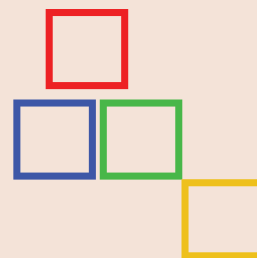


# Seychelles Qualifications Authority



Recognising your Competencies

Newsletter Issue 26

June 2019



*Education is not preparation  
for life, education is life itself.*

**John Dewey**

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## Editorial

I would like to welcome all our readers to first edition of the official Newsletter of the Seychelles Qualifications Authority (SQA) for the year 2019. The Newsletter provides one of the platforms that the SQA makes use of to engage its stakeholders and keep them updated about the activities of and developments at the SQA.

The Newsletter starts with an update on locally developed programmes and credit bearing short courses that have been awarded full validation status by the Authority. It is without doubt that there is progress and tertiary education and training providers are taking on board the crucial importance of offering programmes that are validated and recognised nationally.

A significant milestone has been the transfer of the Inspectorate Unit of the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development to the SQA in January 2019. This decision fits in well with the work of the SQA which is to provide for quality assurance of the education and training system nationally.

During the first part of last year, SQA was preparing for the launch of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) nationally. In this edition of our Newsletter, we report on our achievement since the roll out in July 2018, and enrolments for the RPL process during the first half of 2019.

We also report in this edition on accreditation visits of tertiary education and training institutions and visits to state schools.

SQA Officers participated in international meetings and forums in the quest to remain abreast with developments relevant to qualifications frameworks and quality assurance and build capacity. We report on these in this issue of the Newsletter.

Progress on evaluation and certification of qualifications has been a regular feature in all past issues of the Newsletter and this current issue is no exception.

We hope that you enjoy reading this issue of our Newsletter and that you let us know what you think.

**Fiona Ernesta**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**Seychelles Qualifications Authority**

## SQA's Vision

A credible, valued and efficient organization which, as custodian of a high quality national qualifications framework puts the needs of learners at the centre of an open, responsive and integrated qualifications system which recognizes their competencies and enables them to develop to their fullest potential.

## SQA's Mission

To develop and enhance a national qualifications framework that elevates and recognizes competencies whilst promoting quality education and training.

# Programme Validation

Programme validation approves, for a specified period of time, a specific education and training programme or course, offered by an education and training provider or institution, leading to the award of a specific qualification or part of a qualification to be registered on the Seychelles National Qualification Framework (NQF).

A provisionally validated programme meets the majority of the requirements of the NQF to be offered to learners but minor changes are required to achieve full validation status.

By validating a programme or credit bearing course, the SQA has ensured that the programme or course has met certain national quality assurance criteria which enable it to be registered on the framework at a specific level of the NQF.

A qualification / part qualification registered on the NQF means that there can be confidence that the qualification / part qualification is at the level at which the provider or institution has pitched it.

Six (6) Applications for Programme Validation were submitted to the SQA during the first half of 2019 of which three were new submissions and three resubmissions from the previous year. Three programmes leading to qualifications were awarded full validation. The programmes which received full validation are as follows:

1. Certificate in General Agriculture (Apprenticeship) offered by offered by the Seychelles Institute of Agriculture and Horticulture (SIAH).
2. Advanced Certificate in Plumbing offered by the Seychelles Institute of Technology (SIT)
3. MSc. Marine Science and Sustainability University of Seychelles (UniSey).

The validation status of a programme lasts between three to five years and six months before the validation expiry date, the programme needs to be re-submitted for re-validation. One such programme is the BSc (Honours) in Environmental Science of the University of Seychelles (UniSey) which has been validated for the second time round.

### Note:

Altogether 89 local programmes (inclusive of 9 credit bearing short courses/part qualifications) have reached the standard for the SQA to award full validation status.



# Institutional Accreditation Seychelles Institute of Art and Design (SIAD) Accreditation Visit

In 2017 the Seychelles Institute of Art and Design (SIAD) was accorded the status of Provisional Accreditation for one year. It was therefore required that after the one year lapsed, the SQA conducts an accreditation visit at SIAD to see whether they have addressed all the recommendations of the 2017 Accreditation Report. Therefore the purpose of the accreditation visit in 2019 was to assess progress in the implementation of the 18 recommendations emanating from the 2017 Accreditation Report.

The visit was conducted from 23-25 April 2019. The Accreditation Team comprised of five members. The visit was a pleasant one in that the team received good cooperation from the management, staff members and learners. The Accreditation Report of SIAD was finalised in May and it is currently being considered by the SQA Quality Assurance Committee for an accreditation decision.

The Accreditation Team extends a sincere thank you to the Institute for the warm hospitality, patience and understanding during the visit.



Photo 1: The Accreditation Team at work



Photo 2: The Accreditation team presenting the oral report on the last day of the visit



Photo 3: SIAD staff and learners during the presentation of the oral report

# Implementation of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

## What's New on the RPL Front?

*Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a process whereby prior learning acquired formally, non-formally and informally is assessed against standards, and is given recognition in the form of awards of part qualifications or full qualifications. It recognises and validates competencies obtained inside and outside the formal education and training systems, for purposes of certification.*

### **National Guidelines for the Implementation of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) July 2017)**

Following the launch of RPL in July 2018, the SQA is proud to showcase its achievements. Out of the 21 candidates that enrolled for RPL between July and December 2018, eight (8) have been awarded with a full qualification. The remaining RPL candidates are at different phases of the process.

The number of candidates who enrolled for RPL from January to June 2019 and the qualifications targeted are encapsulated in the following table.

Qualification Targeted	Institution	No. of Candidates
Advanced Certificate in General Agriculture	Seychelles Institute of Agriculture and Horticulture	3
Certificate in General Agriculture	Seychelles Institute of Agriculture and Horticulture	12
Advanced Certificate in Restaurant and Bar / Advanced Certificate Food preparation and Culinary Arts	Seychelles Tourism Academy	4
Advanced Certificate in Electrical Installation / Advanced Certificate in Mechanical Engineering / Advanced Certificate in Air condition and Refrigeration	Seychelles Institute of Technology	4
Certificate in Mechanical Engineering / Certificate in Masonry / Certificate in Electrical Installation	Seychelles Institute of Technology	4

All five groups of candidates are in the process of compiling their portfolios under the guidance of dedicated SQA trained RPL Coordinators. Most of the candidates have been working for many years in their respective field of work and have accumulated a wealth of knowledge, skills and competences that need to be formally recognised somehow. The SQA is privileged to be facilitating the RPL process.

### **RPL Sensitisation Sessions from January in Pictures**



Photo 4: SQA presents the RPL process to the staff of MoE on the 3rd of May in the SITE auditorium



Photo 5: Staff of CINEA are sensitised on the RPL process





Photo 6 & 7: Employees from Employment Department during the RPL session on Thursday 13th May, 2019



Photo 8: Employees of the Seychelles Licensing Authority learn about RPL on Saturday 8th June, 2019



Photo 5: Staff of CINEA are sensitised on the RPL process

# Overseas Missions

## Quality Promotion Conference

The Principal Quality Assurance Officer for Accreditation attended the Quality Promotion Conference under the theme, 'Promoting Academic Integrity in Higher Education' that was hosted by the Council on Higher Education (CHE) at the CSIR International Convention Centre, in Pretoria, South Africa from the 26-28 February 2019.

The focus of the conference was to create a conducive environment where participants would meaningfully engage on various issues pertaining to academic integrity. Among the issues discussed were academic integrity and what it entails, its relationship with quality and quality assurance, the need to promote academic integrity and how academic integrity can be promoted in higher education. Knowledge thus gained would likely assist in promoting and protecting the credibility and integrity of higher education institutions both locally and globally.

Overall, the conference was a resounding success. It managed to put academic integrity at the centre of the discourse. Presenters spoke with one voice in condemning academic dishonesty in higher education institutions and that there is need to curb it before it worsens. The general feeling among the delegates was that there is need for all stakeholders, namely learners, academics and professional staff in higher education institutions, to play their part in curbing this menace. Achieving this would require a commitment and collaborative effort from learners, academics, non-academics and society as a whole.



Photo 10: Group photo of the participants at the conference



# Policy Learning Forum on Learning Outcomes

The CEO of SQA and the Principal Quality Assurance Officer for Validation attended the Policy Learning Forum (PLF) on “The Conceptualisation and the use of Learning Outcomes” held in Johannesburg, South Africa on 24-25 June 2019. The Forum was a key event to commemorate the 21st anniversary of the South African National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and the purpose was to provide a peer learning opportunity for South Africa and Europe to exchange experiences and engage with the users of Learning Outcomes. The Forum was also intended to develop a better conceptual understanding of Learning Outcomes, how they have been used, how they are currently being used, and how best to complement them.

The meeting comprised many presentations which showcased various experiences with Learning Outcomes from both spheres and the intention was to establish the platform for South Africa and the rest of SADC countries to learn from the EU experiences and to start the dialogue on Learning Outcomes between the two parties.



Photo11: CEO and Ms Bistoquet at the Policy Learning Forum on Learning Outcomes

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The Forum was divided into plenary presentations and deepening the Learning Outcomes conversations whereby three presentations were held simultaneously. The presentations and discussions addressed various areas as depicted below:

## 1. Articulation and Learning Pathways

It was established that barriers in articulation between the Basic Education, TVET and Higher Education levels do exist in most education systems. However, it was pointed out that in many cases, with the right Learning Outcomes used throughout the curriculum and especially at the exit level, this can be of value, especially when facilitating pathways for individual learners. In certain cases reverse articulation can also be applied particularly between TVET and Higher Education.

## **2. Learning Outcomes Conversation in the Sub-frameworks**

which was divided into three streams; the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications, the Higher Education Qualifications and the Occupational Education sub-frameworks. It was agreed that Learning Outcomes can showcase what learners have learnt during the learning process and the graduate/exit outcomes should be able to match the qualifications gained.

## **3. Learning Outcomes and Professional Designations-**

Presentations were made by professional bodies on their role for bridging the knowledge gaps between institutions and the labour market. The question that emerged was “Can Learning Outcomes facilitate the dialogue between education and the labour market?” The essence is to be able to create good dialogue between one another and use a language that both parties are able to understand. It is important that stakeholders are involved in developing learning outcomes to ensure that programmes are sustainable, reliable and based on trust.

## **4. Learning Outcomes and Policy Learning** which was divided into the following streams:

- Learning Outcomes and quality assurance
- Learning Outcomes and foreign qualifications and
- Learning Outcomes and recognition of prior learning (RPL)

RPL was presented as an effective way for providing access to further education in both the vocational and academic streams, provided that a common language is implemented in the writing up of the Learning Outcomes.

Ms Fiona Ernesta the CEO of SQA was one of the speakers presenting on how learning outcomes are applied to RPL. She based her presentation on the Seychelles experience by outlining the successes, challenges and lessons learned by the SQA in using Learning Outcomes to advance RPL.

On the way forward, the SAQA CEO Mr. Joe Samuels stressed that ‘we can create the future that we want’ simply by reaching out and have more of such conversation to develop better concept of Learning Outcomes.

# Meeting of SADC Technical Committee on Certification and Accreditation

A scheduled meeting of SADC Technical Committee on Certification and Accreditation (TCCA) was held from 16-17 May 2019 in Johannesburg, South Africa and was chaired by Namibia. The meeting was preceded by the Third meeting of the SADC Qualifications Verification Network (SADCQVN) on 15 May 2019. Both meetings were attended by Chief Executive Officers and Directors of national institutions responsible for certification and accreditation of education and skills training, from the following Member States: Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Mauritius, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe and the SADC Secretariat. Seychelles was represented by the CEO of SQA, who is a member of the SADC TCCA and the SADCQVN.



Photo 12: Souvenir photo of participants

During the SADCQVN meeting held on 15 May, participants reviewed the Terms of Reference for SADCQVN. There was a presentation on the updated SADCQVN booklet which provides information on national bodies responsible for verification of qualifications as well as a presentation on the SADCQF brochure.

With respect to mobility statistics, the meeting received a presentation covering a period of four years (2015 to 2019). It was indicated that only eight Member States responded and some highlighted increase and whilst others recorded a decrease in the number of qualifications evaluated. There was also an update on progress on the finalisation of the Recognition Manual. The purpose of the Recognition Manual is to facilitate mechanisms for comparability and recognition of full qualifications.

Progress on the nine (9) steps towards ratification of the Addis Convention was reviewed and it was noted that only two countries namely Mauritius and South Africa have ratified the Addis Convention.



During the TCCA meeting held from 16 to 17 May 2019, members considered the updated Funding Proposal that intends to facilitate mobilisation of financial resources to implement the SADC Qualifications Framework. The meeting also noted progress on the six implementation programmes of the SADC Qualifications Framework (SADCQF) namely:

- a. **Governance:** Botswana came on board to support the SADC Secretariat from 1st April 2019 in the implementation of the SADCQF.
- b. **Alignment:** So far two Member States had submitted their National Alignment Reports being South Africa and Seychelles. The meeting considered the adjudication report for South Africa and endorsed the alignment report for South Africa. The meeting agreed that the Seychelles report will be considered at the next TCCA EXCO meeting of June 2019 and the adjudication report will be considered at the TCCA meeting of September 2019.
- c. **Quality Assurance:** The Quality Assurance Report was presented and the meeting noted that eight Member States participated in the pilot. The meeting resolved that Member States will be given an opportunity to update the questionnaires and re-submit. Another analysis report will be presented at the September 2019 TCCA meeting.
- d. **Verification:** There was an update on the verification activities in the SADC.
- e. **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (CATS) and Articulation:** A comprehensive progress report on the status of RPL, CATS and Articulation in the eight Member States which had responded to the RPL, Credit Accumulation and Transfer Systems (CATS) and Articulation questionnaire was presented.
- f. **Advocacy and Communication:** There was an update on the advocacy and communication programme aimed at creating awareness and publicity of the SADCQF. The meeting also urged Member States to continuously provide updates and information to create awareness on the SADCQF and to share information on advocacy and communication activities being undertaken at national level.

The meeting also considered matters to be tabled at the upcoming SADC Ministers' meeting for Education and Training; and Science, Technology and Innovation that was convened in Windhoek, Namibia 17-21 June 2019.

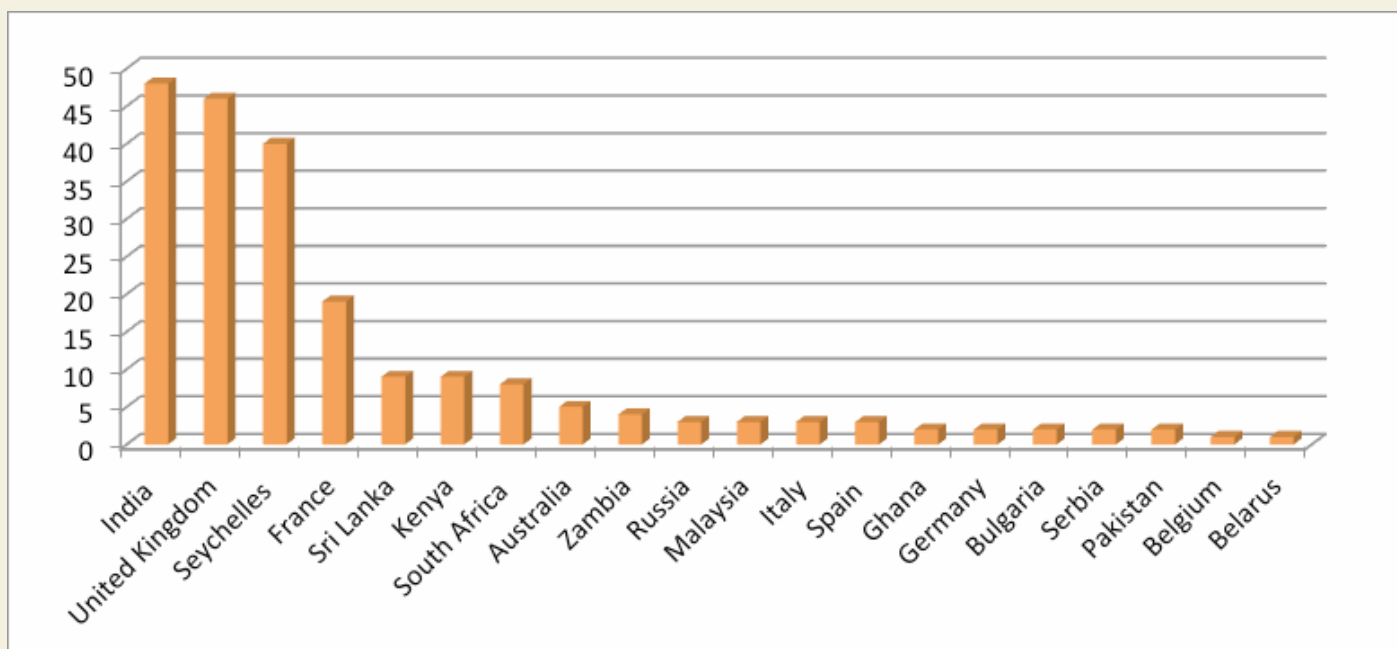
# Evaluation and Certification of Qualifications

## Evaluation of qualifications

The process of Evaluation of qualifications establishes the level of the qualifications on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). A total of 218 qualifications were evaluated from January to June 2019. India is the country with the highest number of qualifications (48) evaluated followed by the United Kingdom (46) and the Seychelles (40).

The distribution of qualifications evaluated by country of origin from January to June 2019 is shown in the table which follows.

Countries	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	Country Total
India	7	6	16	3	10	6	48
United Kingdom	21	7	10	3	3	2	46
Seychelles	9	10	5	4	4	8	40
France	7	1	6	2		3	19
Sri Lanka		4	3	2			9
Kenya	1	5		2		1	9
South Africa	3		2	1	2		8
Australia	3	1			1		5
Zambia	1				2	1	4
Russia			3				3
Malaysia			1	1	1		3
Italy					3		3
Spain				1		2	3
Ghana			2				2
Germany				1	1		2
Bulgaria				1	1		1
Serbia	1				1		2
Pakistan				2			2
Belgium			1				1
Belarus			1				1
Japan		1					1
Estonia				1			1
Armenia				1			1
Cuba					1		1
Ireland						1	1
Slovakia					1		1
Grand Total							218



Graph 1: Qualifications evaluated by country of origin from January to June 2019

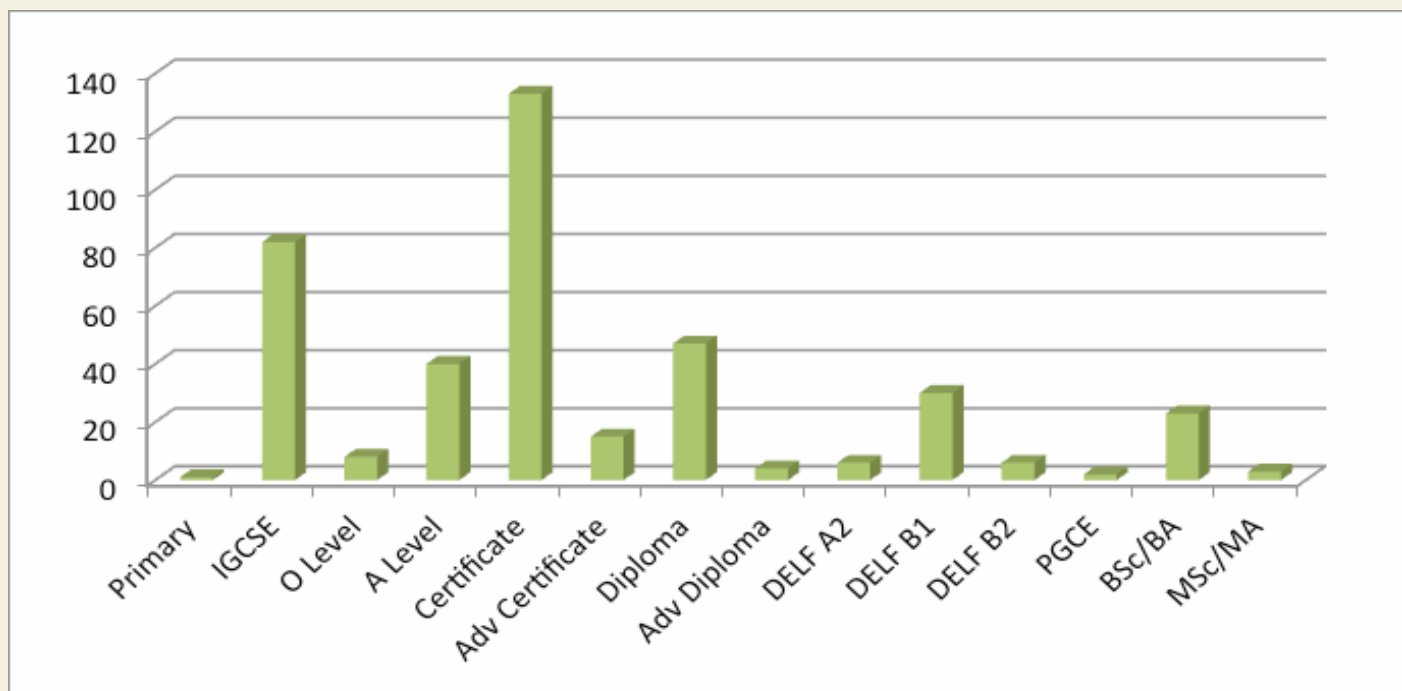
### Qualifications Certified True Copy

Certification of qualifications establishes the authenticity of the qualifications. A total of **400** qualifications have been certified true copy from January to June 2019. The most popular qualifications certified are the Certificates (133) and the IGCSEs (82).

The number of qualifications certified true copy by type from January to June 2019 is shown in the table that follows.

Qualifications	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	Total
Primary							1
IGCSE	9	24	22	6	13	8	82
O Level		1	2	2	1	2	8
A Level	6	12	5	4	6	7	40
Certificate	12	23	63	10	19	6	133
Adv. Certificate	6	1	1		3	4	15
Diploma	7	4	3	6	15	12	47
Adv. Diploma		1		1	1	1	4
DEL F A2		2	3	1			6
DEL F B1	5	4	10	1	8	2	30
DEL F B2		4	1		1		6
PGCE				1	1		2
BSc/BA	2	4	2	1	2	12	23
MSc/MA			1	1	1		3
<b>Grand Total 218</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>400</b>





Graph 2: Qualifications certified true copy by type from January to June 2019

## Accreditation Unit (Schools)

In January 2019 the Inspectorate Unit of the Ministry of Education & Human Resource Development (MEHRD) was transferred to the Seychelles Qualifications Authority (SQA) as part of the process of finalising the MEHRD's Organisational Structure 2018. The aim of this transfer was to rationalise the Ministry's structure and to reduce duplication of responsibilities in the area of quality assurance.

Three officers responsible for quality assurance in schools have been transferred to the SQA but although they remain in their former accommodation they now report to the CEO of the SQA.

The work of the Accreditation Unit (Schools) involves measuring schools against standards established in the school evaluation framework: "Looking at Our School". Officers are in the process of reviewing their operational procedures to align these with SQA requirements while continuing with the planned programme of inspection. As this is finalised information will be communicated to schools and other partners concerned.

It is worth mentioning, however, that as part of the new procedures schools may expect that Inspection Reports will now be scrutinised by the Quality Assurance Committee of the SQA and all recommendations will need to be addressed accordingly.

### Main Activity of the Unit for the period January to June 2019

#### a. Analysis of schools' Self-Evaluation Reports

Members analysed the annual self-evaluation reports that all state primary and secondary schools submitted in December 2018.

#### Whole school inspections

2.1 The Unit carried out three whole school inspections of:

- i) Plaisance Secondary School from 11 to 20 February 2019
- ii) Plaisance Primary School from 25 March to 3 April 2019
- iii) Pointe Larue Primary School from 6 to 14 June 2019

(Whole school inspection assesses the school according to the standards set out in the six key areas of the framework Looking at Our School and makes recommendations for improvement.)

The Unit carried out a Return Visit inspection of Pointe Larue Secondary from 20 to 24 May 2019 to verify the level of progress made in relation to the recommendations made in the Whole School Inspection Report of February 2018.



Photo 13: Staff of the Accreditation Unit observing lesson delivery



Photo 14: Accreditation Team members in discussion

## Overseas Visitors to the SQA

From 1st to 9th April 2019, the SQA hosted Mrs Lesego Barakanye from the Botswana Qualifications Authority (BQA) for a job shadowing exercise on the various activities of the SQA, in particular Qualifications Registration. The visit of Mrs Barakanye was refreshing and fruitful and both parties learned a lot from each other. The two Authorities also shared relevant documents and discussed future projects for collaboration.



Photo 15: Mrs Barakanye and SQA Officers discussing the way forward on the last day of the study visit

BQA is a statutory body established in 2013 through the Botswana Qualifications Authority Act of 2013. The Authority's key objectives are to provide for and maintain a National Credit and Qualifications Framework (NCQF), and coordinate the education, training and skills development quality assurance system.



Photo 16: A souvenir photo (Mrs Lesego Barakanye is second from left front row)



# Within the SQA

## Incoming staff



The Seychelles Qualification Authority is glad to welcome Mr Praveen D'Souza who is occupying the post of Principal Standards Setting Officer since March 2019.

Mr. Praveen completed his education in India. He pursued his undergraduate studies in Business Management and after which he continued his path in the stream of Business Management, earning himself a Diploma and Masters in the same field, with a specialization in Human Resources.

He was a Business Studies Lecturer at the School of Advanced Level Studies (SALS) and then progressed to the SQA.

Mr Praveen is happy to be part of the SQA team and looks forward to supporting the SQA to execute its functions, part of which is to promote the quality and standards of education and training through a system of accreditation, validation and quality assurance. In doing so this will ensure that the interests of learners are protected and that the stakeholders' requirements and expectations are met in relation to quality and standards of education and training in the Seychelles.

The SQA staff takes the opportunity to wish Mr Praveen the very best in his new post.

# The National Qualifications Framework

Ensuring quality, genuine qualifications  
leading to a better life for all



**NQF**  
NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

