

UMALUSI



Quality Council for General and Further  
Education and Training

**REPORT ON  
ACCREDITATION AND  
MONITORING OF PRIVATE  
EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AND  
PRIVATE ASSESSMENT BODIES**

FOR THE PERIOD  
1 APRIL 2022 - 31 MARCH 2023



Quality Council for General and Further  
Education and Training

EVALUATION AND ACCREDITATION UNIT

---

REPORT ON  
ACCREDITATION AND MONITORING OF PRIVATE EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS  
AND PRIVATE ASSESSMENT BODIES

---

FOR THE PERIOD  
1 APRIL 2022 - 31 MARCH 2023

# Contents

Contents	2
Tables	4
Abbreviations and Acronyms	5
Overview	6
<b>CHAPTER 1</b>	<b>7</b>
Background	7
Purpose	7
Legislative mandate	7
Scope	9
Organogram	11
<b>CHAPTER 2</b>	<b>12</b>
Accreditation of Private Education Institutions	12
Independent Schools	12
The Accreditation Process for Independent Schools	12
Private Colleges	13
The Accreditation Process for Private Colleges	13
<b>CHAPTER 3</b>	<b>15</b>
The Accreditation Process	15
Letter of Intent (LOI) to apply for accreditation	15
Quality Promotion Meetings	17
Self-evaluation Report and Desktop Evaluation	18
Referral to the DHET	20
Initial Site visits	21
Follow-up Site Visits and Improvement Reports	25
Confirmation Site Visits	27
Reports to the Accreditation Committee of Council	27
Turnaround time for accreditation applications	29
Monitoring	30
Monitoring Underperforming Accredited Schools	33
Extension of scope	33
Reapplication	33

<b>CHAPTER 4</b>	<b>35</b>
Accreditation Outcomes	35
Committees	35
Internal Accreditation Committee (IAC)	35
Accreditation Committee of Council	35
Accreditation Appeals Committee (AAC)	36
ACC Consideration of Accreditation Recommendations	36
Accreditation outcomes	36
Independent Schools	37
Private Colleges	38
Window Period	39
Improvements following a window period or provisional accreditation	40
The Appeal Process	43
Appeals presented to the AAC	43
<b>CHAPTER 5</b>	<b>45</b>
Accreditation of Private Assessment Bodies	45
Private assessment bodies accredited by Umalusi	46
Monitoring the conduct, administration, and management of examinations	46
<b>CHAPTER 6</b>	<b>47</b>
Stakeholder Engagement	47
Meetings with officials from the DBE and PEDs	47
Accreditation Forum and Accreditation Certificate Presentation Ceremony	48
DHET and UMALUSI Joint Task Team on Registration and Accreditation of Private Colleges	48
Other Activities	49
Reporting accreditation status	49
Independent Schools	49
Private Colleges	50
General Challenges	52
Conclusion	53

# TABLES

Table 1: LOI submitted between 01 April 2020 and 31 March 2023	15
Table 2: Quality Promotion Meetings held between 01 April 2022 and 31 March 2023	17
Table 3: SE Evaluated between 01 April 2020 and 31 March 2023	19
Table 4: initial site visits conducted for independent schools per quarter between 01 April 2020 and 31 March 2023	22
Table 5: Initial Site Visits conducted for Private Colleges per quarter between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2023	23
Table 6: Follow-up Site Visits conducted	26
Table 7: Reports submitted to the ACC between 01 April 2020 and 31 March 2023	28
Table 8: Accredited Institutions Monitored Between 01 April 2019 And 31 March 2022	31
Table 9: Accreditation outcomes for independent schools	37
Table 10: Accreditation outcomes for Private Colleges	38
Table 11: Window period letters issued	39
Table 12: Independent School accreditation outcomes between 01 April 2019 and 31 March 2023 following a period to improve	41
Table 13: Private College outcomes following a period given to improve	42
Table 14: Appeals presented to the AAC	44
Table 15: Current status of private assessment bodies accredited to assess qualifications on the GFETQSF	46
Table 16: 2023 Red, Green, Amber colour coding across nine provinces	49

# ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

A&C	Accreditation and Coordination
AAC	Accreditation Appeals Committee
ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
ACC	Accreditation Committee of Council
AET	Adult Education and Training
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CET	Continuing Education and Training
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
E&A	Evaluation and Accreditation
EXCO	Executive Committee of Council
FET	Further Education and Training
GENFETQA	General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance
GETC	General Education and Training Certificate
GFETQSF	General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework
IAC	Internal Accreditation Committee
IS	Independent School
LOI	Letter of Intent
NATED	National Education Programme (Report 190/191)
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NC(V)	National Certificate (Vocational)
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSC	National Senior Certificate
PED	Provincial Education Department
QAM	Quality Assurance and Monitoring
QP	Quality Promotion
SACE	South African Council for Educators
SE	Self-evaluation

# OVERVIEW

The Evaluation and Accreditation (E&A) unit lies within Programme three, the Quality Assurance and Monitoring (QAM) branch. The purpose of Programme three is to ensure that the providers of education and training have the capacity to deliver and assess qualifications registered on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework (GFETQSF) and are doing so to the expected standards and quality. The E&A unit fulfils this purpose through the evaluation, accreditation and monitoring of independent schools, private Further Education and Training (FET) colleges, and private Adult Education and Training colleges that offer the curriculum or programmes leading to a qualification registered on the GFETQSF and private assessment bodies assessing the registered qualifications.

This report outlines the main functions and processes of the Evaluation and Accreditation unit in the accreditation and monitoring of private education institutions and private assessment bodies. It provides statistical information related to the 2022/23 financial year.

Legislation requires private education institutions to be accredited to offer qualifications on the GFETQSF. The accreditation process is rigorous, comprising several steps of evaluation and verification. The Accreditation Committee of Council (ACC) considers and makes recommendations on the accreditation outcome for institutions based on reports presented to them outlining the extent of an institution's compliance with the accreditation criteria.

The recommendation of the ACC is then submitted to the Umalusi Chief Executive Officer for approval on behalf of Umalusi Council.

Similarly, private assessment bodies must be accredited by Umalusi to assess a qualification on the GFETQSF. Private assessment bodies must demonstrate the capacity to conduct, administer and manage national examinations and assessment of learner achievement and deliver valid, reliable, fair, and credible assessments and examinations. Umalusi Council makes the final decision on the accreditation of private assessment bodies after consideration of the reports presented to them based on the evaluation and verification processes.

# Chapter 1

## BACKGROUND

The Evaluation and Accreditation unit of Umalusi, as part of Programme 3: Quality Assurance and Monitoring, implements policies and processes to ensure the achievement of the organisational outcome, *Enhanced educational standards*.

### Purpose

The purpose of the Evaluation and Accreditation sub-programme is to quality assure the delivery of qualifications on the GFETQSF at private education institutions and the capacity of private assessment bodies to assess those qualifications. This purpose aligns with the purpose of Programme 3, which is to ensure that the providers of education and training have the capacity to deliver and assess qualifications registered on the GFETQSF and are doing so to the expected standards and quality.

### Legislative Mandate

#### Constitution of the Republic of South Africa

The *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (Act No. 108 of 1996) provides for the establishment of private education institutions that-

- (a) Do not discriminate on the basis of race.
- (b) Are registered with the state; and
- (c) Maintain standards that are not inferior to standards at comparable public educational institutions.

#### National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act

The *National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008* (Act No. 67 of 2008) provides for the establishment of Umalusi as a Quality Council responsible for developing and managing a Sub-framework of qualifications at Levels 1 to 4 of the National Qualifications Framework and the related quality assurance processes. The Act determines that the Quality Council must, in respect of quality assurance within its Sub-framework -

- (a) develop and implement policy for quality assurance;
- (b) ensure the integrity and credibility of quality assurance; and
- (c) ensure that quality assurance as is necessary for the Sub-framework is undertaken.



## **General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance (GENFETQA) Act**

Section 17A(2) of the *General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, 2001 (Act No. 58 of 2001, as amended)* requires that:

- (a) “The Council must develop policy for the accreditation of assessment bodies other than departments of education and submit it to the Minister for approval.
- (b) The Minister must make regulations in which the policy for accreditation is set out.
- (c) The Council must accredit an assessment body in accordance with the regulations contemplated in paragraph (b) above; and 23(1).

Section 23(1) of the same Act requires the Council to develop policy and criteria for quality assurance of private education institutions. It indicates in section 23(2) that any institution that is required to register as –

- (a) an independent school in terms of the South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No. 84 of 1996).
- (b) a private college for further education and training in terms of the Further Education and Training Colleges Act, 1998 (Act No. 16 of 2006); or
- (c) a private centre in terms of the Adult Basic Education and Training Act, 2000 (Act No. 52 of 2000), must comply with the policy and criteria developed by the Council.

Section 25 further states that:

- (1) The Council must monitor private education institutions to ensure compliance with the policy contemplated in section 23(1).
- (2) If a private education institution fails to comply with the policy, the Council must—
  - (a) notify such private education institution in writing and set out the nature and extent of the failure; and
  - (b) determine a reasonable period within which the private education institution must comply with the policy.
- (3) At the expiry of the period contemplated in subsection (2)(b), the Council—
  - (a) must evaluate the steps taken by the private education institution to comply with the policy and take into account any submissions made by the education institution; and
  - (b) may affirm the accreditation of the private education institution or withdraw the accreditation as from a date specified by the Council.
- (4) Before the Council withdraws an accreditation, it must notify the head of the department or Registrar concerned, as the case may be, contemplated in section 24(1), of its intention to withdraw the accreditation and of the date of the intended withdrawal.

## **Policies and Regulations developed in terms of Section 17A of the GENFETQA Act**

- Policy and criteria for the Quality Assurance, Accreditation and Monitoring of Independent Schools and Private Assessment Bodies (Notice 1142 in Government Gazette 41206 of 27 October 2017).
- Regulations regarding the criteria for the Quality Assurance, Accreditation and Monitoring of Independent Schools and Private Assessment Bodies (Notice 1143 in Government Gazette 41206 of 27 October 2017).
- Policy for the quality assurance of Private Colleges for Continuing Education and Training, offering Qualifications registered on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework and the Accreditation of Private Assessment Bodies (Government Gazette 41887 of 7 September 2018).

Umalusi has developed guidelines for the implementation of the policies for the accreditation of independent schools, private colleges, and private assessment bodies. The guideline documents are available on the Umalusi website.

### Other legislation

In quality assuring a private education institution to offer or a private assessment body to assess a qualification, the legislation applicable to those institutions and the qualifications offered or assessed must also be taken into account. This includes, but is not limited to, the following legislation:

- Continuing Education and Training Act 16 of 2006
- National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996
- South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, as amended
- South African Council for Educators Act 31 of 2000
- Regulations pertaining to the National Curriculum Statement Grades R – 12, Gazette 36041 of 28 December 2012, as amended.

## Scope

The E&A unit quality assures provision and assessment through evaluation and accreditation of private education institutions and private assessment bodies. In line with current legislation, applications for accreditation in respect of the following are considered:

- Independent schools to offer the National Curriculum Statement leading to the National Senior Certificate;
- Private Further Education and Training (FET) Colleges offering the NATED Report 190/191 N1 to N3 Engineering Studies and the National Certificate (Vocational),
- private Adult Education and Training Colleges offering the General Education and Training Certificate: Adult Basic Education and Training (GETC: ABET); and
- Private assessment bodies that intend to assess the qualifications mentioned above.

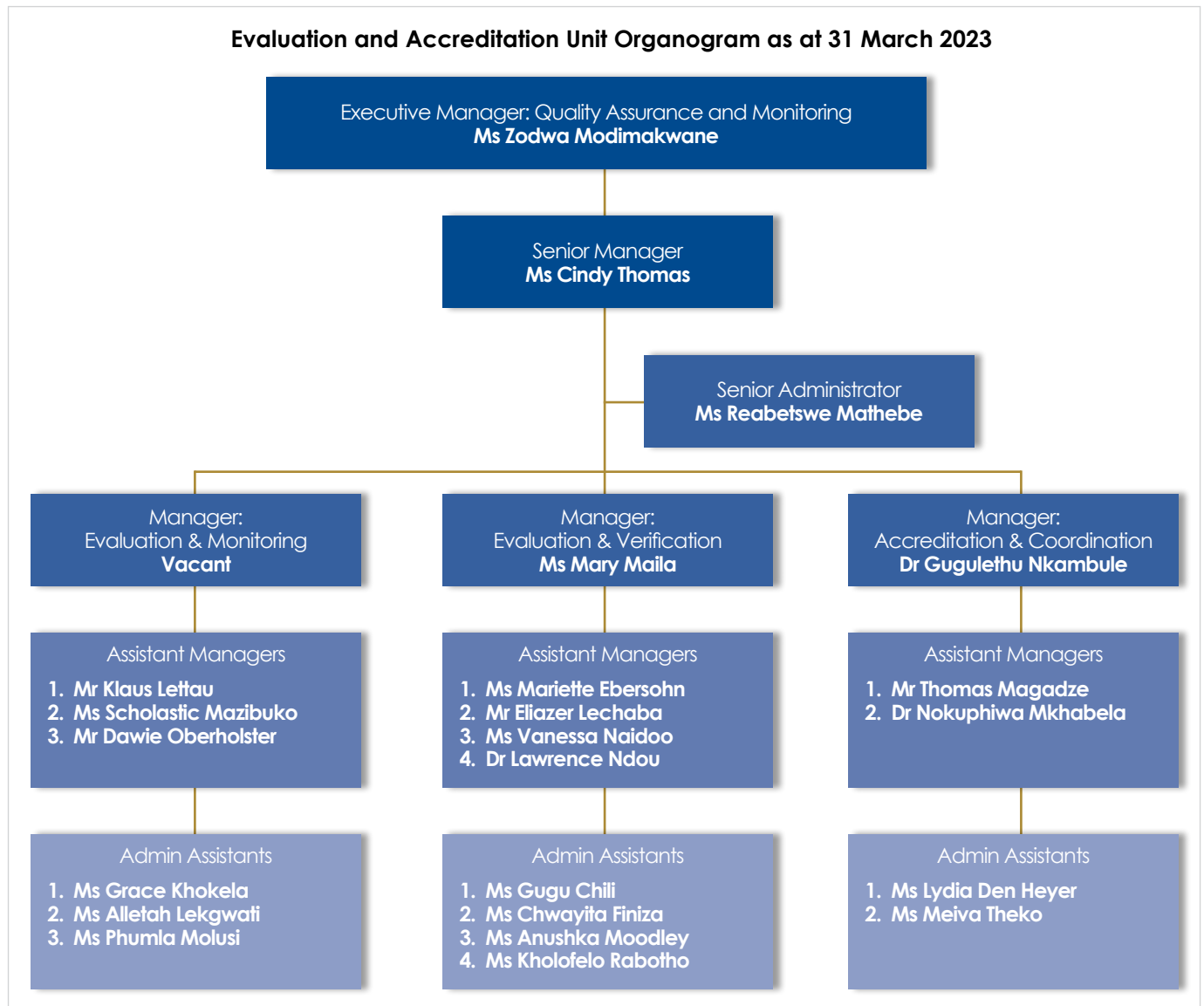
The Evaluation and Accreditation (E&A) unit comprises three sub-units, each concentrating on specific accreditation processes.

- (a) The Evaluation and Monitoring sub-unit:** deals with the initial stages of an accreditation application, from Letter of Intent (LOI) to the evaluation of submitted self-evaluation reports; monitoring of accredited institutions; the extension of scope process; accreditation and monitoring of private assessment bodies; and providing assessment bodies with details regarding the accreditation status of private education institutions. The sub-unit is responsible for organising the annual accreditation forum and liaison with the Department of Higher Education and Training in matters related to the accreditation of private colleges.
- (b) The Evaluation and Verification sub-unit:** is responsible for conducting site verification visits to independent schools and private colleges. The site visits include visits to institutions that have met the requirements at the desktop evaluation stage of the accreditation process and those in the "improvement" stage after an initial outcome of provisional accreditation or a window period to improve. The site verification visit aims to verify the implementation of the evidence submitted in the self-evaluation report. The sub-unit is responsible for liaison with provincial education departments in matters related to the accreditation of independent schools.

**(c) The Accreditation and Coordination sub-unit:** serves as the secretariat of the Internal Accreditation Committee (IAC), Accreditation Committee of Council (ACC) and Accreditation Appeals Committee (AAC). The A&C sub-unit coordinates the presentation of accreditation reports to the IAC, ACC, AAC, and the CEO. This sub-unit is also responsible for communicating the outcome of accreditation applications to private education institutions and coordinates the issuing of accreditation certificates.

## Organogram

The reporting structure of the E&A unit:



# Chapter 2

## ACCREDITATION OF PRIVATE EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

### Independent Schools

Independent schools must be registered by the Provincial Education Department before applying for accreditation by Umalusi. Since the National Senior Certificate (NSC) is the only qualification for schools on the GFETQSF, independent schools wanting to be accredited by Umalusi must offer the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) leading to the NSC. Furthermore, any independent school that offers the NCS leading to the NSC must be accredited by Umalusi.

The approved criteria for accreditation of an independent school to offer the National Curriculum Statement leading to the National Senior Certificate are:

- Leadership, management, and communication
- School ethos
- Teaching and learning
- School results

The indicators for each of the criteria are based on minimum requirements. They are thus applicable to all independent schools, whether part of a listed company or a small school in a rural area serving the local community's needs.

Possible outcomes of the accreditation process for independent schools:

- accreditation,
- two (2) years provisional accreditation, or
- no accreditation.

In line with the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, no institution receives an outcome of no accreditation at the first presentation of the report to the ACC. An institution that does not meet the minimum requirements for accreditation on the first presentation to the ACC is granted a "window period" to address the areas needing improvement before the accreditation decision is made.

### The Accreditation Process for Independent Schools

The accreditation process comprises the following steps:

- Letter of intent (LOI) to apply for accreditation;
- Attendance of a Quality Promotion (QP) meeting;
- Self-evaluation by the independent school;
- Desktop evaluation of the self-evaluation report by Umalusi;

- Site verification visit by Umalusi;
- Consolidation of the reports on each of the processes into an accreditation report;
- Consideration of the application by the Accreditation Committee of Council and their recommendation of an accreditation outcome; and
- Approval of the accreditation decision by the Umalusi Chief Executive Officer on behalf of Umalusi Council.

Note that payment is due in advance for each step of the accreditation process. The step will only be executed once payment has been verified.

## Private Colleges

Umalusi accredits private Further Education and Training colleges to offer the National Certificate (Vocational) and the NATED Report 190/191 N1 to N3 Engineering Studies programme. In addition, Umalusi accredits private Adult Education and Training colleges to offer the General Education and Training Certificate: Adult Basic Education and Training (GETC: ABET). The *Continuing Education and Training (CET) Act 16 of 2006* requires private colleges to be registered by the Department of Higher Education and Training and accredited by Umalusi to offer a qualification on the GFETQSF.

The approved criteria for a private college to offer a qualification on the GFETQSF are as follows:

- Mission directed leadership and management
- Teaching, learning and training
- Assessment and results
- Learner support

Possible outcomes of the accreditation process for private colleges:

- seven (7) years accreditation,
- two (2) years provisional accreditation, or
- no accreditation.

In line with the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, no institution receives an outcome of no accreditation at the first presentation of the report to the ACC. An institution that does not meet the minimum requirements for accreditation on the first presentation to the ACC is granted a "window period" to address the areas needing improvement before the accreditation decision is made.

## The Accreditation Process for Private Colleges

The accreditation process comprises the following steps:

- Letter of intent (LOI) to apply for accreditation;
- Attendance of a Quality Promotion (QP) meeting;
- Self-evaluation by the private college;
- Desktop evaluation of the self-evaluation report by Umalusi;
- Referral of the private college to the Department of Higher Education and Training for registration (or provisional registration) as a private college and as an examination centre;
- Site verification visit by Umalusi once the private college is registered by the DHET, has enrolled students, and conducted a complete cycle of teaching and assessment;

- Consolidation of the reports on each of the processes into an accreditation report;
- Consideration of the application by the Accreditation Committee of Council and their recommendation of an accreditation decision; and
- Approval of the accreditation decision by the Umalusi Chief Executive Officer on behalf of Umalusi Council.

Note that payment is due in advance for each step of the accreditation process. The step will only be executed once payment has been verified.

# Chapter 3

## THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

This chapter outlines the accreditation process for independent schools and private colleges.

### Letter of Intent (LOI) to apply for accreditation

The “Letter of intent” (LOI) to apply for accreditation is an online process which indicates to Umalusi whether the institution falls within Umalusi’s quality assurance mandate. That is, whether the institution offers a qualification on the GFETQSF, is operating in South Africa, and, in the case of independent schools, is registered as an independent school by the Provincial Education Department.

The LOI is a mere indication that the institution intends to apply for accreditation. It is not an application for accreditation. Institutions that do not fall within Umalusi’s scope for accreditation cannot continue with the accreditation process beyond this step.

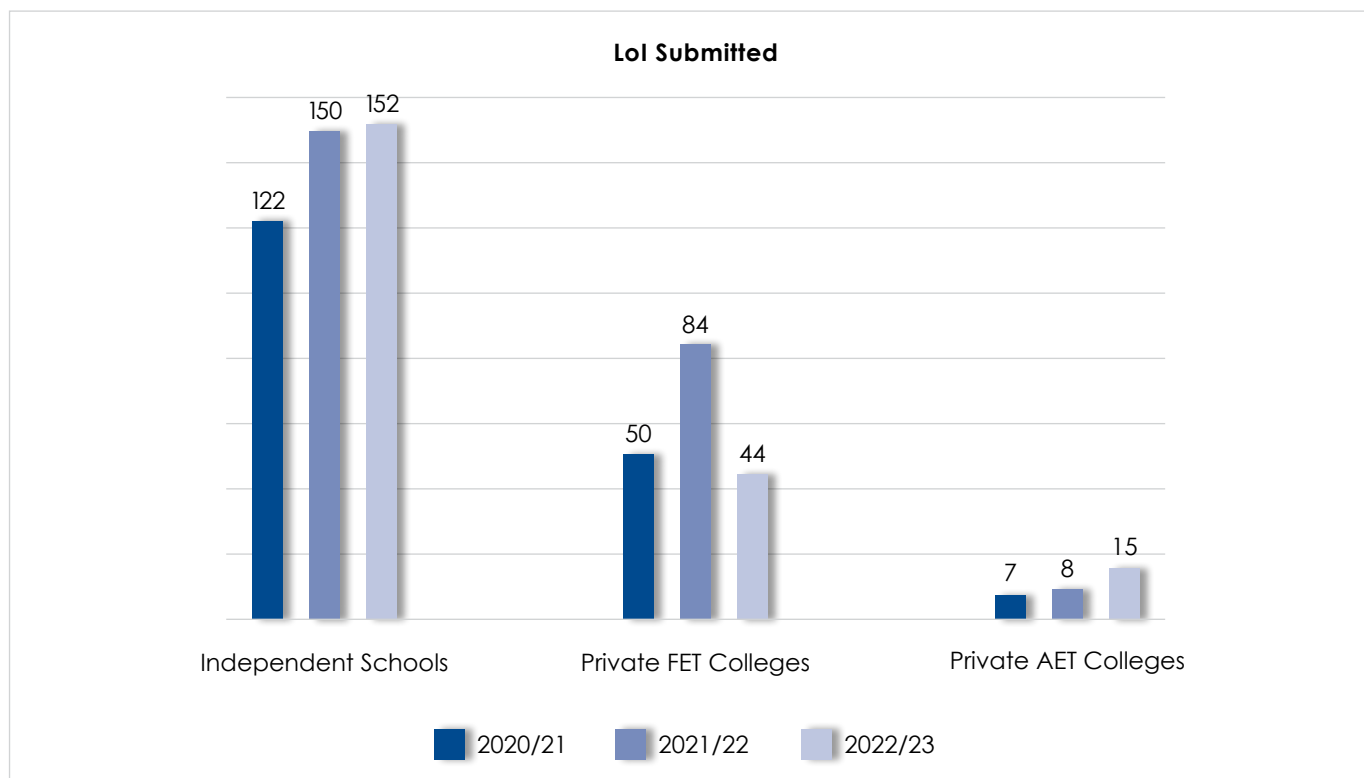
During the period 01 April 2022 to 31 March 2023, 152 independent schools, 44 private Further Education and Training (FET) colleges, and fifteen (15) private Adult Education and Training (AET) colleges submitted the letter of intent (LOI) to apply for accreditation.

Table 1 and the graph below illustrate that the number of LOIs submitted by independent schools has remained relatively stable over the past two years after a slight decrease in 2020/21 due to Covid. The number of LOI submitted by private AET colleges has almost doubled since the previous two financial years. In contrast, there has been a significant drop in the number of LOI submitted by private FET colleges in this reporting year. The decline in the FET College sector could be attributed to the imminent phasing out of the N1-N3 Engineering Studies programmes, with colleges rather seeking accreditation to offer occupational qualifications that do not fall under Umalusi.

**Table 1: LOI submitted between 01 April 2020 and 31 March 2023**

	INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS					PRIVATE FET COLLEGES					PRIVATE AET COLLEGES				
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL
2022/23	36	47	31	38	152	16	17	5	6	44	6	2	4	3	15
2021/22	41	39	28	42	150	25	23	17	19	84	3	2	1	2	8
2020/21	8	42	21	51	122	5	6	25	14	50	1	3	0	3	7





**Figure 1: LOI submitted between 01 April 2020 and 31 March 2023**

### Areas of Strength

- The LOI process is online, therefore, can be accessed from anywhere at any time.
- Since it is an online process, documentation is stored electronically, reducing the required paper-based evidence.
- The LOI stage immediately determines whether an institution falls within the quality assurance mandate of Umalusi. Providers are therefore alerted to this at the beginning of the process before expending resources on a process not relevant to them.
- Through the LOI process, aspirant private colleges are guided in choosing subjects needed to complete a qualification.

### Areas of Concern

- The increasing number of aspirant private colleges that want to apply for accreditation but do not understand the qualification they wish to offer.
- The lack of understanding of Umalusi's quality assurance mandate is evident in the enquiries for accreditation to offer qualifications that fall under other quality councils.
- Incorrect contact details provided by the private education institutions in the LOI process, which results in Umalusi being unable to communicate with them.
- Some private colleges repeatedly change their company name and physical address, which causes additional administrative challenges and delays in the process.
- Institutions that submit more than one LOI under slightly different names whilst the other application is still in progress and switch between the applications. This practice leads to confusion as to which is the correct application and possible delays in the process.

## Recommendations for improvement

- (a) Provincial regulations for registering independent schools should be standardised and applied uniformly across all provinces.
- (b) Potential applicants for accreditation must be familiar with the qualification and requirements for the qualification that they intend to offer before approaching Umalusi for accreditation.
- (c) Institutions must complete one application fully before submitting another LOI for the same institution under a slightly different name.

## Quality Promotion Meetings

Quality Promotion (QP) meetings are conducted with schools and private colleges to explain the accreditation criteria and provide guidelines for the self-evaluation and site verification processes before submitting the application for accreditation (the self-evaluation report).

Attendance at a Quality Promotion meeting is mandatory in the accreditation process before an institution can access the self-evaluation report. At this meeting, private education institutions are guided through the relevant legislation, the accreditation process, the documents needed as evidence, all that is required for the self-evaluation report, and a brief overview of what will occur during the verification site visit. The QP meeting aims to equip applicants for the accreditation process and allow them to ask questions about the process and requirements for the provision of the qualification.

It has been noted that after attending a QP meeting, some private colleges amend the subjects chosen, while others cancel their applications. This is particularly prevalent among Adult Education and Training (AET) providers who do not wish to register as companies or feel that the requirements for accreditation are too demanding for the AET sector. In this reporting period, many FET college providers either cancelled their intent to apply for accreditation or changed their intent to apply to offer the NC(V) rather than the N1-N3 programmes when they became aware of the imminent phasing out of the N1-N3 Engineering Studies programmes.

The online approach allows QP meetings to be conducted when the need arises for institutions across all provinces without incurring logistical costs for Umalusi and the institutions. The table below indicates the number of Quality Promotion meetings conducted over the 2022/23 financial year.

**Table 2: Quality Promotion Meetings held between 01 April 2022 and 31 March 2023**

QUALITY PROMOTION MEETINGS HELD	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL
Independent Schools	8	8	6	9	31
Private FET Colleges	3	3	2	1	9
Private AET Colleges	0	3	1	2	6

## Areas of Strength

- (a) The requirements for accreditation are explained in detail to the applicants during the QP meetings. Applicants can obtain a clear understanding of Umalusi's expectations and a better understanding of the accreditation process through the meetings.
- (b) The information provided to institutions during the Quality Promotion Meetings clearly explains the processes and minimum requirements for accreditation.
- (c) Since separating the quality promotion meetings for private AET and FET colleges, the quality of uploaded evidence by AET providers has improved.

## Area of Concern

- (a) Load shedding remains the most challenging aspect impacting attendees' inability to attend online quality promotion meetings without interruption.

## Recommendations for improvement

- (a) Umalusi discourages the attendance of the consultants for the quality promotion meeting. The director, owner, campus manager, principal or other key people involved in submitting the evidence for the self-evaluation report for an institution must attend the Quality Promotion Meetings before starting the accreditation process. It is the staff at the institution who will need to provide evidence of implementation of the evidence submitted, not the consultant; therefore, it is in the institution's best interests for their staff to attend the QP meeting.

## Self-evaluation Report and Desktop Evaluation

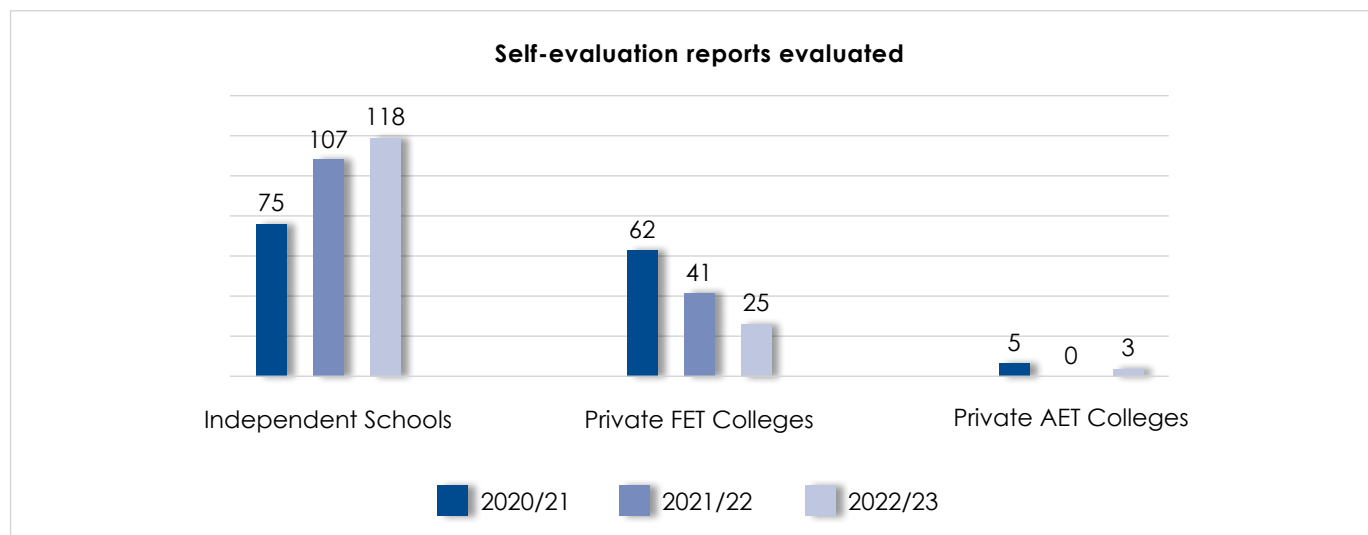
Once an institution has attended a QP meeting, they gain access to the self-evaluation report, which they must complete online and upload the supporting evidence. The self-evaluation report and supporting evidence are evaluated to determine compliance with the minimum requirements for accreditation. In this regard, trained evaluators and subject specialists are assigned specific criteria to evaluate online.

If the self-evaluation (SE) report of the institution is found not to meet the minimum standards, the SE report is returned to the institution to allow them to submit further relevant evidence at the fee approved by Umalusi Council. The SE report may be returned to the institution a maximum of two times. If the evidence still does not meet the minimum requirements for accreditation after the two additional submissions, the application will be rejected. Should the institution still seek accreditation with Umalusi, it will be required to make a new application without access to the previous submission and pay all the relevant fees.

Table 3 below compares the self-evaluation reports evaluated during the three (3) most recent financial years. Fifty-six of the 118 self-evaluation reports received from independent schools were for reapplication after the independent schools received an outcome of no accreditation. The drop in the number of self-evaluation reports received from private FET colleges mirrors the decrease in the number of LOI received. The impact of the imminent phasing out of the N1-N3 programmes is reflected here. Comparing the number of private AET colleges that submitted LOI to apply for accreditation, and the few that submitted self-evaluation reports, it is evident that these providers have difficulty proceeding with the accreditation process.

**Table 3: SE Evaluated between 01 April 2020 and 31 March 2023**

Self-evaluation reports submitted	INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS Section A					PRIVATE FET COLLEGES					PRIVATE AET COLLEGES				
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL
2022/23	15	25	71	7	118	2	3	17	3	25	0	3	0	0	3
2021/22	14	61	19	13	107	6	7	23	5	41	0	0	0	0	0
2020/21	2	31	34	8	75	10	25	8	19	62	1	2	0	2	5



**Figure 2: LOI submitted between 01 April 2020 and 31 March 2023**

### Areas of Strength

- The self-evaluation process enables institutions to reflect on the processes, procedures, and policies in place and amend and develop further policies to meet the evidence requirements. This process can lead to improvement within the institutions.
- Being allowed to correct and submit outstanding information at the self-evaluation stage enables institutions to develop.
- Using contracted, trained officials to evaluate self-evaluation reports provides the capacity to deal with the number of applications.
- Evidence submitted is easily accessible in case of appeals and queries.
- Most independent schools submit self-evaluation reports and supporting evidence that meets the minimum standards at the first attempt.
- Independent schools find the system user-friendly and experience few challenges submitting the self-evaluation report and supporting evidence.

### Areas of Concern

- Detailed evidence is required in the self-evaluation process, which some institutions take a long time to upload and submit.
- The quality of the self-evaluation submissions for colleges is generally unsatisfactory. This results in the self-evaluation report being returned to the college to correct the report. The inadequate standard of the submissions could be attributed to private consultants submitting generic documents irrelevant to the institution. It could also be attributed to the non-attendance of the QP meetings by the campus

manager, owner, or staff responsible for completing the self-evaluation report, who therefore do not understand what is required.

- (c) Some institutions use private consultants who charge institutions exorbitant fees. Umalusi does not endorse private consultants. Many of the reports submitted by consultants do not meet the requirements for accreditation as the consultants do not have a working knowledge of the institution's operations.
- (d) Many private colleges submit documents from other colleges that do not pertain to the college for which the application is being made.
- (e) Most of the private college applications are for accreditation to offer the NATED N1 – N3 Engineering Studies programme, which has a very old curriculum.
- (f) Very few applications for accreditation to offer the NC(V) are submitted. Of those submitted, many providers struggle to meet the requirements of the resources specific to the programme they intend to offer.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

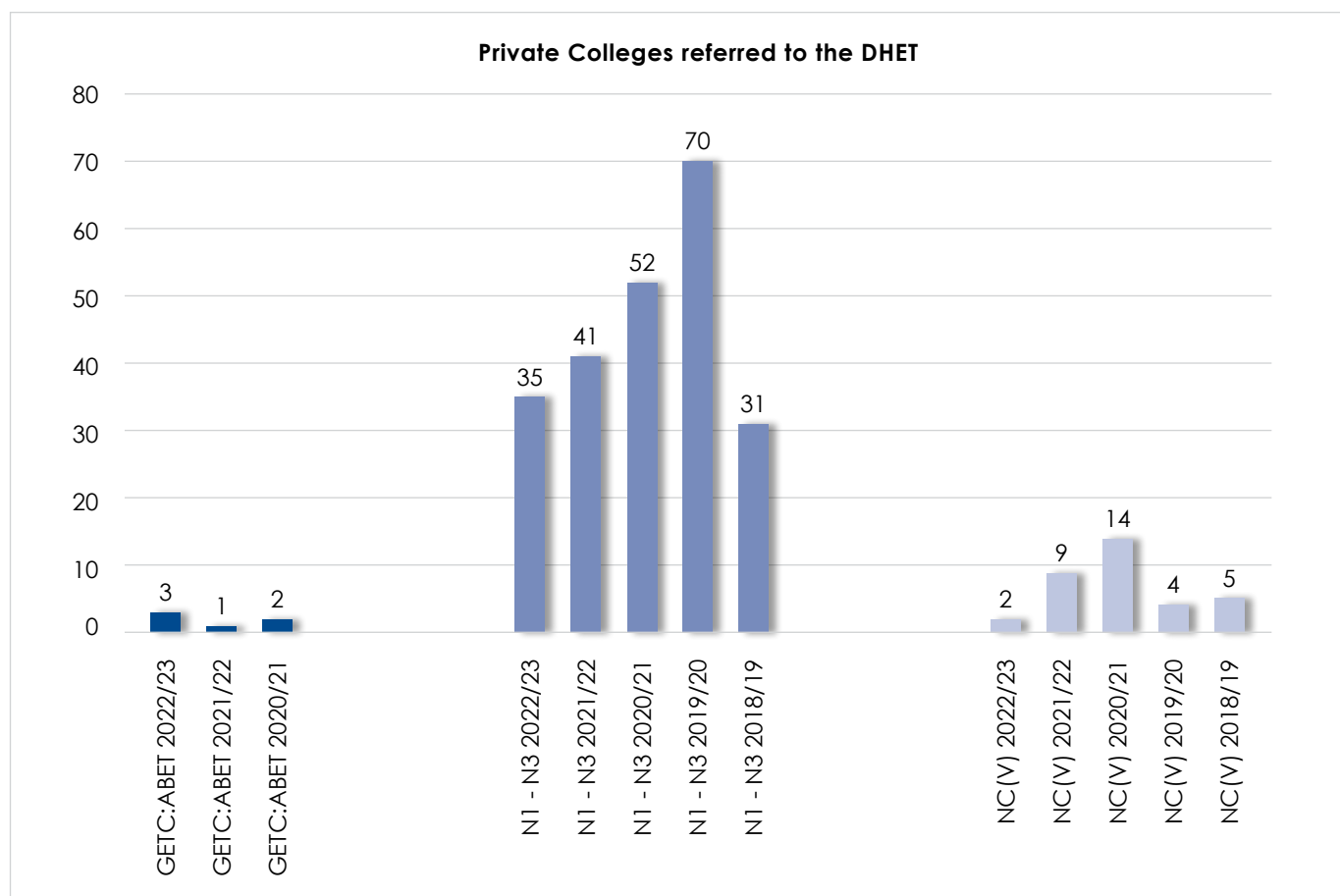
- (a) The head of the institution and representatives of the institution must attend the Quality Promotion Meeting and personally manage and oversee the self-evaluation process in their institutions to ensure that relevant information is provided.
- (b) People who intend to offer a qualification on the GFETQSF must research and understand the qualification they intend to offer before applying for accreditation of a private college to offer the qualification.

## **Referral to the DHET**

Since accreditation by Umalusi is the recognition of the capacity of a private college to offer a qualification on the GFETQSF and the college's implementation of the curriculum in support of the qualification at the required standard, a private college must be operating for Umalusi to evaluate its capacity. However, a private college can only operate once it is registered by the DHET. The DHET, on the other hand, will only register a private college if the Registrar has reason to believe that the applicant will comply with the requirements of Umalusi (Section 30(1)(b)(ii) of the CET Act 16 of 2006). To solve this conundrum, Umalusi implements a referral to the DHET process. Once the self-evaluation report submitted to Umalusi meets the minimum requirements at this stage of the accreditation process, Umalusi will advise the DHET. The college must then apply to the DHET for registration. If the college meets the DHET minimum requirements, the DHET will proceed with the processes leading to the provisional registration as a private college and examination centre.

The private college may only enrol students once it is registered or provisionally registered by the DHET and only at the beginning of an academic cycle. A college may not enrol students for examinations without conducting the entire academic cycle of teaching and assessment with those students. A private college may also not enrol students on a programme for which it has applied for accreditation by Umalusi based on the registration to offer programmes falling under another Quality Council.

The chart below indicates the number of private colleges, by qualification, that have been referred to the DHET.



**Figure 3: Private Colleges referred to the DHET**

## Initial Site visits

Verifying the evidence submitted during the desktop evaluation process is the primary aim of the site verification visit. As a result, the site verification visit is based on the reports generated during the desktop evaluation phase. The site verification visit is conducted on one (1) day.

For independent schools, this verification entails examining, among other things, the school's mission, policies and processes, staff establishment, financial stability, premises and facilities, curriculum design and delivery, assessment procedures, and academic performance and results. The same holds for private colleges, with an increased focus on student support, stakeholder satisfaction, and result analysis leading to process improvement.

Private colleges have a different route to accreditation than independent schools. Independent schools must first be registered with the Provincial Education Department and enrol students before applying for accreditation. On the other hand, private colleges, in accordance with the Continuing Education and Training Act (No. 16 of 2006), paragraph 30(1)(b)(ii), must give the registrar reason to believe that the private college will, among other things, comply with the requirements of Umalusi before being registered as a private college. Therefore, private colleges must successfully complete the self-evaluation stage of the accreditation process before being referred to the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET)

for registration as a private college and examination centre to offer specific subjects. Private colleges must then fulfil the DHET requirements and be registered (or provisionally registered) before enrolling students and conducting examinations.

The registration (or provisional registration) of a private college is a requirement for accreditation. Private colleges that are not registered or provisionally registered by the DHET will not be able to proceed with the accreditation process after the self-evaluation stage of their application due to this legislative requirement.

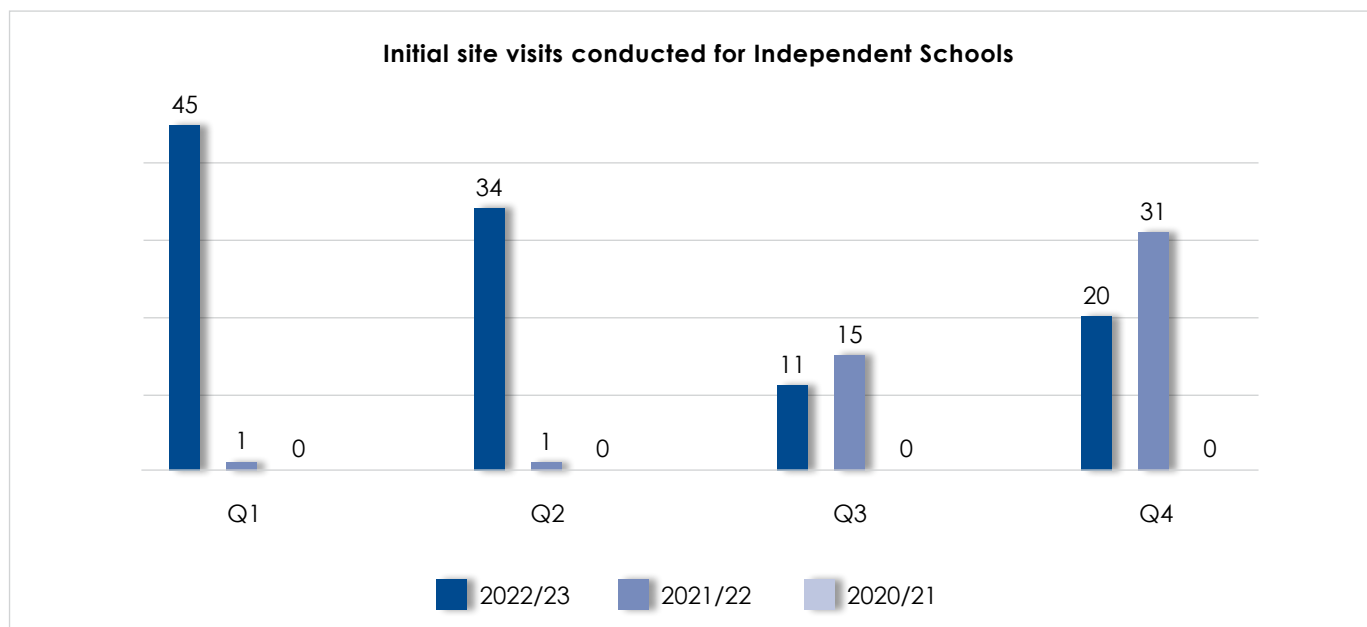
An assistant manager and administrative assistant coordinate the site verification visit. Independent Contract Workers (ICWs) are deployed to conduct the evaluation. The evaluation team comprises a general evaluator and subject specialists who have undergone training. Before the site verification visit, profiles of the evaluation team members are sent to the institution to help prevent conflicts of interest.

Information is triangulated using various sources of data acquisition, including interviews with management, learners/students, and teachers/lecturers. Also included is the implementation of policies and the overall functionality of the institution's structures, lesson observation, and facility and premises inspections. In accordance with an evaluation guideline, the evaluation team members develop site verification reports and make professional judgements and recommendations.

The travel and mobility limitations imposed by the COVID-19 lockdown in South Africa in 2020 caused Umalusi to look at the potential of using technology to take the applications for accreditation forward. To this end, the unit started online verification site visits. Institutions are invited to pre-site visit meetings to prepare them for this novel approach. The pre-site visit meeting aims to prepare institutions for the online site visit by ensuring they have the necessary resources to participate in this online process. Additionally, to advise institutions on how information should be packaged and presented for verification during the site visit. Although verification site visits are no longer conducted in person, the standards and level of verification remain rigorous and intense.

**Table 4: Initial site visits conducted for Independent Schools per quarter between 01 April 2020 and 31 March 2023**

INITIAL VERIFICATION SITE VISITS CONDUCTED: INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL
2022/23	45	34	11	20	110
2021/22	1	1	15	31	48
2020/21	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	46	35	26	51	158



**Figure 4: Initial site visits for Independent Schools between 01 April 2020 and 31 March 2023**

The graph above depicts the three (3) financial years spanning from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2023 for the site visits conducted at independent schools. The steady incline visible in the 2022/23 financial year attests to the successful implementation and application of technology in the accreditation process through the online site visit approach effected since the onset of COVID-19.

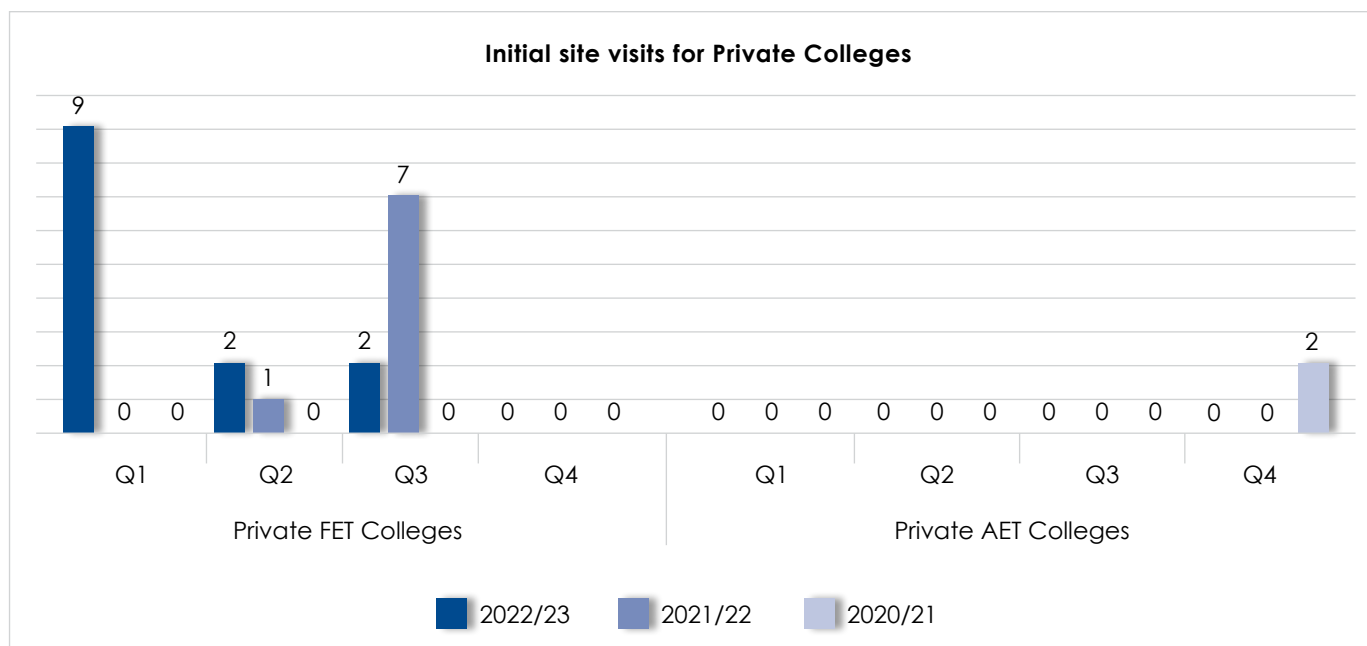
A similar picture is painted for private FET Colleges in Table 5 and figure 4 below, with fewer applications for the N1-N3 Engineering Studies programmes and the NC(V) compared to independent schools. The detriment caused by COVID-19, coupled with limited dates available for site visits to be conducted due to the trimester nature of the NATED programme, contributed to the few site visits conducted in the sector. With the phasing out of the N1-N3 Engineering Studies, the numbers will likely drop further in the next financial year.

Conversely, the picture depicted by the private AET colleges is the lack of applications received in this sector, as evidenced in table 3 above, with only eight (8) self-evaluation reports processed in the three (3) financial years. The absence of applicants reverberated in the last two (2) financial years since no initial site visits could be conducted in this sector in those reporting periods.

**Table 5: Initial site visits conducted for Private Colleges per quarter between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2023**

INITIAL VERIFICATION SITE VISITS CONDUCTED	PRIVATE FET COLLEGES				PRIVATE AET COLLEGES				TOTAL
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2022/23	9	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	13
2021/22	0	1	7	0	0	0	0	0	8
2020/21	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
TOTAL	9	3	9	0	0	0	0	2	23





**Figure 5: Initial site visits for Private Colleges between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2023**

### Areas of Strength

- (a) Online site verification visits are successfully conducted.
- (b) Many institutions have welcomed the introduction of pre-site visit meetings.
- (c) The online site visit process enhanced communication with institutions.
- (d) Online site visits are safe and cost-effective as there is no need for travel and accommodation.
- (e) More site visits can be planned and conducted as evaluators can be deployed from any part of the country needing to make provision for travel time.
- (f) We have shown many institutions how to use Microsoft Teams features.
- (g) Documents from institutions are submitted before the online site visit. This saves much time verifying evidence on the day of the site visit.
- (h) A thorough evaluation of evidence submitted by institutions is done as the online process requires probing.
- (a) The online site visit process is recorded, and recordings serve as a reference in case of uncertainty and disputes.

### Areas of Concern

- (a) Some institutions lack the technology to conduct a successful online site verification visit.
- (b) Nationwide load-shedding without warning disrupts the online process.
- (c) Internet connectivity and reception remain a challenge, especially for institutions in remote areas.
- (d) For private colleges, site visits can only be conducted once they are registered or provisionally registered by the DHET, have conducted a national examination, and paid the required fee. These factors make advance planning very difficult, as it depends on the applicant's actions and compliance.
- (e) Although the registration and accreditation processes are related, Umalusi can only communicate to applicants concerning Umalusi's processes. However, many applicants expect Umalusi to provide feedback on the registration process, which is outside Umalusi's control.
- (f) Sometimes colleges have no enrolments for a trimester. Teaching and learning cannot be verified if no students are enrolled. Verification of curriculum implementation is a crucial requirement during a site visit.

- (g) Some providers do not inform Umalusi that they do not have registered learners, and they agree to a site visit date. Teaching and learning can, therefore, not be verified on the day of the site visit.
- (h) The site visit captures the situation at an institution at one given point in time. There is great potential for “window dressing”; however, this is addressed in the “follow-up” site visits or “confirmation” site visits, which, under normal circumstances, are conducted unannounced.
- (i) Regarding private colleges, there are limited dates available for site visits, especially for the NATED programme, because of the nature of the trimester calendar.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

- (a) Institutions must notify Umalusi when confirming the site visit date if they do not have registered learners.
- (b) Institutions must have the necessary devices and technology for a successful online site verification visit.
- (c) Institutions should prepare backup plans in case of load-shedding during a site visit.

## **Follow-up Site Visits and Improvement Reports**

An institution that does not meet the minimum requirements for accreditation at the first presentation of a report to the Accreditation Committee of Council is given a period to address the areas in which it was found lacking. Dependent on the extent of the non-compliance, this is either a window period to improve or provisional accreditation. Upon payment of the required fee to evaluate evidence after this period, Umalusi evaluators conduct the “follow-up” evaluation and produce an “improvement” report. “Follow-up” site visits are conducted to verify the information provided by the institution and implementation of policies and procedures, curriculum content and delivery, assessment practices, structures, facilities, resources, and equipment in place at the institution. These follow-up site visits were previously unannounced, but online site visits are now conducted. Due to the nature of online site visits, they cannot be unannounced. However, where necessary, Umalusi officials conduct confirmation site visits following an online site visit.

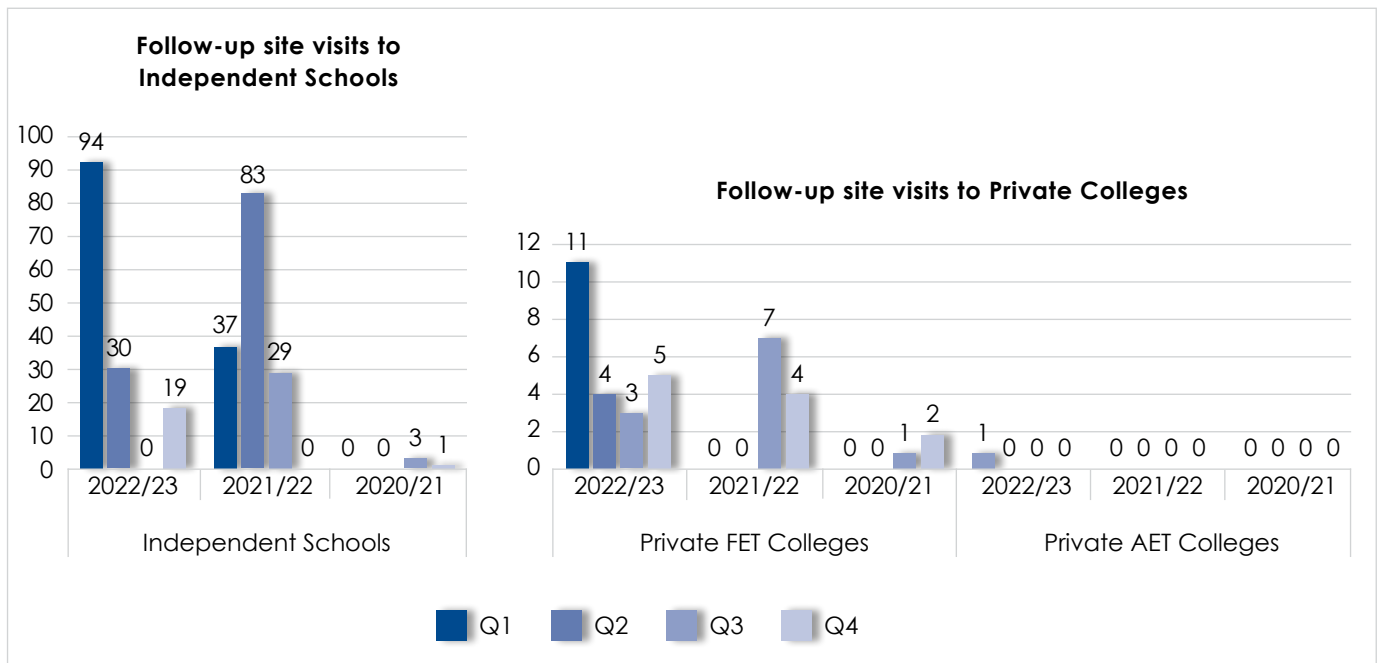
The online “follow-up” site visits are conducted rigorously and professionally. Most institutions have expressed their preference for an online site visit and provided positive feedback after an online site visit. Since the online site visits are recorded, all information is available for review.

A follow-up site visit is also conducted in cases where accredited private education institutions move premises and submit an application for a “change of site”. The premises are visited to verify whether the new facilities and resources meet the minimum requirements for quality provision.

Below is a depiction of the number of follow-up site visits conducted following the evaluation of an improvement report, per sector, from 01 April 2020 to 31 March 2023.

**Table 6: Follow-up Site Visits conducted**

	Independent schools			Private FET Colleges			Private AET Colleges		
	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
Q1	94	37	0	11	0	0	1	0	0
Q2	30	83	0	4	0	0	0	0	0
Q3	0	29	3	3	7	1	0	0	0
Q4	19	0	1	5	4	2	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>



**Figure 6: Follow-up site visits conducted**

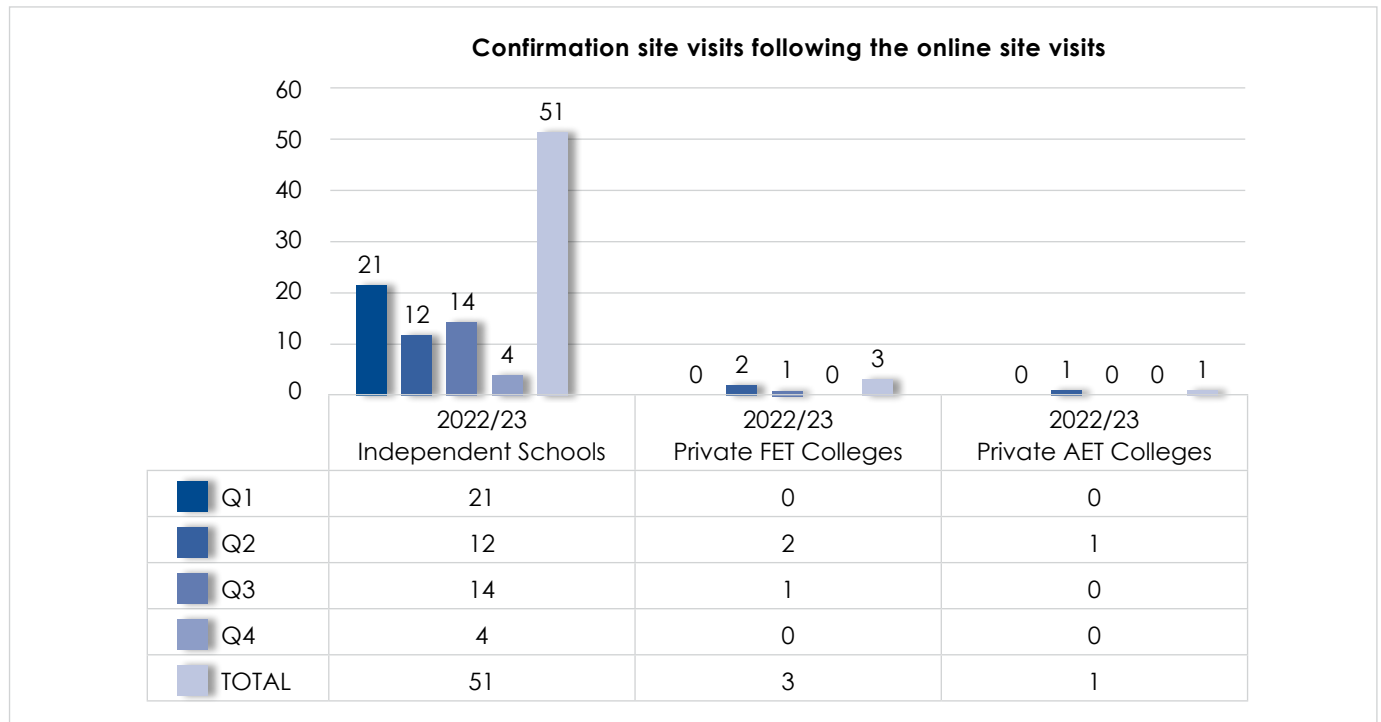
Some of the feedback received after online site visits:

- *Very clear and informative. Well explained.*
- *Umalusi is well-organised and professional.*
- *We welcome the positive and constructive guidance in undertaking the evaluation process by the leader and her team.*
- *Despite this being our first online evaluation, it was a very smooth process due to the professionalism and expertise of the Umalusi evaluators.*
- *The evaluators were well-organised, thorough and welcoming in their approach.*
- *I applaud the work done by the team.*
- *We appreciate the friendly and professional manner in which the meeting was conducted.*
- *The evaluators were very helpful and patient. The interviews were professionally conducted. They reassured us on a number of issues and gave us clarity.*
- *All were friendly and professional. They read the situation clearly when the management team needed to have a breather.*

## Confirmation Site Visits

Confirmation site visits are unannounced physical site visits undertaken by two Umalusi officials following an online site where there is a need to physically verify and confirm evidence presented during an online site visit. Conducting "confirmation" site visits after an online site visit has proved beneficial to the accreditation process, particularly in minimising the effects of "window-dressing" during site visits.

The figure below shows the fifty-five (55) confirmation site visits conducted in the 2022/23 financial year across the three (3) sectors.



**Figure 7: Confirmation Site Visits conducted for Independent Schools and Private Colleges per quarter in 2022/23**

## Reports to the Accreditation Committee of Council

The evaluators and subject specialists develop desktop and site visit reports on the information collected during the evaluation and verification processes. This information is consolidated into one consolidated accreditation report with a recommendation on the outcome of the accreditation application based on specific indicators to determine whether the institution meets the minimum requirements for accreditation in terms of the gazetted criteria for accreditation.

The consolidated accreditation reports are moderated, quality assured and approved within the sub-unit before being submitted to the Accreditation and Coordination sub-unit. They undergo another moderation process before being assigned to the Accreditation Committee of Council (ACC) members for consideration. The number of accreditation reports presented to the ACC per quarter depends on the number of site verification visits conducted.

The diagram below displays a picture of the consolidated accreditation and improvement reports for independent schools and private colleges presented to the ACC during the three (3) years: 2020/21, 2021/22, and 2022/23. The effects of the COVID-19 lockdown are visible in the number of initial consolidated reports presented to the ACC in the 2020/21 and 2021/22 financial years. During the 2022/23 financial year, the backlog caused by Covid-19 was addressed through the use of technology, increasing by 605% (103 more) initial consolidated reports presented to the ACC than the previous financial year.

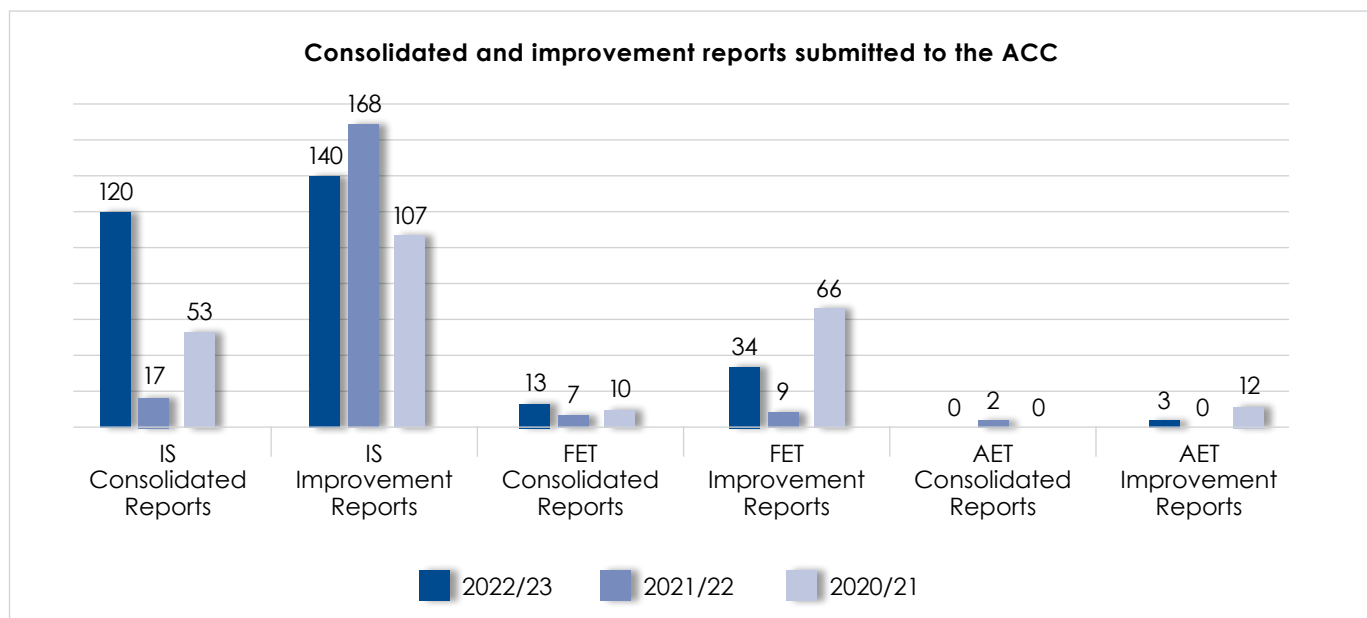
A contrasting trend is observed in the number of independent school improvement reports presented to the ACC. The almost consistent number of reports submitted to the ACC from the 2020/21 to 2022/23 financial years can be attributed to improvement reports being linked to an expiry date. Adhering to expiry dates ensures a continuation of online site visits, preparation of improvement reports and subsequent submission to the ACC. Thus, independent institutions honouring these timeframes account for the consistent presentation of improvement reports to the ACC.

A similar picture emerges for private colleges, as evident in the graph below. The picture remains consistent for private FET college initial consolidated reports over the indicated years. The fact that few private AET colleges apply for accreditation is also evident in the statistics provided. Comparatively, 415 improvement reports were submitted for independent schools, 109 for private FET colleges, and 15 for private AET colleges over the past three financial years.

**Table 7: Reports submitted to the ACC between 01 April 2020 and 31 March 2023**

		INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS			PRIVATE FET COLLEGES			PRIVATE AET COLLEGES		
		2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
Initial Consolidated Accreditation reports submitted to the ACC	Q1	27	0	52	0	0	7	0	2	0
	Q2	37	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0
	Q3	39	2	1	5	1	3	0	0	0
	Q4	17	15	0	2	6	0	0	0	0
	TOTAL	120	17	53	13	7	10	0	2	0

		INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS			PRIVATE FET COLLEGES			PRIVATE AET COLLEGES		
		2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
Improvement reports submitted to the ACC	Q1	18	18	36	1	0	8	0	0	1
	Q2	82	31	0	13	0	0	0	0	0
	Q3	35	72	47	12	2	35	0	0	2
	Q4	5	47	24	8	7	23	3	0	9
	TOTAL	140	168	107	34	9	66	3	0	12



**Figure 8: Accreditation reports submitted to the ACC**

### Areas of Strength

- (a) The turnaround time between the site visit and the presentation of the report to the ACC has been reduced.
- (b) The format of the consolidated reports directs reporting, ensuring that essential information is provided for making a recommendation on the accreditation decision.
- (c) The online site visits have proved to be rigorous and an effective means of conducting verification.

### Area of Concern

- (a) The consolidated accreditation report involves an intensive process of collating information from the desktop evaluation reports and the site visit reports on a particular institution. This report writing demands specialised report writing skills and is a time-intensive process.

### Recommendation for improvement

- (a) The online reporting system must be developed to facilitate the consolidation of the information from the separate reports into one consolidated accreditation report. This process will reduce the time in which reports can be finalised and the costs of paying a report writer to consolidate all the reports.

## Turnaround Time for Accreditation Applications

The turnaround time from submitting the self-evaluation report to communicating the outcome to the institution after the presentation of the accreditation report to the Accreditation Committee of Council can be up to 18 months. However, this can be longer for private colleges as it depends on the private college obtaining registration from the DHET as a private college and examination centre. The college must then conduct a complete academic cycle of offering the qualification before the site visit can take place.

The following factors impact and may delay the process:

- An institution's accreditation application is not aligned with its offering;
- Incomplete submissions;
- Non-payment for the site visit;
- The institutio has not attended a pre-site visit meeting in preparation for the site visit;
- Examinations taking place;
- School/college holidays;
- Institutions deferring site visits.

## Monitoring

Once accredited, institutions are subject to regular monitoring to ensure that the minimum requirements for accreditation are maintained, including:

- (a) The institution must continue to offer the curriculum leading to the qualification for which they are accredited. (For schools, that is the National Curriculum Statement leading to the National Senior Certificate.)
- (b) The principal holds a professional teaching qualification and is registered with the South African Council for Educators (SACE).
- (c) At least 80% of the teachers at a school hold professional teaching qualifications, and all educators have current registration with SACE.
- (d) At least 80% of the lecturers at a private college are suitably qualified and have current registration with SACE.
- (e) The premises and facilities continue to meet the required standard, and any change in the premises or ownership is authorised by the relevant authority.
- (f) The premises are safe, and a current health and safety certificate and evidence of annual servicing of fire equipment are in place;
- (g) The institution is financially viable and has current financial statements by an independent financial officer to attest to its financial viability.
- (h) For schools, the grade 12 results continue to be on par with or above the national average.

The policies and regulations for the accreditation and monitoring of independent schools and private colleges offering qualifications on the GFETQSF require that accredited institutions are monitored. Umalusi applies a differentiated approach to monitoring. In the 2022/23 financial year, institutions in their second year of accreditation, independent schools in their sixth year, and independent schools with a grade 12 pass rate less than the national average in the 2021 NSC examinations, were monitored. In addition, Umalusi monitored institutions for which complaints or media queries were received.

The amended approach to identifying institutions to be monitored impacted the number of institutions monitored, which was necessary due to the limited human resources available.

Institutions that fail to maintain the required standards are given notice of intent to withdraw the accreditation. Failure to comply with the requirements for accreditation within the specified time may lead to withdrawal of the institution's accreditation.

The consequences of the withdrawal of accreditation may be the review of the registration status of the institution by the provincial education department or the DHET and the withdrawal of the examination centre registration by the assessment body.

One of the main requirements that institutions fail to meet in the monitoring process is that an institution must employ educators who have current registration with SACE. In addition, at least 80% of the teachers in a school responsible for subjects within the CAPS curriculum must hold professional teaching qualifications. In colleges, at least 80% of the lecturers must have suitable qualifications for the subjects they are responsible for. Many schools that employ educators from neighbouring countries blame this on the uncertainty regarding foreign nationals' work permits, which prevented some individuals from renewing their SACE registration, causing the schools to be non-compliant.

Other common areas of non-compliance post-accreditation include the following:

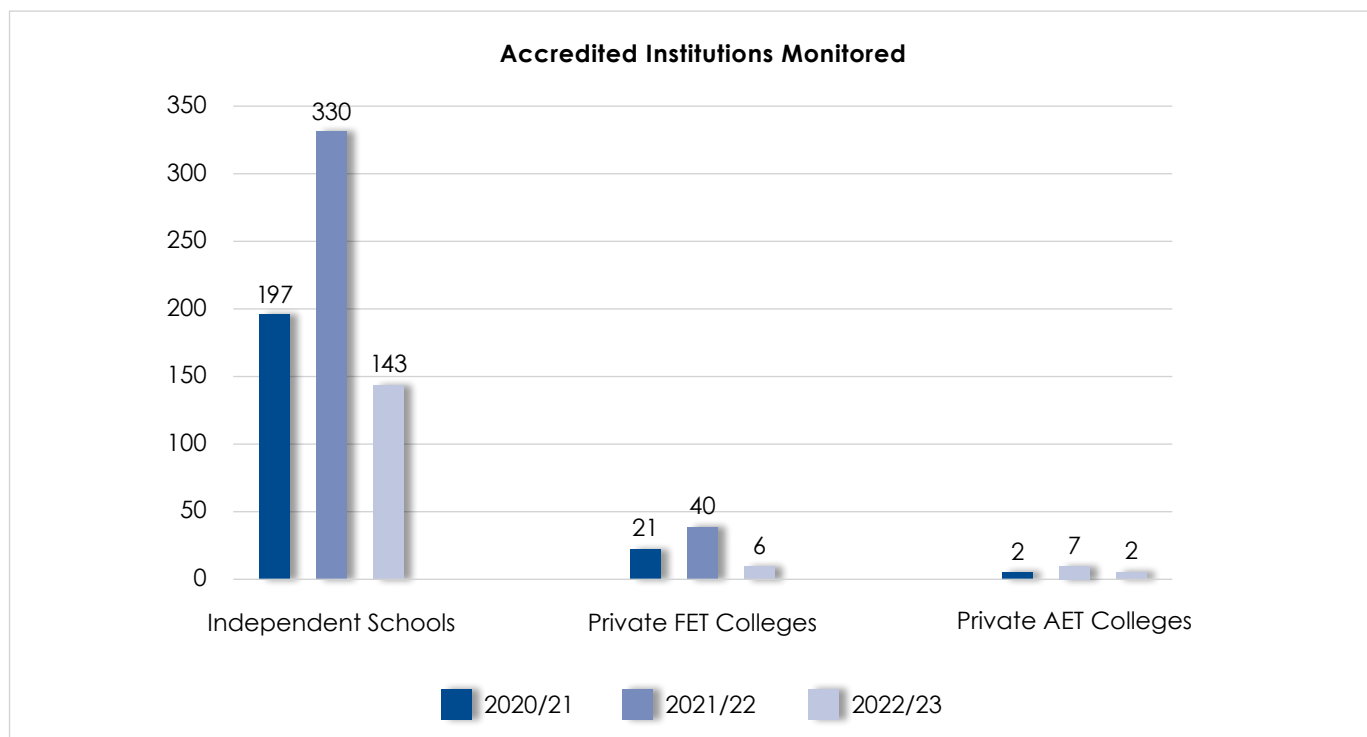
- (a) Expired health and safety certificates;
- (b) Annual servicing of firefighting equipment not adhered to;
- (c) Change of premises without the necessary authorisation;
- (d) Institutions no longer offering the qualifications for which they are accredited;
- (e) Non-submission of financial statements compiled by an independent financial officer.

Table 8 below indicates the number of independent schools and private colleges monitored between 01 April 2020 and 31 March 2023. The impact of the implementation of the differentiated approach to monitoring is visible in the total number of schools and colleges that were monitored, which shows a dramatic decline. It must be noted that institutions that undergo the extension of scope process in the year they are due for monitoring are not required to submit a monitoring report because the institution is monitored during the extension of scope process.

**Table 8: Accredited Institutions Monitored Between 01 April 2019 and 31 March 2022**

No. of institutions monitored	INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS					PRIVATE FET COLLEGES					PRIVATE AET COLLEGES				
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL
2022/23	48	40	46	9	143	2	1	3	0	6	0	0	0	0	0
2021/22	122	61	49	98	330	10	14	6	10	40	1	5	0	1	7
2020/21	23	60	36	78	197	1	1	11	8	21	0	0	2	0	2





**Figure 9: Accredited Institutions Monitored Between 01 April 2019 and 31 March 2022**

#### Area of Strength

- (a) The majority of accredited schools continue to adhere to the Umalusi accreditation criteria.

#### Areas of Concern

- (a) Some institutions wait until Umalusi follows up with them before they pursue renewal of their health and safety certificates, which results in a notice of intent to withdraw accreditation being issued to that institution.
- (b) Many accredited private colleges do not take the monitoring process seriously. Much follow-up is required to ensure they comply with the monitoring process.
- (c) The number of institutions issued with a notice of intent to withdraw accreditation has increased.

#### Recommendations for improvement

- (a) Accredited institutions should continue to maintain the standards that were in place when they were granted accreditation.
- (b) Institutions must adhere to timelines for the submission of monitoring reports.
- (c) Institutions must establish a culture of ongoing monitoring of teaching and learning and keep records of:
- Internal monitoring of teaching and learning.
  - Tracking of learner performance; and
  - Analysis of results per subject per level.
- (d) There must be clear handover procedures in place when there is a change of principal, including issues relating to the institution's accreditation.

## Monitoring Underperforming Accredited Schools

Accredited independent schools must continue to produce NSC results that are on par with or above the national average. To that effect, accredited independent schools whose NSC results are below the national results are monitored as underperforming accredited schools. The monitoring aims to ensure that the schools develop improvement plans, implement measures to assist struggling learners and improve school results.

Thirteen (13) accredited schools achieved results below the national average in the 2021 National Senior Certificate (NSC) examination and are considered "underperforming" accredited schools. The thirteen schools were required to submit an improvement plan for 2022. Online site verification meetings were held with the underperforming schools to verify the implementation of their improvement plans and to emphasise the importance of meeting the accreditation criteria by performing on par with or above the national average NSC pass percentage. Six of the thirteen underperforming accredited independent schools improved their results in the 2022 NSC examinations. The schools that continue to underperform will face possible withdrawal of their accreditation should they not show any improvement in their final opportunity to improve.

It is difficult to compare the results of private colleges with those of public colleges as there is no national benchmark, as is the case with the NSC.

## Extension of Scope

Institutions that have acquired accreditation may apply for an extension of scope to offer additional grades/subjects/programmes linked to their current registration and accreditation. The institution must be registered with the Provincial Education Department (PED) or the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) for the phase/subject/programme for which it applies for an extension of scope. Six (6) independent schools applied for an extension of scope in the 2022/23 financial year.

The following process applies to an application for an extension of scope by an accredited institution:

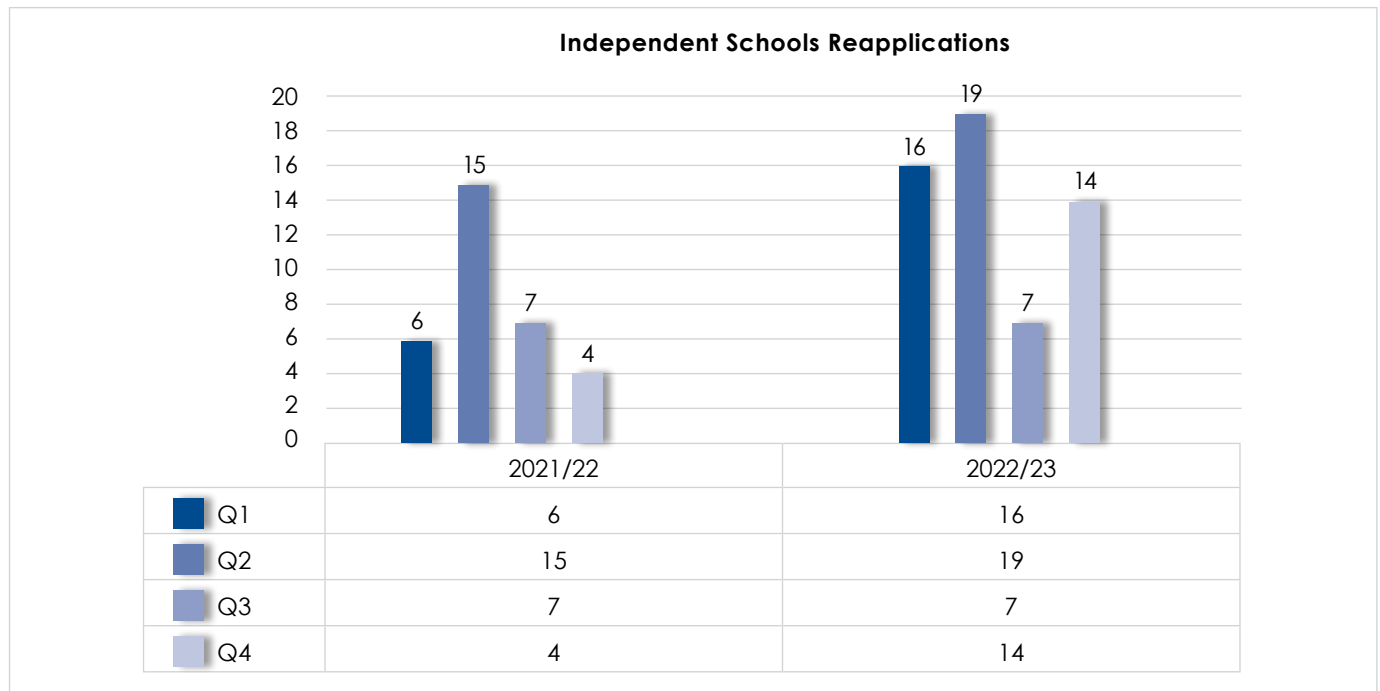
- (a) Submission of a Letter of Intent indicating the phase for which the extension of scope is sought;
- (b) Payment of the requisite fees;
- (c) Attendance of a Quality Promotion meeting;
- (d) Submission and evaluation of a Self-evaluation report;
- (e) Site verification visit conducted;
- (f) A consolidated report is presented to the ACC;
- (g) Independent institutions which are successful in their application for extension of scope must return their original accreditation certificate to Umalusi and will be issued a new certificate indicating all the grades/subjects/ programmes accredited to offer.

## Reapplication

Schools and colleges can reapply for accreditation after receiving an outcome of no accreditation. Colleges also reapply for accreditation in the sixth year of their seven-year accreditation if they still want to be accredited by Umalusi. To differentiate between an original application and a reapplication, the letters "RE" must be added to the college or school name when completing the LOI for reapplication. There is

a slightly different approach for schools that are reapplying in that they complete a shortened version of the original self-evaluation report in a "Word" document rather than uploading evidence on the online accreditation system.

The figure below indicates the number of reapplications received from independent schools. The number of schools that have reapplied for accreditation increased because of the increase in the number no accreditation outcomes, especially schools that previously received a window period to improve and were still not able to meet the required standards. Assessment bodies request proof of compliance from independent schools that they are engaged in the accreditation process before they will consider them for examination centre registration. That accounts for many schools with Grade 12 immediately reapplying for accreditation when they receive an outcome of no accreditation.



**Figure 10: Reapplications by Independent Schools for the period 1 April 2021 – 31 March 2023**

Three private colleges have reapplied for accreditation from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. A possible reason for the low reapplication rate could be the phasing out of the NATED 190/191 Engineering Studies qualification. Colleges seem reluctant to offer the NC(V) programmes due to the additional resource requirements of each programme.

# Chapter 4

## ACCREDITATION OUTCOMES

The Accreditation and Coordination (A&C) sub-unit is responsible for communicating the outcome of accreditation applications to private education institutions and coordinates the issuing of accreditation certificates. The sub-unit coordinates the workings of the committees involved in the accreditation of private education institutions, namely the Internal Accreditation Committee (IAC) (an operational committee) and two council Committees, namely the Accreditation Committee of Council (ACC) and Accreditation Appeals Committee (AAC). The A&C sub-unit serves as the secretariat of the committees. The staff of the sub-unit coordinate the presentation of accreditation and monitoring reports to the IAC and ACC and the presentation of appeal reports to the AAC. They also develop letters notifying institutions of the accreditation outcome for signature by the Chief Executive Officer or the Senior Manager, as required.

### Committees

Three committees are involved in the accreditation of private education institutions applying for accreditation with Umalusi.

#### INTERNAL ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE (IAC)

The Senior Manager and Managers of the E&A unit of Umalusi sit on the IAC. The Accreditation and Coordination sub-unit manager or his delegate chairs the Internal Accreditation Committee. Managers co-opt Assistant Managers and Admin Assistants from their sub-unit onto the IAC as necessary to provide clarity on reports to be considered at the IAC meetings. The Accreditation and Coordination sub-unit serves as the secretariat of the committee.

The purpose of the Internal Accreditation Committee is to consider recommendations of the evaluation teams concerning deferred reports, reports to be sent back to the ACC for review, and monitoring reports where a notice of intent to withdraw accreditation is recommended. The committee also considers appeals against the accreditation outcome and presents findings and recommendations to the Accreditation Committee of Council. The Internal Accreditation Committee meets at least four times annually, before each meeting of the ACC.

#### ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

The ACC was established by Council to support the work of the Evaluation and Accreditation (E&A) unit's evaluation processes and to assure institutions that accreditation decisions have been interrogated and are credible and valid.

The Terms of Reference of the ACC indicate that the Committee consists of thirteen (13) Council-appointed members. However, the 6th Umalusi Council has made a concession for the current ACC membership to comprise 14 members. Membership of the ACC comprises a Chairperson who is a member of the Umalusi Council and 13 nominated members from the private and public provider sectors that Umalusi serves. One of the committee members is appointed as the deputy chairperson. Umalusi full-time staff members serve as ex-officio members of the committee.

The role of the ACC is to deliberate on and recommend decisions on the outcome of applications for accreditation. Meetings of the ACC are held at least four (4) times annually.

## **ACCREDITATION APPEALS COMMITTEE (AAC)**

The AAC is a Council Committee chaired by a member of the Umalusi Council. The purpose of the Appeals Committee is to ensure that private providers of education and training and private assessment bodies can appeal an accreditation decision or outcome felt unjust.

Umalusi Council appoints members of the Accreditation Appeals Committee. The committee consists of one (1) legal expert and two (2) professional persons, qualified and experienced in the work of Umalusi. The two professional persons are nominated by the two other Quality Councils, namely the Council on Higher Education (CHE) and the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO). Four meetings of the Accreditation Appeals Committee are scheduled per calendar year. However, the committee only meet on the scheduled dates if there are appeals to be considered.

The Accreditation Appeals Committee considers appeals against accreditation decisions of the Accreditation Committee of Council and makes recommendations to the Umalusi Executive Committee (EXCO) in respect of the appeals. The EXCO makes the final decision on the outcome of an appeal.

## **ACC Consideration of Accreditation Recommendations**

Accreditation reports are allocated to Accreditation Committee of Council (ACC) members to verify that the accreditation process is fair and that the decisions are consistent with the evidence found.

ACC members have access to the evidence provided by the institutions, the source reports, and the consolidated accreditation report. They report on the verification of each of their allocated institutions and make recommendations on whether to accept or amend the accreditation recommendation, along with supporting reasons for their recommendation. Each member presents their findings on the allocated reports, and the committee decides on the final recommendation of the outcome of the institution's application for accreditation.

## **Accreditation Outcomes**

The Accreditation Committee of Council recommends accreditation outcomes to the Chief Executive Officer, who Council delegates to approve recommendations of the ACC. Once outcomes have been approved, accreditation letters, signed by the Umalusi Chief Executive Officer on behalf of the Umalusi Council, are issued to the institutions.

## Independent Schools

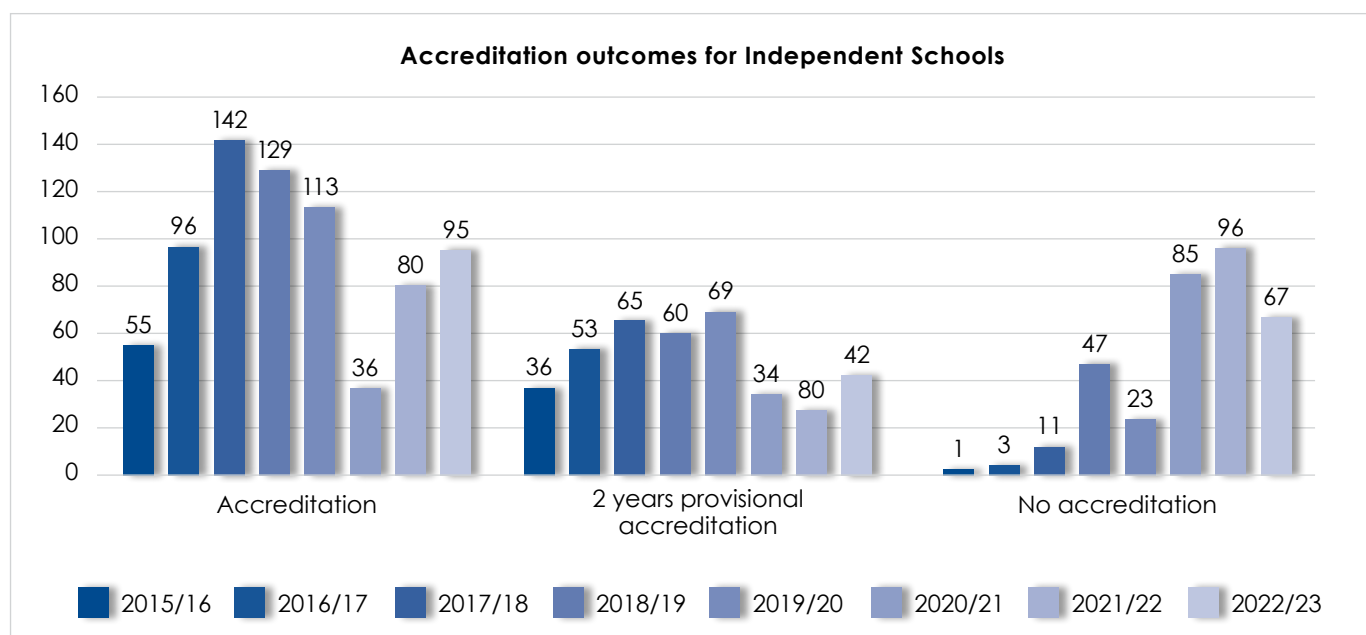
Independent schools applying for accreditation can be awarded one of the following statuses:

- Accreditation
- Two (2) years provisional accreditation
- No accreditation (following a “window period” to improve or provisional accreditation)

The table below indicates the number of independent schools granted each status in 2022/23 and previous financial years.

**Table 9: Accreditation outcomes for Independent Schools**

	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16	TOTAL
<b>Accreditation</b>	95	80	36	113	129	142	96	55	<b>746</b>
<b>Provisional accreditation</b>	42	27	34	69	60	65	53	36	<b>386</b>
<b>No accreditation</b>	67	96	85	23	47	11	3	1	<b>333</b>
<b>Accreditation Outcomes</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>1465</b>



**Figure 11: Accreditation outcomes for independent schools**

Issues preventing schools from achieving accreditation include:

- Some schools move premises without acquiring permission and the necessary documentation from the Provincial Education Department;
- Health and safety certificates that have either expired or are not obtained – especially for new premises;
- Schools employing unqualified teachers or teachers who are not registered with SACE;
- Fraudulent SACE certificates;
- Provisional registration as an independent school;
- Application for accreditation is not in line with the registration and or offering of the school;
- Schools do not follow up on their accreditation application after being granted a period to improve.

## Private Colleges

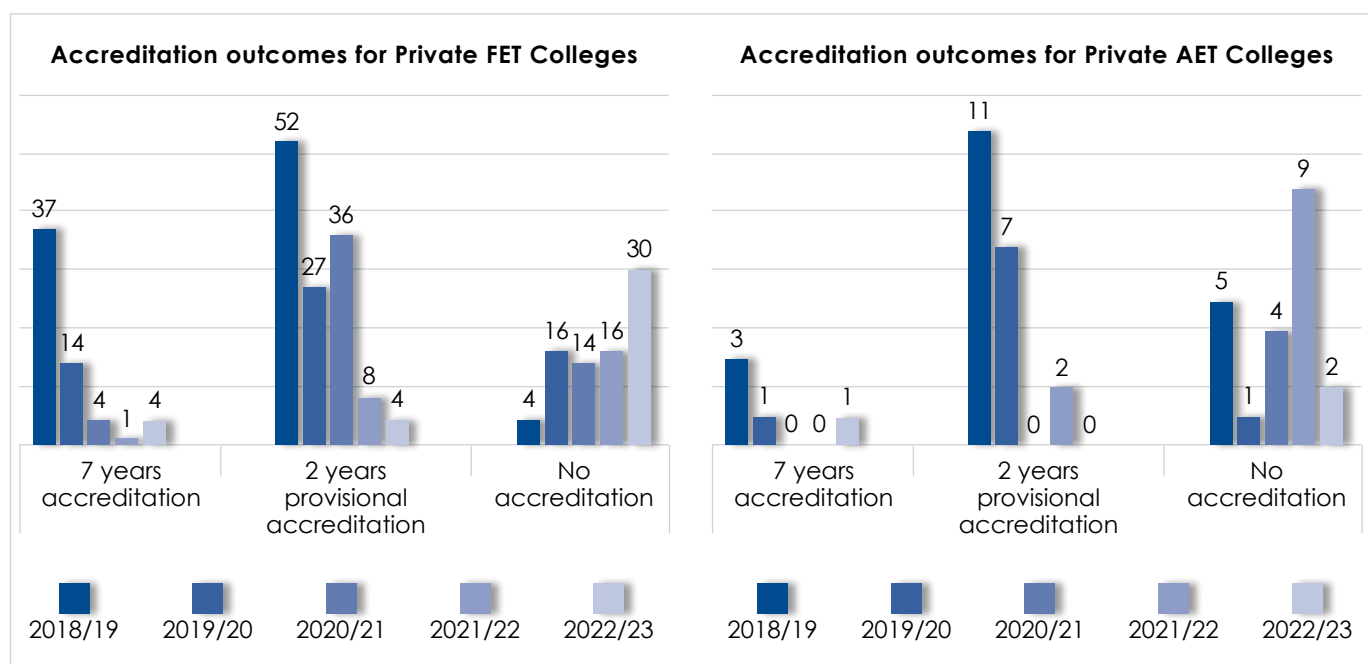
Private colleges are awarded one of the following statuses:

- Seven (7) years accreditation
- Two (2) years provisional accreditation
- No accreditation (following a “window period” to improve or provisional accreditation)

The table below indicates the number of private colleges granted each status in 2022/23 and previous financial years.

**Table 10: Accreditation outcomes for Private Colleges**

	Private FET Colleges					Private AET Colleges				
	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19
<b>Total Number of accreditation outcomes</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Seven years accreditation</b>	4	1	4	14	37	1	0	0	1	3
<b>Two years provisional accreditation</b>	4	8	36	27	52	0	2	0	7	11
<b>No accreditation</b>	30	16	14	16	4	2	9	4	1	5



**Figure 12: Accreditation outcomes for Private Colleges**

The number of private colleges granted a “window period” to improve or two years provisional accreditation outweighs those receiving seven years accreditation. For many private colleges, it is found that the evidence submitted in the self-evaluation report is not implemented in the college. The lack of implementation could be due to outsourcing the development of the self-evaluation report rather than it being done by the college management and staff.

## Window Period

The GENFETQA Act (Chapter 3 clause 25(2)) requires that institutions that do not meet the requirements for accreditation must be given a reasonable period to comply with the policy. Therefore, institutions that do not meet the minimum requirements for accreditation are granted a window period to improve. The window period to improve is typically six months; however, it can be as short as one month or as long as twelve months, depending on the areas that need improvement. For instance, a short period is granted when learners are at risk. If the only area a school needs to improve is the grade 12 results, the window period must accommodate the next examination cycle

A window period is not an accreditation outcome or status. It means the institution did not meet the required standards and has been granted an opportunity to improve. The window period is time-bound, and there is a cost that the institution must pay for the follow-up evaluation to determine whether the institution subsequently meets the required standards. There is no extension of a window period to improve. An institution that still does not meet the minimum requirements for accreditation at the second presentation of the report to the ACC will receive an outcome of no accreditation. The same outcome will be applied if, within the specified time, the institution does not pay the required evaluation fee or present new evidence of meeting the required standards.

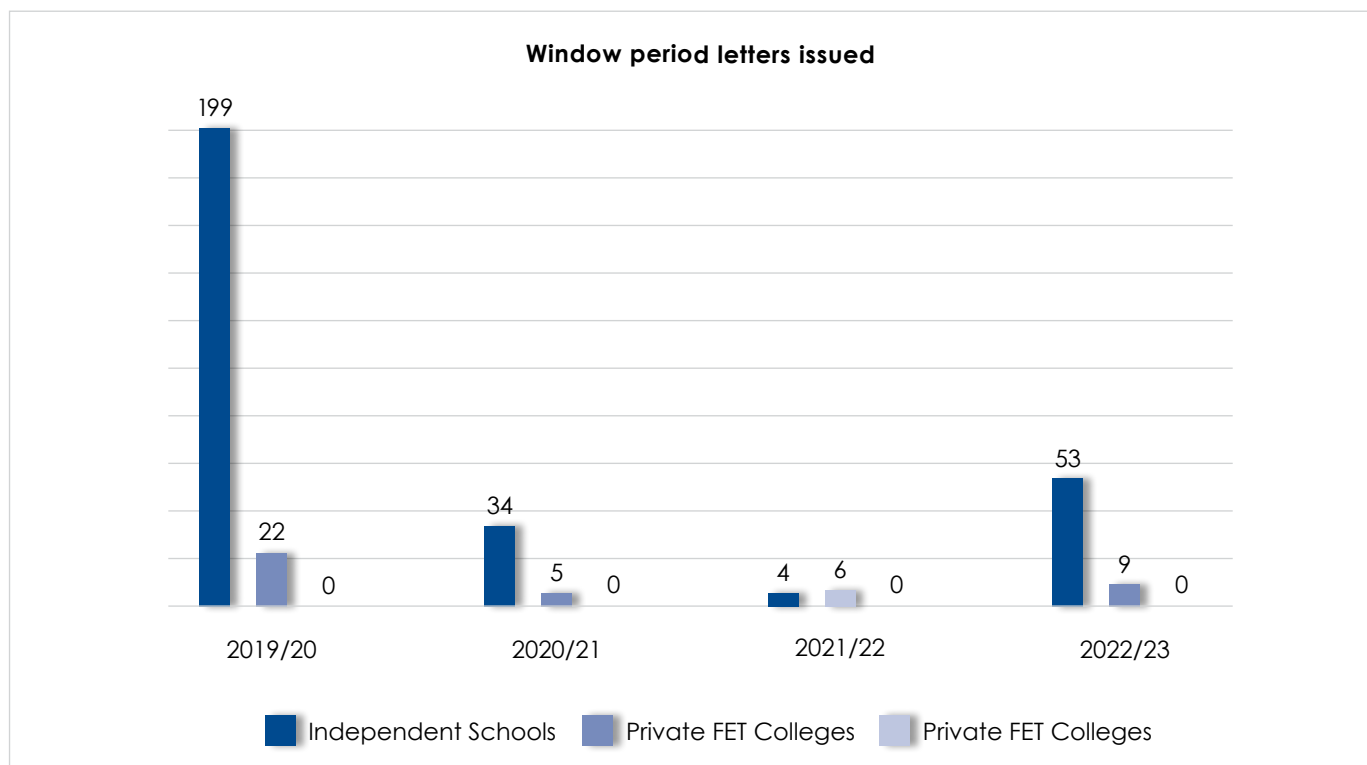
Institutions are given feedback on the areas where the minimum requirements were not met. However, during the evaluation process following a window period to improve, the evaluation will focus on all the core requirements for accreditation, not only those listed in the feedback report, as institutions are expected to uphold the minimum standards for accreditation at all times.

The table and graph below indicate the number of “window period” letters issued to private education institutions after consideration by the ACC in the financial years 2019/20 to 2022/23. The decrease in “window period” letters issued in 2021/22 was directly related to the inability to conduct site verification visits during the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions. However, with initial site visits again taking place, it has become apparent that several institutions do not meet the requirements for accreditation.

**Table 11: Window period letters issued**

No. of window period letters issued	Independent Schools	Private FET Colleges	Private AET Colleges
2022/2023	53	9	0
2021/2022	4	6	0
2020/2021	34	5	0
2019/2020	199	22	0





**Figure 13: Window Period letters issued**

#### Area of Strength

- (a) The “window period” fulfils the legislative requirement of providing institutions a period to improve if they initially do not meet the minimum requirements for accreditation.

#### Areas of Concern

- (a) It is of concern that institutions that have attended a Quality Promotion meeting and have been informed of all the requirements for accreditation still do not meet the requirements for accreditation. It often points to the fact that those institutions no longer adhere to the conditions of their registration by the relevant authority.
- (b) Evaluation of evidence following a window period to improve increases the unit's workload and the human resources needed to conduct the associated processes.
- (c) When institutions change their contact details during the accreditation process without informing Umalusi, they do not receive the outcome letters timeously. (c)

#### Recommendation for improvement

- (a) Institutions must notify Umalusi in writing of any changes in their contact details to ensure they receive timely feedback on their accreditation application.

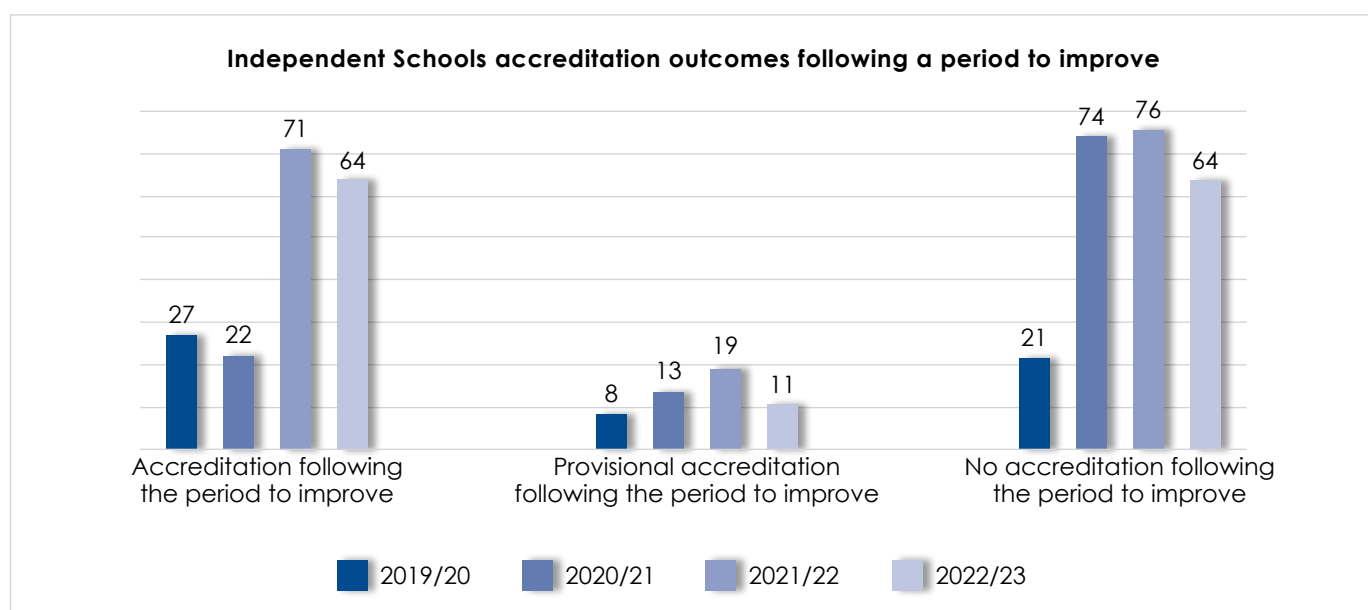
### Improvements Following a Window Period or Provisional Accreditation

The information in the table and graph below indicates that institutions are not effectively using the window period or provisional accreditation period to improve their accreditation status. In the 2019/20 financial year, 48% of schools were granted accreditation after a period given to improve. In the 2022/23 financial year, 46% achieved accreditation after being granted a period to improve. Conversely, after

the period given to improve, 37.5% of institutions did not meet the requirements for accreditation in the 2019/20 financial year, compared to 46% in the 2022/23 financial year. More concerning is that most schools continue to operate even though they have not met the requirements for accreditation as registration of an independent school, the “license to operate”, falls under the Provincial Education Departments and not Umalusi. Although the Head of Department in each province is advised of the outcome of accreditation applications, a no accreditation outcome does not mean that a school's registration will automatically be withdrawn. The public should therefore be vigilant and insist on evidence of an independent school being accredited by Umalusi before enrolling their children in an independent school.

**Table 12: Independent School accreditation outcomes between 01 April 2019 and 31 March 2023 following a period to improve**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL OUTCOMES FOLLOWING A PERIOD GIVEN TO IMPROVE				
	TOTAL	Accreditation	Provisional accreditation	No accreditation
2022/23	139	64	11	64
		46%	8%	46%
2021/22	166	71	19	76
		43%	11%	46%
2020/21	109	22	13	74
		20%	12%	68%
2019/20	56	27	8	21
		48%	14%	38%

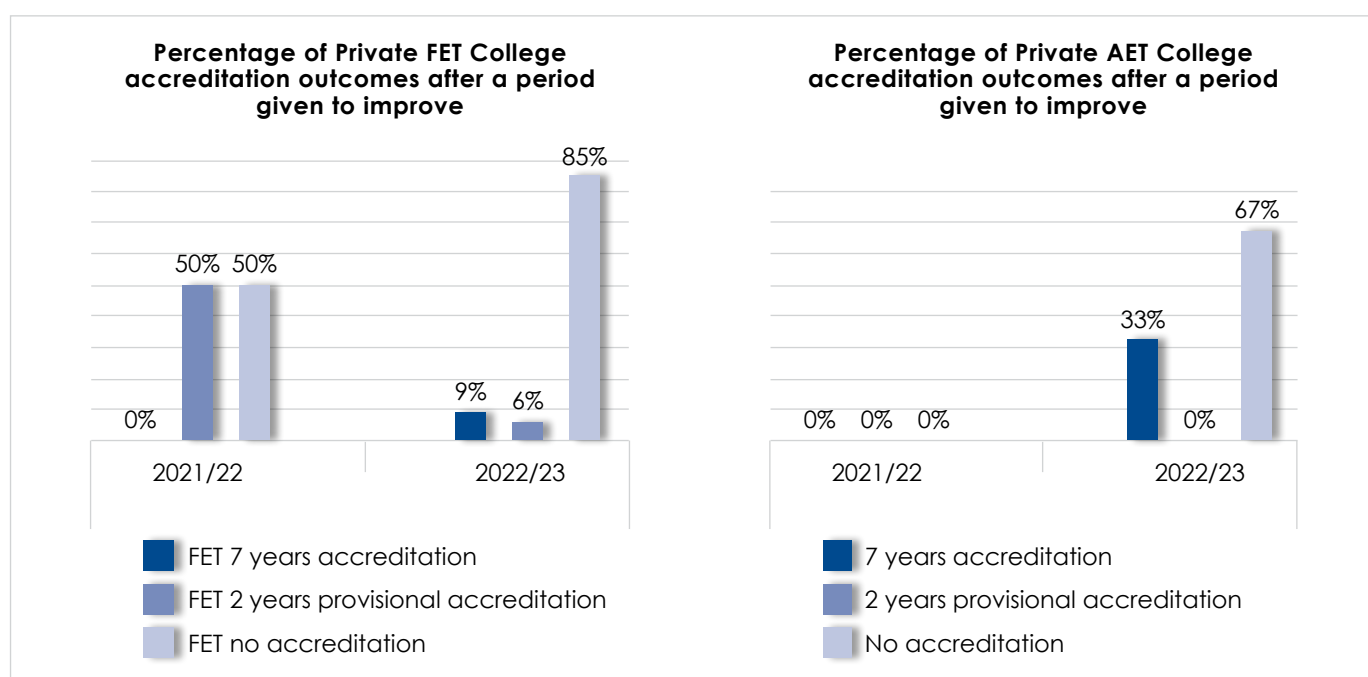


**Figure 14: Independent School Accreditation outcomes following a period to improve**

The statistics for private colleges for the past financial years reflect a similar trend to that of independent schools in that most colleges are not making use of the opportunity given to them to improve. Eighty-five per cent of private colleges received an outcome of no accreditation following a period to improve in the most recent financial year, as did 67% of private AET colleges.

**Table 13: Private College outcomes following a period given to improve**

PRIVATE COLLEGE OUTCOMES FOLLOWING A PERIOD GIVEN TO IMPROVE				
	TOTAL	Accreditation	Provisional accreditation	No accreditation
2022/23 Private FET Colleges	34	3	2	29
		9%	6%	85%
2021/22 Private FET Colleges	2	0	1	1
		0%	50%	50%
2022/23 Private AET Colleges	3	1	0	2
		33%	0%	67%
2021/22 Private AET Colleges	0	0	0	0
		0%	0%	0%



**Figure 15: Private College accreditation outcomes following a period to improve**

**Area of Strength**

- (a) All stakeholders enjoy the benefits of the improvements in the institutions that take the process seriously and make the required changes to meet the accreditation requirements.

**Areas of Concern**

- (a) Principals / Heads of institutions leave an institution without proper handover, resulting in the new incumbent not knowing what is required in terms of the institution’s application for accreditation;
- (b) The increasing number of fraudulent documents presented during the evaluation process;
- (c) Institutions that do not have current health and safety certificates and Certificate of Acceptability as food premises.

## Recommendations for improvement

- (a) Institutions must take responsibility for ensuring that they adhere to the timelines that are indicated in the accreditation feedback letters.
- (b) Principals / Heads of institutions must put stringent measures in place to verify the professional qualifications and SACE registration of teachers/lecturers.
- (c) Institutions must ensure they pay for the improvement process within the specified period, as evidence is only evaluated once payment is made. Non-payment within the specified time will lead to the accreditation outcome being decided on the initial evaluation, and the institution will receive an outcome of no accreditation.

## The Appeal Process

Institutions have the right to appeal an outcome of “no accreditation”.

The following steps are followed when an appeal of the outcome is received:

- (a) The appeal is recorded in the appeals register.
- (b) The letter containing the query or appeal is brought to the attention of the manager dealing with the institution's accreditation to investigate the matter.
- (c) The appeal and findings are presented to the Internal Accreditation Committee (IAC).
- (d) The query or appeal and findings, and the recommendation of the IAC, are presented to the Accreditation Committee of Council (ACC).
- (e) The ACC considers the findings and recommendations of the IAC and either reviews or stands by their original decision
- (f) The institution is advised of the decision of the ACC and invited to lodge a formal appeal to be handled by the Accreditation Appeals Committee (AAC) should they want to pursue the appeal. An invoice is raised for the institution to pay an appeal fee, which is determined annually by Umalusi Council.
- (g) If payment is made by the stipulated date, the appeal is presented to the Accreditation Appeals Committee.
- (h) The Chair of the AAC presents the recommendations of the Accreditation Appeals Committee to the Umalusi EXCO for a decision.
- (i) The outcome is communicated to the private education institution.

It is important to note that the basis for an appeal must be that the institution believes and has evidence to support the claim that an incorrect decision was made, taking into account the evidence presented at the time of the evaluation. Measures put in place after the evaluation do not constitute grounds for an appeal.

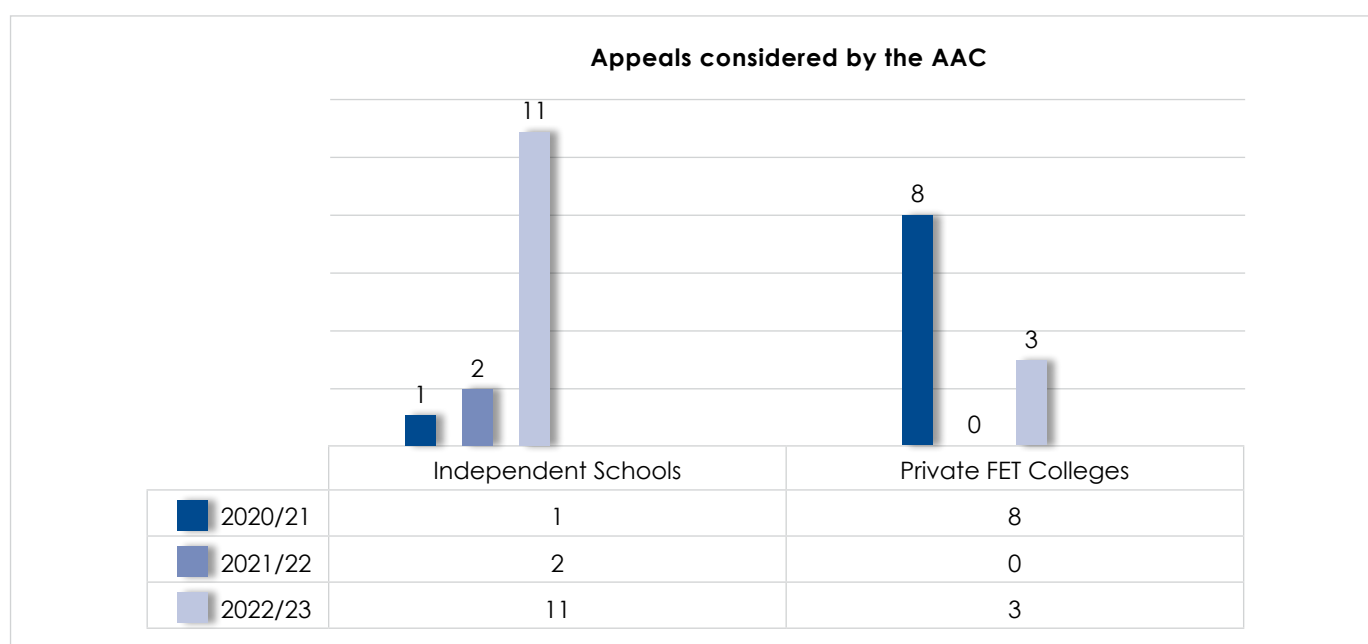
## Appeals presented to the AAC

Since the appeal process was instituted in 2019, 42 appeals have been considered by the Accreditation Appeals Committee (AAC). Of the 42, four (4) appeals have succeeded due to procedural matters. In these four cases, the appellants were given an opportunity to present evidence for evaluation. The Accreditation Committee of Council (ACC) then pronounced on the applications based on the evidence submitted for evaluation within the specified timelines.

The table below indicates the number of appeals presented to the AAC per financial year between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2023.

**Table 14: Appeals presented to the AAC**

	Quarter	INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS			PRIVATE FET COLLEGES		
		2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
Appeals presented to the Accreditation Appeals Committee	Q1	9	0	0	0	0	0
	Q2	0	2	0	0	0	1
	Q3	2	0	0	3	0	5
	Q4	0	0	1	0	0	2
	TOTAL	11	2	1	3	0	8



**Figure 12: Appeals presented to the AAC**

### Area of Strength

- (a) The Accreditation Appeals Committee, which is independent of the Accreditation Committee of Council, provides an additional layer of review to ensure that the accreditation process is fair, efficient and reliable.

### Area of Concern

- (a) Despite every effort to explain the basis for an appeal, institutions still submit appeals which have no basis. For example, institutions request additional time to put measures in place, ask for leniency, or indicate measures that have been put in place after the evaluation and outcome of the application being received.

### Recommendation for improvement

- (a) Private education institutions must note that the basis for an appeal must be that the institution believes and has evidence to support the claim that an incorrect decision was made, taking into account evidence presented at the time of the decision.

# Chapter 5

## ACCREDITATION OF PRIVATE ASSESSMENT BODIES

The Evaluation and Accreditation unit of Umalusi is responsible for the accreditation process of private assessment bodies. The manager responsible for evaluation and monitoring coordinates the application and subsequent evaluation. Registered companies intending to be accredited as an assessment body may apply to assess a qualification on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework (GFETQSF). After a rigorous process, accreditation may be granted to a private assessment body that demonstrates the capacity to conduct, administer, and manage national examinations and assessment of learner achievement. The rigorous process involves evaluating a private assessment body to determine whether its capacity, systems, processes, and products are of the appropriate quality to deliver valid, reliable, fair and credible assessments and examinations.

The accreditation process entails several steps, stretches over a minimum of three years for new applicants, and culminates in presenting an accreditation report for consideration by the Umalusi Council. The accreditation criteria for private assessment bodies are outlined in the policies and regulations<sup>1</sup> developed in line with the requirements of the GENFETQA Act (No. 58 of 2001, as amended). Umalusi Council pronounces on the accreditation of a private assessment body.

The criteria for accreditation of a private assessment body are:

Criterion 1: Leadership, planning and management

Criterion 2: Assessment standards

Criterion 3: Research and development

Criterion 4: The conduct and administration of examinations

Criterion 5: Resulting systems and processes

During the 2022/23 financial year, the following activities were conducted in respect of private assessment bodies:

- Finalisation of the evaluation of an application to assess the NSC;
- Finalisation of the evaluation of an application to assess the GETC: ABET
- Consideration of letters of intent to apply for accreditation and the justifiable needs processes for two prospective private assessment bodies
- Development of a monitoring instrument to monitor private assessment bodies
- Review of the Guideline for implementation of the policy and criteria for the quality assurance, accreditation and monitoring of private Assessment Bodies.

<sup>1</sup> Policy and criteria for the quality assurance, accreditation and monitoring of independent schools and private assessment bodies, Government Gazette No. 35830 of 29 October 2012, as amended in 2017;  
Regulations regarding the criteria for the quality assurance, accreditation and monitoring of independent schools and private assessment bodies, Government Gazette No. 41206 of 27 October 2017;  
Policy for the quality assurance of private colleges for continuing education and training, offering qualifications registered on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework, and the accreditation of private assessment bodies (Government Gazette No. 41887 of 7 September 2018);

## Private Assessment Bodies Accredited by Umalusi

Table 15 indicates the status of private assessment bodies accredited to assess qualifications on the GFETQSF.

**Table 15: Current status of private assessment bodies accredited to assess qualifications on the GFETQSF.**

ASSESSMENT BODY	QUALIFICATION	ACCREDITATION STATUS
INDEPENDENT EXAMINATIONS BOARD (IEB)	National Senior Certificate (NSC)	Full accreditation
	General Education and Training Certificate (GETC): Adult Basic Education and Training	Full accreditation
SOUTH AFRICAN COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT INSTITUTE (SACAI)	National Senior Certificate (NSC)	Full accreditation
	General Education and Training Certificate: Adult Basic Education and Training (GETC: ABET)	Full accreditation

## Monitoring the Conduct, Administration, and Management of Examinations

All the operational units at Umalusi are involved in monitoring the processes related to their operations during the conduct, administration and management of the examinations. The monitoring is coordinated by Umalusi's Quality Assurance of Assessment Units.

Processes that are evaluated and reported on include:

- Moderation of question papers
- Moderation of school-based assessment portfolios
- Monitoring the state of readiness to conduct the examinations
- Monitoring of writing
- Standardisation of the marking guidelines
- Monitoring of marking
- Verification of marking
- Standardisation and resulting
- Certification
- Management of irregularities

# Chapter 6

## STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Umalusi values engagement with stakeholders. The Evaluation and Accreditation unit has, amongst other, conducted meetings with Department of Higher Education and Training officials, Department of Basic Education and Provincial Education Department officials, principals of independent schools at meetings arranged by Provincial Education Departments, and meetings with schools and private colleges by prior arrangement.

Quality Promotion Meetings provide a vehicle to communicate with stakeholders on matters related to the accreditation process.

A hybrid Accreditation Forum and Accreditation Certificate Presentation Ceremony was conducted in this financial year.

### Meetings with Officials From the DBE and PEDs

During the 2022/2023 financial year, the unit hosted 18 meetings with various provincial officials in preparation for the provincial collaborative meetings hosted online on 11 August 2022. Initial meetings with provinces focused on preparing delegates for a brief presentation during which province-specific challenges relating to independent schools' accreditation and registration processes had to be highlighted. Delegates were also requested to propose solutions to alleviate the impact of the identified challenges and their possible effects.

For the online provincial collaborative meetings, delegates from the provincial, district and regional levels were invited to represent the Registration Directorate and Examinations Directorate. Discussions during these meetings were tabled, and the findings informed the national collaborative meeting. Discussions included the registration and accreditation of independent schools, distance education institutions and online schools. Discussions on registration of independent schools as examination centres focussed on the 'red, amber and green lists', concessions, the allocation of unaccredited independent schools to designated centres, and registration data for independent schools.

Forty-five delegates attended the national collaborative meeting during which the above-indicated matters were discussed. During these discussions, the unit gave concise feedback on what they observed and concluded from the provincial meetings. Following the discussions, Umalusi recommended standardising registration processes, letters, and certificates. On the side of examination centre registration, emphasis was on the prerogative of the provinces as assessment bodies to register independent schools as examination centres.



## Accreditation Forum and Accreditation Certificate Presentation Ceremony

The 2023 Accreditation Forum and Certificate Presentation Ceremony was conducted in a hybrid mode (a physical meeting and concurrent online live stream) on 08 March 2023. The hybrid mode allowed Umalusi to be able to accommodate many delegates. Approximately one hundred and seventy (170) delegates attended the physical forum, and 500 delegates connected to the webinar.

The theme for the forum was “Assuring education standards through quality provision and assessment.” Topics of the presentation were:

- The importance of maintaining standards
- Standardisation of assessment results
- Quality assuring the assessment of a national qualification
- Learner Support – what, why and how?
- Update on developments affecting private education institutions in the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-Framework
- Accreditation of a Private Assessment Body
- Presentation of accreditation certificates to institutions that were granted accreditation between 1 January 2022 and 31 December 2022

Very positive feedback was received from participants, indicating that many delegates prefer an online forum, although the presentation of certificates will always be more effective in a physical setting.

## DHET and UMALUSI Joint Task Team on Registration and Accreditation of Private Colleges

A Joint Task Team between Umalusi and the DHET meets to discuss matters relating to the registration and accreditation of private colleges, as the two processes impact each other. This task team was responsible for developing the referral procedure to the DHET for registration after completing a self-evaluation report. The CEO of Umalusi and the Director-General of the DHET have approved the task team Memorandum of Understanding.

# OTHER ACTIVITIES

## Reporting Accreditation Status

### Independent Schools

Umalusi reports the stage of independent schools in the accreditation process to the Provincial Education Departments annually and more frequently on request. The status is reported in terms of “green”, “amber”, and “red” colour coding:

**Green:** the independent school is accredited or provisionally accredited;

**Light Green:** the independent school has submitted a self-evaluation report and is in the accreditation process but has not yet received an outcome of the application;

**Red:** the independent school has not made sufficient progress in their application to be considered compliant with Umalusi's requirements, or

the independent school has been through the accreditation process and received an outcome of no accreditation, or

the school has not applied for accreditation.

**Amber:** the independent school has been granted a window period to improve as it was not sufficiently compliant with the accreditation criteria at the first presentation of the report to the ACC, or

The school received an outcome of no accreditation after June of that year (it has not had sufficient time to reapply for accreditation prior to the date of reporting to the assessment body).

The table below reflects the number of registered independent schools in South Africa in each colour category. The numbers include primary schools, many of which are reluctant to apply for accreditation, and schools offering a qualification other than the National Senior Certificate.

**Table 16: 2023 Red, Green, Amber colour coding across nine provinces**

PROVINCE	GREEN	AMBER	RED	TOTAL
Eastern Cape	99	9	123	231
Free State	35	2	39	76
Gauteng	500	48	741	1289
KwaZulu Natal	148	17	117	282
Limpopo	107	7	69	183
Mpumalanga	61	10	76	147
North West	51	7	51	109
Northern Cape	22	3	19	44
Western Cape	154	8	149	311
TOTAL	1177	111	1384	2672

Colour coding of Independent Schools: December 2022

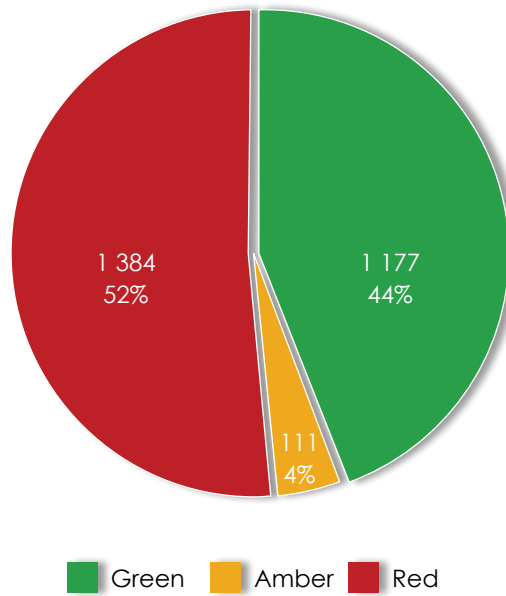


Figure 13: IS Red, Green, Amber Colour Coding as at 31 December 2022

## Private Colleges

Umalusi reports accreditation decisions to the Registrar<sup>2</sup> in the Department of Higher Education. Accredited private colleges and those that have made significant progress (those that have submitted a self-evaluation report meeting the minimum requirements) are indicated on the list provided to the DHET at the start of each academic cycle. Only private colleges on that list that have been granted registration as a private college and as an examination centre by the DHET for the qualifications certified by Umalusi may enrol learners at the beginning of a tuition cycle.

In addition, individual letters indicating colleges that meet the desktop requirements of the accreditation process are sent to the DHET Registrar of private colleges.

The cut-off dates to be compliant with Umalusi's processes to be included on the "green list" are as follows:

## NATED N2-N3 Engineering Studies

- 31 March for the August examination of the same year.
- 15 August for the November examinations of the same year.
- 15 November for the April examinations of the following year.

## NC(V)

- 15 November for the November examination of the following year.

<sup>2</sup> In line with the GENFETQA Act No. 58 of 2001, as amended.

### **Areas of Concern**

- (a) Not all assessment bodies fully understand the process of accreditation.
- (b) Assessment bodies differ in their implementation of linking the colour coding and examination centre registration. This causes confusion as independent schools belonging to the same group but in different provinces are treated differently.
- (c) The lack of understanding of the difference between accreditation and registration.
- (d) The lack of understanding that the assessment bodies, and not Umalusi, are responsible for the registration of examination centres.
- (e) The low number of independent primary schools that apply for accreditation.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

- (a) More awareness campaigns to the public about the legal requirement for private education institutions to be accredited.
- (a) Provincial education departments to become more strict in the enforcement of accreditation compliance.

## GENERAL CHALLENGES

- (a) Many colleges are managed by people with a “business” rather than an “educational” background. This becomes evident in the lack of understanding of the requirements for the qualification and the accreditation criteria, especially related to teaching, learning, and assessment. As a result, many colleges do not meet the requirements for accreditation at the first presentation of the report to the Accreditation Committee of Council.
- (b) Despite quality promotion meetings being conducted and compulsory for all applicants to attend, many applications do not meet the minimum requirements. This may result from private colleges sending people to attend the meetings who, thereafter, are not involved in compiling the self-evaluation report for submission to Umalusi.
- (c) Some institutions use the brand of Umalusi to attract learners to register for qualifications and programmes that Umalusi does not accredit. This practice is against the law since private colleges may only offer programmes and qualifications that they are registered and accredited to offer. Members of the public are urged to check the accreditation letters and certificates issued to institutions to ensure that the institution is accredited to offer a specific qualification and subjects within that qualification.
- (d) Since online schools are not registered institutions in line with the South African Schools Act, 1996, they fall outside Umalusi’s mandate for accreditation. However, many offer the NCS leading to the NSC, which is a qualification on Umalusi’s sub-framework of qualifications.

# CONCLUSION

Since private education institutions that offer a qualification on the GFETQSF are required by law to be accredited by Umalusi, the E&A unit is inundated with applications for accreditation and queries about whether an institution is accredited to offer specific qualifications.

The Evaluation and Accreditation unit continues to implement rigorous processes to ensure quality provision of the qualifications on the GFETQSF to protect the South African learner.



**UMALUSI**



Quality Council for General and Further  
Education and Training

**Physical Address:** 37 General Van Ryneveld Street, Persekor Technopark, Pretoria

**Pretoria Postal Address:** P.O. Box 151 Persekor Technopark, Pretoria, 0020

**Telephone:** +27 12 349 1510 | **Fax:** +27 12 349 1511

**Toll Free Fraud Line:** 0800 000 889

**Email:** [info@umalusi.org.za](mailto:info@umalusi.org.za) | **Web:** [www.umalusi.org.za](http://www.umalusi.org.za)

**Facebook:** @Umalusi\_RSA | **Twitter:** @UmalusiSA