



2020 Accreditation Forum

Current processes, changes and challenges in the Independent School sector

(Breakaway Session)

Mary Malia



PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- **Legislative Framework**
- **Umalusi's current accreditation process**
- **Accreditation Appeals**
- **Changes and Challenges**
- **Questions and Discussion**

Legislative framework

- National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act No. 67 of 2008, as amended
- GENFETQA Act, 2001, (as amended)
- Policy and Criteria for the Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Independent Schools and Private Assessment Bodies, GG 35830 of 29 October 2012 as amended in 2017
- Regulations regarding the Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Independent Schools and Private Assessment Bodies, GG 41206 of 27 October 2017.

UMALUSI'S CURRENT ACCREDITATION PROCESS

- Letter of intent to apply for accreditation
- Quality Promotion workshops
- Self-evaluation report & desktop evaluation
- Site verification visit
- Consolidation of desktop & site visit reports into an accreditation report
- Presentation of the report to the ACC for a recommendation
 - Accreditation
 - 2 years provisional accreditation
 - Window period to improve
 - No accreditation
- Approval of the recommendation by the CEO
- Notification of outcome to the institution with feedback on areas which did not meet the minimum requirements
- Improvement report
- Appeal process
- Monitoring of accredited independent schools
- Extension of scope

ACCREDITATION APPEALS

Please note that an appeal of an accreditation outcome only considers **what was in place at the time of the evaluation**, and whether the correct decision was made taking into account the evidence that was available at the time of the evaluation.

ACCREDITATION APPEALS PROCEDURE:

Step	Action taken
1	A query or appeal is received from the institution.
2	The query or appeal is recorded in the appeals register.
3	The email or letter containing the query or appeal is brought to the attention of the relevant manager to investigate the matter.
4	The query or appeal and findings are presented to the Internal Accreditation Committee (IAC).
5	The query or appeal and findings together with the recommendation of the IAC are presented to the Accreditation Committee of Council (ACC).
6	The ACC considers the findings and the recommendations of the IAC, and then either: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. reviews their original decision, or ii. stands by their original decision, and advises that the matter be referred to the Appeals Committee.
7	The institution is advised to lodge a formal appeal to be handled by the Accreditation Appeals Committee.
8	The appeal is presented to the Accreditation Appeals Committee.
9	Recommendations of the Accreditation Appeals Committee are presented for a decision and ratification by EXCO through the AAC Chair.
10	The outcome is communicated to the institution.

CHANGES AND CHALLENGES

1. Registration / Accreditation:

- An independent school must first be registered with the relevant provincial education department as an independent school (to obtain a “licence” to operate) before it is accredited by Umalusi.
- Independent schools offering a qualification registered on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework that received registration must apply to Umalusi for accreditation within **one year** after registration.
- Accreditation is linked to the EMIS registration and registered physical address of the school.

Registration / Accreditation

- Any change to:
 - Physical address
 - Grades offered at the registered premises
- must be authorised in writing by the Provincial Education Department (PED) **before** the change is made. Such evidence must be submitted to Umalusi.
- Since Umalusi's accreditation is life time, schools that are provisionally registered with the provincial education department cannot be granted accreditation.
- If for some reason a school is provisionally registered with the PED, it is the responsibility of the school to insist on the conditions for provisional registration to be recorded on the EMIS registration document.

2. Exam centre registration:

The exam centre registration is the responsibility of the assessment body and not Umalusi

- Umalusi has provided the PED / Assessment Bodies with a list of schools which are compliant with the accreditation requirements as at **31 October 2019**.
- The cut off date for compliance to be included on the “green list” for the 2020 examination cycle was **31 August 2019**.
- This is the **only** list to be recognised by the PED.
- **No letters** will be issued to individual schools (other than the outcome of the accreditation process).
- The “green/amber/red” status will **not** change during an academic year.
- Schools which have letters from the past but have not been compliant with the accreditation (or monitoring) requirements are indicated as not compliant (**red**), therefore learners who write the NSC at those centres will not be certificated by Umalusi in 2020.

Exam Centre registration

- PEDs / Assessment Bodies can apply for concessions for schools that are “red”, supported by relevant documentation.
- The application for concession must come from the PEDs / Assessment Bodies and **NOT** directly from the schools.
- PEDs / Assessment Bodies have their own requirements that schools must meet to become an examination centre.
- Umalusi will certificate learners who are writing at centres approved by the PEDs / Assessment Bodies and are indicated as compliant or granted a concession on Umalusi’s lists.
- Umalusi cannot force the PEDs / Assessment Bodies to grant schools examination centre statuses.
- Exam centre status is the prerogative of the PEDs / Assessment Bodies

3. Improvement Reports

- The process to be followed for independent schools who receive an outcome of “provisional accreditation” or “a window period to improve”.
- Letters clearly indicating the areas where the institution did not meet the minimum requirements for accreditation and the time period in which the minimum requirements must be met and payment made, are sent to the affected institutions.
- Such private education institutions are granted an opportunity to improve on their submission and meet the minimum requirements for accreditation before the final accreditation decision is made.

Improvement Reports

“Follow up” site visits are conducted to verify implementation of evidence submitted in the “improvement report”.

- Unannounced, but evaluator will have a letter of authorisation from Umalusi. Schools can phone Umalusi to verify.
- Since follow-up site visits only focus on specific conditions for which schools have already submitted evidence, the site visits can take place at any time of the school year.
- School calendars for the current year are requested and are consulted prior to arranging the unannounced visit to prevent the evaluator turning up during a special school event.
- The process applies to private education institutions that are granted 2 years provisional accreditation or a window period to improve.

NOTE:

- **All accreditation criteria must still be met at the point of review** – a drop in standards will affect the accreditation outcome, even if those indicators were not listed in the original feedback.
- Therefore, in addition to the listed requirements, the evaluator may check any of the accreditation criteria, e.g.:
 - Teacher qualifications and SACE registration
 - School results
 - Health and Safety Certificate
 - Servicing of fire equipment
 - Facilities (including hostels)
 - Etc.

4. Change of Premises

- If a school moves premises once accredited, Umalusi must be informed within 14 days and an application for change of premises must be submitted to Umalusi within 30 days.
- This must be accompanied by the relevant authorisation documents from the PED.

5. Change of Principal

- If a new principal is appointed, the following documents must be submitted to Umalusi:
 - Letter of appointment on a school letterhead;
 - Certified copy of principal's ID document (or passport in the case of a foreign national);
 - Certified copies of:
 - Professional teaching qualifications
 - SACE registration document

6. Professional Qualifications and SACE registration of teachers:

- In terms of legislation, 100% of teachers employed at a school must be registered with SACE.
- One of the requirements for accreditation is that 80% of the teachers must be **professionally qualified** and have current registration with SACE.
- Teaching qualifications must be relevant to schools e.g BEd, PGCE, HED, etc.
- This does not include ABET qualifications, ECD, PAM etc.
- The SACE registration must be current.
- Teachers with proof of submission of application to SACE cannot be considered.

7. Fraudulent SACE certificates:

- Umalusi is experiencing an increasing number of fraudulent SACE certificates being presented.
- All SACE certificates will be submitted to SACE for verification.
- It is the responsibility of the principal to check and verify the authenticity of the SACE certificates submitted by teachers upon employment at the school. The principal will therefore be held accountable for all fraudulent SACE certificates submitted to Umalusi on behalf of the school.
- Umalusi reserves the right to report any fraudulent SACE certificates to the SAPS.

8. Turnaround Time:

- Umalusi considers a school's application after submission of the self-evaluation (SE) report.
- Once the SE has been evaluated and accepted, the planning and preparation for the site visit commences.
- The turnaround time from the submission of the self-evaluation report to communication of the outcome to the institution after presentation of the accreditation report to the Accreditation Committee of Council can be up to 18 months.

The following factors can delay finalisation of the accreditation process:

- ✓ Sending the application back to the school for further information;
 - ✓ Non-payment for the site visit;
 - ✓ The school has not attended a QP workshop in preparation for the site visit;
 - ✓ Exams taking place;
 - ✓ School holidays;
 - ✓ Schools deferring site visits;
 - ✓ planning schools in remote areas to be visited at the same time;
- etc.

9. Benchmarking Assessments:

- It is **just** a recommendation for schools to measure their performance against others and to learn best practices.
- **It is not compulsory**
- **Some examples of benchmarking tests we have seen:**
 - ✓ International Benchmark Test (IBT)
 - ✓ Conquesta Olympiads
 - ✓ Singapore Maths
 - ✓ ACER Exams (Australian Council for Education Research)
 - ✓ Core Skills Tests
 - ✓ IEB - ACER
 - ✓ Benchmark Common Assessment Tasks
 - ✓ DBE Common Assessment Tasks
 - ✓ Arrangements with a neighbouring school

10. Accreditation certificates:

- Issued to independent schools that are granted accreditation (not provisional accreditation)
- Are issued with an expiry date. Schools that meet the requirements during monitoring will be issued with updated certificates at the end of the period of validity.
- Updated certificates will be posted / sent by courier / can be collected at Umalusi. They will not be presented again at certificate presentation ceremonies.
- Certificates presented without an expiry date will be recalled.
- The public and stakeholders will be advised that only accreditation certificates with an expiry date are valid.

CONTACT DETAILS

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Submissions:

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- Accreditation Appeals: Accreditation.Appeals@umalusi.org.za
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QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION



Thank
You