

TONGA NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND ACCREDITATION BOARD



POLICY AND GUIDELINES FOR APPROVAL OF SHORT COURSES

2018

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Introduction

This document provides guidance to post compulsory education and training (PCET) providers that are seeking approval for short courses. Approval of a short course also means accreditation to deliver the short course.

To gain approval for a short course, PCET providers must meet the criteria specified in Part 3 of this document.

PART 1 INTERPRETATIONS

1.1. Authority

These Policies are made under Part 2 Section 8 of the TNQAB Act 2004.

1.2. Commencement

These Policies commence on the day after the date of approval by the Board.

1.3. Interpretation

In these Policies, unless the context otherwise requires: “Act” means the TNQAB Act 2004:

“Corporate training” means study or training arranged for personnel of one or more organizations, where the study or training is paid for by the organizations, and it is not open for participation by the public.

“Corporate short courses” are designed for meeting regulatory requirements for occupational registration, occupational licensing, or health and safety in the workplace.

“Credit value” refers to the measurement of time spent on study or training, where each credit represents ten notional learning hours

“Level descriptors” means the descriptors used by TNQAB to determine levels. “Level” means any of levels 1 to 10 on the TQF

“Community Training Providers” means PCET Provider registered by the TNQAB

“Recognition of prior learning” means a process that involves formal assessment of a learners’ relevant and current knowledge and skills (gained through prior learning) to determine achievement of learning outcomes for awarding credit towards that qualification; and for the avoidance of doubt it does not include credit recognition and transfer.

“Register” means the register of all approved providers of education and training provided for in section 11 of the Act

“Short course” in the Act, means a course which is less than 12 months-

- (a) that may contain a component or components of an accredited course of study; and
- (b) for which a participant on successful completion shall receive an award or credit specifying the level of competency attained.

“TNQAB” means the Tonga National Qualifications and Accreditation Board: “TQF” means the Tonga Qualifications Framework

1.4. TNQAB Qualification Structure

Type of Qualification	Length and/or Credit Value	Assessment	Organisation Type
Community Education Including “Micro Credentials”	Can be any length if not assessed. Less than 10 credits if assessed.	Optional for community education. Micro credentials are assessed.	Any organisation approved as part of TNQAB’s Community Education recognition Process
Short Course	Less than 40 credits.	Formally assessed	Registered PCET provider
Provider Qualification	40 or more credits	Formally assessed	Registered PCET provider
National Qualification	40 or more credits	Formally assessed	Registered PCET provider

PART 2: STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

The TNQAB Regulation 2010 Part 4 No 17 (1) (b) states all persons, organizations and providers wishing to provide post compulsory education and training shall apply to the Board for accreditation of short course made up of units from a course of study leading to a stated qualification.

Approval is mandatory to enroll international learners in a short course. An international learner refers to anyone enrolled at a school or a provider who is not a local learner, defined, in turn, as a Tongan citizen or a permanent resident in Tonga.

It is also important to note that a provider wishing to deliver modules of an already approved programme does not need to seek short course approval.

PART 3: APPROVAL CRITERIA

Criteria for approval of a shortcourse

The following are the criteria for the granting of approval to a PCET provider to deliver a short course:

Criterion 1: Structure of the short course

The short course has a coherent structure in terms of its learning outcomes, content, level and credit value, which is appropriate for its purpose and a title that is not misleading.

Criterion 2: Delivery methods

Delivery methods are clearly defined, appropriate to the needs and level of the intended learners and support achievement of the learning outcomes.

Criterion 3: Resources and staff

There are adequate and appropriate teaching staff (with appropriate qualifications and/or experience), facilities, physical resources, and learners support systems to enable sustained delivery.

Criterion 4: Information for learners

Adequate information is available to learners including, where applicable, information on entry and selection requirements, cross-crediting and credit transfer, recognition of prior learning, reassessment and appeals, learner progress and requirements for completion.

Criterion 5: Assessment and moderation

Assessment methodologies provide fair, valid, consistent and appropriate assessment, given the stated learning outcomes. There is an effective system for moderation of assessment materials and decisions.

PART 4: APPLICATIONS FOR APPROVAL

Required Information

PCET providers must provide the following information when submitting an Application (Appendix 1) for short course approval to TNQAB:

- i. Name and contact details.
- ii. A title for the short course that properly reflects its subject area and level.
- iii. The purpose of the short course in relation to the needs of intended learners, industry, community, and employers.
- iv. Credit value
- v. TQF level
- vi. The assigned six-digit code from the Tonga Standard of Classification of Education (TONGASCED) system. (TNQAB will assist with this)
- vii. A list of any assessment standards (unit standard/ competency standards) or learning outcomes in the short course.
- viii. A checklist to confirm that the short course meets the approval criteria. (Appendix 2)
- ix. The provider's record of internal approval of the short course.

For any assessment standards (competency or unit standards) from overseas used in the short course, the provider must consult the 'Policy and Guidelines for the Delivery and Awarding of Overseas Qualifications in Tonga (Cross Border Provision) for guidance on approval.

Reasons why short courses will not be approved

Approval will not be granted to any provider for applications for short courses where the short course:

- has a credit value of 40 or more credits or
- is substantially similar to a qualification on the TQF, or
- has outcomes that are more suited to being listed as a qualification on the TQF, or
- has any of the following words in the title: "Tonga", "national", "diploma", "degree", "bachelor", "master", "doctor", "under-graduate" or "post-graduate" where it may cause confusion with a qualification on the TQF; or
- included in the title the name of a person, organization, or product unless the applicant satisfies TNQAB that there is a sound justification for the inclusion.

PART 5: APPROVAL POLICIES

5.1 Short course approval from PCET providers other than universities

- a) TNQAB will advise applicants if any of the details in the application require further work.
- b) TNQAB may carry out a site visit.
- c) Where TNQAB is satisfied with the details in the application, TNQAB will approve the application and advise the applicant
- d) Where TNQAB is not satisfied with the details in the application, TNQAB will not approve the application, and will advise the applicant to withdraw the application until it is able to meet most of the criteria and apply six months later
- e) TNQAB will publish on its website updated and appropriate details of short courses it has approved.

5.2 Applications and criteria for short course approval from universities

Applications from universities for short course approval will be decided by a panel for universities in accordance with the criteria for short course approval set out in this policy.

5.3 The application processing time

All applications for short courses shall be processed within six weeks unless other arrangements are put in place. Analysis of application will commence upon receipt of all documents and payment of prescribed fees.

5.4 Approval

When it is evident the criteria for short courses have been met, the application will be approved for as long as the provider continues to meet registration requirements and continues to deliver the course.

PART 6: CROSS BORDER POLICIES

A short course developed from an overseas training organization, the policies from TNQAB Quality Assurance Policy on Cross Border Provision of Education and Training will be applied.

PART 7: MAINTAINING APPROVAL

7.1 Requirements to be met to maintain approval

- a) Providers holding short course approvals must continue to:
 - i. meet the criteria set out in Part 3; and
 - ii. participate in quality assurance for providers as well as universities which includes carrying out self-assessment and participating in Quality Audit and Review conducted by TNQAB.
 - iii. Continue to deliver the short course at least once per year.

7.2 Lapse of approval

Providers must notify TNQAB if they are no longer delivering a short course after 12 months, otherwise the short course approval will lapse.

7.3 Change(s) to short courses

Short courses will sometimes change as a result of on-going self-assessment and improvement. Any changes to the title, level, purpose and credit value of the approved short course must obtain TNQAB approval before using the application form in Appendix 4. The application must include evidence of internal approval for the changes.

7.4 The Award

An approved short course can lead to the award of a “Certificate of Attainment” but not a Diploma or Degree. The certificate should show the units that have been completed.

PART 8: SUB-CONTRACTING POLICIES

8.1 Use of sub-contractors to provide short courses

- a) Where a PCET provider proposes to use a sub-contractor to deliver a short course on the provider’s behalf, the provider must obtain TNQAB’s approval prior to the short course being delivered.
- b) TNQAB will grant approval to an application for a sub-contracting arrangement where it is satisfied that:
 - i. the provider remains responsible for the sub-contractor meeting all of the provider’s obligations that are relevant for the short course:
 - ii. the sub-contractor will meet all relevant obligations in the Act and in policies in relation to the provision of the short course:

- iii. there is a formal documented arrangement between the PCET provider and the sub-contractor that includes provisions to ensure that TNQAB can exercise its quality assurance and enforcement powers and functions in respect of the acts or omissions of the sub-contractor relating to the provision of the short course:
 - iv. the information and advertising for the short course clearly states that it is provided through a sub-contracting arrangement:
 - v. all learner enrolments are through the provider, and the provider maintains all learner's enrolment and academic information.
- c) The use of sub-contractors by universities will be governed by decisions of the panel for universities

PART 9: PCET PROVIDER'S RECORDS

9.1 Records

PCET Providers are required to keep a record of the following for all approved short courses:

- Academic Records
- Enrolment Records

PART 10: FEES AND PROCESSING

10.1 The prescribed accreditation fees

The applicant is also required to pay the prescribed fee of TOP500.00.(+ CT where applicable) as stipulated in Schedule E in the TNQAB Regulation 2010.

10.2 The application processing time

All applications shall be processed within six weeks of receipt as stipulated in the Act.

APPENDIX 1: Application Form – Short Course Approval

TONGA NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND ACCREDITATION BOARD



APPLICATION FOR SHORT COURSE APPROVAL

- 1 Complete the form electronically, print it out and sign the hardcopy.
- 2 include all supporting documents with the application and indicate what these documents are in the relevant sections of this form.
- 3 submit the signed hard copy of this application form and include any supporting documents in hard or electronic copies (e.g. on disc, email or on a flash drive).

1. Provider's Details

Name of Provider	
Contact Person's Name	
Address where the short course is to be delivered	
Phone Numbers	
Email Address	

2. Proposed Short Course Structure:

1. Title	
2. Purpose	
3. Credit Value	
4. TQF Level	
5. TQF Code	
6. Assessment Standards (Competency/ unit standards)	
7. Components of the qualification	
8. Checklist of how the course meets the approval criteria	
9. Evidence of internal approval of short course	

APPENDIX 2: Checklist for approval of short courses

CRITERIA	DETAILS	Checked by:	
		Provider	TNQAB
1. <i>Structure of the short course</i>	Specify the learning outcomes for each component of the shortcourse. Provide a course learning structure, showing components and length of the short course. A coherent structure in terms of its learning outcomes, content, level and credit value, which is appropriate for its purpose and title.		
2. <i>Delivery methods</i>	Describe the delivery methods to be used and state how each method is appropriate to the target learner group in achieving the outcomes of the short course. Provide an educational rationale for any practical sessions/workshops, field-based or work-based experience and clearly describe how the work- based experience will be integrated into the training. Identify specific resources and equipment required to support the delivery method.		
3. <i>Resources and staff</i>	Adequate and appropriate: Teaching staff (qualification and/or experience) Facilities and Physical resources Learner support systems		
4. <i>Information for learners in the Tongan language</i>	Information for learners should include entry and selection requirements and as appropriate may include information on: cross-crediting and credit transfer options recognition of prior learning reassessment and appeals Learner progress requirements learner completion requirements the availability of assessment in the Tongan language.		
5. <i>Assessment and moderation</i>	Assessment Schedule – showing where in the programme assessments will take place linkages between assessments and learning outcome, Assessment strategy e.g. assignments (<i>essays, reports, etc</i>), tests, exam, portfolio, oral presentation, website development, practical demonstration; grade and % contribution to overall assessment An explanation of how external and internal moderation activities will be managed for the shortcourse an indication of how learner academic records are kept and achievement records are reported		

Checked on behalf of the Provider by:	Checked by TNQAB Officer:
Name:	Name:
Signature:	Signature:
Date:	Date:

APPENDIX 3: Statement of Management Commitment

We, the undersigned, confirm that this application for post compulsory education and training accreditation represents an accurate statement of the current status and operations of our organization, with regard to the courses of study and short courses listed, and is supported by the governing body.

We, the undersigned, confirm that the governing body has been advised of the Tonga National Qualifications and Accreditation Board Act 2004 and of Board policies and procedures of relevance to the activities of the organisation and that to the best of our knowledge, these activities comply with relevant requirements therein.

We, the undersigned, confirm that we have considered any aspects of our operations that may place learners or the public at **risk** and have implemented policies and procedures to ensure their protection.

Name:

[Representative of the Governing Body]

Signature:

Date:

Name:

[Principal, Director, Manager etc]

Signature:

Date:

Tonga National Qualifications and Accreditation Board contact details:

Please send the completed application form, along with all relevant supporting documentation, to:

The Chief Executive Officer

Tonga National Qualifications and Accreditation Board

PO Box 65

Molisi City Central – Level 1

Salote Road

Nuku'alofa

APPENDIX 4: Application for approval of change to an approved short course
TONGA NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND ACCREDITATION BOARD



**APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF CHANGE TO AN APPROVED
SHORT COURSE**

Instructions

- 1 PCET providers need to submit this application if changes are proposed to a short course that affect:
 - i. the overall number of credits or the level of the certificate, or
 - ii. the title, or
 - iii. the learning outcomes of the course
- 2 Complete the form electronically, print it out and sign the hardcopy.
- 3 Include all supporting documents with the application and indicate what these documents are in the relevant sections of this form and submit the signed hard copy of this application form to TNQAB Office via email, electronically and a hard copy.

Part 1: Contact Details

Name of PCET Provider:	
Programme Name:	
Date of Request:	
Proposed Implementation Date:	

Part 2: Details of the Proposed change:

i. Details of the change(s)
ii. Rationale for the change(s)(including any consultation that has taken place)

iii. Internal approval (Academic Board or equivalent body) for the change(s)

iv. Staffing or other resource implications

Submitted by:

Name	
Signature:	
Date:	

FOR TNQAB USE ONLY – Received by:

Name:	
Signature:	
Date:	

