

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

SAQA welcomes the 2017 National Senior Certificate results but cautions against the use of confusing terminology

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The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) welcomes the 2017 National Senior Certificate (NSC) results of the public schooling system that were announced yesterday by the Honourable Minister of Basic Education, Mrs Angie Motshekga. As the Minister pointed out, these results point to a “system on the rise” with an overall achievement rate of 75.1%, which is an increase of 2.6% from the 72.5% recorded in 2016. Although there is an improvement the Minister also pointed out that much still needs to be done to further improve the quality and efficiency of the basic education system.

SAQA congratulates the Department of Basic Education (DBE) for its role in the administration of the 2017 NSC examinations. SAQA also congratulates Umalusi, the Council of Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training, for upholding the integrity of the NSC examination through its quality assurance of the management and administration of the 3 exit point examinations, which lead to a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Level 4 qualification, namely the NSC.

It should be noted that Umalusi’s rigorous quality assurance processes go beyond the DBE examinations to that of the Independent Examinations Board (IEB) and the South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI), all of which lead to the NSC at NQF Level 4. Whether acquired through the DBE, IEB or SACAI examinations, the NSC is the gateway to different opportunities for learners.

“While the 2017 public school NSC results add to a sustained pass rate which has consistently remained above 70% over the last seven years, terminology used particularly

around the level of achievement should not be confusing for the education system as well as the public” said the SAQA CEO, Mr Joe Samuels.

“To say that learners achieved four different qualification types, namely, Bachelor, Diploma, Higher Certificate and NSC is very confusing because all learners who pass receive one qualification type, which in this case is the NSC at NQF Level 4,” he added. “There are different qualification types including a PhD, Masters, Honours, Bachelor’s, Higher Certificate and Certificate,” he further added. “In this instance, the NSC is a Certificate hence the categories of passes should rather be referred to as levels of achievement to avoid the confusion it creates among the sector and the public,” he explained. SAQA hopes that this matter will be tackled and sorted by the DBE in time for the class of 2018.

That said, SAQA congratulates all the learners who were successful to acquire their NSC. These learners will make a good contribution to South Africa as they enter universities, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), learnership programmes with Sector Education and Training Authorities, the labour market and/or create other opportunities, etc.

For those who were unsuccessful, it is not the end of the road as they can consider rewriting or writing supplementary examinations should they qualify to do so. The DBE also has a good second chance programme in place. Education is not an individual effort, hence all stakeholders including parents, guardians, educators, unions, private and public officials’ contribution to the 2017 NSC results is also recognised and appreciated.

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Enquiries: Joe Samuels, SAQA CEO

Contact details: 012 431 5001 or 082 833 1271 or jsamuels@saqa.co.za

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SAQA’S MISSION

To ensure the development and implementation of a National Framework which contributes to the full development of each learner and to the social and economic development of the nation at large

Postnet Suite 248
Private Bag X06
Waterkloof 0145
SAQA House
1067 Arcadia Street
Hatfield 0083
Tel (+27 12) 431-5000
Fax (+27 12) 431-5200
Helpdesk: 086 010 3188
Website: www.saqa.org.za
Email: saqaingo@saqa.org.za