



Guidelines for the alignment
of national quality policies (NQPs)
with the Africa Quality Policy (AQP)

TOWARDS FREE, FAIR AND SAFE TRADE IN AFRICA

Developed by Beer Budoo

The PAQI initiative is supported by

This document is available at www.paqi.org



Table of Contents

Acronyms.....	4
Definitions.....	4
Foreword.....	5
1. Purpose.....	6
2. Context	7
3. Concept of alignment in literature.....	7
4. Definition of alignment in the context of the AQP.....	7
5. Processes associated with NQP/AQP alignment.....	8
6. Objective of the NQP/AQP alignment.....	8
7. Levels of NQP/AQP alignment.....	9
7.1 Different contexts	9
7.2 Approaches to policy implementation	9
7.3 Level of alignment	10
8. Scope of NQP/AQP alignment	10
8.1 Structure.....	10
8.2 Policies	11
8.3 Extent of alignment	11
9. Next steps.....	11
ANNEX A – Concept of alignment in literature	12
ANNEX B – Guidelines for NQP alignment with the AQP	14

List of boxes

Box 1 – Illustration of difference between guidelines and guidance	6
Box 2 - Examples of combined top-down and bottom-up policies in metrology.....	9

Acronyms

AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
AFRAC	African Accreditation Cooperation
AFRIMETS	Intra-Africa Metrology System
AFSEC	African Electro-technical Standardisation Commission
AQP	Africa Quality Policy
ARSO	African Organisation for Standardisation
AU	African Union
BIPM	International Bureau of Weights and Measures
CA	Conformity assessment
EU	European Union
GRP	Good regulatory practice
IEC	International Electrotechnical Commission
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
MS	AU Member State
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
NAB	National accreditation body
NaTReF	National Technical Regulatory Framework
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NMI	National metrology institute
NQIS	National Quality Infrastructure System
NQP	National quality policy
NSB	National Standards Body
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OIML	International Organization of Legal Metrology
PAQI	Pan African Quality Infrastructure
PTB	Physikalisch Technische Bundesanstalt
QI	Quality Infrastructure
QP	Quality Policy
REC	Regional Economic Community
SI	International System of Units
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
STC-TTIM	Specialized Technical Committee for Trade, Tourism, Industry and Minerals
TBT	Technical Barriers to Trade
TR	Technical regulation
WTO	World Trade Organization

Definitions

For the purpose of this document, the definitions contained in the Africa Quality Policy (AQP) apply.

Foreword

These Guidelines are meant to provide guidance to AU Member States wishing to align their respective national quality polices (NQPs) with the Africa Quality Policy (AQP). The development of these guidelines is part of the preparatory work towards the full deployment of the AQP at the level of AU Member States (MSs).

At its 22nd meeting in February 2023, the Pan African Quality Infrastructure Joint Committee (PAQI JC), through Resolution 6.1, requested for the development of a checklist/guideline to assist with alignment of NQPs with the AQP.

The goal of alignment is to ensure that quality policies operate as an integrated system within the continent so as to achieve quality objectives.

A NQP is an instrument to develop and sustain an efficient and effective quality infrastructure (QI) system. It relies on a comprehensive approach, in consultation with all stakeholders, to target the right level of QI service needed by a country. This process is relatively new and even the definitions of QI and NQP were not agreed upon until around 2016.

By adopting the AQP, the continent has taken a huge innovative step forward. Aligning NQPs with the AQP poses an immediate challenge since there is no documented situation analysis as to the status on NQP development in Africa. Thus, the first step was to collect the information. A desk research was carried out in 2021 to assess all the NQPs which were publicly available on the Web. Seventeen were found and analysed. In order to seek information from a larger number of MSs, the results of the desk study were used to design a detailed online survey of NQPs to which all 55 AU Member States were invited to participate. Twenty-six countries participated.

Collecting information on NQPs was an important step but to achieve alignment of NQPs with the AQP, there is need to define what this process means and how it has to be conducted.

These Guidelines make use of the information compiled from the desk study and the online survey to describe the concept of alignment and offer a working definition for it. Examples of alignment practices from international organizations and from literature were used to define what the NQP/AQP alignment would entail.

1. Purpose

These Guidelines aim at defining the concept of alignment of NQPs with the AQP and describing what it means in practice when undertaking the process. The main purpose is to provide guidance as to how the policies contained in the AQP, which represent best practices, are transposed in NQPs.

For the purpose of this document, and in line with practices prevailing in some international organizations¹ as to the use of the terms “guidance” and “guidelines”, it is understood that guidelines mean recommendations and good practice statements which guide the choice among different interventions or measures to

achieve the best possible outcome. The primary purpose of guidelines is to support policy-makers to establish national policies and plans tailored to their local contexts. Guidance documents or guides, on the other hand, are “how to” documents such as implementation guides or tools to implement specific policies determined by guidelines.

The hypothetical example in Box 1 illustrates how these guidelines could help in transposing AQP policies in NQPs and in which area additional guidance may be required.

Box 1: Illustration of difference between guidelines and guidance

The AQP has a policy to ensure that all testing laboratories covering priority African exports are accredited by an internationally recognized accreditation body (AB). These guidelines recommend that, in order to be aligned with the AQP, NQPs for countries housing such laboratories should include policies about how such accreditation services are to be provided locally.

For countries having a national AB (NAB) that is internationally-recognized, it is straightforward to follow the guidelines and be aligned with the AQP.

But other countries not having a NAB need to choose among possible options such as creating a national accreditation body or using the services provided by a foreign national, regional or multi-economy accreditation body. Although such countries may choose a temporary solution that meet these guidelines, they might wish further guidance on a more permanent and cost-effective solution. It is not necessary that such specific guidance be developed under the AQP programme but this example illustrates the different roles of these guidelines and any further guidance on specific topics that AU Member States may need.

¹ - Guidance Document for the development of OECD Guidelines for the Testing of Chemicals, OECD, 2009
- Guidance Document on testing Nanomaterials using OECD Technical Guidelines No. 312 “LEACHING IN SOIL COLUMNS”, OECD, 2021
- Handbook for Guideline Development, 2nd edition, WHO, 2014

2. Context

The African Union Commission (AUC) and the Pan African Quality Infrastructure Joint Committee (PAQI JC) Secretariat developed the AQP in 2019. The AQP was adopted by the Specialized Technical Committee of Ministers of Trade, Tourism, Industry and Minerals (STC-TTIM) at its meeting on 3 September 2021 and endorsed by the African Union Summit in February 2022.

In its scope, the AQP gives policy directions for the operation of a continental-level quality infrastructure (QI) system, akin to what a NQP does in matter of policies governing national QI systems.

A quality policy means a policy adopted at a national or regional or continental level to develop and sustain an efficient and effective QI system.

The PAQI JC, through Resolution 6.1 at its 22nd meeting in February 2023, requested for the development of a guideline document to assist with alignment with NQPs with the AQP. Alignment is meant to ensure that quality policies operate as an integrated system within the continent.

The guidelines in this document have been developed also taking account of the findings from an online survey on NQPs conducted in 2022 in which all AU Member States were invited to participate. The survey was meant to give a snapshot of the current state of development and implementation of NQPs in Africa, thus providing valuable information as to the extent of alignment or misalignment with the AQP.

The findings of the survey are published in a separate document.

3. Concept of alignment in literature

Annex A provides some interesting examples about how some international organizations use the term alignment and the concept behind it.

The key points in the above examples regarding the process of policy alignment points to assembling policies not previously connected in such a way as to enable the policies to be implementable, resulting in solutions.

With regard to the purpose of these guidelines, it is noteworthy to point out that not only the AQP but also the NQPs aim at assembling a set of heterogeneous policies, institutions, regulations and best practices in a way never envisaged before in Africa. Moreover, this assemblage is expected to be driven, monitored and its performance measured through a collaborative system under the AQP involving all AU Member States. Hence, the need for a clear understanding of what alignment means by all and therefore a need for guidelines.

4. Definition of alignment in the context of the AQP

For the purpose of this document, a NQP is fully aligned with the AQP when

- the NQP document incorporates and addresses, from the national perspective, every policy focus area and the associated policy measures of the AQP, including coverage of funding, implementation and performance measurement arrangements as well as periodic review.

5. Processes associated with NQP/AQP alignment

The question of alignment and the processes associated with assessing the extent of alignment exist because there is very rarely de facto alignment even among established rules, policies or guidelines. Furthermore, when such rules, policies and guidelines do not exist at all, the first step taken whenever there is a need for alignment is to develop such references. Only after the reference is set, can an assessment be made as to the extent of alignment.

At least three steps are normally involved in the process of alignment as follows:

- a) Development of an agreed reference guideline document, with recommendations offering guidance as to how the AQP policies and associated policy measures can be *incorporated* in the NQP;
- b) Initial assessment of the NQP to verify to what extent the recommendations of the reference guideline document have been effectively *incorporated* therein; this assessment will result in a statement indicating whether the NQP is conceptually and structurally aligned with the AQP;
- c) Monitoring assessment to measure the extent to which the recommendations of the reference guideline document are effectively *implemented*; for this type of assessment, additional criteria would need to be developed but this is outside the scope of the present Guidelines which only caters for step (b) assessment.

This guideline document constitutes the completion of step (a). Step (b) can be carried out both as a continuous process while countries are developing their NQPs or when a country's existing NQP has to be reviewed to align it with the AQP.

Step (c), on the other hand, can only be carried out after the NQP has been implemented over a number of years. The results of monitoring assessments could primarily be for the consumption of the countries' themselves as a way to measure progress in their NQP implementation and also to measure the effective implementation of the national aspects of the AQP. The AQP Council would also have an interest in the monitoring assessment from the latter perspective.

6. Objective of the NQP/AQP alignment

Countries formulate their NQPs after assessing the current state of their QI systems and a detailed analysis of needs, for example using the World Bank/PTB Rapid Diagnostic Tool (RDT)². The objective is to identify gaps in the QI systems and take strategic and operational policy directions in these NQPs so as to fill the gaps.

Aligning the NQP with the AQP at step 5 (b) above means that all the relevant strategic and operational policies have been taken on board at the national level at the *conception* level. This does not produce an efficient and effective national QI system yet. To achieve an efficient and effective QI system, the aligned NQP has to be successfully implemented through step 5(c) above over the NQP life cycle, i.e. several years.

In other words, a NQP/AQP alignment produces a policy-level document at the country level but does not result in an efficient and effective national QI system recognized at the international level at the end of the alignment process.

However, a NQP aligned with the AQP does provide a roadmap for the country to move forward along the path set by the AQP.

² Comprehensive Diagnostic Tool (2019), International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank and Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt (PTB) available at <https://www.ptb.de/cms/en/ptb/fachabteilungen/abt9/gruppe-93/qi-toolkit.html>

7. Levels of NQP/AQP alignment

7.1 Different contexts

A NQP means a policy adopted at national level to develop and sustain an efficient and effective QI system. In view of different needs of countries, national QI systems (NQIS) are expected to be different from country to country, mainly due to the size and the critical mass of various QI services required. Nevertheless, whatever the size of the NQIS, the NQP must frame policies for it to comply with international requirements and best practices and, in this prospect, the NQP policies should mirror the policies embedded in the AQP.

The continental context covered by the policies of the AQP is quite different from the national contexts covered by the respective NQPs. While both the AQP and NQPs aim at the same objective of having a QI system that is internationally recognized, there is no physical operating QI system at the continental level. On the other hand, each NQP has to address policies covering operating and functioning national QI systems which cut across many ministries and agencies, regulators, the private sector, NGOs etc. It is therefore important to clearly understand what to align and the following sections will elaborate further on this.

7.2 Approaches to policy implementation

Quality policies, whether at the national, regional or continental level, are a mix of both top-down and bottom-up approaches. According to Matland³ in Lucie Cerna (2013)⁴, top-down theorists see policy designers as the central actors and concentrate their attention on factors that can be manipulated at the central level, while bottom-up theorists emphasise target groups and service deliverers, arguing that policy is made at the local level.

In the implementation of the AQP and its alignment with NQPs (which are under the sole responsibility of sovereign States), care has to be exercised to avoid the perception of both one-way top-down prescriptive advice (i.e. from the AQP perspective) and bottom-up over-emphasis on national autonomy in deciding policies (i.e. from the NQP perspective). A combined top-down and bottom-up approach is expected to draw on their main strengths by allowing a strong central policy direction (i.e. the AQP) to interact with national policy-makers and actors (i.e. through NQPs) to reach the common goal of achieving an effective and efficient QI system in Africa.

Box 2:

Examples of combined top-down and bottom-up policies in metrology

The AQP has policies to encourage Member States to establish/strengthen national metrology institutes (NMI) with the responsibility of acquiring and conserving national measurement standards capable of providing accurate and reliable measurements in the country and also to ensure that these national measurement standards are traceable to the International System of Units (SI). This is a top-down policy.

However, each country will have to decide for which basic units it wishes to maintain traceable measurement standards in light of its needs. Furthermore, it should determine whether it should seek traceability from a foreign non-African metrology laboratory or from neighbouring countries. Another aspect could also be to determine whether creation of private calibration laboratories should be encouraged and supported. These are bottom-up operational policies for which the AQP does not provide guidance.

3 Matland, R. (1995), 'Synthesising the implementation literature: the ambiguity-conflict model of policy implementation', *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 5(2): 145-174

4 The Nature of Policy Change and Implementation: A Review of Different Theoretical Approaches, Lucie Cerna, Analyst, OECD, 2013

8. Scope of NQP/AQP alignment

Another way of looking at the issue is to see top-down policies as strategic policies and bottom-up policies as operational policies. The type of combined approach which can be useful in NQP/AQP alignment is illustrated in Box 2 above. The top-down approaches to policy are determined by international requirements and best practices, e.g. the WTO TBT requirements, the AfCFTA requirements, or the OECD guidance on Good regulatory practices. The bottom-up approaches are, on the other hand, specific to the country and the QI sector under consideration.

7.3 Level of alignment

The alignment process of the NQP with the AQP is principally at the level of the top-down strategic policies, on which there should be no divergence in principle since international requirements and best practices have to be followed by everyone.

However, the alignment process for policies at the operational level needs deeper consideration from the country perspective because the AQP does not offer detailed policy guidance at that level in view of the fact that each country has different needs. Once the NQP strategic policies are aligned with those of the AQP, the NQP has to go one step further in articulating, for each strategic policy thus aligned, one or more operational policies that will achieve the objective of creating an efficient and effective national QI system. As the example in Box 2 illustrates, the operational policy of deciding how metrology services are set up in the country is not a policy that can be aligned with the AQP since the latter does not go to that level of detail.

Alignment may be both in terms of the form (i.e. structure) and substance (substantive policy directions).

8.1 Structure

As to the form, there is a need to align the structure of the NQPs to that of the AQP. Structure refers to the logical way information in a document is organized; it defines the hierarchy of information and the relation between different parts of the document. A good, logical structure is essential for general readability and clarity of the intent exposed in the document. Alignment of structure is not only important to compare NQPs among themselves and with the AQP, but the content should be clear enough to allow any reader to clearly understand. Information on the current state of the national QI system, the objectives pursued, the gaps identified and the policies/tools that need to be implemented to close the gaps should be presented in a logical manner. Without a proper structure, it can be a problem to communicate to and mobilize all actors involved in the NQP deployment. If the NQP is not clear enough, policy-makers who are meant to allocate national resources for NQP implementation will be hard to convince.

It is not recommended that AU Member States review their NQPs merely for aligning the structure. However, when they are reviewing the policy content of their NQPs, they should consider aligning the structure as well if necessary.

9. Next steps

8.2 Policies

The scope of the NQP/AQP alignment is to ensure that all policy focus areas and other aspects of the AQP are incorporated in the NQP. These policy focus areas cover strategic policies.

The NQP must address each strategic policy thus aligned in such a manner as to produce an operational policy relevant to the country specifically. Where there are several options to choose from for such an operational policy, the NQP should indicate the basis for the choice or if a choice cannot be made immediately, then the process to be adopted to reach a decision should be described.

NQP/AQP alignment *does not mean* alignment of QI systems. Firstly, the AQP is not really used to develop and sustain an efficient and effective QI system because there is no continental-level body which operates a QI system at continental level. So, there is no sense in aligning the national QI system with a continental-level QI system that does not exist. However, during the alignment process the current national QI system should be assessed, not for the purpose of alignment as mentioned, but to identify gaps that will need to be addressed in the NQP. The state of national QI systems can be assessed using the WB/PTB toolkit mentioned in section 6 above.

8.3 Extent of alignment

Annex B lists around 130 guidelines offering guidance as to how to address each aspect of the AQP in the NQP. A simple qualitative scoring system is proposed to determine the extent of alignment. The table in Annex B is also available as a separate tool to conduct assessment and scoring.

Several countries have taken the initiative to secure technical assistance from development partners to either develop new NQPs or align their existing NQPs with the AQP. This is a welcome development building up from the approval of the AQP.

It is hoped that these guidelines on the process of NQP/AQP alignment will help countries to undertake that exercise, either by themselves or with the support of technical assistance partners.

These guidelines, as indicated above, are expected to cover initial assessment of the extent to which AQP policies have been incorporated in the NQPs. This level of alignment is relevant for immediate implementation by AU Member States.

As for measuring, through monitoring assessments, the extent to which the incorporated policies are effectively implemented, this will need a separate set of criteria. In terms of timeline, this type of assessment is best carried out a few years after the NQP implementation has been in operation and is therefore not of immediate interest in the context of the AQP implementation.

ANNEX A – Concept of alignment in literature

A.1. Introduction

The term alignment itself does not have one meaning in literature. For the purpose of these guidelines and to ensure that the process of alignment of NQPs with the AQP is understood in a similar manner by all parties, a definition is proposed in section 4 of the guidelines. The definition builds on the various elements purporting to alignment as they are understood in relevant literature as described in the subsections below.

A.2. Alignment under the WTO TBT Agreement

The World Trade Organization Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (WTO TBT Agreement) obliges governments to use international standards as a basis for regulation, yet leaves a degree of flexibility with respect to the choice of standard, and the manner of its use. International standards are used by the Agreement as a means of promoting international harmonization of technical regulations, conformity assessment procedures, and national standards; in other words, international standards can help promote greater regulatory alignment on a global scale⁵.

The concept of regulatory alignment is used solely by the WTO and is concerned about not only the proper use of international standards in technical regulations but the need for international standardizing bodies to strive for better international standards governance.

A.3. Alignment as referred to in some OECD papers

A.3.1. OECD paper titled “International Trade and Circular Economy – Policy Alignment”⁶”

In the above paper, Shunta Yamaguchi explores how to make circular economy policies and trade policies mutually supportive by mapping out potential misalignments and identifying opportunities to align and strengthen both policy areas. While the publication does not offer a formal definition of what alignment entails, it does point out that to make circular economy policies and trade policies mutually supportive, i.e. better aligned, some actions can be pursued at the national level while others require international co-operation. At the national level, policy makers could, for example, act on circular economy related standards, such as those related to material content, material quality and product quality. At the international level, circular economy related standards that appear to be critical for a circular economy transition could, for example, be considered for harmonisation or mutual recognition of conformity assessment procedures.

A.3.2. Methodology for the Alignment Assessment of Industry Programmes with the OECD Minerals Guidance

In 2016, as part of the implementation of the “OECD Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains of Minerals from Conflict-Affected and High-Risk Areas”, the OECD launched a project to develop and pilot test an assessment methodology for evaluating the extent to which industry programmes align with the detailed recommendations of the Guidance. In 2018, the OECD published the “Methodology for the Alignment Assessment of Industry Programmes with the OECD Minerals Guidance” and used this methodology to assess alignment of industry programmes with the OECD guidance.

5 International Standards and the WTO TBT Agreement: Improving Governance for Regulatory Alignment, Erik Wijkström and Devin McDaniels, WTO

6 International trade and circular economy - Policy alignment; Shunta Yamaguchi, OECD Trade and Environment Working Papers 2021/02 (<https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/ae4a2176-en>)

This methodology document provides:

- The criteria (97 criteria in all) against which the Alignment Assessment should be made.
- The process that should be followed to obtain all information necessary to evaluate a programme against those criteria.
- The methodology for determining whether the criteria are met, supported by an Assessment Tool.

This OECD publication *defined* alignment as “the extent to which a programme specifies and oversees implementation of measures that require companies to put into practice the recommendations contained within the OECD Guidance”.

The OECD Alignment Assessment methodology has been enshrined into EU law as regards the methodology and criteria for the assessment and recognition of supply chain due diligence schemes.

A.4. Policy alignment in literature

Savage and O’Connor (2018)⁷ consider alignment as processes of policy assemblage to solve apparent policy problems. This necessitates linking heterogeneous component parts that were previously not connected. Citing Miller and Rose (2008)⁸, the authors argue that alignment of policies and processes at the national level requires alignments of both the political rationalities and technologies of governance (i.e. the techniques, instruments, mechanisms, data infrastructures, laws and other processes) through which policy and governance processes are made technical.

The key points in the above paper regarding the process of policy alignment points to assembling policies not previously connected in such a way as to enable the policies to be implementable, resulting in solutions.

Not only the AQP but also the NQPs aim at assembling a set of heterogeneous policies, institutions, regulations and best practices in a way never envisaged before. Moreover, this assemblage is expected to be driven, monitored and its performance measured through a collaborative system under the AQP involving all AU Member States. Hence, the need for a clear understanding of what alignment means by all and therefore a need for guidelines.

7 What’s the problem with ‘policy alignment’? The complexities of national reform in Australia’s federal system (Glenn C. Savage and Kate O’Connor), JOURNAL OF EDUCATION POLICY, 2018 <https://doi.org/10.1080/02680939.2018.1545050>

8 Miller, P., and N. Rose. 2008. *Governing the Present: Administering Economic, Social and Personal Life*. Cambridge: Polity Press

ANNEX B – Guidelines for NQP alignment with the AQP

Alignment of NQPs with the AQP		
AQP chapter reference	AQP aspects relevant to national perspective	Score Extent of incorporation of guidelines in the NQP (Yes=1, No=0)
1	Introduction and context-setting	
1.1, 1.2	Drivers for AQP, e.g. high-level policies, strategies, programmes and national, sub-regional, regional, continental and international contexts, identified and described.	The NQP should identify drivers for the policy and describe the linkages.
1.3	Why an effective QI is needed for Africa?	The NQP should describe why a strong QI is needed for the country and reference to sub-regional or regional QPs, as well as to the AQP; should be included wherever applicable.
1.4	Why is there a need for AQP?	The NQP should provide a summary description of the existing QI set-up showing why a strong NQP is necessary for the country to address any gap.
2	Scope of quality policy	
	Drives national, regional and continental QI systems with the aim of alignment.	The NQP should <ul style="list-style-type: none"> describe the link to national, regional and continental QI systems; indicate that the NQP scope covers all sectors' needs although these may be prioritized.
3	Balancing resources	
	The policy focus and policy measures to consolidate and strengthen the continental QI should be based on priorities determined by the AQP Governance, i.e. the Specialized Technical Committee on Trade, Tourism, Industry and Minerals.	The NQP should describe the choice of national priority sectors and indicate commitment to support continent-level priority sectors/products.
4	Guiding principles	
	List of guiding principles and how they are applied.	The NQP should include at least all AQP guiding principles and show how they apply.

Alignment of NQPs with the AQP			
AQP chapter reference	AQP aspects relevant to national perspective	Guidelines to address relevant AQP aspects in the NQP	Score Extent of incorporation of guidelines in the NQP (Yes=1, No=0)
5	Policy options AQP based on selection of option 2, out of 3 options.	The NQP should describe the analysis of policy options and a statement on the chosen policy direction.	
6	Vision All Africa's goods and services comply with relevant standards and technical regulations and are competitive on regional and international markets.	The NQP vision should aim at compliance with relevant standards and technical regulations as well as competitiveness but could include other national aspects important for the country.	
7	Overall objective To contribute to poverty reduction and economic prosperity by realizing an effective African Quality Infrastructure (QI) capable of raising the quality of goods and services, thus increasing Africa's export-led growth and leading to industrial expansion and diversification in line with the African Agenda 2063, the AfCFTA and boosting Intra-African trade (BIAT).	AQP overall objective comprehensive enough to apply to NQP in whole but other important national aspects may be included.	
8	Specific objectives		
8.1	To assist Africa's enterprises in becoming globally more competitive, including better integration into regional and international value chains, through enhanced trade facilitation and sustainable industrialization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NQP may have the same or a different number of specific objectives which could include similar contents adapted to the national situation. The NQP may also include any other specific objective of interest to the country. 	
8.2	To assure that the continental QI is aligned to and compliant with international best practices, regional requirements and international agreements to which AU Member States are party.		

Alignment of NQPs with the AQP		
AQP chapter reference	AQP aspects relevant to national perspective	Score Extent of incorporation of guidelines in the NQP (Yes=1, No=0)
8.3	To assure that the technical regulatory framework complies with the requirements of the AfCFTA and the WTO TBT Agreement through the application of good regulatory practices.	<p>Guidelines to address relevant AQP aspects in the NQP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NQP may have the same or a different number of specific objectives which could include similar contents adapted to the national situation. • The NQP may also include any other specific objective of interest to the country.
8.4	To provide for arrangements for the mutual acceptance of conformity assessment procedures among Member States in the areas of inspection, certification, testing and calibration.	
8.5	To promote trading of compliant products on the African market by ensuring that goods comply with agreed national, regional and international standards.	
8.6	To support the use of standards for sustainable development in all spheres of socio-economic activity, especially the MSMEs, aimed at achieving an efficient economy within Member States, better social, environmental and consumer protection, and an enhanced quality of life for citizens.	
8.7	To promote the involvement and support of the private sector, non-governmental organizations and other civil society organizations in formulating and implementing the AQP as well as fulfilling certain functions of the QI, for example, providing conformity assessment or consultancy services.	
8.8	To support the establishment of African centres of excellence so as to promote research and innovation and support the QI in the areas of conformity assessment.	

Alignment of NQPs with the AQP			
AQP chapter reference	AQP aspects relevant to national perspective	Guidelines to address relevant AQP aspects in the NQP	Score Extent of incorporation of guidelines in the NQP (Yes=1, No=0)
Not covered in AQP (see notes)	Review of the current QI system		
	NOTE: Not covered in the AQP as not relevant, since the AQP is not formulated to create and sustain an effective and efficient QI system at continental level.	NOTE: The NQP chapter concerning the review of the current QI system is a critical step and needs to be carefully done since it is from the findings of this exercise that gaps will be identified and addressed in the NQP.	
		The NQP should describe <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the legal and institutional framework under which the QI operates; the way QI institutions are organized (e.g. whether several of the QI elements like standardization, metrology, conformity assessment are housed under the same institution) and the safeguards used to avoid potential for conflicts of interest. 	
		The NQP should describe the current operational system for each of the 7 elements of the QI.	
		The NQP should describe the gaps between the existing situation and perceived needs in QI services, including gaps in technical services but also gaps in the legal framework.	
		The NQP should describe the status of compliance of the QI with WTO TBT requirements, regional and international requirements/guidelines as applicable, in particular the AfCFTA Agreement.	
		The NQP should describe the status of convergence of the QI with REC quality policies, as applicable as well as with the AQP.	

Alignment of NQPs with the AQP			
AQP chapter reference	AQP aspects relevant to national perspective	Guidelines to address relevant AQP aspects in the NQP	Score Extent of incorporation of guidelines in the NQP (Yes=1, No=0)
9	Policy focus and policy measures for QI elements		
9.1	Setting and implementing the NQP		
9.1.1	Policy context	<p>The NQP should describe the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how the country wishes to address any gap or overlap in the functions of the QI bodies observed during the initial assessment of the QI system prior to the development of the NQP; • state if any short-term plan is envisaged to strengthen the legal framework to address any gap or overlap identified under the previous bullet point; • the consultative process to be adopted for any review/revision and strengthening of the legal framework. 	
9.1.2	Consulting with Member States and RECs, and through them the relevant stakeholders, on the content and orientation of the AQP during its formulation, its implementation and its periodic review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NQP should confirm the roles of stakeholders at all levels of the national QI system, including formal consultation during development of the NQP; • In line with the policy of engaging stakeholders, the NQP should describe the complementary roles that stakeholders can play in the deployment of NQP activities and in providing feedback on progress and performance at field level. 	
9.1.2	Strengthening of regional PAQI institutions (ARSO, AFRAC, AFRIMETS, AFSEC) and supporting their operational linkages with relevant international organizations to ensure that the continental QI is recognized internationally.	The NQP should indicate a commitment to participate in the work of PAQI institutions.	

Alignment of NQPs with the AQP			
AQP chapter reference	AQP aspects relevant to national perspective	Guidelines to address relevant AQP aspects in the NQP	Score Extent of incorporation of guidelines in the NQP (Yes=1, No=0)
9.1.2	Strengthening regional services (e.g. reference testing and/or calibration laboratories, regional certification or inspection schemes, proficiency testing providers, etc.).	The NQP should indicate whether the country is likely to take advantage of regional QI services when these are available and if yes, to frame a policy for that.	
9.1.2	Encouraging and supporting the private sector to invest in conformity assessment services, such as testing, calibration, inspection and certification to ensure that the combined efforts of the public sector and the private sector continually satisfy the needs of the continent.	The NQP should indicate the role of the private sector in supplying QI services.	
9.1.2	Exercising oversight on continental QI functions to ensure their continual effectiveness, relevance and efficiency.	The NQP should state the policy with regard to how the country wishes to exercise oversight in addressing any gap or overlap in the functions of the QI bodies observed during the initial assessment of the QI system when the NQP was developed.	
9.1.2	Encouraging and supporting Member States and RECs to ensure that their QI institutions closely cooperate with and participate in the work of relevant continental and international organizations (e.g. ARSO, AFRAC, AFRIMETS, AFSEC, ISO, IEC, OIML, IAF, ILAC, CIPM, BIPM, etc.).	The NQP should have a policy on selecting international organizations in whose work the country will participate and provide funding for that.	
9.1.2	Monitoring the African business environment with a view to its responsiveness to changing international requirements related to QI matters and taking pre-emptive measures, in collaboration with Member States and RECs, to assure continued compliance.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate participation of stakeholders in governance councils or boards of public QI bodies.	

Alignment of NQPs with the AQP			
AQP chapter reference	AQP aspects relevant to national perspective	Guidelines to address relevant AQP aspects in the NQP	Score Extent of incorporation of guidelines in the NQP (Yes=1, No=0)
9.1.3	Seeking external funding opportunities to strengthen the RECs' QI functions and PAQI institutions taking care not to duplicate resources.	Not directly applicable for NQP.	
9.1.3	Requesting MSs to appoint one or more technical personnel within their key ministry responsible for QI matters to coordinate national activities with regard to the implementation of the AQP.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate formal arrangements at the national level to implement the provisions of the AQP and REC quality policies as applicable.	
9.1.3	Strengthening human resource capacity in standardization, technical regulations, conformity assessment, accreditation and metrology.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate capacity-building intentions for QI professionals, both in the public and private sectors.	
9.1.3	Designating and empowering an entity within the AUC to supervise, on behalf of the AU and in collaboration with Member States, RECs, PAQI institutions and stakeholders, the implementation of the AQP and monitoring of associated performance indicators.	The NQP should have policy to indicate how QI matters are coordinated nationally, e.g. if there is one central entity/institution responsible for such matters, responsible for coordinating policies with all national QI institutions.	
9.1.3	Establishing clear targets and timelines for implementing the AQP.	The NQP should indicate steps to develop implementation plans and timelines.	
9.1.3	Continually assessing the evolving continental needs in each of the 7 QI elements, identifying areas where there are gaps and implementing additional policy measures to bridge the gaps.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate the frequency of NQP review.	

Alignment of NQPs with the AQP			
AQP chapter reference	AQP aspects relevant to national perspective	Guidelines to address relevant AQP aspects in the NQP	Score Extent of incorporation of guidelines in the NQP (Yes=1, No=0)
9.2	Standardization		
9.2.1	Policy context.	<p>The NQP should describe the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • commitment to cooperate in the area of standardization under the AfCFTA Agreement and under the REC TBT programmes. • how standardization activities are carried out in the country and whether a NSB exists; • if a NSB exists, its institutional set-up as to whether it is a public, private or para-public organization; the legal framework under which it operates; its governance structure and composition; • the policies regarding declaration of compulsory standards and their enforcement; • proportion of the total number of national standards which are declared as compulsory standards; • percentage of NSB revenue through enforcement of compulsory standards compared with the total revenue of the NSB; • proportion of the total number of national standards which are referenced in regulations. 	
9.2.2	Encourage Member States to establish national standards bodies.	<p>The NQP should have a policy to indicate plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to establish a NSB if one does not exist. If there is a NSB already, the NQP should re-confirm its role and importance; • to ensure that the NSB has the necessary means (financial, human and material resources) to operate effectively. 	

Alignment of NQPs with the AQP			
AQP chapter reference	AQP aspects relevant to national perspective	Guidelines to address relevant AQP aspects in the NQP	Score Extent of incorporation of guidelines in the NQP (Yes=1, No=0)
9.2.2	Ensure that standards harmonization work at the level of ARSO and AFSEC is always carried out based on priority needs.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate the process for replacing any national standard by an ARSO or AFCEC harmonized standard when such a harmonized standard is developed.	
9.2.2	Strengthen the active participation of Member States' national standards bodies in the development of regional and international standards particularly in those sectors that are crucial for intra-African and international trade.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate how it chooses to seek and maintain membership in international and regional standards organizations as well as to participate in the standards development work of these organizations.	
9.2.2	Encourage Member States and RECs to ensure that their standardizing bodies accept and follow the Code of Good Practice for the Preparation, Adoption and Application of Standards as provided in Annex 3 of WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate acceptance and implementation of the Code of Good Practice for the Preparation, Adoption and Application of Standards as provided in Annex 3 of WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade and to notify the WTO.	
9.2.2	Support ARSO and AFSEC with the means to ensure that they comply with the Code of Good Practice for the Preparation, Adoption and Application of Standards as provided in Annex 3 of WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade as well as follow the 6 principles[1] of transparency, openness, impartiality and consensus, relevance and effectiveness, coherence and consideration of developing country interests when developing Harmonized African Standards requested by the AUC.	Not directly applicable for NQP.	

Alignment of NQPs with the AQP			
AQP chapter reference	AQP aspects relevant to national perspective	Guidelines to address relevant AQP aspects in the NQP	Score Extent of incorporation of guidelines in the NQP (Yes=1, No=0)
9.2.2	Support ARSO and AFSEC to maintain the relevant level of membership or liaison in international standards organizations such as ISO and IEC respectively, and as far as possible participate in the international standards development work of these organizations, either directly or through Member States' NSBs.	If the country's NSB participates in the standards development work of international standards organizations, the NQP should have a policy to indicate how the NSB could voice ARSO's or AFSEC's positions at the level of these international organizations.	
9.2.2	Promote the linkages between research and innovation with African standardisation work.	Not directly applicable for NQP.	
9.2.3	Assess the needs for harmonized African standards, establish priorities and request ARSO and AFSEC as needed to prepare such African standards within given deadlines.	Not directly applicable for NQP.	
9.2.3	Ensure compliance with the Code of Good Practice for the Preparation, Adoption and Application of Standards according to Annex 3 of the WTO/TBT Agreement in all standardization work undertaken under this Policy.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate how the NSB ensures compliance with the WTO/TBT standards code, e.g. through a written procedure or inclusion of provisions within a Standards Manual.	
9.2.3	Establish and implement a plan for capacity-building of ARSO/AFSEC staff and technical committee members on good standardization practices (GSPs).	The NQP should have a policy to indicate the strategy for training of NSB staff and technical committee members in applying GSP.	
9.2.3	Establish and implement a methodology for prioritizing standards development, through wide consultation among stakeholders, academia and research organizations as well as technical experts.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate participation of stakeholders in the development of periodic standardization programmes of work.	

Alignment of NQPs with the AQP			
AQP chapter reference	AQP aspects relevant to national perspective	Guidelines to address relevant AQP aspects in the NQP	Score Extent of incorporation of guidelines in the NQP (Yes=1, No=0)
9.2.3	Ensure that standards will be developed only if they have a market relevance and are suitable as a technical solution.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> whether the NSB has/intends to have a monitoring mechanism for the use/implementation of standards by stakeholders; the criteria to declare national standards as compulsory, if applicable; the monitoring of the impact of national standards referenced in technical regulations; role of the NSB in enforcing compulsory standards, if applicable. 	
9.2.3	Ensure that ARSO and AFSEC liaise with the AfCFTA Sub-committee on Technical Barriers to Trade to facilitate AfCFTA standards harmonisation needs in terms of the AfCFTA Agreement's Protocol on Trade in Goods Annex 6 on Technical Barriers to Trade.	Not directly applicable for NQP.	
9.2.3	Ensure that the programme of work relating to standards under development is published at least once every six months in accordance with the requirements of the WTO TBT Agreement.	The NQP should have a policy to publish its periodic standardization programmes of work, taking into account that such information may be continually made available through the NSB website.	
9.2.3	Conduct awareness seminars to disseminate information about the benefit of standards to various target groups, including both the public and the private sector.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate plans for awareness-raising in standardization and the target groups which are identified.	

Alignment of NQPs with the AQP			
AQP chapter reference	AQP aspects relevant to national perspective	Guidelines to address relevant AQP aspects in the NQP	Score Extent of incorporation of guidelines in the NQP (Yes=1, No=0)
9.3	Setting and implementing a National Technical Regulatory Framework (NaTReF)		
9.3.1	Policy context.	<p>The NQP should describe the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • commitment to cooperate in matter of technical regulations under the AfCFTA Annex 6; • how national coordination among regulators is to be implemented to ensure that (i) regulators are trained on NaTReF policies and GRP use, (ii) new technical regulations are developed in accordance with NaTReF policies on use of GRP, (iii) there is no duplication of regulatory control among the regulators, and (iv) there is exchange of experience in regulatory practices; • commitment to review, together with the designated regulatory authorities, the technical regulations currently on the statute books to ensure that they comply with the NaTReF principles of effectiveness and efficiency, transparency and accountability, proportionality and consistency. 	
9.3.2	Request Member States to establish a national technical regulatory framework (NaTReF) with a view to applying a set of mechanisms and related principles of GRP recommended by the WTO TBT Committee.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate whether it is envisaged to establish a new or consolidate the existing national technical regulatory framework (NaTReF).	

Alignment of NQPs with the AQP			
AQP chapter reference	AQP aspects relevant to national perspective	Guidelines to address relevant AQP aspects in the NQP	Score Extent of incorporation of guidelines in the NQP (Yes=1, No=0)
9.3.2	Encourage RECs to align NaTReFs with any REC-level technical regulatory framework with a view to assuring regulatory coherence and regulatory harmonization aimed at minimizing TBIs. close collaboration will be maintained in this process with the AfCFTA Sub-Committees on NTBs and TBIs established under the AfCFTA Annexes 5 and 6 respectively, as well as with REC NTB Coordination Units.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate how the country implements cooperation in technical regulations under the REC TBT programme as appropriate.	
9.3.2	Encourage Member States and RECs to use international standards and ARSO African Harmonized Standards as relevant as basis for technical regulations.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate how relevant international standards and ARSO & AFSEC African Harmonized Standards are used as basis for technical regulations.	
9.3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage Member States and RECs to be linked and to share information and data on counterfeit and sub-standard goods in their markets; Establish a continental early warning system to enhance the effectiveness of market surveillance systems operating at Member State or REC levels with a view to alerting all African countries when imports of sub-standard or dangerous goods on African soil are encountered; Facilitate the sharing of information, through the AU Trade Observatory, on findings of national market surveillance authorities on dangerous goods. 	<p>The NQP should have a policy to indicate a commitment to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> regulatory cooperation with other AU Member States and RECs and for sharing of data on counterfeit, substandard and dangerous goods; participate in any early warning system set up at continental level; sharing the results of market surveillance with other AU and REC members; properly resource market surveillance activities for these to be effective. 	

Alignment of NQPs with the AQP			
AQP chapter reference	AQP aspects relevant to national perspective	Guidelines to address relevant AQP aspects in the NQP	Score Extent of incorporation of guidelines in the NQP (Yes=1, No=0)
9.3.3	Set up a committee composed of REC representatives, PAQI institutions and the African Union Commission – Department of Trade and Industry (AUC DTI) to develop guidance on setting up a national technical regulatory framework (NaTReF) at the level of Member States. the Committee should ensure that the NaTReF is based on features of high-quality regulation such as effectiveness and efficiency. transparency and accountability. proportionality and consistency.	Not directly applicable for NQP.	
9.3.3	Work with RECs to organize awareness and training programmes for national regulators on the NaTReF guidance document to help them understand and apply GRP, RIA and other tools/principles.	The NQP should describe the policy for following the recommendations of the WTO TBT Committee in applying the principles of good regulatory practice (GRP) when preparing, adopting or applying technical regulations so as not to create unnecessary obstacles to international trade.	
9.3.3	Develop guidance on referencing international standards or African Harmonized Standards in technical regulations with a view to train regulators on referencing only the essential requirements of a standard necessary to meet the desired objectives of the technical regulation.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate a commitment to train national regulators on referencing of international standards in TRs.	

Alignment of NQPs with the AQP			
AQP chapter reference	AQP aspects relevant to national perspective	Guidelines to address relevant AQP aspects in the NQP	Score Extent of incorporation of guidelines in the NQP (Yes=1, No=0)
9.4	Conformity assessment (CA)		
9.4.1	Policy context.	<p>The NQP should describe the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • commitment to cooperate in CA under the AfCFTA Annex 6; • whether conformity assessment systems, which include the rules, procedures and management for carrying out conformity assessment, are properly documented and publicly available, constituting the basis for mutual recognition of CA among Au Member States. 	
9.4.2	Encourage Member States and RECs to ensure that they use conformity assessment procedures that comply with WTO/TBT requirements; in particular the use of relevant guides or recommendations issued by international standardizing bodies as a basis for conformity assessment procedures.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate that CA procedures used comply with WTO/TBT Agreement, in particular the use of relevant guides or recommendations issued by international standardizing bodies as a basis for conformity assessment procedures.	
9.4.2	Encourage Member States and RECs to accept, as far as possible, only accredited conformity assessment results to demonstrate compliance with standards and technical regulations in order to minimize risks. where this is not possible, results from CABs participating in recognized inter-comparisons and proficiency testing schemes may be temporarily accepted.	<p>The NQP should have a policy to indicate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • commitment to accept, as far as possible, only accredited CA results to demonstrate compliance with standards and technical regulations; • commitment to use only accredited CA results (i.e. test reports, inspection reports, certifications), where these are needed, to develop national public policy and technical regulations. 	
9.4.2	Encourage Member States and RECs to accept all accredited conformity assessment results or to support voluntary mutual recognition arrangements (MRAs) between conformity assessment bodies.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate the intent to support any voluntary MRA between CABs.	

Alignment of NQPs with the AQP

AQP chapter reference	AQP aspects relevant to national perspective	Guidelines to address relevant AQP aspects in the NQP	Score Extent of incorporation of guidelines in the NQP (Yes=1, No=0)
9.4.2	Encourage Member States and RECs to support regional optimization of conformity assessment services, for example by strengthening existing strong laboratories to build critical incremental capacity in testing and act as regional reference laboratories.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate whether the country wishes to propose any strong national testing or calibration laboratory for strengthening in view of its potential role as regional reference laboratory within a given REC. • Note - If such a policy is taken, then an additional policy should be included in the NQP regarding the commitment to make the services of the potential regional reference laboratory available on equitable basis to all Member States of the REC.	
9.4.2	Welcome and support initiatives by CABs to regroup as professional associations or a forum to reflect on the state of CA in Africa and to advise the AU on policies to strengthen this sector.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate any support to CABs to regroup as professional associations and a commitment to consider them as stakeholders for NQP implementation.	
9.4.2	Promote and support the establishment of centres of excellence that can be used as reference points for testing and calibration to support industrial development and trade.	Not directly applicable for NQP.	
9.4.2	Support programmes at the level of Member States and RECs to address the special needs of MSMEs for conformity assessment services, e.g. for handicraft products.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate commitment to establish support programmes to address the special needs of Micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) for CA services.	
9.4.2	Encourage Member States and RECs to create the necessary business environment to enlist the support of the private sector in providing conformity assessment services, if necessary through public-private-partnerships.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate commitment to create the necessary business environment to enlist the support of the private sector in providing CA services.	

Alignment of NQPs with the AQP			
AQP chapter reference	AQP aspects relevant to national perspective	Guidelines to address relevant AQP aspects in the NQP	Score Extent of incorporation of guidelines in the NQP (Yes=1, No=0)
9.4.3	Undertake a survey of CABs in Africa, with the help of Member States and RECs, with a view to constitute a continental database for use by producers, traders, regulators etc. to quickly identify appropriate CABs for their needs. regular updating of the database can also be used to measure progress in the expansion of CA services on the continent.	Not directly applicable for NQP.	
9.4.3	Prepare a framework agreement on Mutual Recognition Arrangements(MRAs) under which Member States and RECs can establish MRAs.	Not directly applicable for NQP.	
9.4.3	Assess conformity assessment capabilities both in the public sector as well as in the private sector for continental priority sectors in view of addressing any gaps in needed capabilities by strengthening CA service providers through PAQI institutions and RECs as relevant.	Commitment to assess CA needs of the country, survey available CA services capacity and take steps to fill any gap identified.	
9.4.3	Create the condition under which test laboratories in Member States will have access to regular proficiency testing.	Measures to encourage or facilitate testing laboratories to access proficiency testing services.	
9.4.3	Undertake to assess whether CABs operating in the priority sectors for Africa have access to accreditation services to cover their scopes of conformity assessment and if needed the capabilities of relevant national or multi-economy African accreditation bodies will be extended to cover the needs of CABs.	Commitment to ensure that conformity assessment bodies (CABs) have access to accreditation services to cover their scopes of conformity assessment.	

Alignment of NQPs with the AQP			
AQP chapter reference	AQP aspects relevant to national perspective	Guidelines to address relevant AQP aspects in the NQP	Score Extent of incorporation of guidelines in the NQP (Yes=1, No=0)
9.4.3	Enlist the support of ARSO Conformity Assessment Committee (CACO) to identify the need for and develop guidance documents on conformity assessment in the African context, including an African quality mark.	Not directly applicable for NQP	
9.5	Accreditation		
9.5.1	Policy context.	The NQP should describe the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • commitment to cooperate in accreditation under the AfCFTA Annex 6; • the approach envisaged for assessing national accreditation needs, considering options for providing accreditation services and deciding how these are to be made available nationally. 	
9.5.2	Encourage Member States and RECs to arrange for the provision of accreditation services to their CABs. This can be done either through the creation of ABs at the national level, or through regional or multi-economy ABs.	If the creation of a national accreditation body (NAB) is not chosen as the preferred option, the NQP should have a policy to decide whether the country will preferably use the services of a national, regional or multi-economy accreditation body from Africa, provided it is internationally recognized.	
9.5.2	Strengthen AFRAC to extend its MRA scopes to cover other African needs, e.g. in proficiency testing.	Not directly applicable for NQP.	
9.5.2	Support regional and multi-economy ABs in Africa to achieve international recognition as soon as possible by becoming signatory members of AFRAC .	Not directly applicable for NQP.	

Alignment of NQPs with the AQP		
AQP chapter reference	AQP aspects relevant to national perspective	Score Extent of incorporation of guidelines in the NQP (Yes=1, No=0)
9.5.2	Encourage Member States to preferably use the services of national or multi-economy internationally recognized accreditation bodies from Africa.	Where the country does not have a NAB, the NQP should have a policy to designate a national accreditation focal point with proper resources to ensure that the accreditation needs of the country are met by the foreign accreditation services provider.
9.5.2	Request Member States to recognize and accept results of conformity assessment from CABs accredited by any national or multi-economy internationally recognized accreditation bodies.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate a commitment to recognize and accept results of conformity assessment from CABs accredited by any national, regional or multi-economy accreditation body from Africa, provided it is internationally recognized.
9.5.3	Undertake a survey of accreditation needs in Africa in priority sectors with the help of AFRAC.	Not directly applicable for NQP.
9.5.3	Mobilize resources to strengthen national or multi-economy accreditation bodies from Africa in light of needs identified above, for example to extend their scopes of accreditation when these are needed by African producers in priority areas for the continent.	Where the country has a NAB, the NQP should have a policy to indicate a whether it commits the NAB to be strengthened under the AQP resources and subsequently to provide accreditation services in priority sectors for the continent.
9.5.3	Support Member States and RECs to disseminate awareness and information on accreditation and conformity assessment to various target groups.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate plans for awareness-raising and training activities for various target groups, including assessors and auditors.
9.5.3	Support RECs to establish and implement plans for capacity-building to constitute/expand regional pool of technical assessors, auditors and experts for use by national and multi-economy ABs when providing accreditation services across Africa.	Where the country has a national accreditation body (NAB), the NQP should have a policy to commit to build its capacity to deliver accreditation for the scopes that are needed by conformity assessment bodies in the country.

Alignment of NQPs with the AQP			
AQP chapter reference	AQP aspects relevant to national perspective	Guidelines to address relevant AQP aspects in the NQP	Score Extent of incorporation of guidelines in the NQP (Yes=1, No=0)
9.5.3	Ensure that AFRAC liaises with the AfCFTA Sub-committee on Technical Barriers to Trade to facilitate AfCFTA accreditation needs in terms of the AfCFTA Agreement's Protocol on Trade in Goods Annex 6 on Technical Barriers to Trade.	Not directly applicable for NQP.	
9.6	Metrology		
9.6.1	Policy context.	The NQP should describe a commitment to implement cooperation in metrology under the AfCFTA Annex 6.	
9.6.2	Encourage Member States to use only the International System of Units (SI) of measurements at the national level; other local or traditional units of measurements should be phased out gradually.	If non-SI units are in use in the country, the NQP should have a policy to indicate the time frame for phasing out the traditional units of measurement and replacing them by SI units.	
9.6.2	Encourage Member States to establish/strengthen national metrology institutes (NMI) with the responsibility of acquiring and conserving national measurement standards capable of providing accurate and reliable measurements in the country.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NQP should have a policy to confirm the role of the National metrology institute (NMI); The NQP should have a policy to decide on which national measurement standards are conserved in the country. 	
9.6.2	Encourage Member States and RECs to ensure harmonization of type approval and verification procedures of measuring instruments at REC level first, then at continental level.	Not directly applicable for NQP.	
9.6.2	Encourage Member States to ensure protection of consumers by controlling pre-packaging of goods on the market, all of which should be based on relevant international or regional standards such as the Recommendations of the International Organization of Legal Metrology (OIML).	The NQP should have a policy to ensure that legal metrology activities target key products so as to protect consumers; the procedure for identifying and controlling key products should be described.	

Alignment of NQPs with the AQP			
AQP chapter reference	AQP aspects relevant to national perspective	Guidelines to address relevant AQP aspects in the NQP	Score Extent of incorporation of guidelines in the NQP (Yes=1, No=0)
9.6.2	Encourage Member States to recognize the equivalence between any public or private calibration laboratories, including those of NMIs, to provide calibration services provided that they are accredited. private sector operators should be encouraged to offer calibration services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NQP should have a policy to recognize and accept, without distinction, certificates of calibration from both public and private calibration laboratories, provided they are accredited; The NQP should have a policy to indicate how cooperation with the private sector is planned, including calibration services which the latter could provide. 	
9.6.2	Encourage Member States to ensure that all national measurement standards in the custody of their NMIs are traceable to the International System of Units (SI).	The NQP should have a policy to ensure that all national measurement standards in the custody of its NMI are traceable to the International System of Units (SI).	
9.6.3	Undertake a survey of metrology capabilities in Africa with the support of AFRIMETS to identify gaps in priority areas for Africa and draw necessary plans to address these gaps.	Not directly applicable for NQP.	
9.6.3	Establish a plan in collaboration with Member States and RECs to support AFRIMETS to implement its mandates as described above.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate cooperation with Member States and the relevant RECs in the work of AFRIMETS as well as funding arrangements to allow for this participation.	
9.6.3	Identify, as a matter of priority in consultation with Member States and RECs, operational hurdles preventing NMIs from guarantying traceability requirements.	Not directly applicable for NQP.	

Alignment of NQPs with the AQP			
AQP chapter reference	AQP aspects relevant to national perspective	Guidelines to address relevant AQP aspects in the NQP	Score Extent of incorporation of guidelines in the NQP (Yes=1, No=0)
9.6.3	Consider regional optimization measures to enable Member States with limited resources to obtain international traceability from other African countries.	The NQP should describe the process for acquiring and maintaining international traceability of the NMI measurement standards to the SI units, including obtaining this traceability through other AU Member States' NMIs.	
9.6.3	Establish a priority plan to support accreditation of NMIs so that they can disseminate traceability to calibration laboratories within Member States.	The NQP should have a policy to commit to achieving accreditation, if not already achieved, of the calibration services of the NMI.	
9.6.3	Ensure that AFRIMETS liaises with the AfCFTA Sub-committee on Technical Barriers to Trade to facilitate AfCFTA metrology needs in terms of the AfCFTA Agreement's Protocol on Trade in Goods Annex 6 on Technical Barriers to Trade.	Not directly applicable for NQP.	
9.7	Quality promotion and use		
9.7.1	Policy context.	<p>The NQP should have a policy to indicate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the drivers that bring producers, service companies, etc. to apply standards; the intent to target one or more of the following drivers to raise the demand for quality in the country: increased awareness about the benefits of applying standards in operations, strong demands for conforming products by well-organized and strong consumer associations, procurement conditions in Government purchase contracts, requirements of overseas buyers, need to demonstrate a leadership position and improve corporate image, etc. 	

Alignment of NQPs with the AQP			
AQP chapter reference	AQP aspects relevant to national perspective	Guidelines to address relevant AQP aspects in the NQP	Score Extent of incorporation of guidelines in the NQP (Yes=1, No=0)
9.7.2	Encourage Member States to promote awareness campaigns and training with the view to raise knowledge and awareness of quality in society, including by establishing programmes for education in standardisation and other elements of QI .	The NQP should have a policy to indicate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how standardization and other QI elements could be incorporated in education curricula, both at secondary and tertiary education levels; • how authorities intend to carry out awareness-raising activities, including the framework for collaboration with all stakeholders. 	
9.7.2	Support PAQI institutions to create and conduct capacity building programmes in their respective fields of expertise, including preparation and publication of technical brochures, manuals, etc.	Not directly applicable for NQP.	
9.7.2	Encourage Member States to promote application of quality tools to improve products and services through training of industry personnel, with special regard to MSMEs and integration into the international and regional value chains.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how cooperation with the private sector is planned, including the application of standards in industry, with special regard to MSMEs • development of national training plans and their deployment to various target groups. 	
9.7.2	Encourage Member States to support consumers and consumer organizations to disseminate knowledge and information about standards and quality.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate the tools to be used to create awareness, e.g. publications, creation of national institutes of quality, national quality award schemes, etc.	
9.7.2	Encourage Member States to create national pools of experts in quality management to support producers and services to apply quality management systems.	The NQP should indicate policies to build capacity in terms of creating or consolidating pools of local consultants in QI matters to support industry.	

Alignment of NQPs with the AQP			
AQP chapter reference	AQP aspects relevant to national perspective	Guidelines to address relevant AQP aspects in the NQP	Score Extent of incorporation of guidelines in the NQP (Yes=1, No=0)
9.7.2	Encourage Member States and RECs to create national institutes of quality and national/sub regional quality awards to promote the quality culture.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate support to the creation of quality institutes and national quality awards, whether the initiative comes from the public or private sector.	
9.7.2	Establish an Africa Quality Award Scheme (AQAS) with the specific aim of promoting quality in the MSME sector.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate support to MSMEs to participate in the AQAS when the latter is established.	
9.7.2	Encourage Member States and RECs to closely involve the private sector in all initiatives related to quality promotion.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate a commitment to involve the private sector in the planning of quality promotion initiatives, including organization of a national quality award.	
9.7.3	Draw up an action plan for implementing the above policies in close collaboration with the PAQI institutions and RECs.	Not directly applicable for NQP.	
9.7.3	Design and disseminate a communication plan to inform all stakeholders on progress with implementation of the AQP.	Not directly applicable for NQP.	

Alignment of NQPs with the AQP			
AQP chapter reference	AQP aspects relevant to national perspective	Guidelines to address relevant AQP aspects in the NQP	Score Extent of incorporation of guidelines in the NQP (Yes=1, No=0)
10	Financing		
10.1	AUC budget allocations for national activities.	<p>The NQP should indicate plans to identify quality gaps for eventual inclusion in continental activities to be funded at continental level for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where the country's industry participates in value chains earmarked for industrial development at continental level; • participation of technical experts in standards development and/or harmonisation technical committee meetings for products designated as priorities for the continent; • technical capacity building activities such as training workshops and attachments for QI staff and awareness building activities. 	
10.2	Development and consolidation of national QPs where relevant.	Development of a new NQP or consolidation of the existing NQP should be carried out in accordance with these guidelines with the objective of aligning with the AQP.	

Alignment of NQPs with the AQP			
AQP chapter reference	AQP aspects relevant to national perspective	Guidelines to address relevant AQP aspects in the NQP	Score Extent of incorporation of guidelines in the NQP (Yes=1, No=0)
10.2	Upgrading or consolidating the national QI institutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NQP should have a policy to indicate commitment by Government to fund activities that are primarily its responsibility, e.g. market surveillance; awareness raising, etc.; <i>NOTE - Commitment to fund the NQP does not mean engaging a specific budget sum over the life of the NQP. In line with the AQP, which does not include a budget, the NQP should only indicate who funds what.</i> Reliance on funding from development partners should not constitute the main source of funding for NQP implementation; The NQP should indicate projected time frames for QI bodies to assure financial sustainability. 	
10.2	Training and capacity-building for QI institutions, consumer organizations, civil society organizations and other stakeholder groups.	The NQP should indicate the approach for funding training and capacity-building, in particular with possible contributions from the private sector.	
10.2	Membership fees, as relevant, to appropriate regional, continental and international bodies.	<p>The NQP should have a policy to indicate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a commitment to pay membership fees to relevant regional, continental or international organizations; how decisions are made to select such organizations as relevant for the country. 	
10.5	Private sector contributions.	<p>The NQP should have a policy to indicate that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> private sector contributions could be in kind, e.g. full participation costs of private sector technical experts in relevant technical meetings of regional or international QI organizations; national QI bodies will facilitate the nomination of private sector experts to such meetings. 	

Alignment of NQPs with the AQP			
AQP chapter reference	AQP aspects relevant to national perspective	Guidelines to address relevant AQP aspects in the NQP	Score Extent of incorporation of guidelines in the NQP (Yes=1, No=0)
Not covered in AQP (see note)		Legal framework The NQP should state the policy with regard to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how the country wishes to address any gap or overlap in the regulatory functions of the QI bodies observed during the initial assessment of the QI system prior to the development of the NQP; any short-term plan is envisaged to strengthen the legal framework to address any gap or overlap identified under the previous bullet point; the consultative process to be adopted for any review/revision and strengthening of the legal framework. 	
11	Implementation		
11.1	Governance		
11.1.a	Monitor and oversee implementation plans on a regular basis till successful AQP implementation.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how the NQP governance plans engage the main stakeholders during the whole phase of NQP implementation; the composition of the NQP governance which should ensure multi-stakeholder participation; the NQP review intervals which should be similar to the ones for the AQP as far as feasible. 	
11.1.b	Commission studies, request information from concerned institutions and conduct research to obtain information and data.	Not directly applicable for NQP.	

Alignment of NQPs with the AQP			
AQP chapter reference	AQP aspects relevant to national perspective	Guidelines to address relevant AQP aspects in the NQP	Score Extent of incorporation of guidelines in the NQP (Yes=1, No=0)
11.1.c	Adopt plans for the modernization of the continental QI and assign implementation to specific PAQI institutions or RECs.	The NQP should describe the roles and responsibilities of the national entities tasked with the implementation of the NQP.	
11.1.d	Review the current status of the continental level QI and make recommendations on improvements.	The NQP should describe the process for taking corrective actions as a result of monitoring progress during the implementation.	
11.1.e	Progress the decisions and recommendations made to the highest level of the AU and AfCFTA secretariat for modernizing the continental QI.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate the process for the NQP Governance to report to the highest-level authority in charge of quality, whether at ministerial or similar level.	
11.2	High-level implementation plan The Governance will develop an Action Plan within 6 months of the approval of the AQP.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate that Governance will develop an Action Plan within 6 months of the approval of the NQP in consultation with all relevant stakeholders.	
11.3	Timeline The AU is committed to implement the provisions of this AQP within a period of five years from the date of its approval.	The NQP should specify the NQP life cycle in accordance with national practices, e.g. to coincide with national development plans or similar timelines.	
12	Performance measurement arrangements and indicators With respect to the AQP, policy implementation indicators and Policy effect indicators are specified.	The NQP should have a policy to indicate that NQP Governance will develop a simple set of performance indicators that will be part of the NQP implementation plan.	

Alignment of NQPs with the AQP			
AQP chapter reference	AQP aspects relevant to national perspective	Guidelines to address relevant AQP aspects in the NQP	Score Extent of incorporation of guidelines in the NQP (Yes=1, No=0)
13	Periodic review The AQP shall be reviewed three years after its adoption by the AU and thereafter every 5 years.	The NQP should indicate the intervals for periodic review and, as far as feasible, these should coincide with the AQP periodic review intervals.	
Not covered in AQP (see note)	Activities and budgets <i>NOTE: The AQP does not include a list of activities or budget, although it requires the AQP governance to develop an action plan within 6 months after approval of the AQP.</i>	In accordance with national practices, the NQP may include a list of activities and budgets if required. However, in line with the AQP, this is not necessary.	

