TONGA NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND ACCREDITATION BOARD

GUIDELINES AND

APPLICATION FORMS FOR

RECOGNITION OF COMMUNITY

EDUCATION IN TONGA

January 2018

Contents

1. BACKGROUND

The establishment of the Tonga National Qualifications and Accreditation Board (TNQAB) by the Government of Tonga demonstrated its intentions to strengthen post school education and training through setting standards and criteria for providers, their teaching programmes and the qualifications they offer.

One of the functions of TNQAB is to promote quality assurance in community or non-formal education and training programmes. The TNQAB's processes for the recognition of community learning are designed to help enhance the quality of such learning activities and to encourage a culture of continuous improvement. The processes enable community learner achievements to be recognized. Their implementation will help give learners, the community and government, confidence that the education and training provided is of good quality. By "recognizing" community learning, TNQAB is saying that the course is documented and meets the criteria in section 6. Recognition does not mean that the course is "accredited" or that TNQAB has an ongoing quality assurance role with the provider.

2. INTRODUCTION

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the current versions of the TNQAB documents:
    QualityAssurancePolicies.
    TongaQualificationsFrameworkPolicies.

These guidelines are designed to be enabling rather than prescriptive so that each CommunityEducation ProviderhasscopetodemonstratethatitmeetsTNQAB'squality assurance criteria in a way that acknowledges the size, nature and complexity of the organization as well as the community learning activities they support. In implementing the guidelines, TNQAB will work collaboratively with the provider and consider evidence from a variety of sources.

Because community and non-formal education opportunities are characterized by diversity, flexibility and responsiveness to the identified learning needs of communities and individual learners, TNQAB takes a flexible approach to the way community education providers can demonstrate that they meet the quality assurance criteria. The notion of 'fit for purpose' will be applied in evaluating the community learning against the criteria.

Given the nature of community and non-formal education, **TNQAB will register both the provider and the course(s) in the one process.** It is generally expected that any given provider will only deliver one or a small number of community education programmes.

3. RATIONALEFOR RECOGNISING COMMUNITYEDUCATION

Recognition of community learning helps to:

Provide a mechanism to formally recognize learner achievements and competencies

Provide confidence to the community and related stakeholders that the training services provided have met relevant quality assurance criteria;

Ensure that the learning outcomes are consistent with expectations of the community and learners;

Assure the learners that the learning activities relate to community and socially accepted values and practices;

Provide pathways and opportunities for learners to credit their community learning achievements towards formal qualifications through recognition of prior learning (RPL)where appropriate.

4. WHAT IS COMMUNITY EDUCATION?

The definition of community or non-formal education is evolving internationally. It includes any organized educational activity that takes place outside the formal educational system. Usually it is flexible, learner-centered, contextualized and uses a participatory approach. Community education could take place in a workplace, community facility, sports field, church, home etc.

Courses are short term and do not normally lead to a formal qualification. However, these guidelines recognize that some "micro-credentialing" may be classified as community education provided the courses or activities are less than 10 credits (see next section for explanation of credits).

What it Isn't:
A course or activity is NOT classed as community education if any of the following apply:

- It is an assessed course of more than 10 credits.
- It leads directly to a qualification registered on the Tonga Qualifications Framework (TQF);
- It uses a protected term (Refer TNQAB-Quality Assurance Policy) in the names of any of the coursesthatitprovides;
- The provider enrolls foreign students for a period of more than 2 months in any of the community education programmes it provides.

In these cases, the provider should be fully registered as a Post Compulsory Education and Training (PCET) provider.

5.   ACCREDITING COMMUNITY EDUCATION TO FORMAL QUALIFICATIONS

Some learners may wish to gain credit for their community education into formal courses or qualification with a PCET provider. There are two ways in which this can occur:

1. The PCET provider gives credit into their course for the learning that has already taken place through a process of recognition of prior learning (RPL). Having the community learning already registered through TNQAB makes this process much easier as there will be a clear record of what was learned and to what level.

or

2. A prior arrangement between the community provider and a PCET provider to give credit into the PCET provider's qualification based on an understanding of where <u>the community learning matches the learning outcomes of the PCETqualification</u>. In such cases TNQABcan help both providers to set up this process. In some cases, TNQAB may require a formal association between the community provider and a PCET provider as a condition of the approval.

3. The currency of community education is a "**credit**". All community education courses or parts of courses that are submitted for recognition must specify the calculation of credits. One credit is equal to ten notional hours of learning. (see the glossary on page 9 for more information on credits). TNQAB staff will help providers to calculate how many credits the programme covers.
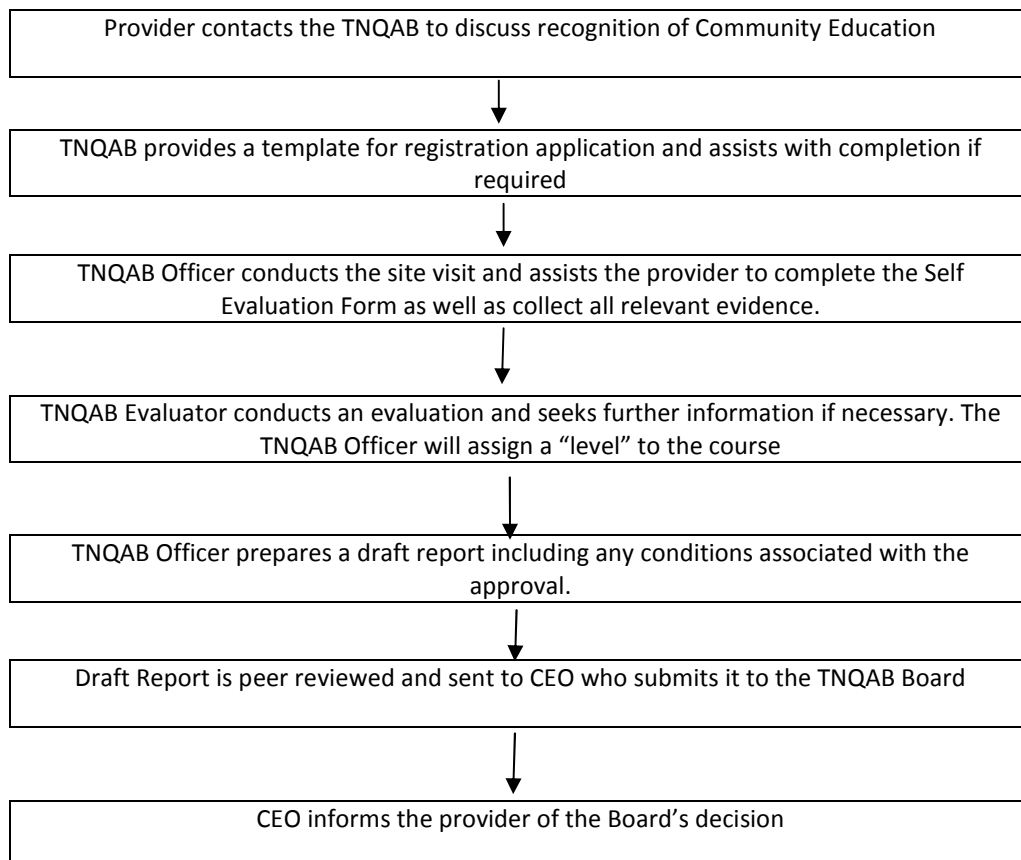
6. CRITERIA FOR RECOGNITION OF COMMUNITY EDUCATION

TNQAB Criteria for Recognition of Community Education	
1. Organisation	The provider or its governing body is a **legally established** or **recognised body**. For example, this could be a village committee, sports organisation, cultural group, church group, employer, government department, etc.
2. Programme Development and Review	The provider has a documented programme of learning which specifies the learning outcome, content, level, method of teaching, assessment and resources needed. The provider develops and reviews its learning activities in response to identified community needs.
3. Programme Delivery	Community learning activities are delivered in an educationally sound, culturally appropriate and safe way.
4. Resources	Adequate and appropriate resources are available to sustain the community learning activities.
5. Personnel	The provider ensures that the trainers have adequate skills, knowledge and competence to teach the programme.
6. Learner Information and Support	The provider ensures that accurate and relevant information is Supplied to learners and communities before and during the course.
7. Assessment (if applicable)	The provider ensures fair, valid, and consistent assessment.
8. Reporting Learner Achievements	The provider has adequate systems for recording, storage and reporting (to learners and other organisations if applicable) of learner achievements.

7. EVALUATION PROCESS FOR RECOGNITION OF COMMUNITY EDUCATION

TNQAB works collaboratively with providers to ensure that TNQAB captures the accurate and real information about the activities of community education in Tonga.

The process for the recognition of community education is as follows:

Provider contacts the TNQAB to discuss recognition of Community Education

↓

TNQAB provides a template for registration application and assists with completion if required

↓

TNQAB Officer conducts the site visit and assists the provider to complete the Self Evaluation Form as well as collect all relevant evidence.

↓

TNQAB Evaluator conducts an evaluation and seeks further information if necessary. The TNQAB Officer will assign a "level" to the course

↓

TNQAB Officer prepares a draft report including any conditions associated with the approval.

↓

Draft Report is peer reviewed and sent to CEO who submits it to the TNQAB Board

↓

CEO informs the provider of the Board's decision

NOTES

The provider fills in the application form in either English or Tongan and sends it to TNQAB.

When the application is received and logged, the TNQAB Officer then acknowledges the application and makes arrangements to visit the provider. The purpose of the site visit is to assist the provider to complete one or more self-evaluation forms for community education activities and/or training courses. The template identifies sources of evidence that demonstrate that the provider is meeting the TNQAB's criteria for the recognition of community education (see Section 6). For those providers who have oral

evidence only, TNQAB will provide support by helping to document relevant information from staff, a sample of the learners and other stakeholders.

A TNQAB Evaluator (other than the TNQAB staff member who has worked with the provider through the application process) examines documentation including the self-evaluation and writes a brief report, which provides an assessment as to whether or not the provider has met each of the TNQAB Criteria for the Recognition of Community Education. Further information or clarification made be sought from the provider during this process. The report identifies good practice and areas for improvement. It includes a recommendation as to whether or not the TNQAB Board should approve and whether any conditions should be attached e.g that the provider develops formal links with a PCET provider.

The report and recommendations are submitted to the TNQAB Board through the Chief Executive Officer. The TNQAB Board considers the TNQAB Evaluator's Report and makes a decision. A letter notifying the provider of the Board's decision is sent with the TNQAB Board's approved final report.

If the Board's decision is NOT to recognize the community learning activities, the provider can resubmit the application to TNQAB as soon as the issues in question have been addressed satisfactorily.

Appeals by a provider against the TNQAB Board's decisions will be processed in accordance with approved policy as published in the latest version of the TNQAB's Quality Assurance Policies.

8.   RETAINING RECOGNITION STATUS

It is anticipated that a TNQAB Officer will visit each provider of Community Education once per year, to ensure that the course is still being offered as planned, to update documentation if required and to generally offer support and guidance.

This visit will usually be scheduled for when a class is in progress so that the TNQAB Officer can observe the delivery and speak with learners.

9. GLOSSARY

Credit
The numerical value assigned to a full qualification, as well as to its components, that represents the estimated time needed for a typical learner to demonstrate that all the specified outcomes have been achieved. Accredit in this context is 10 notional hours of learning.

Notional Learning Hours are the estimated time spent by a typical learner in achieving specified learning outcomes. It includes time spent being directly taught, plus out of class activity such as: time spent in workshops, time spent studying and doing assignments, time spent on supervised practical work placements and time spent on assessment.

Post Compulsory Education and Training (PCET)
The post compulsory (school) education and training sector in Tonga comprises all forms of education and training activities that occur outside the school system utilising any structured mode of delivery.

Programme (of Learning)
A coherent set of courses, modules, papers or units designed to meet the requirements of a qualification.Usually written into a "Programme Document".

Qualification
Formal certification that a person has successfully achieved all learning outcomes relevant to identified individual, professional, Industry or community needs.

Quality Assurance
A generic term for all activities which provide assurance that the educational and training services of a provider are being delivered effectively, to the required standard, and in line with published goals and objectives.

Quality Standards
The Standards that PCET providers whether formal or community must meet in order to give assurance that they are offering quality PCET. It has ten elements and each of them have criteria that must be met to demonstrate that standards are being or will be met.

Recognition
Means that TNQAB is satisfied that the course is documented and meets basic requirements. It does not imply full quality assurance by TNQAB.

Tonga Qualifications Framework
A classification structure indicating the levels and types of quality assured qualifications.

TONGA NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND ACCREDITATION BOARD

RECOGNITION OF COMMUNITY EDUCATION

INITIAL APPLICATIONFORM

January 2018

RECOGNITION OF COMMUNITY
EDUCATION INITIAL APPLICATION FORM

These details are required of Community Education Providers to start the process of applying for TNQAB recognition of the community or community learningactivitiestheysupport.

Once received, a TNQAB Officer will contact you to arrange a visit where the full application process will be explained and possibly completed.

A. Community Education Provider Details	
Name of Community Education Provider	
Location of provider's premises	
Mailing Address	
B. Contact Details	
Contact Person	
Designation	
Telephone Number	
Email Address	
Website (if applicable)	

C. Community Education Activities for which Recognition is sought
(please give a brief description of the course or courses which you wish to have recognised – this is not the application for course approval, but simply a statement about what training you would like to have recognised.)
1.
2.
3.

TNQAB Contact details

Please send the completed application form to:

Chief Executive Officer
Tonga National Qualifications and Accreditation Board
Level 1, Molisi City Central Building
PO Box 65
Nuku'alofa, Tongatapu
Kingdom of Tonga

Or email a soft copy to:

fololina@tnqab.to

Recognitionof Community Education Self-EvaluationForm

Name of Community Education: _____

Date of Application: _____

Course or Activity_____

(Note that a separate self-evaluation will be required for each course or activity)

It is intended that providers complete this application in collaboration with TNQAB. The guidelines are designed to be enabling rather than prescriptive so that each Community Education Provider has scope to demonstrate that it meets TNQAB's quality assurance criteria in a way that acknowledges the size, nature and complexity of the organisation as well as the learning activities they support. In implementing the guidelines, TNQAB will work collaboratively with the provider and consider evidence from a variety of sources.

Because community education opportunities are characterised by diversity, flexibility and responsiveness to the identified learning needs of communities and individual learners, TNQAB takes a flexible approach to the way community education providers can demonstrate that they meet the quality assurance criteria. The notion of "fit for purpose" will be applied in evaluating the community learning against the criteria.

TNQAB Criteria	Indicators/Guiding Questions	Answers to questions and examples of evidence to show that your organisation and activities meet the TNQAB criteria.
Organisation The provider or its governing body is a legally established or recognised body.	The organisation could be a legal entity (e.g a company or trust), or it could for example, be a village committee, sports organisation, cultural group, church group, employer, government department, etc.	
Programme Development and Review The provider has a documented programme of learning which specifies the learning outcome, content, level, method of teaching, assessment and resources needed The provider develops and reviews its learning activities in response to identified community needs.	Is there a documented programme of learning? Are the learning outcomes and/or defined competencies specified and likely to be achieved as a result of the community education activities? Is it clear how much time would the average learner need in order to achieve each learning outcomes? How are the needs of learners, community groups and other stakeholders identified and reflected in the development and ongoing review of the activity.?	
Programme Delivery Community learning activities are delivered in a pedagogically sound, culturally appropriate and safe way.	What teaching and learning approaches are used? How does the provider know that the activities meet the learning needs of the participants? (e.g is there a student survey process or is there opportunity for students to give verbal feedback about the course?)	

TNQAB Criteria	Indicators/Guiding Questions	Answers to questions and examples of evidence to show that your organisation and activities meet the TNQAB criteria.
	How are the learning activities monitored and evaluated?	
Resources Adequate resources are available to sustain the training/learning activities	(How) Is the provider funded? (The provider could be funded by government, church, student fees or voluntary services and donations) What financial management practices are used? Are the training site, equipment and learning resources suitable? How does the provider ensure that the premises, equipment and learning resources meet the required level so health and safety for all concerned?	
Personnel The provider ensures that the trainers have the skills, knowledge and competence to teach the programme.	What skills and experience do the trainers have? Are they sufficient?	

Learner Information and Support
 	
The provider ensures that accurate and relevant information is suppliedto learners and communities before and during the course
	What information is available to learners and communities about:
	    content and learning outcomes;
	    enrolment procedures,
	    costs and equipment or materials that they
	    need to provide;	

TNQAB Criteria	Indicators/Guiding Questions	Answers to questions and examples of evidence to show that your organisation and activities meet the TNQAB criteria.
	assessment procedures (if applicable), health and safety; and further learning opportunities.	
Assessment (if relevant) The provider ensures fair, valid, consistent and relevant assessment.	What does the provider do to ensure that assessment: is suitable for the learning outcomes? criteria are clear and learners are informed about them? is fair and valid?	
Reporting Learner Achievements The provider has adequate systems for recording, storage and reporting of learner achievements to the learners.	Do learners receive regular feedback on their progress? How does the provider store learner results?	