



CERTIFICATION POLICY

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Da Vinci Institute is an accredited private higher distance education provider offering qualifications on NQF levels five to ten, which are registered on the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF). This Policy forms part of the institutional Integrated Quality Management System and details the principles for ensuring that programme offerings adhere to academic standards and empower students to contribute to the transformation of their communities, society and the economy of the future. This approach is underpinned by the Business and Community-driven Action Learning discourse on the co-creation and distribution of relevant knowledge.

2. DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Academic Transcript	A document that indicates all relevant student information and achievements, including, the programme modules, level of the programme, module credits and marks obtained by the student
Certification	Process for the formal recognition of a qualification or part-qualification awarded to a successful learner
Certificates of qualifications	Awarded on completion of higher certificates, diplomas, Bachelor degrees, Postgraduate degrees, Master's Degrees and Doctoral Degrees which are ratified by The Da Vinci Senate following the recommendation by the Assessment Committee
Council on Higher Education (CHE)	An independent statutory body that is responsible for advising the Minister of Higher Education and Training on all Higher Education policy issues, and for quality assurance in Higher Education. The CHE is the council for quality assurance in Higher Education, mandated by the NQF Act (Act 67 of 2008) to achieve the objectives of the NQF and to develop and manage the HEQSF
Learning Programme	The sequential learning activities, associated with curriculum implementation, leading to the achievement of a particular qualification or part qualification
Programme	A coherent set of modules, leading to a certain qualification
Qualification	A registered national qualification consisting of a planned combination of learning outcomes which has a defined purpose or purposes, intended to provide qualifying learners with applied competence and a basis for further learning and

Term	Definition
	which are assessed in terms of exit level outcomes, registered on the NQF and certified and awarded by a recognised body
Qualification Award	The formal acknowledgement, by the relevant authority, of achievement of the stated learning outcomes for a qualification
Record of learning	A statement of all learning for which a student is enrolled or which the student has completed that is issued by an authorised issuing organisation
South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)	Formal recognition of a qualification or part-qualification awarded to a successful learner

3. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

This Policy is benchmarked against, and should be read in the context of the relevant legislation underpinning the principles against which institutional policies and operational procedures are developed, implemented and maintained. These include:

A. Relevant legislation:

- i. Constitution of the Republic of South Africa: 1996
- ii. CHE: Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) Criteria for Programme Accreditation: November, 2004
- iii. Higher Education Act (Act 101 of 1997)
- iv. SAQA: National Policy and Criteria for Designing and Implementing Assessment for NQF Qualifications and Part Qualifications and Professional Designations in South Africa.

B. Applicable Da Vinci documents:

- i. Prospectus
- ii. D5 – Curriculum Design and the Development of Learning and Assessment Resources Policy
- iii. D19 – Assessment and Moderation Policy
- iv. D18 - Invigilated Examinations Policy.

4. SCOPE

This Policy is relevant to all students, alumni, staff and faculty of The Institute.

5. PURPOSE

The aim of this Policy is to provide clear guidelines for the certification of students who have met all the relevant requirements for a full qualification and the recording of their achievements on the National Learners' Records Database.

The Institute has multiple mechanisms in place to ensure the quality assurance and integrity of the certification process both in the processing and issuing of certificates. Security features, such as, unique numbering and watermarks, ensure that there is no fraud or illegal issuing of certificates. These security mechanisms are documented in the D21-P2 – Certification procedure.

Certificates of Completion and Award Certificates are issued with similar security processes. The Registry office maintains a register of all certificates issued for verification purposes.

6. CERTIFICATION POLICY OBJECTIVES

In order to ensure that integrity, accuracy and credibility is maintained, The Institute undertakes to:

- 6.1. Clearly articulate the requirements for completion of a qualification that leads to certification as registered with South African Qualifications Authority and accredited by the Council on Higher Education
- 6.2. Ensure that certification takes place only when the student has satisfied all the requirements for the award of the qualification
- 6.3. Where Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT) procedures have been implemented, the relevant exempted modules will be indicated as such on the student's academic transcript
- 6.4. Ensure that the data submitted to the Council on Higher Education via the Higher Education Quality Committee Information Systems (HEQCIS) for subsequent submission to the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) to meet the requirements of the National Learners' Records Database (NLRD) for the period, is true and correct.

7. CERTIFICATION PROCEDURE: APPROVAL FOR CERTIFICATION

Upon completion of a formal academic programme, the following procedures are followed to approve the certification:

- 7.1. The relevant Programme Convener must submit the statement of results to Registry for confirmation that the student has completed all the requisite requirements in the programme as registered with South African Qualifications Authority and accredited by the Council on Higher Education
- 7.2. Registry will validate the results and prepare and present the list of potential graduates to the Assessment Committee. The final result and any request for condonement of individual student results will be discussed at the Assessment

Committee and recommendations regarding the awarding of qualifications will be made to Senate for approval and ratification

7.3. The final Academic Transcript is prepared and signed.

8. AWARDING OF A QUALIFICATION

The following rules apply:

- 8.1. A student must attain the pass mark for each module at the associated NQF level programme of the qualification
- 8.2. The student is deemed to have complied with all the requirements for the award of the qualification as ratified by Senate
- 8.3. The qualification is formally awarded at a Da Vinci graduation ceremony or thereafter.

9. AWARDING OF A QUALIFICATION WITH DISTINCTION (CUM LAUDE)

The following rules apply when awarding a qualification with distinction:

- 9.1. The rules governing the final promotion mark are reflected in The Institute's Annual Prospectus and all students are required to consult the Prospectus for the year in which they registered, for information on the rules pertaining to the programme they registered for
- 9.2. All currently registered students must achieve a weighted average of 75% over the whole programme to achieve their qualification Cum Laude
- 9.3. Students who received credits towards a qualification as a result of achievements in similar programmes at other registered and accredited institutions, the word 'exemption' will appear on the Academic Transcript for the relevant modules, and Cum Laude will be calculated on the overall mark achieved at The Institute
- 9.4. Since no mark is allocated to a Doctoral thesis, no Doctoral student may be awarded the qualification with the status Cum Laude.

10. ISSUING OF ACADEMIC TRANSCRIPTS

A student may request an academic transcript from The Institute at any time:

- 10.1. Requests for Academic Transcripts must be made in writing or via email to the relevant Programme Convener or to Registry
- 10.2. All Transcripts have to be signed and quality checked by Registry.

11. RE-ISSUING OF QUALIFICATION CERTIFICATES

With regards to the re-issuing of Qualification Certificates:

- 11.1. Certificates which are incorrect or damaged whilst in the possession of The Institute, must be returned to The Institute and a new certificate will be issued.

The incorrect or damaged certificate is then shredded by Registry before releasing the re-issued (duplicate) certificate

- 11.2. A student who loses his or her certificate may request a replacement certificate. The re-issued certificate will indicate "replacement certificate" on the front of the certificate. Certificates will be re-issued using the same certificate number as the one being replaced. The student must formally request a replacement certificate, indicating the reason for the replacement and a fee is applicable.

12. REVIEW OF THIS POLICY

Regular review and amendment of this Policy will be done in line with the approved institutional policies and regulatory requirements. This will take place in consultation with the relevant quality assurance structures at the departmental and institutional level, under the auspices of the official custodian of this Policy, namely the Executive Dean: Academic.