to new working requirements;
- can be delivered and assessed by any approved CPD provider.

The goal is that all qualifications obtained within the CPD framework must be presented in unit format and **all units must be capable of certification as worthwhile goals in their own right**.

It is important to stress that units do not replace qualifications; they simply allow educators the flexibility to take and manage their learning in smaller chunks of learning for which credit at a specified level is given.

**How are the units designed? How will they work?**

All Units submitted by **unit designers** will be designed according to an approved standard. This standard is provided by the Faculty of Education of the University of Namibia, premised on the Namibia Qualifications Authority framework for unit standards.

**Unit designers, with guidance from UNAM, and using the NQA level descriptors, will determine the level and credit value of each unit.**

A unit (or unit of assessment) contains the following elements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Well defined and specific name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning outcomes statements</td>
<td>Unambiguous descriptions of what educators are expected to know, understand and / or do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment criteria</td>
<td>Standards for achieving specified learning outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>Level of rigour required to complete a unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit value</td>
<td>Numerical value assigned to a unit indicating the volume of work to be undertaken by an educator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All units designed will form part of a unit databank. The units in the databank will then be used to develop rules of combination. Such rules of combination will determine what qualification/s or awards may be awarded.

The qualifications awarded are based on credits and levels determined by the NQA. They may be single awards, e.g., Certificate in Working with Hearing Impaired Learners. They may also be larger qualifications, e.g., Post Graduate Diploma in Educational Leadership.

The units are designed so that they can articulate into (a) formal programme(s). They can also be certified on their own. In other words, their worth is not dependent on completion of a programme. However, should an educator wish to study at a participating institution of higher learning, the unit/s they have completed, and the credits they have earned for such (a) unit/s will be recognised, subject to time limitations that may be imposed by the Board / Council, and programme rules of the particular institution.

All units must have learning outcomes and assessment criteria. Together with credit, these elements are important in defining standards. The relationship between them can be represented as follows:

**Figure 2 Role of outcomes and assessment in defining standards**

(Adapted from Credit and HE Qualifications. Credit Guidelines for HE in England, Wales and Northern Ireland)
RECORDING OF ACCUMULATED CREDITS

The CPD system is designed so that information on all educators can be collated and stored on a single database. This will enable the CPD Unit to track levels of learning achievement in credit bearing CPD activities among educators.

Credits accruing from units successfully completed by educators will be recorded on an educator’s credit transcript.

Subject to the rules of combination, an educator can select units that can be packaged into a relevant qualification.

There are some elements that will influence the rules of combination and qualification packaging. These are:

- Accredited providers (who have the right to accept or reject accrued credit)
- Credit from equivalent units
- Time limits on accumulated credits

TRANSFER OF ACCUMULATED CREDITS

When educators have successfully completed a learning programme and accumulated the associated credits, they may transfer these credits to another programme, subject to the general and specific rules of that programme.

What is general and specific credit

This aspect of the credit framework refers to the credit that educators receive for any successfully completed blocks of learning.

Specific credit refers to the number of credits (captured in the general credit) that an educator can use towards another learning programme. It’s specific because it is directly related to the context of the programme to which an educator wishes to progress.
LIST OF SOURCES CONSULTED


