

## Why selected sites are being visited

### **SAQA's verification of the Kha Ri Gude adult literacy campaign learner achievement**

The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) has been commissioned by the Department of Basic Education to engage in a verification exercise of the Kha Ri Gude results that lead to the successful candidates being recorded as having obtained an ABET level 1 qualification on the National Learner Record Database (NLRD).

This verification is based upon the following:

- An examination of the curriculum and instructional materials (the mother tongue literacy manual and numeracy manuals, the English for Everyone manual, the Learner Assessment Portfolio (LAP) and the respective teacher guides. (This process was first undertaken in 2009 and will be reviewed in 2011).
- An annual verification workshop at which a large sample of the completed LAPs are checked for the accuracy and integrity of the marking and for the consistency of the level of marks awarded.

On the basis of the above the results for programme years 2008, 2009 and 2010 were accepted by SAQA and recorded on the NLRD.

The verification process now enters a further stage of refinement with two major foci:

- Site visits towards the end of the each year's programme that are designed to check on the authenticity of the learner input into the LAPs.
- At the verification workshop to be held in early 2012 to verify that the marking accurately matches the criteria for marking developed by the Kha Ri Gude campaign, that is, verifying that the marks awarded accurately correspond to the actual level achieved by the learner.

## **The rationale for the site visits**

Kha Ri Gude has an excellent administrative and logistics system. Nevertheless most classes in the campaign operate in relatively informal situations. Worldwide, literacy campaigns have tended not to assess learner success. So in using the LAPS supported by a rigorous verification programme Kha Ri Gude and SAQA have developed a unique and promising approach to assessing and verifying literacy campaign learner success. It is an important development and could show whether it is a viable way of doing this important educational and community development process.

## **Purpose of the site visits**

The site visits are intended to support and inform the overall process of moderation and verification. They are thus part of the progressive development of an appropriate quality assurance system for Kha Ri Gude.

In the first two years of moderation, various constraints meant that SAQA could only endorse the validity of the **assessment** of the portfolios themselves by overseeing the moderation of a large sample of the completed LAPs. Ideally, over time, SAQA should be able to strengthen its confidence in the internal assessment, moderation and verification procedures of campaign. Checking its assumptions does, however, require some measure of independent verification.

## **Key questions for the site visits**

In essence, the site visits involve three key verification questions:

1. Can one confirm the identity of the learners (using their ID or Kha Ri Gude number): who are real members of the class and who have been working on a LAP?
2. Is there a credible fit between their skills demonstrated in the LAP as compared to a brief independent test (though one that is truly equivalent to the LAP activities).
3. How good is the local internal quality assurance as demonstrated in the work of the voluntary educators in marking the LAP, and the supervisors who moderate them? This question poses a subsidiary question about how insightful the educators are in judging the required levels of achievement as spelled out in the LAPs themselves in the form of the marking criteria alongside each activity.

## Determining the size of the site visit sample

There are some 35 000 KRG sites spread over rural, urban, township and informal settlements. These are overseen by some 190 coordinators who manage about 20 supervisors each. SAQA worked from a provided list of 144 coordinators.

(we will have to check on the reasons for the disparity)

It is planned to visit 350 sites spread over all provinces and covering the typical types of locality as described above. To provide adequate coverage and at the same time to have a manageable number of “visitors” in the field it was determined to visit local sites under the control of 30 coordinators (that is, a sample of about 15% of the coordinators).

The first stage in developing this sample was to construct the following table:

David there is a problem here: the totals for the table don't tally with the no of coordinators 164 rather than 190 of 144; with the number of areas 26 rather than 30; or with the number of sites 304 not 350)

Province	No of Coordinators	Areas per Province	Percentage of 350 sites
EC	46	6	70
FS	16	2	24
GP	27	4	44
KZN	41	6	70
MP	16	2	24
NC	3	2	24
WC	5	2	24
NW	10	2	24
	164	26	304

With the approximate number of sites per province now determined, the list of coordinators was analysed by province to determine an appropriate sampling basis. For example in Gauteng where there are 27 coordinators we need to visit 4 places. So every 6<sup>th</sup> coordinator was chosen.

Thereafter we scrutinized the identified areas in order to ensure that at minimum there was a rural/urban divide and, where possible, urban township, rural township, and informal settlement coverage.

We now had a list of 30 coordinators divided up by province. The selected coordinators were contacted to determine the geographical location of each of their r supervisors.

With this information we were now in a position to determine the hubs from which we would operate and how many “visitors” would be required to cover the sites, bearing in mind that we would visit at least two centres per day.

The next step was appoint the visitors, train them and, with the assistance of coordinators and supervisors, make local arrangements for the visit.

## **Appointment, job description and Training of “Visitors”**

The Visitors will be appointed on the basis of the following broad criteria:

1. They must have had at least several years experience in the field of adult literacy or adult basic education.
2. They must have been in a position (as a teacher/leader/manager, etc.) in which they have had experience of exercising judgement.
3. They must speak the language of the learners in the site they are visiting.
4. They must be able (whether using private or public transport) to get to the site.

In the current year visitors will be paid at a standard rate per day (assuming two visits a day). The rate of R2625 per day. Car travel is paid out at the rate of R4,40 per km. Each visitor will be contracted to SAQA.

## **Job description and activities of the “Visitors”**

Those involved in the KRG site visits are known as **site visitors** rather than evaluators. SAQA is not evaluating KRG and we should not confuse verification with evaluation. It is important to remember that we are not conducting a comprehensive evaluation of Kha Ri Gude, neither is it an inspection. The centre of our concern is the validity of the results that SAQA aims to record on the NLRD.

The usual protocols of respect and timeous and appropriate levels of communication must be observed in respect of liaison with the district and local Kha Ri Gude staff. Contact and feedback must be as positive and complete as possible (and appropriate) without compromising the independence of the observation.

The site visitor should adopt a stance of non-intrusive curiosity about the working of the learning site and an affirmative approach to educators and learners.

Much will be learnt from conversations, with gentle, unobtrusive probing.

## **Procedure for the actual visit**

1. The visit may well start with a group encounter in which the educator and learners talk to the visitor about the experience of Kha Ri Gude. How did they come to participate in the programme? What do they think about it? Do they recommend it to friends? What difference has it made to their lives? What were the best things they learnt?
2. It is essential that any group discussion is then followed by individual interviews with learners. Conversation with the individual learners should yield a clear judgement of the genuineness of the activities and achievements of the learning site. In addition there should be a class list for the site.

3. Material required for the interviews includes a copy of the literacy and numeracy manuals, a copy of the learner's LAP, and some pre-prepared exercise sheets that are analogous to the ones the learners have completed in the LAP.

### **Some possible questions to the individual learner**

1. Gently request an identity check via the class list (which should have their ID number and or Kha Ri Gude number).
2. Ask if the programme is meeting their expectations so far – have they got as far as they wanted. Ask them to show you how far they have got in the manual so far and in their individual LAP.
3. Ask them to do a couple of exercises related to how far they have progressed in the manuals and LAP.
4. Depending on the degree of report, you may ask some additional questions such as:
  - a. Could you read anything before you started KRG? Please describe
  - b. Could you write anything before you started KRG? Please give examples
  - c. Could you count or calculate before you started KRG? Please describe
  - d. What were the most important things you learnt from KRG?
  - e. What can you do now that you couldn't do before?
  - f. What have you tried to read out of class?

### **Some possible questions to the educator**

1. What did you find most satisfying about running the programme?
2. Tell me about the learners who made the most rewarding progress? What factors do you think helped to make them successful?
3. Tell me about the more difficult challenges of work?
4. Do you think the learners are making independent progress in the LAPs or are they being helped too much by friends?

### **The exercises**

These should be in a format similar to those in the LAP or a LAP from a previous year.

Various exercises should, at the very least, check the capability expected for the particular stage in the programme. These would include:

1. Write their name, ID number and address.
2. Write the date and (approximate) time.
3. Write the names of two best friends.
4. Make a list of three things they need to buy at the shop.
5. Write a sentence to the Mayor about something good or something bad in your town or rural district.

## **Data management**

Site visitors must:

1. Remember that it is essential for us to be able to link each learner's test exercises and any relevant observations to the particular LAP. The learner's ID number is the key here. If the learner has forgotten her ID number, the facilitator should be able to provide this from the class list.
2. Keep the tests and any other documents relevant to the verification exercise in a clearly marked file with the site's name and number and the name of the educator and supervisor.
3. Write a brief report indicating your impression of the learning site in relation to the whole site visit.
4. Provide a score out of 10 for your estimate of the genuineness and integrity of the teaching, learning and assessment at the site. Be prepared to argue and defend this score.