

## **Fact Sheet on the verification of national qualifications**

Verification of qualifications is about checking to see if person's qualifications are indeed genuine.

Genuine qualifications can only be issued by the provider if:

- The provider is accredited;
- The provider is registered (except if it is a skills development provider);
- The qualification is registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF);
- The document is authentic.

A public university does not have to be registered as it has been established by an Act of Parliament.

Private providers register with the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). A provider cannot be registered without being accredited.

Verification of national qualifications involves:

- 1) A search on SAQA's National Learners' Records Database (NLRD) where all NQF registered qualifications are recorded.
- 2) If there isn't any information found on the NLRD or further information is required; the institution where the client studied is contacted for information.

### **Number of national qualifications verified:**

2014/15 financial year: 51 009

2015/16 financial year: 72 543

### **Number of national qualifications found to be misrepresented qualifications:**

2014/15 financial year: 106

2015/16 financial year: 94

### **What is a misrepresented qualification?**

Misrepresentation is defined as an incorrect statement of fact or law made by one person to another (natural or juristic). Qualifications have been misrepresented if:

- The qualification claimed by an individual was not awarded by the provider;
- The qualification documents are altered in any way;
- The provider is not registered and/or accredited by the relevant Authority; or
- The qualification is not registered by the relevant Authority, or does not form part of a national system of education.

### **What happens to a person found to have a misrepresented qualification?**

An individual or provider's name will be placed on the *List of Misrepresented Qualifications* after the misrepresentation has been confirmed by SAQA or one of the three Quality Councils. Information on this list is confidential and is mainly for internal use only.

DHET Minister, Dr Blade Nzimande, tasked SAQA with developing and publishing a *Register of Fraudulent Qualifications*. Seeing that only a court of law can declare a

qualification as fraudulent, work started towards establishing a *Register of Misrepresented Qualifications* and a *Register of Fraudulent Qualifications*.

SAQA drove the process of developing a *Draft Policy on Misrepresented Qualifications* and presented it to the Minister of Higher Education and Training for further action. Furthermore, changes to the NQF Act have also been proposed. These changes will provide the legislative frame for the *Policy on Misrepresented Qualifications* to be approved. Once the policy is approved and comes into effect, the *Register of Misrepresented Qualifications* and the *Register of Fraudulent Qualifications* will be established. Both these registers will be accessible to the public.

### **What is the Register of Misrepresented Qualifications?**

The *Register of Misrepresented Qualifications* comprises two parts:

- Part A comprises a list of individuals who hold qualifications that are not authentic, or are from institutions that are not accredited or registered.
- Part B comprises a list of providers that are not registered and/or accredited to offer the qualification in question, or mislead the public in their claims about their programmes or institution.

An individual or provider's name will be entered into the *Register of Misrepresented Qualifications* after the misrepresentation has been confirmed by SAQA or one of the Quality Councils.

### **What is the Register of Fraudulent Qualifications?**

It is a register containing the names and details of the offence of individuals and providers who have been found guilty by a court of law of holding or issuing (a) fraudulent qualification(s).