

VAN SCHAIK PUBLISHERS
OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION
Guidelines for tertiary textbooks

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“The shift in thinking is from education for employment - developing the ability to do a specific job - to education for employability - developing the ability to adapt acquired skills to new working environments.”

NQF

With the passing of the SAQA (The South African Qualifications Authority) Act in 1995, it became obvious that curricula (and textbooks) in higher education had to undergo changes. Concepts such as skills, vocationalism, transferability, competence, outcomes, experiential learning capability and enterprise (as cited by SAQA) are becoming increasingly important. In line with these developments it is of crucial importance to authors and publishers in the textbook market to meet the needs of the requirements as stipulated by SAQA and the NQF (The National Qualifications Framework).

Below are some practical guidelines to assist you, the author, in developing and writing your manuscript. Please bear in mind that these are mere guidelines and you are welcome to tailor them to suit your specific needs in your particular field of study.

1. **Outcomes** have to be referred to in the text for more clarity. The student has to know what is expected of him/her. These learning outcomes (*not* objectives) can be placed at the outset of every chapter, and reinforced at strategic places in the text.
2. The **language level** must meet the student’s needs. Bear in mind that a large number of students are ESL (English Second Language) speakers.
3. The text must be **user-friendly** and **accessible** to the target market. The structure and organization of the text must be logical and must facilitate the student in understanding pre-defined outcomes. Icons are often useful.
4. Try to relate the theory to **South African** conditions.
5. **Experiential exercises** are often useful to give students exposure to computer-aided and/or real-life problem solving. These exercises have to enable students to think critically and creatively in order to solve problems. These exercises are also very important for developing entrepreneurial skills.
6. Many **examples** throughout the text can aid in clarifying the theory for students.
7. The use of **key concepts** is a useful instrument for highlighting important points in the text.
8. **“Applying the concept”** boxes - strategically inserted in the text - can be used to explain to the student how the theory can be put into practice in different contexts.
9. **Web sites** can be referred to, where relevant.