

# FACT SHEET

## QUALITY COUNCIL FOR TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS

## INTRODUCTION

In 2014 April, SABPP published a fact sheet on QCTO, which outlined key aspects thereof and highlighted important implementation issues for HR practitioners. This fact sheet serves as a review, from the implementation phase to the progress or the changes that have taken place thus far. SABPP has embarked on the standards and ensuring that those who offer HR qualifications adhere to these standards. It is thus imperative that the updated accurate information be disseminated whenever need be. For HR managers, a constant update forms a crucial part in decision making as well as policy development. This goes together with the mission of QCTO which states that there should be effective and efficient means to manage the occupational qualifications sub-framework in order to set standards, develop and quality assure national occupational qualifications for all who want a trade or occupation and, where appropriate, professions.

Far reaching changes to the skills development system were introduced in 2010 when the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) was set up. The QCTO is a Council established under the Skills Development Act for standards generation and quality assurance for all Occupational Qualifications. It stands alongside Umalusi (which quality assures basic education) and the Council for Higher Education (CHE). New qualifications in trades and occupations for registration on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) must be developed through the QCTO.<sup>1</sup>

As outlined in QCTO strategy, an MoU was entered into by QCTO and DHET in July 2011 in order to assist with the transition phase, thereby allowing QCTO to fully integrate the systems to enhance support whilst it reaches the point whereby it is fully operational. The MoU was extended annually from 2013/14 and from 2014/15 the QCTO was progressing in a way that it was able to appoint permanent staff, develop and implemented policies and subsequently moving to its own premises. All these resembled a significant change that allowed QCTO to discontinue the MoU at the end of 2015 and operate as fully functional unit as from 2016 with all its delagted responsibilities.

*This fact sheet will cover the progress from QCTO since inception to date.*

<sup>1</sup> SABPP Fact Sheet No.3/2014 April



## QCTO OBJECTIVES

As outlined in the previous fact sheet (April 2014), the QCTO was initiated because there was a need for an institution which had a national capacity for the quality assurance of trades and professional/occupational qualifications, rather than the system which placed quality assurance for these with the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETA's) which are, by definition, concerned with only their specific sectors.

There were inconsistencies between SETA's and there were problems with demarcation where a qualification was not clearly within the scope of one SETA, or where a qualification spread across the scope of several SETA's.<sup>2</sup> After some deliberation, there was a consultation with the Minister of Higher Education and Training, where a need arose to develop the Qualifications Sub-Framework for trades and Occupations (QSF) and that they focus on NQF Levels 1-8.

During this transition, the SETA's are continuing to quality assure the unit- standard based and provider-based qualifications (as was hitherto). This, the SETA's in conjunction with QCTO framework of operation will continue to do until the qualification validity expires on 30th June 2021/23 depending on the National Qualification Framework (NQF) Level. *Note that this has been extended from the previously set date which was to be the latest 2017 and infers a training out date of approximately 2027.*



<sup>2</sup> SABPP Fact Sheet No.3/2014 April



## THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF QCTO

Only the QCTO itself will: (see page 3 of April 2014 fact sheet as amended)

- Accredite training providers (Skills Development Providers) towards occupational qualification.
- Issue training provider accreditation certificates.
- Monitor accredited occupational training providers.
- Verify AQP (Assessment Quality Partner) results per learner.
- Issue qualification certificates, on receipt of the examination results from the AQP.



## THE IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

As the transition period progresses, whereby SETA's retain their Quality Assurance (QA) functions, in respect of existing qualifications, there are expiry dates to adhere to. As previously stated, the expiry date was to not exceed 5 years from registration or renewal, meaning all existing qualifications would have expired by 2017. However, to ensure that the transition progress smoothly, the expiry date will now be 2021/23. Any student enrolled before 1st July 2022 will have until 30 June 2025 to achieve the qualification, based on the NQF Level of such qualification (*see page 3, point 2.4 of April 2014 fact sheet as amended*).

The QCTO, as a result of a highly committed staff and supportive partnerships, is growing from strength to strength. As we move into our second Strategic Plan we do so with much invigoration. The possibilities and opportunities afforded to the organisation are many, requiring appropriate planning and careful execution for these to become reality.

One of the critical aspects of the QCTO's work is to formalise its operational procedures and adjust its organisational structure so that it reflects the specific work that must be done to achieve the QCTO's legislated mandate. Furthermore, now that the organisation has grown, it has improved its delivery on its mandate. This success must be communicated to the various constituencies and stakeholders the QCTO serves. As usual I must express my sincere gratitude to all.

The QCTO appreciates the opportunity to serve the nation as we pursue our vision to QUALIFY A SKILLED AND CAPABLE WORKFORCE.

As usual I must express my sincere gratitude to all. (Prof Peliwe Lolwana: Chairperson of the QCTO) <sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> QCTO: 2015/16-2019/20 Strategic Plan



## TABLE OF OCCUPATIONAL QUALIFICATION AND PART QUALIFICATION REGISTERED SINCE INCEPTION

The table below indicates the progress on the transitional phase that is on-going, whereby the QCTO continues to fulfil its mandate through development and quality assure occupational qualifications to address the individual needs for trade or occupation, as well as professions, as per its mission. This range of qualifications have been registered since 2016 to date (*in 2014 April only 9 occupational qualifications were registered*):

Occupation	Qualification	Part Qualification
Trade	44	1
Manager	20	
Professional	22	
Technician & Associate Professional	64	3
Clerical Support Workers	10	
Service & Sales Workers	10	2
Skilled Agricultural, Forestry, Fishery, Craft & Related Trades	18	23
Plant, Machinery Operator & Assembly	49	14
Elementary Occupation	4	
Foundation Learning Competency		1
<b>Total</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>44</b>



## QCTO PLANS

The QCTO in its strategic plan for 2015/16 to 2019/20 identified the issues to be addressed. It is also imperative to fully take cognisance that the QCTO has fully embraced the White Paper for Post-School Education and Training, thus contributing to its success through the execution of its mandate.

**The following are the aspects of the White Paper that the QCTO contributes to:**

- Stronger and more cooperative relationships between education and training institutions and the workplace.
- Strengthen and expand the TVET College system.
- Review and rationalise occupational qualifications.
- Improve QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES AND STANDARDISE THESE ACROSS THE SYSTEM.
- Continue to standardise curricula development.

“The development of trade and occupational qualifications which are externally assessed and have currency in the labour market is a crucial priority. These should build on the existing trade test and apprenticeship system, as well as qualifications quality assured and certified by SETA’s which have gained credibility and respect.”<sup>4</sup>”



## BENEFITS FOR HR PRACTITIONERS, TRAINING PROVIDERS AND SETA'S

### HR Practitioners:

The HR Practitioners must embrace the new directions QCTO in embarking on. For instance when recruiting potential employees for a job (which should be linked to Organised Framework for Occupations – OFO Codes) , HR professions and Recruitment Practitioners / Agents should encourage Occupational Qualification / Vocational Qualifications as an entry requirement for work. As the potential employee has been exposed and declared competent with the required SKILLS, PRACTICALS AND WORKPLACE experience before the learner engages on NATIONAL EXAMINATION (where possible as this is managed by each SETA's mandate to QCTO) which is managed by a recognised Assessment Quality Partner (AQP). The Industry must be aware that when these qualifications were designed by various stakeholders that includes a community of expert practitioners, thus resulting in a qualification or part qualification that is registered with South African Quality Assurance (SAQA) will meet the industry demands and needs.

HR Practitioners should make Occupational Qualifications a standard item in the monthly management meeting. We must support the QCTO as a committed partner for managing the quality assurance function as whole and within delegated quality assurance partners (QAP).

### Skills Development Providers:

QCTO is the central point for requesting professional guidance on quality assurance on occupational qualifications which address industry needs. All accreditation applications including verification of content, sites, required tools and policies for training, monitoring / inspection, issuing of accreditation certificate and letter for successful training provider applicant are managed by the QCTO.

Training providers also know that whilst they are being monitored, the AQP is also managed by them. The process is fair and consistent and applies to all affected parties.

### Sector Education and Training Authority – SETA:





QCTO is the custodian for overseeing the whole of SETA Quality Assurance function with its dedicated team who perform regular monitoring on training providers and the SETA's. They will also play a role of adjudicator, central repository for obtaining guidance on critical matters related to learners, parents, employers, institutions and other affected parties.

The regular reporting submitted by SETA's is been tabled at the QCTO senior management level and comments are shared with the relevant SETA's on a one-on-one interaction.



## CONCLUSION

SABPP is working tirelessly to ensure that we promote the values of QCTO, drive the message to all affected stakeholders and promoting re-alignment qualifications within our daily conversation among all stakeholders. We also strive to meet the new world of work by keeping in touch with the 4th Industrial Revolution – called technology as an enabler and paperless processes for reporting and performing quality assurance function.

The revised occupational qualifications will lead to meaningful learning and workplace application of that learning, HR practitioners should thus engage seriously with the new processes of curriculum development to ensure that all occupations have new qualifications in place. It can take up to 18 months to go through the entire process to get a qualification, together with its examination/assessment process, developed and submitted for registration by the DQP (Development Quality Partner).

Remaining questions include how will the OFO accommodate the creation of new occupations as they emerge, for example, solar panel installer and other occupations in the new “green” economy.

The SABPP, as both a quality assurance body and as a professional body, is fully engaged with this new system. So far, the SABPP is registered as an AQP for the Occupational Trainer qualification. This is a good example of cross-sectoral cooperation as this occupation is represented across all SETA's. The SABPP will also be acting as the examiner for the Mining Qualifications Authority on two of their Foundational Learning curricula (communication and mathematics).

**THIS FACT SHEET HAS BEEN PREPARED BY KGOMOTSO MOPALAMI: HEAD OF RESEARCH AND INNOVATION (SABPP) AND NAREN VASSAN: HEAD OF LEARNING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE (SABPP).**

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# FACT SHEET

DATE	NUMBER	SUBJECT
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## 2016

February	1	<b>PRODUCTIVITY BASICS</b>
March	2	<b>SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT</b>
April	3	<b>TALENT MANAGEMENT: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE</b>
May	4	<b>BUILDING ORGANISATIONAL CAPABILITIES</b>
June	5	<b>CHANGE MANAGEMENT</b>
July	6	<b>INNOVATION IN HR</b>
August	7	<b>HR TECHNOLOGY</b>
September	8	<b>HR IN BUSINESS SUSTAINABILITY</b>
October	9	<b>THE LEARNING &amp; DEVELOPMENT LANDSCAPE IN SA</b>

## 2017

February	1	<b>MODERN SLAVERY</b>
March	2	<b>PENSION LAW FOR EMPLOYERS</b>
April	3	<b>THE GAME CHANGER: ROLE OF HR</b>
May	4	<b>HR GOVERNANCE</b>
June	5	<b>INTEGRATING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT, EMPLOYMENT EQUITY AND B-BBEE TRANSFORMATION</b>
July	6	<b>STRESS MANAGEMENT</b>
August	7	<b>REMUNERATION: RECENT TRENDS</b>
September	8	<b>HOW CEOs AND CHROs CAN USE THE SABPP TO CREATE EXCELLENCE IN HR MANAGEMENT</b>
October	9	<b>PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES</b>
November	10	<b>RETRENCHMENT</b>
December	11	<b>THE SOUTH AFRICAN LEADERSHIP STANDARD</b>

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DATE	NUMBER	SUBJECT
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## 2018

February	1	<b>STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT</b>
March	2	<b>BULLYING IN THE WORKPLACE</b>
April	3	<b>LISTERIOSIS AND FOOD SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE</b>
May	4	<b>FLEXIBLE WORK PRACTICES</b>
June	5	<b>YOUTH EMPLOYMENT SERVICE</b>
July	6	<b>HR PRACTITIONERS AS EX-OFFICIO COMMISSIONERS OF OATHS</b>
August	7	<b>NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE (NMW)</b>
September	8	<b>EMPLOYEE RETRENCHMENT</b>
October	9	<b>THE FUTURE OF YOUTH IN SOUTH AFRICA</b>
November	10	<b>BOARD EXAMINATIONS: A SIGNIFICANT STEP FORWARD FOR HR PROFESSIONALISATION</b>
December	11	<b>CHRONIC DISEASE MANAGEMENT: CANCER IN THE WORK PLACE</b>

## 2019

February	1	<b>EMPLOYER VALUE PROPOSITION</b>
March	2	<b>QUALITY COUNCIL FOR TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS</b>

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