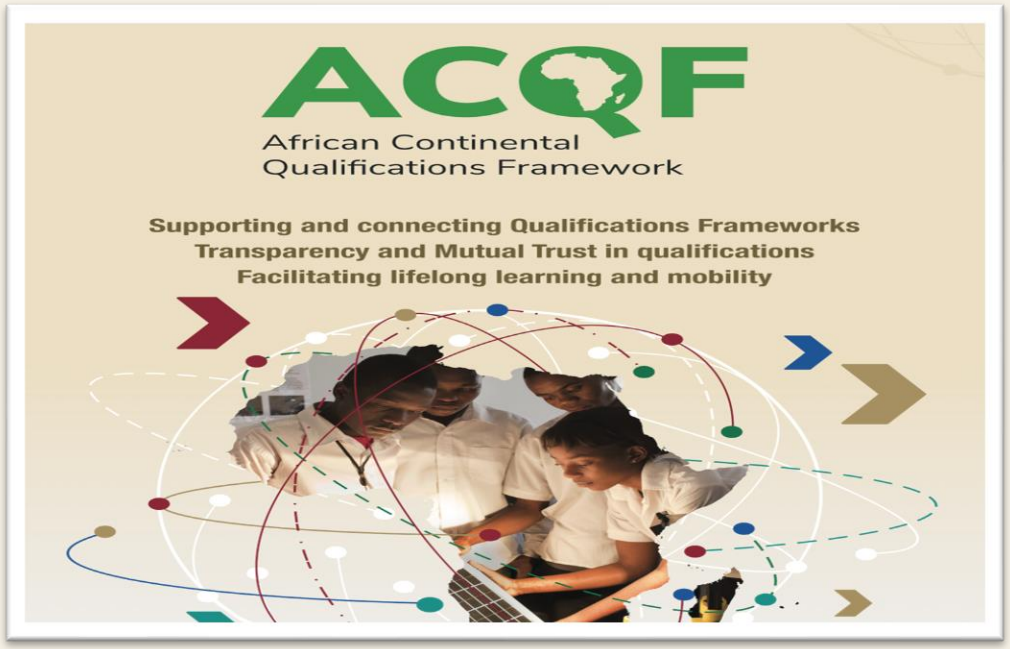

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African Continental
Qualifications Framework

SQA
Recognising your Competencies

Stakeholder Capacity Building on the Implementation of the SNCATS

Day 2: Providers

19th March 2025

Facilitator: James Mwewa

Global Gateway

Funded by the European Union

African Union

ETF Working together Learning for life
European Training Foundation

Recognising your Competencies

Seychelles Qualifications Authority

The Seychelles National Credit Accumulation and Transfer System – Policy and Guidelines (The SNCATS)

20 September 2024
Version 1

African Continental Qualifications Framework

Presentation Outline

- What is the SNCATS?
- Legal Basis for Development and Implementation of SNCATS
- SNCATS Linkage with National Development Priorities
- Purpose, objectives, scope and benefits of SNCATS
- Recalling key concepts and definitions
- Capacity building on the implementation of SNCATS: Development and implementation of institutional CAT procedures
- Roadmap for the implementation OF SNCATS

SESSION 1:

SNCATS: Concepts, Definitions and Benefits

What is the SNCATS?

SNCATS

- A transparency tool for facilitating the recognition of credit(s).
- A tool that will support comparability and recognition of qualifications, as well as articulation, mobility and progression.
- The SNCATS is an overarching national document that sets the basis on which education and training providers will develop or reference, in a transparent and open manner, their institutional credit accumulation and transfer procedures/ guidelines.
- Two parts; Part 1 – Policy and Part 2 – Guidelines. The two parts are then segmented into chapters and key topics to be covered under each chapter.

Legal Basis for Development and Implementation of the SNCATS

SEYCHELLES QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY ACT, 2021 *(Act 57 of 2021):*

Section 4. (1) (2) states that, "in pursuing the object, the Authority shall have the following Functions; (k) establish policy and criteria for credit accumulation and credit transfer".

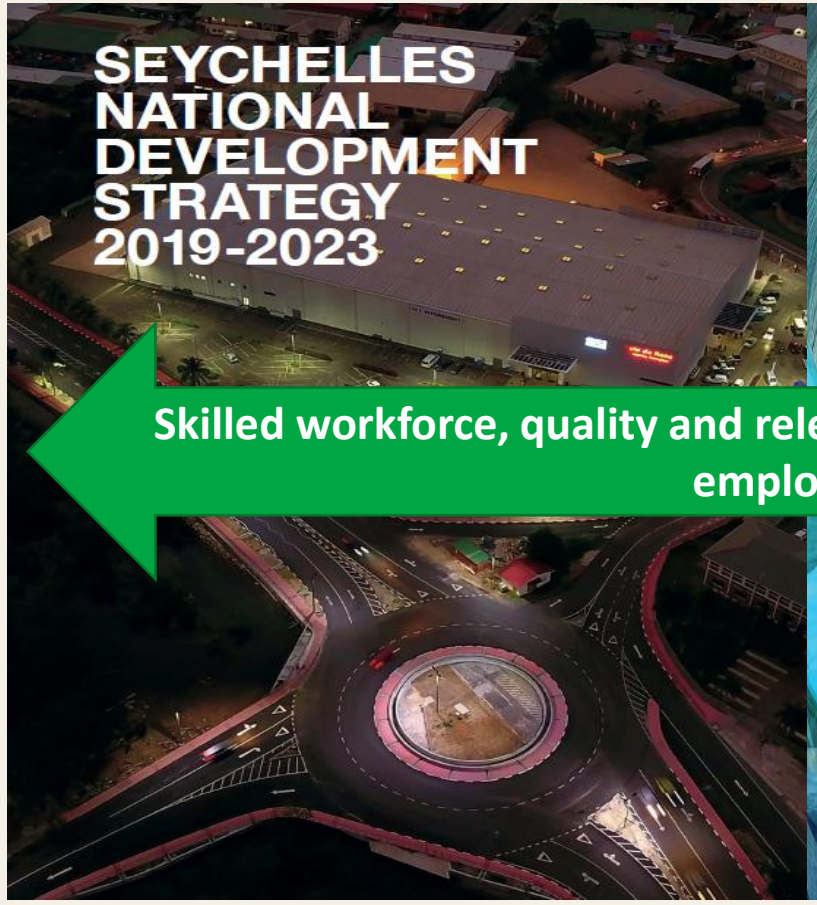
NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK REGULATIONS, 2025

Section 7:

(1) The Authority shall oversee the implementation of the credit accumulation and transfer system in accordance with this regulation.

(2) A provider shall develop and implement internal procedures for credit accumulation and transfer in consultation with the Authority, and in line with the national policy and guidelines.

SNCATS Linkage with National Development Priorities



Skilled workforce, quality and relevant education, creative workforce, dynamic education system, creation of employment opportunities, flexible learning pathways

Ministry of Educations' Education for Socioeconomic Transformation: Statement of Engagement – Policy Document No. 03/2023 (2023)

Seychelles National TVET Strategy and Roadmap (2024 – 2028)

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Purpose of the SNCATS

To provide a common understanding and unified framework for implementation of credit accumulation and transfer across the education and training sector, as well as for the designing and quality assurance of learning programmes in Seychelles.

Objectives of the SNCATS

- Support access to education and training, and flexibility of learning pathways.
- Enhance lifelong learning and employability of learners
- Create a common understanding of CATS and its application in Seychelles.
- Enhance intra and inter institutional mobility of learners within Seychelles.
- Facilitate the vertical, horizontal and diagonal mobility (in-country and international).
- Enhance the comparability of learning outcomes and qualifications.
- Promote equity and fairness in the country's education and training system.
- Support the internationalisation agenda of Seychelles' tertiary education and training.
- Contribute to the enhancement of quality and relevance of qualifications in Seychelles.

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Scope of the SNCATS

- All sectors of the education and training system and levels of the SNQF.
- SQA, education and training providers (public and private), regulatory bodies, curriculum developers, industry, non-governmental organisations, private entities, recognised professional bodies and learners.
- Qualifications, part-qualifications and micro-credentials.
- Qualifications acquired from formal, informal and non-formal learning context.

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Benefits of SNCATS

Multi-skilling and up-skilling of employees

Equal learning opportunities for all

Promotes lifelong learning through flexible learning pathways

Facilitates easy mobility of learners and workers

Guiding Principles of SNCATS Implementation

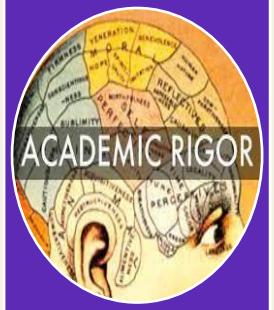
1. Promote Learner Mobility – no Duplication of Learning

2. Systems, Procedures should be Transparent, Fair, Flexible & easy to use

3. Decisions – Timely, Academically Defensible, Equitable, based on LOs

4. Credits for Non-formal or Informal Learning = Credits for Formal Learning

5. Promotes Institutional Autonomy



6. Academic Rigour and Integrity of Qualifications not to be Undermined

7. Institutional Commitment and Cooperation is Key

8. Subject to Rigorous Quality Assurance

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Recalling Key Concepts and Definitions

- **"Credit"** means a measure of the volume of learning required for a qualification or part qualification, quantified as the number of notional study hours required for achieving the learning outcomes specified for the qualification or part qualification whereby 1 credit is equated to 10 notional hours of learning.
- **"Credit accumulation"** means the totalling of relevant credits required to complete a qualification or a part-qualification.
- **"Credit transfer"** means: (1) the vertical, horizontal or diagonal relocation of credits towards a qualification or part-qualification on the same or different level, usually between different programmes, departments or institutions.

  (2) the process of allowing individuals who have accumulated credits in one context to have them valued and recognised in another context.

Sources: NQF Regulations, 2025 and SNCATS

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Recalling Key Concepts and Definitions…Cont'd

❖**Modalities of credit transfers: vertical, horizontal and diagonal.**

❖**Types of credit transfer:**

- **Block Credit Transfer:** entails reducing the total credit of the receiving programme by the amount of credits from the completed programme.

- **Course Exemption:** An individual may be exempted from taking a specific course or module of a programme based on the learning achieved in previous studies. This is applicable to both completed and uncompleted programmes.

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Recalling Key Concepts and Definitions...Cont'd

The Notional Hour Approach:

- The SNCATS is based on the notional hour approach.
- In this approach, the hours referred to here include **all the learning activities of the student (workload)**, inclusive of contact time (lecture time, tutorials, labs), private study, research, assignment writing, examinations, etc.
- The following assumptions are made:
  - The average student accumulates 8 study hours per day. This amounts to a 40 hours/ week.
  - Undergraduate programmes are generally based on a 30-week full-time academic year. At 40 hours per week this amounts to 1200 hours per year**.**
  - 10 notional hours constitute one credit (that is, 10 notional hours = 1 credit, 1200 notional hours = 120 credits).

Computing Learner Workload

- Learner workload is an estimation of the time the learner typically needs to complete all learning activities such as lectures, seminars, projects, practical work, work placements/ work-based learning/ experience and individual study **required to achieve the defined learning outcomes**.
- Learner workload is the basis upon which credits will be allocated under the SNCATS.
- Three components constitute learner workload: teaching, learning and assessment.
- The sum total of learner workload includes the following:
    - Number of contact hours.
    - Number of independent study hours.
    - Number of hours spent on assessment tasks: formative and summative.
    - Number of hours spent on Work-Based Experience (WBE)/ attachments.

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Steps in Allocating Credits to a Learning Programme

1. All learning programme components are described
2. Learning outcomes of each programme component are defined
3. Learning activities are described
4. Workload needed for a learner to complete the learning activities is estimated
5. Proposals are collected, analysed and the estimated workload is expressed in credits

Examples of Regional Credit Systems

Region	Name/ Title of CAT System	Definition of Credit
Southern African Development Community (SADC)	Guidelines for Southern African Development Community Credit Accumulation and Transfer Systems (SADC-CATS)	10 notional hours = 1 credit
East African Community (EAC)	East African Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (EACATS) in Higher Education	10 notional hours = 1 credit
European Union (EU) (Bologna Countries)	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) in Higher Education	25-30 hours = 1 ECTS credit
United Kingdom (UK)	Credit Accumulation and Transfer Systems (CATS)	10 notional hours = 1 credit
Asia-Pacific (APAC)	University Mobility in Asia and the Pacific (UMAP) Credit Transfer Scheme (UCTS)	38-48 hours = 1 UCTS credit
Latin America (LATAM)	Latin American Reference Credit (CLAR)	24-33 hours = 1 CLAR credit

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Converting Credits Across Regional Systems

Region	APAC	USA	BOLOGNA COUNTRIES	LATAM	UK	SADC and EAC
Credit Conversion	1 UCTS	1 AUCS	1.5 ECTS	1.5 CLAR	3-4 CATS	3-4 CATS

1 SNCATS Credit = 1 SADC-CATS Credit = 1 EACATS Credit = 1 UK CATS Credit
= 0.5 ECTS Credits = 0.5 CLAR Credits?
= 0.25 UCTS = 0.25 AUCS

1 ECTS/ CLAR Credit = 2 SNCATS Credits?
SNCATS= 1200 NHrs/ Yr, ECTS = 1500-1800 NHrs/ Yr

1 UCTS/ AUCS Credit = 4 SNCATS Credits

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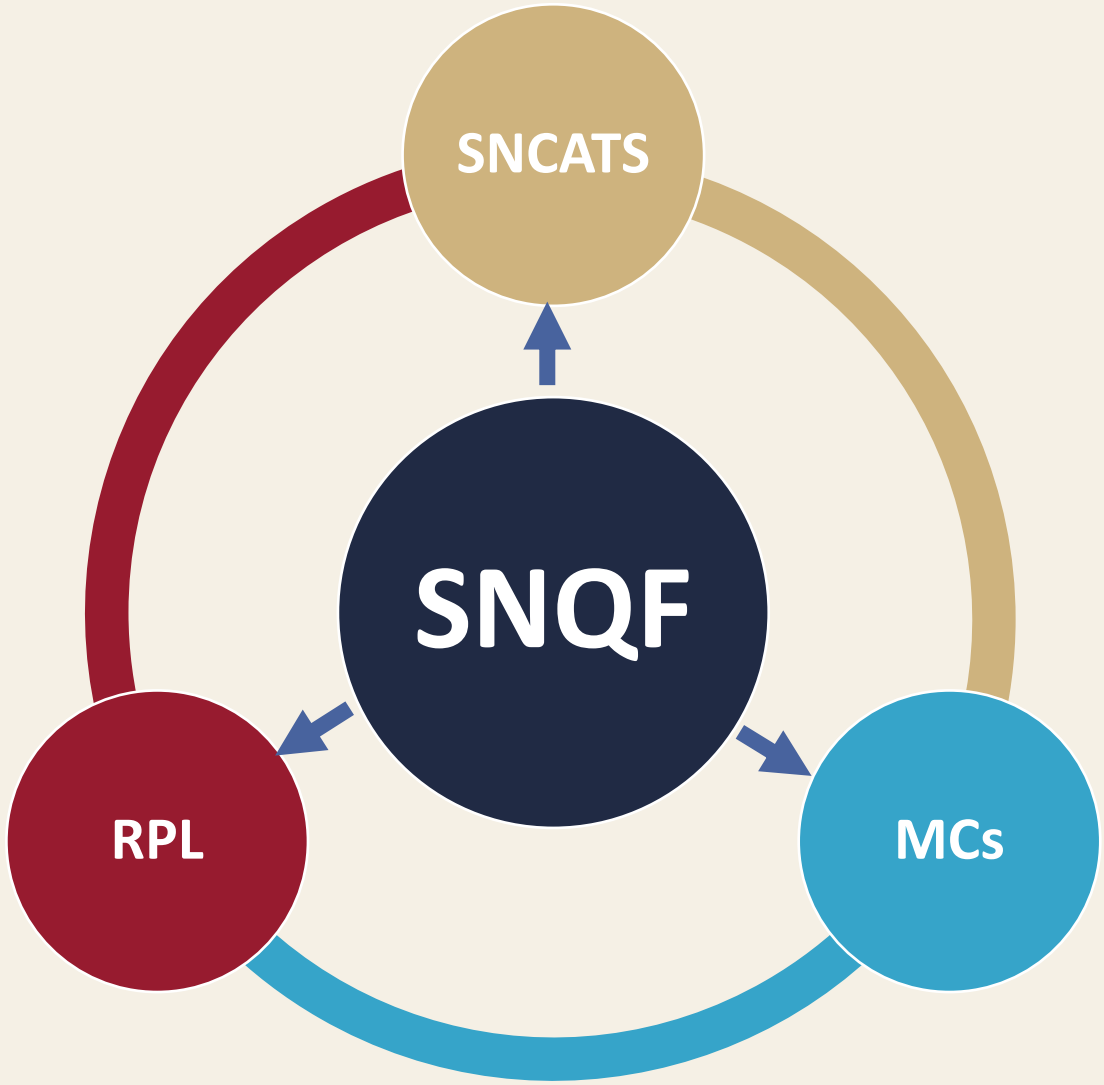
Assigning Credits to Non-formally and Informally Acquired Qualifications and Credentials

- Education and training providers should put in place mechanisms to recognise and award credits for learning outcomes acquired outside the formal learning context through work experience, voluntary work, learner participation, independent study, provided that these learning outcomes satisfy the requirements of their qualifications or components.

- The recognition of the learning outcomes gained through non-formal and informal learning should be automatically followed by the award of the same number of credits attached to the corresponding part of the formal programme.

- As with formal education, the award of credits is preceded by an assessment to verify the achievement of learning outcomes, without specific learning activities or workload.

The Eco-systemic View



The Eco-systemic View...Implications

- Include in the procedures mechanisms for recognising credits obtained through RPL and Micro-credentials
- Provide access to individuals with RPL and micro-credential certifications
- Allow for learners to transfer to other courses or institutions credits acquired via RPL and micro-credentials

SESSION 2:

Capacity Building on the Implementation of the SNCATS: Development and Implementation of Institutional CAT Procedures

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Instruments and Tools for SNCATS Implementation

- SNCATS – Policy and Guidelines
- SQA Act, 2021
- NQF Regulations, 2025
- Revised SNQF Document/ Qualifications Map and Progression chart
- National RPL Policy and Guidelines
- Manual for Development, Evaluation and Approval of Qualifications and Unit Standards, Guidelines for Accreditation of LPs, also Institutional Guidelines on Designing of LPs
- Implementation Plan, M&E Framework and Central Database
- National Micro-credentials Framework – in early thinking

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Role of Providers in SNCATS Implementation

1. Develop and implement institutional CAT procedures aligned to the SNCATS

2. Translate SNQF level descriptors into specific learning outcomes to enable assessment of workload and awarding of credits to each programme component or standalone micro-credential

3. Implement collaborative approaches to curriculum development across institutions in order to advance implementation of SNCATS, including alignment of curricula in common fields, taking into account their purpose and the types of knowledge and competencies

4. Initiate and participate in partnerships with other education and training providers to implement and promote SNCATS

5. Provide information to applicants and the wider public on the CAT opportunities that exist in their respective institutions

6. Process CAT applications and provide feedback to applicants (from all learning contexts and MCs)

7. Demonstrate through regular internal and external quality reviews, that their practices for CAT are in line with the SNCATS principles

8. Maintain records of all CAT activities and upload/ submit the relevant data to SQA in a prescribed manner and format to be agreed with SQA

Institutional Roles, Responsibilities and Accountability

- SNCATS is legally binding; as per the SQA Act, 2021 and NQF Regulations, 2025
- There will be need for top management (Vice Chancellors, Principals, Departmental/ Faculty Heads) commitment and support
- Dedicated members of staff/ implementation structure to be assigned to run with, and account for CAT activities

Process for Developing and Implementing Institutional CAT Procedures

The following activities shall be carried out in preparation for the development and implementation of institutional CAT procedures:

- Conduct a needs assessment – engage staff and learners.
- Constitute an interdepartmental/ interfaculty team to spearhead the development – academic, admin, faculties, support (ICT), students body.
- Assign staff to run with implementation activities – can be the same as above.
- Conduct critical study of the SNCATS and supporting documents (identified earlier).
- Align learning programmes and MCs to the revised NQF, SNCATS, RPL Policy & Guidelines and MC framework.
- Analyse and map curricula to identify transferable courses and potential equivalencies, within and across institutions.
- Create agreements that facilitate seamless credit transfers, both nationally and internationally.

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Process for Developing and Implementing Institutional CAT Procedures

- Define objectives and scope of the CAT procedure.
- Research on best practices.
- Consult and collaborate.
- Develop SNCATS-based CAT procedure - to include step-by-step process of how credits will be accumulated and transferred, including application processes, documentation required, and evaluation criteria; and appeals process.
- Create supporting documents – forms, transcripts, databases.
- Train staff and raise awareness (staff and students).
- Pilot and refine, followed by full implementation.
- Monitor and evaluate, implement corrective measures for continuous improvement.
- Review.
- Continue learning.

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Proposed Components for Inclusion in Institutional CAT Procedures

- Introduction
- Definition of Key Terms
- Purpose and Scope
- Eligibility Criteria
- Credit Accumulation Process
- Credit Transfer Process
- Recognition of Prior Learning and Micro-credentials

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Proposed Components for Inclusion in Institutional CAT Procedures...Cont'd

- Quality Assurance and Standards
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Appeals and Dispute Resolution
- Credit Ceiling and Shelf Life
- Transparency and Documentation
- Monitoring, Evaluation and Review
- Fees

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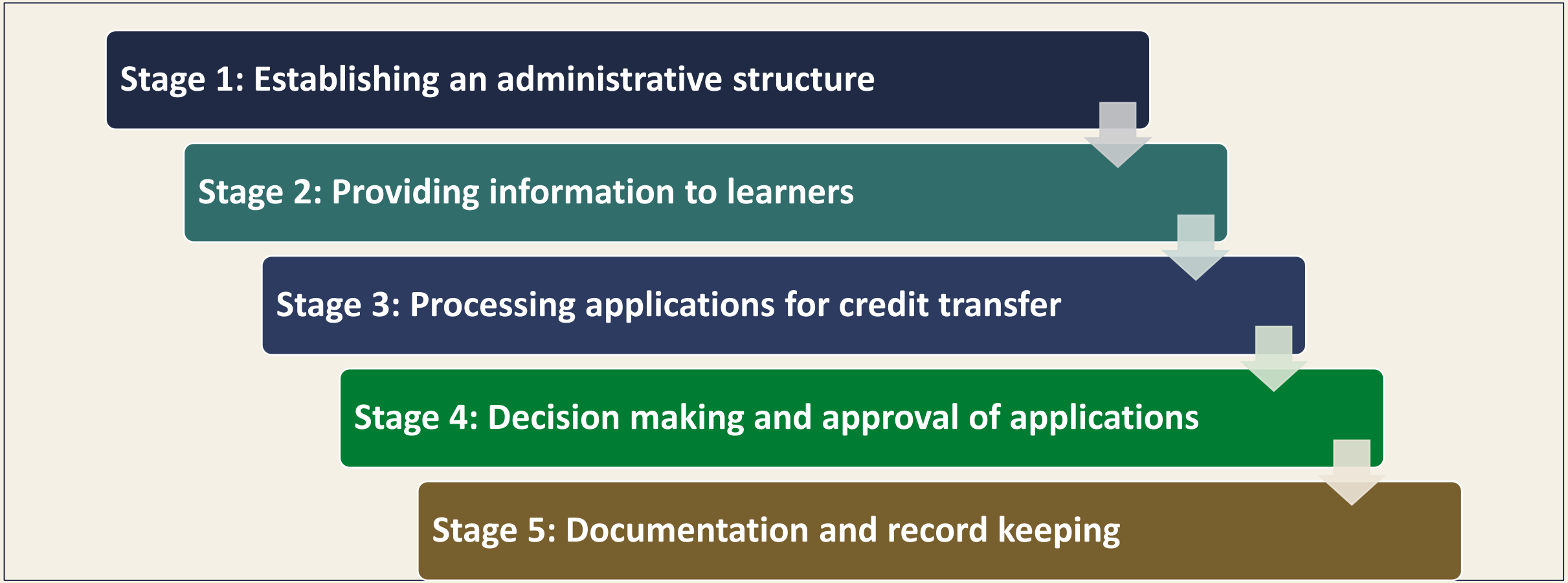
Stages in the Implementation of CAT Procedures



Stage 1: Establishing an Administrative Structure for the CAT

- Clear structures should be established for the administration and implementation of institutional CAT procedures.
- Education and training providers must clearly define the roles and duties of persons responsible for processing CAT applications.
- Where it is considered necessary, a special committee or panel may be set up to deal with the assessment and decision-making processes.
- There should be separation of responsibility between those responsible for the assessment and those responsible for approval of the applications.

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Stage 2: Providing Information to Learners

Institutions should provide clear and easily accessible information with relevant application forms and prospectus of learning programmes to applicants to assist them understand the available CAT arrangements, including the following:

1. How the CATS operates for purposes of credit transfer;
2. Opportunities for articulation from a specific programme offered by the institution to another programme offered by the same or other institution; and
3. Credit transfer agreements reached between institutions.

Stage 3: Processing Applications for Credit Transfer

- Application assessors to have knowledge in the subject of the learning programme involved and also experience or training in processing CAT applications.
- The assessment should be based on the information provided by the applicant.
- Standardised application forms, in paper and electronic formats, should be provided to applicants together with clear guidance notes, which should contain any information that may be considered useful by the applicants and even internal staff of the institutions.
- Providers should give advice on the types of documentary evidence which may be required to support the application.
- In respect of a recognised qualification already obtained by the applicant, the certificate, and other supporting documents such as transcript, course outlines, curriculum and outcome statements, will be useful.

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Stage 3: Processing Applications …Cont'd

- In respect of credits acquired through non-formal and informal learning, evidence including the statement of achievement from awarding bodies, licenses issued by relevant authorities, certificates of international awards or reference letters from employers, will be useful to demonstrate the learning achieved and standard attained.
- The receiving institution should ascertain that the learning outcomes achieved by the applicant in a previous programme are comparable to those of the receiving programme for which credit recognition is sought.
- Not an exact match, but a fair comparison (e.g.70%), supplementary work is encouraged.
- Where necessary, the institution may conduct interviews with the applicants to ascertain their learning experience for the consideration of credit transfer. A panel involving experts or external members may be formed to conduct the assessment.
- For the purpose of credit transfer, assessed qualifications obtained through non-formal and informal learning channels should be given equal standing to qualifications obtained through formal education.

Stage 4: Decision Making and Approval of Applications

- The persons responsible for assessing applications for credit transfer should refer to set principles and procedures to ensure consistency before making a recommendation to the relevant authority for approval.
- The approval authority may make decisions on an application for credit transfer in one or more of the following ways: Credit Transfer and Articulation to Receiving Programme; Course Exemption.
- The use of different credit systems (foreign qualifications) does not prevent the recognition of previous learning achieved by learners for articulation to another qualification – refer to conversion formulas.
- It is good management practice that for non-approval cases, the institution should give reasons for the decisions in a timely manner.
- An applicant reserves the right to appeal against the decision of the institution using the appropriate institutional procedure.

Stage 5: Documentation and Record Keeping

- Credit transfer decisions and justifications for the decisions should be properly recorded and documented by institutions for future reference.
- Credit transfer decisions, including the credits granted and courses exempted should be reflected in the learner's transcript.
- Credits should be indicated on certificates for awarded qualifications, part qualifications and micro-credentials.

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Post Implementation Activities

- Document lessons learnt.
- Conduct final evaluation and data analysis.
- Review the CAT procedures.
- Prepare for next implementation cycle.

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Central Database on CAT Activities

- Important for statistics - assessment of performance of SNCATS, institutional procedures and informing national policies on education and training, skills development and employment
- Can be part of the national QCP or QC-MIS, with providers allocated access and reporting rights
- An excel template may be used in the interim
- Key data fields should include name of student/ applicant, names of sending and receiving provider(s)/ institution(s) (local/ foreign), names of sending and receiving country(s), field(s) of study, title of qualification(s)/ credential(s), decision by receiving provider/ institution, number of credits transferred/ recognised, etc.

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Quality Assurance of SNCATS

- Internal CAT procedures will be subjected to rigorous quality assurance. The quality assurance process will involve the following:
  - Documentation of CAT Processes.
  - Monitoring and Evaluation; feedback loops – to get feedback from students and lecturers; regular reviews.
  - Establishment of Internal Quality Committees at institutional level.
  - Development of Articulation and Access Procedures.

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Considerations for Collaborations and Partnerships on Implementation of Internal CAT Procedures

- All Providers should endeavour to enter into exchange agreements with institutions:
  - That offer transparent descriptions of their programmes, including learning outcomes, credits, learning and teaching approaches and assessment methods.
  - Whose learning, teaching and assessment procedures can be accepted by both the sending and receiving institutions without requiring the learner to take any additional work or examination.
  - That are duly quality assured according to the Seychelles quality assurance system or their respective national systems in the case of foreign institutions.
- Note that agreements may not only be made with institutions offering similar programmes, but also with those with different programmes.

Some Challenges and Possible Solutions

- Teething problems.
  - Continue learning/ benchmarking, practice makes perfect.

- Funds challenges.
  - Administrative fees from applicants (provided for in the NQF Regulations, 2025).
  - Lobbying from Govt and supporting partners.
  - As part of the institution's annual budget.

- Different designs/ structures of LPs.
  - Adherence to the Manual for Development, Evaluation and Approval of Qualifications and Unit Standards, and the Guidelines for Accreditation of Qualifications.
  - Collaborative approach to the designing and development of LPs.

Q & A Session

Plenary Discussion

Group Discussion

-4 Groups

-All Groups to attempt the 3 questions

-Report back to plenary and discussions

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Group Discussion Questions

1) In your respective groups, prepare an outline of an institutional SNCATS-based CAT procedure, highlighting the key components to be included in the procedure.

2) Besides the ones highlighted in this presentation, what other challenges do you envisage in the development and implementation of institutional SNCATS-based CAT procedures?

3) What could be the solutions to the above changes?

Roadmap for the Implementation of the SNCATS

THANK YOU!