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## CRITERIA & GUIDELINES

# ETQA Monitoring and Auditing Practices

# Table of Content

<b>1. OVERVIEW .....</b>	<b>2</b>
1.1. Purpose.....	2
1.2. Summary of content .....	2
1.3. Outcomes.....	2
1.4. How to use the ICONS .....	3
<b>2. INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF AN ACCREDITED PROVIDER .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>4. QUALITY MANAGEMENT .....</b>	<b>5</b>
4.1. What is Quality Management? .....	5
4.2. Why does THETA ETQA monitor the quality of providers? .....	7
4.3. Monitoring and auditing policy .....	8
4.4. How does THETA ETQA monitor and audit providers? .....	9
4.5. Auditing Methods and Techniques.....	10
<b>5. OVERVIEW OF VERIFICATION .....</b>	<b>11</b>
5.1. What is verification .....	11
5.2. The purpose of verification .....	14
5.3. The scope of verification .....	14
5.4. The outcome of a Verification .....	18
5.5. Appeal against outcomes.....	18
5.5.1. <i>The scope of Appeal .....</i>	<i>18</i>
5.6. The role-players and responsibilities .....	19
5.6.1. <i>Expertise of the verifier .....</i>	<i>20</i>
5.6.2. <i>The appointment of a verifier.....</i>	<i>21</i>
5.7. Verification Techniques.....	21
<b>6. THE VERIFICATION PROCESS.....</b>	<b>24</b>
6.1. How do you as a provider prepare for a Verification Visit.....	27
6.1. The Process for an On-Site Verification Visit .....	29
6.1.2. <i>The agenda .....</i>	<i>29</i>
6.1.3. <i>The declaration of understanding.....</i>	<i>31</i>
6.1.4. <i>Verification criteria and report .....</i>	<i>32</i>
6.1.5. <i>Compliance Plan .....</i>	<i>32</i>
6.1.6. <i>Reviewing the Verification Process .....</i>	<i>34</i>
6.2. Post Verification Process .....	35
6.3.1. <i>How to prepare the evidence for Post Verification Process.....</i>	<i>36</i>
<b>7. SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>8. LIST OF ACRONYMS.....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>9. CONTACT DETAILS OF THETA ETQA.....</b>	<b>37</b>

# 1. Overview

## 1.1. Purpose

This guide has been developed specifically for accredited and registered Training Providers who offer Theta qualifications and skills programmes and deals with the providers' role in preparing for monitoring or auditing and the Education Training and Quality Authority (ETQA) roles and responsibility therein.

Therefore the focus is on how Training Providers are monitored and audited and this guide acts as a guideline document that deals with:

- Descriptions of the monitoring and auditing processes in the ETQA
- Reasons why and how certain processes are implemented
- The identification of the role-players
- The description of their responsibilities in various processes
- Descriptions of what is expected of Training Providers?
- Reasons why and how Training Providers should prepare themselves for visits from the ETQA
- A list of additional information that will benefit the Training Providers

## 1.2. Summary of content

The content of the guide is as follows:

- Overview of Quality Management
- Verification as a monitoring and auditing process
- List of supporting resources that Training Providers can use
- Glossary of terms
- List of Acronyms used
- Contact Details of ETQA members for assistance

## 1.3. Outcomes

The outcomes of this guide are:

- To provide the Training Provider with sufficient information about ETQA monitoring and auditing processes
- To ensure understanding of why and how Monitoring and Auditing processes are implemented
- To advise and guide training providers to prepare for and respond to these monitoring and auditing processes

## 1.4. How to use the ICONS

To ensure that this guide is easy to follow we have used some ICONS.

In the table below is a description of the meaning of each ICON.



**Tips:**

This icon is used to provide Training Providers with some advice and recommendations that will assist with implementation of the subject we are dealing with at the time.



**Critical:**

When you see this icon the subject area that we are quoting at the time relates to certain policies, and is supported by legislation.



**Resources:**

When you see this icon we will normally refer to additional resources such as legislation, official policies and criteria & guidelines documents that are available to assist you as the Training Provider with the implementation of your own practices.



**Templates and Tools:**

When you see this icon THETA has pre-developed templates and tools available that Training Providers can adapt and implement into their practices.

## 2. Introduction

As a THETA accredited or registered training provider it is important to understand your responsibility in the greater scheme of skills development in South Africa.

SAQA defines an accredited provider as a body, which delivers learning programmes, which culminate in specified National Qualifications Framework standards or qualifications, and/or manages the assessment thereof.

Accreditation is defined in the *ETQA Regulations* as:



the **certification**, usually for a **particular period of time**, of a **person, a body or an institution**, as having the capacity to fulfill a **particular function** in the quality assurance system set up by the South African Qualifications Authority in terms of the **Act**.

## 3. The responsibility of an accredited provider

As an accredited provider with THETA, you are legally bound to maintain Education, Training and Development (ETD) practices as SAQA has stated in its Criteria for Accredited Providers.



As a reminder, the training provider or body:

- (a) is registered as a provider in terms of the applicable legislation at the time of the application for accreditation;
- (b) has a quality management system which includes but is not limited to –
  - quality management policies which define that which the provider wishes to achieve;
  - quality management procedures which enable the provider to practice its defined quality management policies; or
  - review mechanisms which ensure that the quality management policies and procedures defined are applied and remain effective;
- (c) is *able to develop, deliver and evaluate learning programmes* which culminate in specified registered standards or qualifications;
- (d) has the –
  - necessary financial, administrative and physical resources;
  - policies and practices for staff selection, appraisal and development;
  - policies and practices for learner entry, guidance and support systems;
  - policies and practices for the management of off-site operations;

- practical or work-site components where appropriate;
  - policies and practices for the management of assessment which include appeals systems;
  - necessary reporting procedures; and the ability to achieve the desired outcomes, using available resources and procedures considered by the Education and Training Quality Assurance Body to be needed to develop, deliver and evaluate learning programmes which culminate in specified registered standards or qualifications; and
- (e) has not already been granted accreditation by or applied for accreditation to another Education and Training Quality Assurance body contemplated in Regulation 2.



For further information refer to:

- SAQA Policy Document “Criteria and Guidelines for Providers”
- SAQA Act 1995: NO. 58 OF 1995: SOUTH AFRICAN QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY ACT
- Criteria & Guideline: Accreditation
- Information brochure for providers

All legislative documents are available on the SAQA website ([www.saga.co.za](http://www.saga.co.za)) and all criteria and guideline documents are on the THETA website ([www.theta.org.za](http://www.theta.org.za))

## 4. Quality Management

Both the ETQA and Training Provider are responsible for developing and implementing a Quality Management System that will ensure that Education, Training and Development are delivered to expected standards in line with legislation and requirements stipulated by SAQA.

### 4.1. What is Quality Management?

A QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM for training providers **can be described in several ways**. In essence, it is a sum of the activities and information the provider uses to enable it to:

- consistently deliver products and services that meet the expectations of the ETQA and its learners

The provider must have a quality management system to ensure that the degree of excellence specified for provision and assessment is achieved.



**According to ETQA Regulations 1127, the QMS should make provision for:**

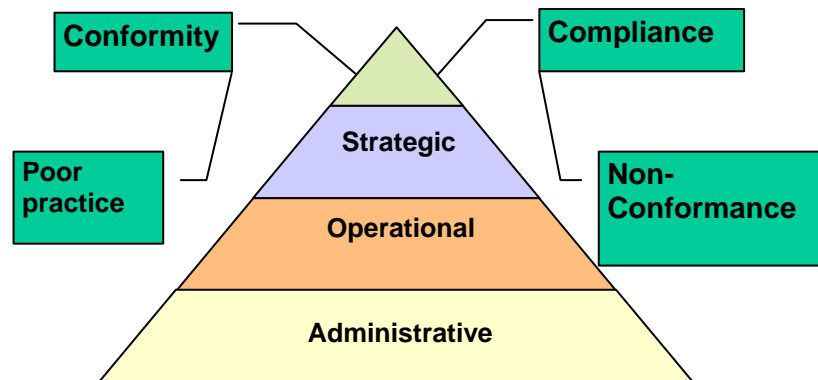
- policies that govern the providers' ETD practice
- processes and procedures for the implementation of policy statements; and
- mechanisms to review these policies, processes & procedures.

The provider must be able to demonstrate that it has a quality management system that includes quality management policies, processes and procedures as well as review mechanisms.



*As you will note, the requirements for the QMS systems is the same as the requirements for an accredited provider. Therefore, if you are accredited, the monitoring and auditing process is about how you maintain your QMS system - and the verification is the validation of that. Verification is a method of monitoring.*

Any QMS is developed on three levels as illustrated below:



All Quality Management Systems have **three broadly defined areas**:

**Strategic**

Policy statements which clearly state the organizational position towards an ETD practice, and where required, state a clear inclusion and exclusion of expected practice

**Operational**

Processes that show how the policy statements will be implemented, and normally includes a “by who”

**Administrative**

Supporting documents to be used in the process of implementation – whether it is learning material, registration forms, assessment guides, moderator reports, codes of conducts, information brochures ...

**Compliance vs. Conformance**



<sup>1</sup>Any provider must aim for **conformance (best practice)** in his ETD QMS, in other words his QMS must first and foremost state his organizational requirements for best practice.

Thereafter, an **alignment to include compliance** must be made – i.e. does my practice also comply with the ETQA / legal requirements?

The QMS Model is broadly divided into **policy areas**:

- Development, management and review of the QMS
- Managing learning programme design, development, implementation
- Managing assessment and moderation practices
- Managing administration, record keeping and reporting
- Managing ETD staff selection, management, development and partnerships
- Managing learnerships and skills programmes provision, workplace partnerships and learner support

**4.2. Why does THETA ETQA monitor the quality of providers?**

It is clear that ETQA’s have a responsibility toward SAQA to ensure that the training providers in their sector deliver ETD practices that meet the required standards.

In terms of the ETQA Regulations (R1127), Section 2(1), an ETQA “*shall be accredited for the purpose of monitoring and auditing achievements in terms of national standards or qualifications*”.

THETA ETQA therefore acknowledges its legal right and duty to monitor and audit providers as per the South African Qualifications Authority.

<sup>1</sup> Reference : Criteria Guidelines for ETD Practices

### 4.3. Monitoring and auditing policy

#### <sup>2</sup>Monitoring Approach



The THETA ETQA holds the position that *monitoring practices* must encourage and enhance *provider inclusion* and development, not *exclusion*.

The overall approach is to:

- confirm compliance to criteria first, thereafter
- identify options of development and continuous improvement.

#### Purpose of Monitoring & Auditing

The THETA ETQA monitors Training Providers for one, or a combination of, for the following reasons. To *collect evidence* of compliance regarding:

1. The systems put in place by a Provider to assure the quality of its services.
2. Learning processes, Provider's competence and resources
3. Assessment of learning by Providers of learning opportunities
4. Assessment undertaken by external bodies (examinations and qualification awarding bodies).
5. What has been learned, achieved, or is already known, through assessing the learner, including RPL practices
6. The degree to which access, mobility, progression and redress have been enhanced

<sup>2</sup> Reference: Policy Document: Monitoring & Auditing

#### 4.4. How does THETA ETQA monitor and audit providers?

The Audit Model followed in the THETA ETQA indicates the point at which the audit is performed, and therefore the overall purpose of the audit.

Auditing Point				
1	2	3	4	5
Accreditation	Programme/ RPL Evaluation	Provision Partnerships Evaluation	External Moderation	Verification

No	Audit Purpose	Method	Audit Focus
1	Accreditation	Through Phase A & B desk top review and site visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Validate QMS</li> <li>• Evaluate programmes</li> <li>• Approve and register ETD staff</li> </ul>
2	Programme / RPL Evaluation	Through documented evidence submission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme strategy</li> <li>• Assessment Strategy and guides</li> <li>• Related QMS and infra-structure</li> </ul>
3	Provision Partnerships Evaluation	Through documented evidence submission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provider / Employer roles &amp; responsibilities</li> </ul>
4	External Moderation	Through learner file evaluation, perform sample moderations on assessment process, results, assessor performance or instrument validation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment result / process</li> <li>• Assessor performance or validate instruments used for assessment</li> </ul>
5	Verification	At systems level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strategic ETD approach (through QMS),</li> <li>▪ Operational implementation (through practice) and administrative support (through documented evidence)</li> </ul>

The THETA ETQA views the provider and its practices as a contextual entity within an integrated, holist system of quality provision.

THETA ETQA focuses on the systems level rather than direct moderation of assessment results.

## 4.5. Auditing Methods and Techniques

THETA ETQA uses the following auditing and methods and techniques:

No	Method	Description
1.	Off-site Desk Top Evaluation	Documented evidence of the provider's strategic, operational and ETD practices are submitted for review and evaluated against set criteria within the ETQA
2.	On-site Evidence Validation	Evidence submitted for desk-top review is validated against actual practice

No	Technique	Example
3.	Sampling Framework	Random and/or targeted selection of learner records for external moderation purposes, to include <b>Probability-based</b> and <b>Non-probability</b> based selection of sampling.
4.	Document Review	Review of policies, standard forms and templates, learning material
5.	Validation	Comparison of evidence to practice
No	Technique	Example
6.	Verification	Evaluation of policy and process at a holistic systems level to demonstrate the <b>concept of trueness</b> in the policy to practice verification. <sup>3</sup>  Evaluation will include the assessment of the policies and practice against a set of criteria, a value judgement based on the results of that assessment, and a sound administrative process to ensure fairness in the evaluation <sup>4</sup>
7.	Interviews	Focused interviews with learners, assessors, moderators
8.	Observation	Evaluation of actual facilities, learner interaction with assessors and facilitators


<sup>3</sup> Promotion of Administrative Justice Act

<sup>4</sup> Promotion of Administrative Justice Act

### Frequency of M&A Interventions

The frequency of **Monitoring / Validation** interventions, and/or **Verification Audits** may be dependent on the following factors:

- Routine schedule: every 6 – 12 months
- ETQA discretion
- Discrepancies / complaints / appeals



For further information refer to:

- THETA ETQA Policy Document: Monitoring & Auditing

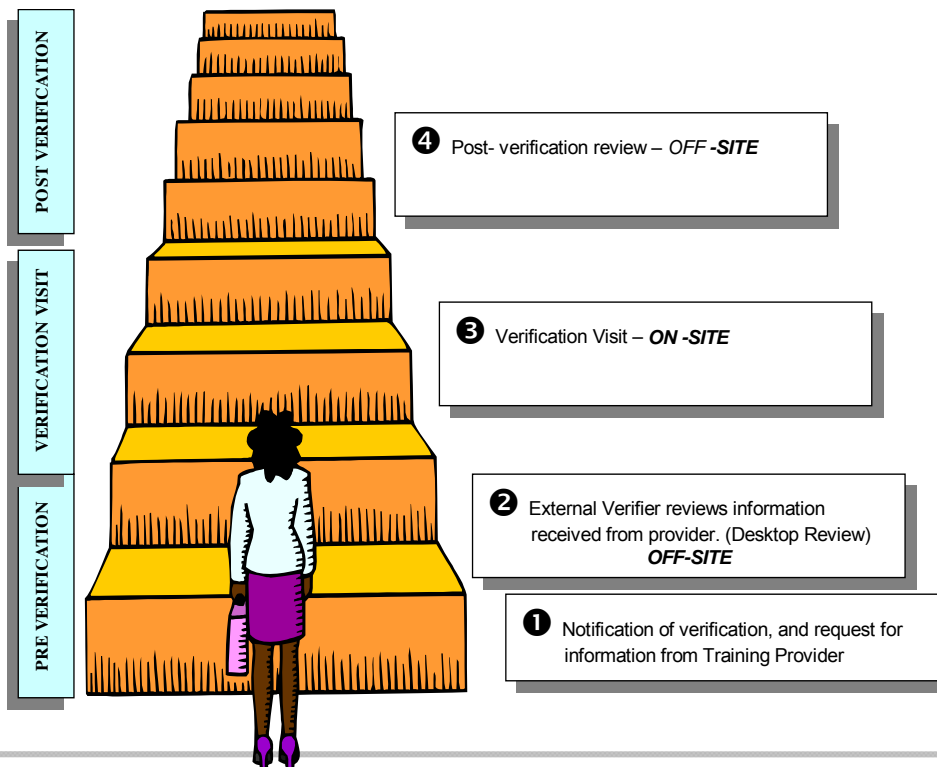
This document is available on the THETA website:  
[www.theta.org.za](http://www.theta.org.za)

## 5. Overview of Verification

### 5.1. What is verification

Verification is a **planned and systematic process** of validation that ensures that all Education, training and development practices meet the requirements as set out by SAQA.

The process can be illustrated as follows:



<sup>5</sup>The verification process does not take place in isolation from the delivery and assessment of ETD practices.



The document ‘SAQA: Quality Management Systems for Education and Training Providers,’ identifies eight criteria that providers of ETD practices should meet in terms of the quality management system implemented. These eight core criteria are:

Criterion	Description
Policy statement	The organisation’s aims, objectives and purposes need to be spelt out
Quality management systems	Identify processes and outline procedures that implement quality management in the organisation
Review mechanisms	Outline the ways in which the implementation of policies would be monitored
Programme delivery	Outline how learning programmes would be developed, delivered and evaluated
Staff policies	Outline policies and procedures for staff selection, appraisal and development
Learner policies	Policies and procedures for the selection of learners are outlined, and learners are given guidance and support
Assessment policies	Outline policies and procedures for forms of assessments that are used and how they are managed
Management systems and policies	Indicate the financial, administrative and physical structures and resources of the organisation, as well as procedures of accountability within the organisation

Verification is part of THETA ETQA’s overall monitoring and auditing approach and therefore covers the same scope required for accreditation.

<sup>5</sup> Source: SAQA Quality Management Systems for Education and Training providers

The following quality indicators form the basis for accreditation and verification:

No	Criteria / Scope	Quality Indicator
1.	Organizational Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ratios – learner per facilitator / assessor</li> <li>▪ Assessor per moderator</li> <li>▪ Geographical spread</li> <li>▪ Quality provision</li> </ul>
2.	QMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Organizational commitment and management</li> <li>▪ Admin management</li> <li>▪ Learning management</li> <li>▪ Assessment Management</li> <li>▪ ETD Staff Management</li> <li>▪ Learnership Management</li> </ul>
3.	Resources, facilities and Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Physical</li> <li>▪ Financial</li> <li>▪ Administrative</li> <li>▪ Human</li> </ul>
4.	Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assessment &amp; RPL - Policy, practices and process</li> <li>▪ Management, review, role players</li> <li>▪ Principles, instruments, access</li> <li>▪ Role players' competence and capacity</li> </ul>
5.	Moderation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Policy, practice and process</li> <li>▪ Role players' competence and capacity, management</li> <li>▪ Scope, impact, instruments</li> </ul>



*As you will note the quality indicators are based on the guidelines provided by SAQA and is the same as the requirements to become an accredited provider. Therefore, if you are accredited, the verification process is about how you have implemented your QMS system and is not a new set of criteria.*

Any verification system will be developed around the following components

- P** rocess      *Policy and Procedures*  
*Record systems*  
*Admin systems*  
*Assessment and moderation*
  
- P** eople      *ETD Practitioners*  
*Assessors, Moderators and Learners*  
*Administrators*
  
- P** roduct      *Learning Materials*  
*Programme Strategies*  
*Assessment Strategies*  
*Assessment guides*  
*Moderators guide*  
*RPL guide*

## 5.2. The purpose of verification

The main purpose of any verification is to make a judgement of the quality of the training providers practices based on the evidence validated throughout the verification process.

The main functions of verification are:

- To validate the implementation of Training Providers' QMS system
- To validate the implementation ETD practices
- To validate supporting systems such as learner records, registrations etc
- To verify that *moderation practices* are fair, valid, reliable and practical
- To evaluate the performance of moderators
- To verify the moderation decisions
- To confirm assessment and moderation decisions for certification purposes
- To process results for certification purposes

## 5.3. The scope of verification

The scope of verification directly links to the requirements as set out by SAQA. THETA ETQA's verification scope is broadly divided into 9 **areas**:

- Development, management and review of the QMS
- Physical Resources
- Staff Resources
- Learner Support
- Administration Systems

- Record Systems
- ETD Practices
- Moderation Practices
- Assessment Practices

This table below shows how the criteria are defined for areas in the scope. Notice how the criteria in this table corresponds with the table on page 13 and 14. The last column indicates the types of evidence that will be validated and evaluated during the verification process.

Scope	Criteria	Evidence that will be evaluated and validated by Verification Team
Management Systems	The provider has developed, established and implemented quality assurance policies, procedures and plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ QMS System</li> <li>▪ <i>Quality Assurance policy and procedures that indicate how the quality of learning provision is maintained (4.1. Phase B)</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Internal Audit systems</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Health and Safety policy</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Vision and Mission Statements</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Policy and procedures to support the mission</i></li> </ul>
Physical Resources	The provider has sufficient physical resources to offer learning programmes listed on their scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>List of resources</i></li> <li>▪ <i>List of training facilities</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Descriptions of facilities for learner records</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Equipment required for learners to practice skills</i></li> </ul>
Staff Resources	<p>The provider has sufficient staff resources to support the delivery of learning programmes listed on their scope</p> <p>The provider has implemented sufficient QMS systems to manage Practitioners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Number of learners/number of ETD practitioners</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Qualification and experience of practitioners</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Administration staff</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Assessors/Moderators</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Organogram</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Recruitment and selection of staff</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Staff contracts</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Performance management systems</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Code of Conduct</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Induction of practitioners</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Staff development plans</i></li> </ul>

Scope	Criteria	Evidence that will be evaluated and validated by Verification Team
Learner Support	The provider has sufficient policies and procedures in place to support learners when entering a learning programme until exiting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Learner selection</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Entry requirements for learning programmes defined</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Learner registration policy and procedures implemented</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Learner induction materials</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Breakdown of learning materials that learners will receive</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Learner contracts</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Resources available for learners</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Coaching for learners</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Disciplinary policies and procedures</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Report of learner progression through the learning programme</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Feedback for employers where learners are applying skills</i></li> </ul>
Administration systems	The provider has sufficient systems to support all the administration requirements around ETD delivery, assessments and moderation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Database of record keeping system</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Types of records</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Storage of records</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Procedures for keeping records</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Access control of records</i></li> </ul>
Record systems	The provider maintains sufficient records of learner personal details as well as assessment results and evidence of learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Learner files</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Portfolio of evidence</i></li> </ul>
Education and Training support	The provider has approved learning programmes to transfer knowledge and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Programme approval obtained from ETQA</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Programme strategy</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Training needs analysis</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Delivery methods applicable and clearly defined</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Training schedules</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Progress reports of learning</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Facilitators reports</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Report from workplace</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Facilitators guides</i></li> </ul>

Scope	Criteria	Evidence that will be evaluated and validated by Verification Team
Moderation	The provider has implemented fair, valid and sufficient moderation practices to support assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Moderation Plan</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Moderation Reports</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Qualified Moderators</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Codes of Conduct</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Contracts of External Moderators</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Moderators Policy</i></li> </ul>
Assessment	The provider has implemented fair, valid, consistent and sufficient assessment practices that support the assessment decisions made by Assessors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Assessment Policy</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Registered Assessors</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Assessment Strategies</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Assessment Guides</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Assessment Instruments</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Assessor Reports</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Assessment Review Reports</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Assessors Code of Conduct</i></li> <li>▪ <i>RPL policy</i></li> <li>▪ <i>RPL guides</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Appeals procedures and policy</i></li> </ul>

Note that all the evidence listed in the table above relates to:

**PROCESS** → **PRODUCT** → **PEOPLE**



THETA has developed a “**Verification Report**” which details each criterion. You will receive this report with a notification of a Verification Visit or you can get this on the THETA Website [www.theta.org.za](http://www.theta.org.za)

## 5.4. The outcome of a Verification

Conducting verification means in essence judging and validating evidence of ETD, assessment and moderation practices of a provider.

Once evidence is validated, the verification team are able to make certain verification decisions.

These decisions relate to specific outcomes and are follows:

- Certification can or can not continue
- The Training Provider can or can not continue with training practices related to THETA certificated programmes
- The Training Provider can or can not continue with assessment practices related to THETA certificated programmes
- Accreditation can or can not continue

The verification outcome will always be supported with a compliance plan that clearly provides the provider with guidelines of what is required and expected.

## 5.5. Appeal against outcomes

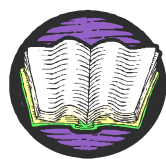


A training provider has the right to appeal the outcome of the verification and should follow the guidelines stipulated in THETA ETQA's Appeals policy.

### 5.5.1. The scope of Appeal

In brief the THETA Appeals Policy is applicable to any **disputes resulting** out of:

1. Accreditation of providers
2. Registration of assessors and/or moderators
3. Evaluation of learning programmes
4. Monitoring and auditing of providers
5. Monitoring & Auditing of employers
6. Certification of learners
7. Provision of accredited providers
8. Use of the THETA Logo




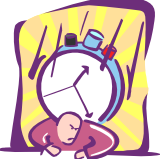

For further information refer to the :

- THETA ETQA 5 Policy Document: Appeals

This document is available on the THETA web-site at [www.theta.org.za](http://www.theta.org.za)

## 5.6. The role-players and responsibilities

To ensure that verification is fair and objective, THETA has opted for a verification team rather than an individual verifier. The team consists of following:

Who	Title	Responsibilities
ETQA Representative 	ETQA Manager ETQA Advisor Quality Assuror	<p><b>Pre-verification – Off site</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Schedules visits</li> <li>▪ Administrates the Desktop review</li> </ul> <p><b>Verification – On Site</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Introduces the process</li> <li>▪ Validates and verifies practices</li> <li>▪ Assists and confirms the verification decisions</li> <li>▪ Advises provider on the compliance plan</li> </ul> <p><b>Post verification – Off site</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Validates and reviews evidence that the providers submit against the compliance plan</li> <li>▪ Liaises with the external verifier if required</li> </ul>
ETQA representative 	Administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Makes all the logistical arrangements</li> <li>▪ Informs providers of requirements</li> <li>▪ Confirms the visit</li> <li>▪ Books verifiers and confirms schedules</li> </ul>
Contracted 	External Verifier	<p><b>Pre-Verification – Off-site</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Conducts a desk-top review off-site</li> <li>▪ Plans the verification activities for the day</li> </ul> <p><b>Verification On-site</b></p>

Who	Title	Responsibilities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Conducts and facilitates the verification process</li> <li>▪ Judges evidence and make decisions</li> <li>▪ Advises provider on the compliance issues</li> <li>▪ Finalises the day</li> </ul> <p><b>Post verification – Off site</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reviews evidence that providers submitted for compliance plan</li> </ul>
Contracted	External Moderator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Conducts moderation and completes moderation reports</li> </ul>
Contracted	Subject Matter Expert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Validates assessment instruments and learning material if required</li> </ul>

The team might be as small as two, or as big as 5 members at a time, depending on the type of provider.

The team might be expanded to include an external moderator or a subject matter expert.

### 5.6.1. Expertise of the verifier

The verifier needs to understand the impact of legislation on verification practices and must have an excellent working knowledge of ETD practices and all legislation that has an impact on it.

To avoid conflict of interest, the verifiers are where possible **independent from the Sector** and every effort is made to not appoint from within the Sector.

The verifier should be a qualified assessor and moderator and must have experience in managing ETDP practices.

The verifier should be professional at all times and have to conduct him/herself in line with the ETQA code of conduct for verifiers.



Please note that Verifier’s **may not consult** a Training Provider once verification was conducted.

If the Training Provider wishes to use the verifier as a consultant they are required to **obtain permission** from THETA ETQA Manager, once **approved** and if the Verifier wishes to enter a service agreement with the Training Provider he/she **may not conduct any further verifications** relating to this particular Training Provider.

### 5.6.2. The appointment of a verifier

THETA ETQA has a set selection criteria for identifying suitable verifiers for the sector.

Individuals that fit the requirements **will be invited** by THETA ETQA to take part in the process of Verification. Verifiers will be inducted into the process and will be subjected to performance evaluation on a regular basis.

The ETQA has the **right to appoint and dismiss external verifiers** not acting inline with the code of conduct.



For further information on the verifier code of conduct please refer to the THETA Website: [www.theta.org.za](http://www.theta.org.za)

- Verifier’s Code of Conduct

### 5.7. Verification Techniques

Verification can take place **off-site or on-site** and a variety of techniques are used depending on the type of learning programmes, size of organisation and any specific needs that arise etc.

The verifier, in discussion with THETA ETQA will select verification techniques, which are most suitable to a Training Provider and will provide evidence against the set criteria that we have discussed in Section 5.3.

Any verification is a sample of the total implementation of the training provider’s ETD practices. The verification team will identify the sample and will request the sample.



*Please make sure that you have all the learner records, assessments (portfolios of evidence) and relevant information of all your learners available. The verification team will request the sample on the day of the visit and if you have none of the records available it will not have a positive outcome.*

The table below summarises some of the most effective techniques suitable for each type of verification that can be used:

Type of Verification	Techniques
Off-site/Desktop review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review of policies and procedures</li> <li>▪ Review reports from assessors and moderators</li> <li>▪ Review assessment decisions</li> <li>▪ Validate assessment instruments</li> <li>▪ Evaluate an assessment strategy</li> </ul>
On-site review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review and evaluate the implementation of policies and procedures</li> <li>▪ Evaluate the implementation by comparing the actual evidence and description on policies and procedure</li> <li>▪ Review and evaluate record systems and records</li> <li>▪ Review and evaluate workplace reports on application of skills</li> <li>▪ Review and evaluate moderation and assessment practices</li> <li>▪ Review and evaluate assessment and moderation process</li> <li>▪ Review and evaluate moderators and assessors reports</li> <li>▪ Validate assessment instruments against unit standards and assessment strategy</li> <li>▪ Validate the assessment decisions against evidence requirements</li> <li>▪ Evaluate &amp; confirm assessment decisions</li> <li>▪ Interview assessors and moderators</li> <li>▪ Interview learners</li> <li>▪ Interview parents</li> <li>▪ Telephonic confirmation of assessment process with learners</li> <li>▪ Observation of practices</li> </ul>

The principles for effective verification are the same as for moderation and assessment practices.

The table below provides you with **an example** of how verifiers review different types of evidence against each criterion. *(Remember the criteria are described in the verifiers report).*

Each criterion will have evidence relating to **Process, Product and People**.

The table below shows how evidence is evaluated against the listed principles:

PRINCIPLES	PROCESS	PRODUCT	PEOPLE
Validity	The evidence meet the requirements of the terms of SAQA/ETQA requirements	Learning Programmes and assessment guides are aligned to registered NQF Unit Standards	Assessors, moderators are qualified and registered
Relevancy	The evidence is relevant to the criteria	Information is relevant to the	Training Providers staff have relevant qualifications and work experience
Reliability	The assessment process is followed to ensure that all assessment decisions are reliable	Assessment instruments measure specific outcomes related to unit standards and the evidence required is clearly defined to ensure consistent assessment decisions	Assessors consistently make the same assessment decisions
Authenticity	The training provider implemented the systems	The portfolios of evidence belong to the learner and can be validated as the learners own work	The assessments conducted confirms assessors and learners participation in the assessment
Consistency	Implementation of practices are consistent with policy and procedures described	The implementation of assessment process is consistently the same among all assessors	Assessors consistently practice assessment as described in the assessment policy
Currency	QA process is current and recent.	Assessment decisions were made within the last 18 months	Assessors have current qualifications
Sufficiency	Sufficient policies and procedures have been developed in implemented to ensure effective ETD practices	Assessors collected enough evidence to make a competence assessment decision	Providers have sufficient resources to deliver a skills programme

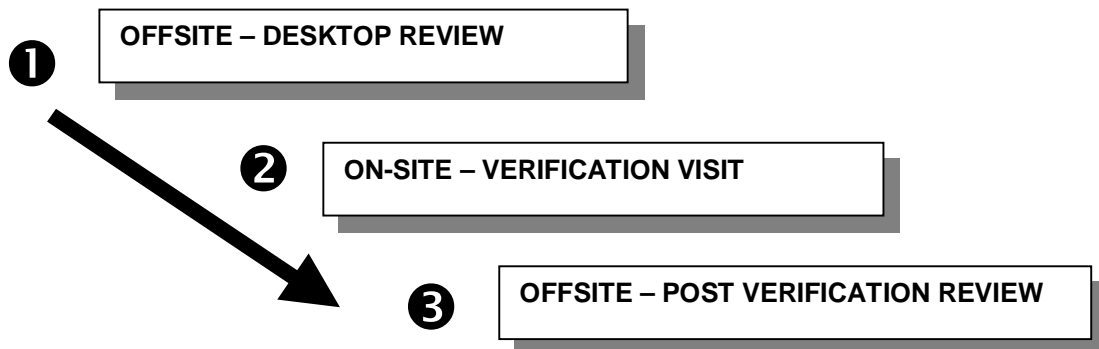
PRINCIPLES	PROCESS	PRODUCT	PEOPLE
Fair/Open	All processes are fair and open for suggestions and comments from all role-players	Assessment process if fair and open to learners	Assessors are fair and open in their judgments and provide feedback to learners



*Please note the table does not reflect all the criteria from the verification report but just provides you with an insight of the evaluation process applied by verifiers. Training providers could use the same process to evaluate their own practices.*

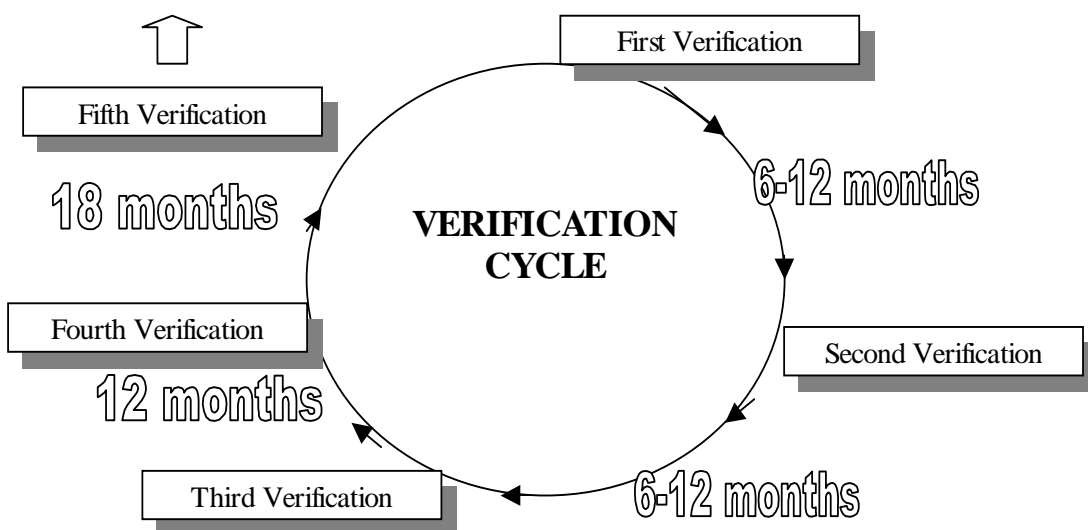
## 6. The verification process

We have already introduced the process to you. This section of the guide will break the process down in more detail.



*Please note: the process is flexible and can be adapted according to circumstances or if special needs arise per Training Provider or if the ETQA sees a need to address a particular issue.*

The verification process repeats itself over a period of time. A normal cycle of verification can be illustrated as follows:



Each verification visit will have specific purposes identified and providers will be informed of the purpose for each visit. The generic purpose description for verification is as follows:

Number of Visit	Purpose of Visit
First	<p>As this is the first visit after a training provider has been accredited this verification will still focus very much on the <b>development</b> of systems such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ QMS system</li> <li>▪ Management Systems</li> <li>▪ Record Systems</li> <li>▪ Learning Programmes approved</li> <li>▪ Assessment Instrument Validation</li> <li>▪ Assessment and Moderation systems</li> </ul> <p>The provider will receive a <b>developmental compliance plan</b> that will assist with meeting all the requirements and some condition will be stipulated.</p> <p>The timeframe will depend on the seriousness of the requirements not met and could be between 3-12 months.</p>
Second	<p>The providers would have had a period to develop and implement systems after the first visit, therefore this visit will focus on verifying the <b>implementation</b> of all systems, policies and practices and whether the provider met the compliance plan from the first visit.</p> <p>If the provider does not meet the requirements they will receive a <b>conditional compliance plan</b>.</p> <p>The timeframe will depend on the seriousness of the requirements not met and could be between 0-3 months.</p>

Number of Visit	Purpose of Visit
Third	<p>The providers would have had a period to develop and implement systems after the second visit, therefore this visit will focus on <b>specific areas</b> rather than all systems, policies and practices.</p> <p>The conditional compliance plan will be reviewed and specific areas will be validated. If the provider does not meet the requirements they will receive a <b>conditional compliance plan</b>.</p> <p>The timeframe will depend on the seriousness of the requirements not met and could be between 0-3 months.</p>
Fourth	<p>The provider would have had almost four years to develop and implement the required standards and should be fully operational and ready for a verification visit with no prior notification.</p> <p>This visit will also link to re-accreditation application, which implies that all criteria will be evaluated. Providers will also be required to conduct a self-evaluation using the available checklist</p>



Refer to the THETA website for the Self-evaluation checklist



*If providers fail to meet the requirements set out on the compliance plan after a verification visit, their accreditation status is at risk.*

## 6.1. How do you as a provider prepare for a Verification Visit



*It is important that the Training Provider is prepared for the Verification Visit. You know your operational practices and being prepared ensures that the Verification Team has the opportunity to validate as much information as possible.*

With the notification of the visits, you would have received the Verification Report that will be used on the day of the verification for the following purposes:

- To record evidence validated during the visit
- To evaluate evidence, make judgments and record the findings
- Provide feedback on each criteria

The Training Providers are expected to have all the relevant information ready for the Visit.

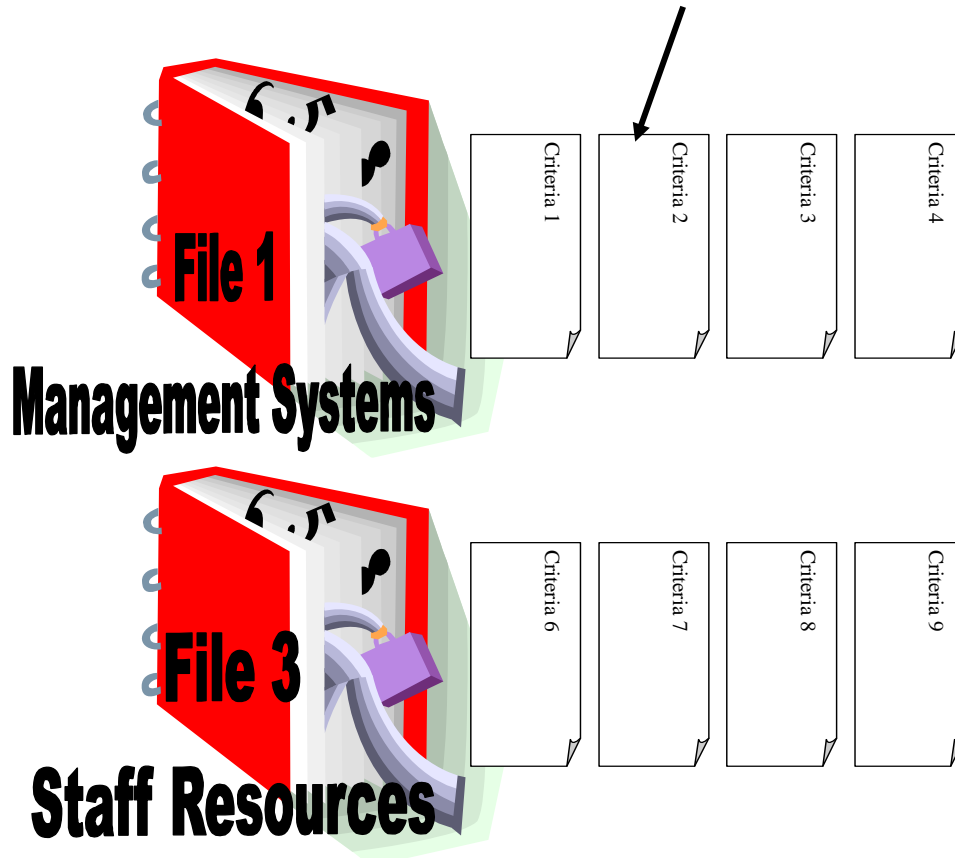
In preparing evidence for the visit, it is advisable to follow the structure of the verification report as set out.

- Management Systems
- Physical Resources
- Staff Resources
- Learner Support
- Administration Systems
- Record Systems
- Education and Training Support
- Moderation practices
- Assessment Practices

For the ease of finding information, we suggest that you identify the **relevant documents per criteria** and that you actually **reference** the information according to the **criteria numbers**.

See an example below of how you can organise evidence in simple filing system:  
Section 1 – Management Systems

Criteria Number	Criteria Description	Evidence Required	Document Number
2	Support and commitment from the management of the provider is clear and sufficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vision and Mission Statement</li> <li>• Minutes of QA Meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doc 2.1</li> <li>• Doc 2.2</li> </ul>



You can use any other type of organising system as long as it's easy to find the relevant information at the day of the visit.



*If you have to go and find information an enormous amount of time is wasted. The verification team has limited time to verify information. An unprepared visit always results in a very cumbersome compliance plan with strict conditions and timeframes attached.*

THETA ETQA has prepared several guideline documents for training providers to prepare themselves for accreditation and verifications, please make use them.



For further information refer to the:

- ETD QMS - Guideline Document
- Programme Strategy Design
- Design and Assessment Strategy
- Guidelines to design Assessment Guides
- Design Assessment Guides for Dummies

Both documents are available on the THETA web-site at [www.theta.org.za](http://www.theta.org.za)



THETA has developed tools that may assist you in your ETD practices:

- Competence Record and Final Assessment Report
- Assessment Guide
- Assessment Strategy for Learners
- Programme Strategy
- Programme Workplace Guide

You can get this on the THETA Website [www.theta.org.za](http://www.theta.org.za)

## 6.1. The Process for an On-Site Verification Visit

The process for an on-site visit is pre-planned, structured and fixed. This is to ensure consistency of verification practices.

### 6.1.2. The agenda

The agenda is fixed to ensure that all training providers are consistently treated the same, and that the same process has been followed.

Process	Description of Evidence	Responsible Person	Estimated Timeframe
1. Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain the purpose of visit and procedures of the visit</li> <li>Declaration of Understanding and commitment</li> </ul>	ETQA Manager	15 minutes
2. Stage One	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss the criteria on the EV report and identify documents to be sampled</li> </ul>	EV and ETQA Manager	1-2 hours
3. Stage Two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Verification of all the documents requested</li> </ul>	EV and ETQA Team only	1-2 hours
4. Stage Three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion of findings and verification report</li> </ul>	ETQA and Provider	1 hour
5. Stage Four	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review Verification Process</li> </ul>	ETQA and Provider	15 minutes
5. Closure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thank all role-players</li> </ul>	ETQA	5 minutes



*Please don't put your **own agenda** on top of the ETQA agenda.*

*The verification team will follow the agenda and will not entertain any deviations unless they identify a specific need. The changes will then be discussed and agreed upon among all parties*

*Please don't **arrange any special activities** such as sit-down lunches with the board members, game drives, bungee jumping or any other activities. Whilst the Verification Team really appreciates any hospitality, we have a strict and time-consuming process to follow. Time is of the essence.*

*Also note that the verification process may exceed normal working hours.*

### 6.1.3. The declaration of understanding

To ensure consistency in all practices it is important to confirm understanding of the process and to mutually agree that the process can continue.

The purpose of the declaration is to:

- confirm the purpose of verification
- confirm the process of verification
- confirm the verification criteria
- confirm the need to provide actual evidence of assessment practices
- confirm the responsibility of the Verification Team
- ensure understanding of the process
- agree to provide relevant documents required for verification
- acknowledge the outputs of the verification
- confirm that the verification report is only relevant to verification and not any other process
- confirm that once the compliance plan has been agreed upon and signed that the provider can not appeal against the outcomes of the verification report



*Providers frequently misunderstand the reason for not being able to appeal once the compliance plan has been signed. The outcomes of the verification and compliance plan requirements are openly discussed with the provider on the day.*

*As training provider, you have the right to not agree to the issues on the compliance plan. These matters will be discussed and solutions will be agreed upon.*

*Additional conditions may not be added to the outcome and compliance plan **after** it has been signed off by parties.*

*Why would you want to appeal against something you already agreed upon?*



*For further information refer to Appeal Policy*

### 6.1.4. Verification criteria and report

To ensure that the verification process is consistent a fixed Verification Report has been developed and implemented. The provider receives this report for preparational purposes and will receive the completed report after the visit.

The purpose of the report is to provide providers with evaluative and developmental feedback as well as some judgements measured against set criteria.



THETA has developed a “Verification Report” which details each criteria. You will receive this report with a notification of a Verification Visit or you can get this on the THETA Website [www.theta.org.za](http://www.theta.org.za)

### 6.1.5. Compliance Plan

The compliance plan provides developmental and conditional feedback as well as guidance on how to meet the standards required.

The compliance plan has four sections namely the:

- Plan of action
- Final Judgements and outcome/s of verification visit
- Overall rating of practices
- Agreement and formalisation with signatures

#### **Section 1 - Plan of Action**

The compliance plan will directly relate to criteria set out in the Verifications report. The compliance plan will describe what is required to be done and what standards are expected. The person responsible will be identified and the time-frame for completion will be stipulated.


#### **Section 2 – Final Judgement**

It is the verification team’s responsibility to make a final judgement based on all the evidence validated.

The typical judgments that are required to be made relates to:

- Whether the purpose of the verification has been met;

- Whether certification of learners can continue;  
(*This judgement relates judging whether learning has taken place and that learners competence can be confirmed beyond doubt*)
- Whether the provider may or may not continue with certain practices such as:
  - *Training*
  - *Assessments*
- Whether Accreditation can continue



For further information refer to the:

- Accreditation Self-Evaluation
- Accreditation Systems Process Flow
- **THETA ETQA’s Accreditation Policy and procedures**

These documents are available on the THETA web-site at [www.theta.org.za](http://www.theta.org.za)

Should verification show evidence of sub-standard ETD practice, the verification team may recommend a variety of outcomes.

### **Section 3 Overall rating**

Part of providing evaluative feedback is to allocate a rating on the evidence judged.

The table below provides you with a description of the rating and possible outcome related to the rating.

No	Non-compliance	Example	Outcome
1	<b>Compliance Rating 5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All QMS and ETD policies &amp; practices comply to / exceed ETQA criteria as stated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approval of continuation of practices</li> </ul>
2	<b>Minor Rating 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policies and practices are in place, but selected areas need improvement</li> <li>• Training and assessment show evidence of alignment and good practice, but does not meet SAQA criteria</li> <li>• Self assessment practices are insufficient</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conditional approval of continuation of practices</li> <li>• Development Plan</li> </ul>

No	Non-compliance	Example	Outcome
3	<b>Medium Rating 2 or 3</b>	Insufficient evidence of : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• programme alignment,</li> <li>• sound assessment evidence and practices,</li> <li>• QMS policy and practice implementation</li> <li>• Quality provision and learner support</li> <li>• Insufficient moderation practices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suspension</li> <li>• Sample re-assessment</li> <li>• External Moderation</li> <li>• Conditional Compliance Plan</li> </ul>
4	<b>Major Rating 1 or 0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obvious disregard to SAQA criteria for quality provision,</li> <li>• No evidence of aligned programmes and assessment practices,</li> <li>• QMS practices insufficient in all ETD areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learner Salvage – retraining and assessment</li> <li>• Certification withdrawal</li> <li>• De-accreditation</li> </ul>

### **Section 4 – Final Agreement**

This section confirms agreement from the provider and validates the completion of the verification process.

### **6.1.6. Reviewing the Verification Process**

The **On-Site Verification** always ends with reviewing verification practices.

Training providers will be required to review and evaluate the verification practices and will be requested to make comments and suggestions related to the:

- verification team’s performance
- verification process
- verification Instruments used and
- value of feedback that was given



*Please be honest and make suggestions that will benefit all Training Providers. This is your opportunity to influence practices.*

Once this part is concluded, the On-site verification process is closed.

## 6.2. Post Verification Process

The verification process continues in the form of the compliance plan that was developed, confirmed and agreed upon by the Training provider on the On-site Verification Visit.

The process can be summarised in the following steps



**STEP 1** Training provider works towards meeting requirements of compliance plan. It is now the Training providers responsibility to meet the requirements of the compliance plan within the agreed time-frame.



**STEP 2** Training provider submits evidence of meeting the requirements in the compliance plan in the form of a Portfolio to THETA ETQA’s Quality Assuror (QA) within the allocated time frame



**STEP 3** Quality Assuror checks whether all requirements on the plan have been met and all relevant evidence is in the portfolio.

*If yes, portfolio is forwarded to an External Verifier for Post Review*

*If no, the portfolio is returned to the training provider with request of completion*



**STEP 4** External Verifier reviews all the evidence, compiles a post review report and review the outcomes and judgements made for the On-site verification visit. Makes suitable recommendations and returns evidence and reports to THETA ETQA Quality Assuror.



**STEP 5** QA will forward the recommendations to ETQA Manager if the outcome will influence the training provider’s accreditation status.



*If the Training Provider wishes to discuss any matters related to the verification and/or compliance plan after the On-site Verification visit they should contact the appointed QA at the ETQA and **not the verifier***

### 6.3.1. How to prepare the evidence for Post Verification Process

The training provider is expected to collect evidence that meets the requirements. The evidence must be compiled in a portfolio and this must be forwarded to the allocated Quality assessor in the THETA ETQA.

#### Rules for submission

- Please ensure that you have all the evidence required on the compliance plan before submitting it to THETA ETQA.
- Please ensure that you have a content page of all the evidence and that all evidence is referenced back to the criteria

Portfolios will be **returned** to Training Providers if the above rules were not followed.



*Please do not delay the process. If your evidence is not complete and it's returned to you for correction when you resubmit to THETA your evidence is returned to the **bottom of the pile again.***

## 7. Summary

If you want to be a nationally recognised training provider, you are required to meet the requirements as set out by SAQA and as implemented by THETA ETQA. It is not the responsibility of the ETQA to train providers to meet the standards.

## 8. List of Acronyms

QMS	Quality Management System
ETQA	Education Training Quality Authority
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
ETD	Education, Training and Development
QA	Quality Assuror

## 9. Contact Details of THETA ETQA

The **THETA web-site** is [www.theta.org.za](http://www.theta.org.za) and contains all the policy documents and resources mentioned in this document.

Should any further assistance be required, the **THETA Call Centre** may be contacted at **0860 100 221**

Alternatively, a **THETA Quality Assuror** will be able to assist potential providers in queries at:

Tel: (011) 217 0600.  
 Fax: (011) 783 7745  
 Email: [theta@theta.org.za](mailto:theta@theta.org.za)