



## TONGA NATIONAL QUALIFICATION AND ACCREDITATION BOARD

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# TNQAB NEWS: it's ours

## Message from the TNQAB CEO

On behalf of the Chairman of the TNQAB Board, Hon. Siaosi 'Ofa-Ki-Vahafolau Sovaleni, and the Directors of the Board, welcome to TNQAB's June newsletter. This newsletter includes details on several events in the field of quality assurance taking place in the last quarter and the coming months.

The last quarter was a hectic and tumultuous one for TNQAB.

Our ubiquitous intention is to move from input and compliance restrictions to a focus on self-assurance and excellence in educational and vocational outcomes. This encompasses aligning and streamlining our practices and processes and executing an internal realignment.

Over the coming months, we will:

- work with registered providers on reviewing their courses/programmes of study and this will be the first of its kind.
- improve the way TNQAB conducts approval, accreditations and audits; writes reports and describes evidence and non-compliances
- work with stakeholders to identify a new approach to declarations of compliance and remediation, including to strengthen the focus on self-assurance
- work on developing new national qualifications on sustainable energy, horticulture and carpentry
- improve internal practices to achieve greater consistency in both approval and accreditation, audit approach and decision making
- adjust some approval and accreditation of programmes, audit practices including, in certain circumstances, requesting information in advance of a site visit to reduce stress to providers and provide more time for discussions
- expand the regulatory tools particularly assessment that TNQAB uses
- be transparent in identifying areas of risk and provide guidance that will support providers in evaluating their own practices to ensure risks are not realised.

I concede that this is a vital transformation plan. Some of the identified scopes for improvement can be progressed instantly while others will need time to challenge intimate commitments and to consult with stakeholders. However, we are constantly focused on performing best practices, contemporary regulation for the TVET, Higher Education and industry sector.

We commenced working with our Legal Adviser in reviewing our TNQAB Act and Regulations. This will help us in shaping our ongoing approach to post-compulsory education and training.

As the financial year 2019/20 winds down, I can reflect on TNQAB's accomplishments and opportunities for celebrating this financial year 2019/20. I would like to offer my sincere thanks to the registered providers, communities, associated sectors and affiliates for their support during the year, and I would like to pay tribute to the TNQAB Secretariat who have, as usual, bringing your passion, intellect, insight, experience and resources to the table. I appreciate that you used all of your experience, skills, knowledge and education to move our organisation forward. A special thank you to the Chairperson of the TNQAB Board and Board of Directors with whom I have had the privilege to serve, thank you; thank you for your service, your loyalty, your leadership and your guidance.

Looking ahead, we hope that the dedication and wisdom exhibited by many of us in our response to the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the collective experiences accumulated, may shed more light on what we could do to better prepare for the future. With your continuous support and commitment to quality, I believe that all these concerted efforts will be crystallised into good outcomes.

Malo mo e lotu,

Dr Opeti Pulotu  
Chief Executive, TNQAB







## Programme Accreditation and Approval

By Mrs Ikatonga Hingano (Quality Assurance Division)

Tupou Tertiary Institute's (TTI) Certificate in Sports Science (Multi-Sector) Level 4 was approved as an accredited programme of study by the TNQAB Board of Directors on the 30th of April, 2020.

This achievement was the result of collaborative efforts by TTI, TNQAB and experts from the Sports field. According to Mrs. Ikatonga Hingano, TNQAB Senior Qualifications Analyst, the key component to this success was collecting valid and reliable evidence to confirm that the programme meets TNQAB accreditation standards.

TTI was able to meet these requirements and was granted accreditation of its Certificate of Sports Science (Multi-Sector) Level 4. TNQAB would like to thank the dedicated staff members at TTI who were involved in this initiative, specifically Tevita Vaikona, 'Ofa Mone Va'enuku and Dr. 'Ungatea Kata. We also acknowledge the experts from the Sports field, Takitoa Taumoepeau and Fe'ao Vakata for their time and invaluable insight, skills and knowledge.



Picture above: A picture taken after the site visit date.  
(L-R: Mr. Fe'ao Vakata, Mrs. 'Ofa Va'enuku, Mrs. Ikatonga Hingano, Mr. Takitoa Taumoepeau and Mr. Tevita Vaikona)



Picture above: Panel members (Mr. Fe'ao Vakata, Mr. Takitoa Taumoepeau and Mrs. Ikatonga Hingano) with interviewed students.



## Programme Accreditation in Progress

By Mrs Ikatonga Hingano (Quality Assurance Division)

TNQAB and the Tonga Institute of Higher Education (TIHE) are working together to accredit two of TIHE's qualifications – the Diploma in Hospitality Operation Level 5 and the Certificate in Information Technology (Computer Science) Level 4. TNQAB Senior Qualification Analyst, Mrs. Ikatonga Hingano, is helping TIHE teachers by providing advice and guidance on how to address the requirements outlined in the Action plan, by providing on-going feedback to TIHE's teachers on their progress in addressing the requirements to meet TNQAB stan-

dards for accreditation and by collecting sufficient evidence to confirm compliance with TNQAB standards. TNQAB is particularly grateful for the enthusiasm and support of the Principal and Acting Deputy Director (TIHE), Mrs Sipola Halafihi, who is a significant driving force in getting these programmes accredited. Other teachers who also play a vital role in this initiative is Mrs. Salote Selui, Mrs Tu'utanga Moala and Mr. Semisi Hopoi. TNQAB acknowledges your hard work and dedication.





## TNQAB and EQAP Collaboration

By Mr Vilimaka Foliaki (PQO-NQ)

An opportunity which could lead to further partnerships between TNQAB and the Pacific Community's Educational Quality and Assessment Programme (EQAP), has recently emerged. The National Qualifications Unit of TNQAB is working together with the Tonga Office of Pacific Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (PCREEE) to facilitate the registration of four certificate-level regional qualifications in Sustainable Energy (SE) onto the Tonga Qualifications Framework (TQF). The EQAP and PCREEE are vital Pacific Island regional initiatives which are both hosted by the Pacific Community (SPC). In Tonga, the Tonga Office of PCREEE is hosted by the MEIDECCC and working very closely with the Tonga Department of Energy.

The above-mentioned qualifications are already registered by EQAP onto the Pacific Register of Qualifications and Standards (PQRS). However, in order for the purpose of these qualifications to be consistent with the goals of PCREEE, the office has expressed their desire to register these regional qualifications onto the TQF as national qualifications for Tonga. This is to ensure quality assured training opportunities in the area of Sustainable Energy are made widely available to training providers in Tonga. The Tonga Department of Energy is the Qualification developer and the costs associated with the registration and accreditation requirements will be covered under the EU-PacTVET Project.

During a meeting on the 19th of May with the PCREEE team, TNQAB were informed that the EU-PacTVET consultancy to conduct the required work had been granted to the Tonga PCREEE Office and will be led by Darlen Lovi and assisted by Paea Tau'aika, Solomon Fifita (PCREEE Tonga Office Manager) and Jesse Benjamin. Professional advice to ensure compliance with TNQAB requirements is provided by TNQAB Principal Qualification Officer for National Qualifications, Vilimaka Foliaki.

This is the first time that TNQAB is establishing a partnership of this kind and discussions have been carried out between TNQAB and PCREEE. Many of them involved EU-PacTVET Project Team Leader from SPC (Suva Office) and EQAP, the Director of Tonga Department of Energy, the CEO of MEIDECC, as well as the Tonga Minister of Education. A national Technical Task Force (TTF) for the Tonga EU-PacTVET Project has also been established to provide advice to the activities funded under the EU-PacTVET project including this specific activity (TQF registration of the four SE qualifications).

This new partnership will not only produce new national qualifications (in Sustainable Energy) for Tonga but these new national qualifications will be recognized as equivalent to their regional versions that are registered by EQAP on the PQRS. The establishment of such equivalence has a lot advantages including the facilitation of labor mobility in the Pacific Islands and abroad in future.



Picture 1: TNQAB meeting with PCREEE officials.  
Clockwise from left to right – Paea Tau'aika, Jesse Benjamin, Darlen Lovi, TNQAB CEO, Dr. Opeti Pulotu, Vilimaka Foliaki (TNQAB National Qualifications).



Picture 2: The PacTVET task force.  
Photo credit: Ministry of Meteorology, Energy, Information, Disaster Management, Environment, Climate Change and Communications (MEIDECC Tonga).  
First row (L-R) Solomon Fifita (Manager of PCREEE), Paula Ma'u (MEIDECC CEO), Nonga Soakai (Deputy CEO, TIST, Ministry of Education and Training).  
Second row (L-R) Samuela Matakaiongo (Principal Assistant Secretary, Department of Energy, MEIDECC), Vilimaka Foliaki (PQO-National Qualification, TNQAB), Nikolasi Fonua (Strategic Development and Engineering Manager, TPL), 'Ofa Sefana (Deputy Director, Department of Energy, MEIDECC), Jesse Benjamin (Program Development Officer, PCREEE), Paea Tau'aika (PacTVET In-Country Coordinator, PCREEE).





## The Whys behind Conducting Accreditation Support Visits

By Mr Kisione Manu (PQO-QF)

Conducting support visits to PCET providers is important for various reasons. Firstly, it is executed in response to a request from a named provider. When conveying a request to our officers, it allows us to identify specific areas that requires our focus and thereby, ensuring our officers are well prepared for any queries on these areas. Secondly, a support visit may be instigated from TNQAB when our officers recognized that there are parts of the applications sent to the office that are consistently not meeting the criteria for approval. In order to minimize its occurrence a support visit is warranted.

Support visits are a form of outreach carried out by our officers to convey messages that are accurate, timely and relevant based on identified needs by both providers and TNQAB. Support visits also ensure that we involved crucial individuals in understanding our processes especially staff members that are not often present in our training workshop. Creating a network of people within a provider that understands our processes, documents and policies, is major step towards making them conscious of the importance and relevance of quality assurance for the development of their own qualifications. There are no time-limits to the support visits to providers, yet it is scheduled according to the availability of our staff members. At the completion of every support visit we take summary points to record and report the scope of areas covered. This is an important practice because it allows for reflection. Most importantly, the feedback provided by providers are crucial to rethinking our processes and ensuring that we guided them correctly to meet our criteria.

There are two important skills that are practiced during site visits and they are effective communication and reflection. Communication is an important skill in bridging key messages to both teachers and administrators because we want them to be very much involved in the process(es) and to convey that we value them as crucial partners in quality assurance. Reflection is equally important because it allows us to identify common areas of 'required support' and 'planning' so that future trainings is well thought out in order to address providers' needs.

Recently, the support visits that we carried out tended to focus on these specific areas:

- Understanding qualification characteristics
- Using QF descriptors
- Qualification development phases
- Support for qualification development
- Understanding course components

- Understanding qualification outcomes
- Understanding learning outcomes and level of learning outcomes in assessments
- The role played by relevant stakeholders in identifying the needs for a qualification and contributions to the development of a qualification
- Engaging expert curriculum writers in designing course components.



Picture 1: TCT-TVET students with their trainer in carpentry. On average there are about 30 students enrolling per course. TCT-TVET is now envisaging the development of a new qual tailored specifically to the unique needs of its learners and ensuring that there are alternative pathways for students in TVET sector.





## The First Panel Training Workshop for 2020

By Miss Siniva Samani (Senior Risk Analyst)

The first panel training workshop for this year was held on the 27th of May at the Davina House. The overall objective of the workshop training was to inform the participants of their responsibilities as panellists and to equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills to become competent panel members.

According to Mrs. Pauline Moa, the TNQAB Deputy CEO, the training was divided into three sessions and they were designed to give participants the opportunity to practice working on qualification credits and qualification level. These hands-on activities were important in consolidating knowledge and skills required to inform panel

members' decision making.

The participants reported enjoying the training as they were able to learn new things about their role and the risks involved if they engaged in another responsibility that may compromise their judgement and decision-making while overseeing a programme of study. They realise the importance of being transparent and the enormous amount of trust that the organisation invests in them.

All of those invited to the workshop training, made the effort to attend and TNQAB would like to acknowledge their commitment to the important role and task that they've been handed.



Participants during the Panel Training workshop on the 27th of May, 2020.

1st row (L-R) Fatui Langilangi (TIST), Metuisela Falesiva (MAFFF), Dr. Mo'ale 'Otunuku (USP), Dr. Opeti Pulotu (TNQAB CEO), Dr. Mele'ana Puloka (FWC Education), Kolotita Kailea (LHS-TVET), Pauline Moa (TNQAB), Paula Tahitu'a (TIHE).

2nd row (L-R) Tupou Pasikala-Fiu (TNQAB), Lesieli Tupola (TNQAB), Vilimaka Foliaki (TNQAB), Soana Kaitapu (TIOE), Tohu'ia Manuofetoea (TNQAB), Kisione Manu (TNQAB), Ikatonga Hingano (TNQAB), Tuituiohu Mafi (TMPI), Siniva Samani (TNQAB).





# The 5 Important Principles of Quality Assurance

By Miss Siniva Samani (Senior Risk Analyst)

This article is an attempt at producing a reduced revised rendition of the CEO's opening speech at TNQAB's first panel training workshop this year. There are five principles that characterize quality assurance; decision, tailor-made system, external involvement, evidence-based and trust. Before delving into the principles and their relevance to quality assurance in Tonga, let us first establish a definition for "quality."

According to Harvey and Knight (2019), quality is something exceptional, perfection or consistent, value for money, fitness for purpose, and transformational while Lander (2019) provides the definition of quality as a service. Similarly, Sallis (2002) suggests that quality is an elusive concept because it can mean so many different things to different people in different places. In order to understand quality in education, Sallis argues that education ought to be viewed as a service rather than a product or outcome (Sallis, 2002).

In spite of these definitions, there is no denying that quality is mandatory and there must be a system in place to ensure quality service in education. Any system established is done so to build public confidence in higher education institutions, vocational education and training institutions and the graduates that they serve. Most importantly, the system must be based on the needs of individuals, communities and the workforce. Therefore, the system adopted depends largely on people, parties concerned and their decision which will have a greater chance of gaining support for implementation if communities and the private and public sector are widely consulted and involved. However, before a decision is executed, we need to address these key questions: Are we confident in our higher education and vocational training provision? If we are, do we want to be even more confident in it? If our answer to this question is 'no', then we need to re-examine our situations to see whether we are ready to take up a quality assurance system. If our answer to the previous question is 'yes', then the parties concerned need to be prepared to make changes to comply with the criteria and requirements of the quality assurance system.

The second principle is a tailor-made system. Each post compulsory education and training (PCET) serves a particular community and inherent in this community is a culture, a way of thinking and of doing things that is unique to the community. A community's culture is fundamentally rooted in philosophy: shared beliefs (whether moral or spiritual or both), shared values and common conceptualisations of what quality education is and

what it should encompass. PCET providers therefore already have a culture in place that determines their satisfactory degree of confidence. Thus, any quality assurance system put in place, must be tailor-made, not borrowed from quality assurance agencies in neighbouring countries and most importantly, it must contain standards that are well accepted by related parties within and outside the provider circle.

External involvement such as engaging a group of panellists in quality assurance is truly valuable because neutral, professional panellists, assessors and auditors are brought in and providers will gain a deeper understanding of quality and the improvements that they need to make to attain quality, through their advice, objective views and recommendations. However, at the same time, panellists must also be understanding of the fact that each provider has its own management system, culture and academic standing. Likewise, providers must be accepting and compliant with the accreditation body's criteria and work procedures. This reciprocal process allows both the provider and the accreditation body to achieve their objectives: quality education is assured by the accreditation body and quality education is delivered by the provider.

The fourth principle is evidence-based.

Evidence-based is an approach that argues that policy and practice must be justified using sound evidence to determine their effects before it is implemented. The only credible and trustworthy kind of evidence is one that is tried and tested. We need to nurture a culture where evidence is the basis for the decisions, practices and policies that we develop regarding quality assurance in education. Education is too important to be based on the unfounded opinions of politicians, researchers, teachers or anyone else. Thus, one of the core responsibilities of panellists is making sound and objective decisions regarding the quality of education delivered by providers, based on evidence. Lastly, there are many definitions of trust but the one I particularly like from the literature about trust in institutions is this one: Trust is the willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that the latter party is 1) benevolent, 2) reliable, 3) competent, 4) honest and 5) open. The relationship that TNQAB hopes to build with panellists is one based on trust where accountability is founded not on strict regulations and rules but on trust. We hope that the same trusting relationship is developed, strengthened and extended to the providers in our care which is one of the factors that makes quality assurance unique.





## Quality Assurance of PCET in Tonga, a trust-based partnership: A reflection

By Mr Vilimaka Foliaki

The words 'trust-based partnership' caught my attention when the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of TNQAB, Dr. Opeti Pulotu, delivered the introductory speech to open the Accreditation Panelists Training Workshop that was held recently at the Davina House on Wednesday 27th May 2020. They were used to describe one of five quality assurance principles, which are critical to the role of an accreditation panelist. The other four include decision-making, tailor-made system, external involvement, and evidence-based. In this short article, I reflect on 'trust-based partnership, as it applies to my own experiences as a staff member of TNQAB.

My choice of trust-based partnership over the other principles is neither arbitrary nor based on any definitive conclusion that it is more important than the rest. My choice, however, is an acknowledgement of this principle and how it has strongly influenced my current understanding of the nature of the work that I do, as well as the challenges that I encounter, while working for TNQAB.

Trust exists between parties, and as correctly explained by Dr. Pulotu, it involves both parties' "willingness to be vulnerable" to one another based on their own evaluation of each other's behaviors, both observable and non-observable. During my short time at TNQAB, I've come to understand that establishing such a trust is no small feat, particularly when I work with a stakeholder for the first time, or when I work with a stakeholder who comes from a professional background that is different from mine. I've found that in such circumstances, it becomes challenging to evaluate the sincerity and dependability of a stakeholder. Similar challenges may also be encountered by the other parties from their own end of the partnership.

Although this trust-based partnership was mentioned in the context of short-term contracted accreditation panelists, I think that this principle may also apply to most, if not all, quality assurance-related responsibilities expected of staff and stakeholders of TNQAB. For example, even though I'm a fulltime staff of TNQAB and I've worked for the organization for a number of years, I, in my line of work, have directly experienced circumstances in which I felt the need for the existence of such kind of trust, either as a giver of it or an earner of it. Whether I am providing advice to a qualification developer or I am assessing an application to establish an industry advisory committee, I've come to learn that quality outcomes are more forthcoming when the nature of the work relationship between myself and a stakeholder is more trusting and consultative than when it's inflexible and riddled with suspicion. However, I have also learned that while the intention of such partnership may be genuine, it also provides the perfect conditions for conflict of interest situations if they are not properly managed.

In the socioeconomic realities of a small country like ours, maintaining impartiality in the work that we do can be a complicated and slippery undertaking if we have

problems either with trusting others or earning the trust of others. We need to be constantly conscious of the difference between being related or friends and being partners in quality assurance of education. To achieve the quality education that we all desire, establishing trust between the different stakeholders of quality assurance of education, is a precondition. Trust must exist between TNQAB staff themselves as well as between TNQAB and the rest of its external stakeholders. Having the ability to not only give trust and but also earn the trust of others can empower us to rise above our own self-interests to realize the common good.

Last but not least, to my mind, referring to the quality assurance work that we do at TNQAB as a 'trust-based partnership', highlights the true nature of this kind of relationship – as one that is grounded in a culture of positive interdependence, and described more clearly by the famous adage "We swim together or sink together." Trust arises out of a commitment of parties to each other based not only on a common understanding of the synergy of their combined efforts but also on an awareness of their own and each other's vulnerabilities and the great risks which they put themselves and everyone else in, when they enter into such partnership.

In light of the wider impact of the role of our organization in the quality assurance of education in Tonga, I believe that such an important responsibility will be an elusive endeavor in the absence of trust. Trust is non-negotiable. For TNQAB, it means that we can all rest easy knowing that all staff, both full-time and part-time, are committed to doing their utmost and that they are not trying to take advantage of one another or bring dispute to the organization. For stakeholders of TNQAB, including both full-time staff and part-time staff, it means that they know that the organization has their interests at heart and that it cares about them as people. Even though that we work for a scarcely-resourced organization and that we live in close-knit communities in a small country such as Tonga, the presence of the trust-based partnership that our CEO, Dr. Pulotu, referred to in his speech to define the important work that we do in education, would allow us to rise above temporary challenges to realize the quality of education that we all desire.







## National Qualifications: Opportunities to be a catalyst for positive changes for your institution and Tonga

By Vilimaka Foliaki PQO-National Qualifications TNQAB

*“When the boring teacher enters the classroom, the students find the hand of the clock slowing down”*

I've come across the above expression in numerous occasions in my previous profession as a teacher educator. In retrospect, most of the time, I used to mull over the root causes of the general public negativity toward the educational services provided by our teachers and trainers through our social institutions such as our schools, technical and vocational institutions and universities. What could be so mundane and uninteresting about these services that learners do not have much to look forward to when they graduate other than the false hope that they may have acquired the skills and knowledge that their dream jobs would require? It may sound humorous but perhaps this may actually be the case with some of our training institutions and programmes.

The fact is, everything including education as well as society, changes with time. Further, education is the means through which society responds to its own needs for change. In order to remain relevant to the needs of a changing society, education must also keep up with the change that's going on in society. Thus, no matter how much we try to provide a fine service by offering the same set of training programmes year in and year out without review, we will soon lose touch with the needs of the workplace and society at large. Consequently, our institutions may begin to experience the wider negative impacts of such neglect in the form of reduced enrolment, loss of funding for resources, increased dissatisfaction with training, increased drop-out rates, and high staff turnover.

In these challenging times, offering a new training programme is one of the things which a training organization could do to help bring about positive changes not only to its own immediate locality, but also to the wider community and the Tongan society as a whole. For a training organization, these positive changes could be as straightforward and immediate such as the recruitment of a new staff or increased enrolment, or they could be more subtle and long term such as sustained growth in terms of improvement in resources and infrastructure as well as improved organizational reputation and training relevance.

The American human rights activist, Malcolm X, is quoted to have said “Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today”.

You do not have to start from scratch. We at TNQAB, with the assistance of some of our industry stakeholders, have already completed approximately 50% of the requirements for accreditation,

for you. In other words, we've completely developed national qualifications and they are already registered on the Tonga Qualifications Framework (TQF). Here they are:

1. National Certificate in Customer Service Level 3;
2. National Certificate in Tour Guide Level 3;
3. National Certificate in Food and Beverage Level 3;
4. National Certificate in Cookery Level 3;
5. National Certificate Front Office Management Level 4;
6. National Certificate in Whale Guide Level 4; and
7. National Certificate in Commercial Cookery in Level 4

(Note: The development of national qualifications is 'work in progress'. National qualifications in other sectors such as Horticulture, Carpentry, and Sustainable Energy are currently being developed.)

If you are interested in offering training that will lead to the award of any of the national qualifications listed #1-7 above, please obtain the qualification documents, read them thoroughly to understand the requirements, discuss with your authorities to see whether your institution can deliver the required training programme to award the national qualification. We at TNQAB are more than willing to meet with you to discuss further or to offer guidance and assistance. Once you've done all these, and you believe your institution can deliver the training programme, you can then apply to TNQAB to accredit your training programme.

As mentioned earlier, depending on the qualification and the requirements of its training programme the preparation time could range from about 6 months to more than a year. During this time, we at TNQAB are willing to provide you with the assistance that you need to ensure your training programme is fully accredited before you can actually enrol students.

This could be the opportunity that your training institution, staff and students have been waiting for. This could be a turn for the better for your institution. The development and TQF registration of national qualifications have already been completed for you. This means these processes have already been paid for you. Why not give it a try? For more information on national qualifications, please contact the officer provided below:

Mr. Vilimaka Foliaki  
PQO - National Qualifications  
Telephone 28-136  
Mobile: 8446230  
Email: vilimaka.foliaki@tnqab.to





## The Quality Audit Training Workshop

By Miss Siniva Samani (Senior Risk Analyst)

The first audit training workshop for this year was conducted on the 11th of June at the Davina House. The objective of the training was to inform Post Compulsory Education and Training (PCET) providers of the quality audit process and important processes in preparation for the audit, like writing the self-evaluation report. The training consisted of two presentation sessions, first led by Mrs Ikatonga Hingano and the second session by Mrs Pauline Moa. Ikatonga gave an overview of the quality audit process, the audit plan and the audit site visit. While in the second session, Mrs Pauline emphasized on the importance for providers to conduct self-evaluation against quality standards for accreditation. This will help introduce a culture of quality to providers. It means that accredited providers will appreciate their internal role and responsibility for the quality of their programmes while TNQAB in conducting the external review and quality audits. The TNQAB CEO, Dr. Opeti Pulotu noted in the opening address he gave at the workshop training, that considering the critical importance of vocational training and higher education to the development of a country, quality audits hold a significant value as it can highlight areas in teaching and learning in an institution which can be improved. Invitations were sent out to seven schools who confirmed the attendance of 19 of their staff members, however, only 15 were able to participate in the training. The participants noted that they especially liked that the presentations clarified the quality audit process and the important expectations required of them so that they can well prepared. TNQAB acknowledges the commitment of these seven schools to self-development via quality assurance processes like the quality audit. We especially thank the participants for making time available to attend the workshop. We appreciate your commitment.



Picture above: The participants at the Quality Audit Training workshop on the 11th of June, 2020.

1st row (L-R) Kilisitina Saulala (CUP), Fatafehi Fifita (LHS-Tvet), 'Ofa Mone Va'enuku (TTI), Dr. 'Opeti Pulotu (TNQAB CEO), Dr. Tau'aho 'Ahokovi (CUP), Seini Siahi Fifita (QSSINAH), Dr. 'Ungatea Kata (TTI), Katherine Vaka (QSSINAH).

2nd row (L-R) Vilimaka Foliaki (TNQAB), Kaveinga Taufu (MTI), Lisione Pahulu (MTI), Paea Finau (MTI), Siniva Samani (TNQAB), Kehealani Nau (ITEP), Linda Helu (ATI), Faakialele Manu (ATI), Sateki Fangupo (Hango) Sitanilei Hoko (QSSINAH), Lesieli Tupola (TNQAB), Ikatonga Hingano (TNQAB), Kisione Manu (TNQAB).







## Qualification Development Workshop Training

*By Miss Siniva Samani (Senior Risk Analyst)*

The organisation's workshop training on Qualification development was conducted on the 26th of June at the Epworth Hall in Kolofono'u. The workshop consisted of two sessions, the first was led by Vilimaka Foliaki whose presentation focused on two activities – needs analysis and functional analysis. These activities are critical for programme development because when carried out effectively by qualification developers, they will ensure that TQF-registered qualifications are relevant and addresses real needs in society and the work force. The second session was led by Kisione Manu who elaborated on these issues – the current trend in qualification development, what TNQAB would like to see happen in the future with qualification development and how a transparent, coordinated and systematic approach to qualification development helps to materialize the goals that TNQAB envisages for qualification development. The TNQAB CEO, Dr. Opeti Pulotu noted in his opening address that TNQAB intends to base all Tonga qualifications on needs, outcomes, flexibility and collaboration.

There was an overwhelming turnout at the workshop and the participants ranged from representatives from post compulsory education and training providers to government ministries and observers from the World Bank (SET project), Tonga Skills and the Ministry of Education and Training (Quality Improvement Component). The organization would like to commend all participants for making the effort to take part in the workshop.



Kisione Manu during his presentation at Epworth Hall.  
Photo credit: Building Families for Tonga Inc.



Vilimaka Foliaki during his presentation at Epworth Hall.



The participants during the Programme Development workshop training at Epworth Hall on the 26<sup>th</sup> of June, 2020.





## TNQAB Meeting with Legal Adviser

By Siniva Samani (Senior Risk Analyst)

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of June, Sela Bloomfield, the lawyer contracted to amend the TNQAB Act, Regulation and policies, visited the office to meet the staff members for the first time. The TNQAB CEO, Dr. Opeti Pulotu welcomed Sela and noted that it's been more than a decade since the organization worked under the jurisdiction of the current TNQAB Act. Therefore, it's most rewarding and only befitting to make necessary changes to the Act in order to remain relevant and responsive to the current trends in quality assurance in Tonga.

Sela expressed her gratitude at the opportunity to work with the staff to amend the TNQAB Act and emphasized that she is only a servant of the organization and is here to serve. She has hopes and intentions of meeting with the staff members individually to discuss the amendments that they believe and envision to be incorporated into the Act.

Sela's contract is funded by Tonga Skills and this first phase, lasts for 20 working days. The organization is indebted to Tonga Skills for funding this project and to Sela Bloomfield, for accepting to work on amending the TNQAB Act which in the end, will benefit the organization, its staff and stakeholders.



## Notification

The following accreditation applications are currently in the office and are being evaluated. They are:

1. St. Joseph Business College Certificate in Business Administration & Management Level 4.
2. Queen Salote College TVET Certificate in Catering Level 2.
3. Tupou Tertiary Institute Diploma in Business Level 5
4. Tupou Tertiary Institute Diploma in Business Level 6
5. Tonga Institute of Higher Education Certificate in Media & Journalism Level 4.
6. Tonga Institute of Higher Education Certificate in Accounting (Finance & Management) Level 4.
7. Tonga Institute of Higher Education Diploma in Media & Journalism Level 5.
8. Christ University in Pacific Bachelor in Business Administration degree

9. Christ University in Pacific Master in Global Business degree

10. Christ University in Pacific Bachelor in Commerce (Accounting) degree

The following PCET providers are scheduled to be audited as follows:

In October -

1. ITEP
2. Liahona TVET
3. 'Ahopanilolo

In November -

1. Monfort Technical Institute
2. Hango Agricultural College

In December -

1. Queen Salote Institute of Nursing and Allied Health
2. Christ University in Pacific



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