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The South African Qualifications Authority

Vision

To build a world-class National Qualifications Framework for South Africa.

Mission

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

Cover photo:
Women's march, 9 August, 1956





Foreword by the Chairperson of SAQA

Samuel Isaacs, the first chairperson of the SAQA Board and the current Executive Officer, coined the phrase "making the NQF road by walking accountably, boldly and reflectively" for the first stage of establishing and building the NQF.

SAQA has indeed made great strides during the reporting period in all the fields of its mandate, including the generation of new qualifications and unit standards that are responsive to national needs, the development of a performance-auditing instrument for quality audits, eliminating a significant backlog in the evaluation of foreign qualifications and completing an updated report on the trends in public higher education using data from the National Learners' Records Database, as highlighted in this report.

I wish to recognise the contributions of Samuel Isaacs, Executive Officer, Joe Samuels, Deputy Executive Officer and SAQA's management and staff, towards realising these achievements, and that of the Authority, and in particular Ken Hall, who ably held the reins during my illness in the second half of 2006.

The NQF has reached a new stage of development, and SAQA is now, after ten years, ready to move into a new era, during which it will focus on the need for strong relationships and synergies of approach among key partners towards the achievement of our common goals in terms of the NQF – the new era is that of "moving into dance"!

SAQA is acutely aware of its responsibility to uphold the values of the NQF, especially those of integration, access, portability and parity of esteem, on which the hopes and dreams of many ordinary South Africans are pinned.

SAQA will "move into dance" with other key role players, performing its leading role by giving leadership, mediating and supporting, contributing to the maturation of the system and by keeping the best interests of the country and of learners at heart.

During the next reporting period, SAQA's attention will focus on establishing the National Learners' Records Database as the key national source of information on education and training, addressing a number of challenges related to quality assurance, with specific emphasis on Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), further building SAQA's research capacity and, most of all, achieving shared meanings, purposes and strategies among key stakeholders.

We are keenly aware that through NQF-related activities, many hundreds, if not thousands, of individuals and organisations give their time and creative energies to help improve the workings of the system. We are dependent on you, our dancing partners, and wish to duly acknowledge your contributions to the work of the past year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S Walters". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath.

Prof. S Walters

Chairperson: SAQA



Foreword by the Minister of Labour

In order to halve unemployment in South Africa by 2014, our economic growth rate needs to be 6% by 2010. The shortage of certain skills in the country, including engineers and artisans, is one of the constraints on achieving this target and government is actively working towards addressing the skills shortages both in the short and the longer term.

It is in this context that I am pleased to acknowledge SAQA's contribution towards the development of people in terms of scarce and critical skills. SAQA has, in its development of qualifications and unit standards during the reporting period, focused on those scarce and critical skills identified by the Joint Initiative on Priority Skills Acquisition (JIPSA), and produced high quality qualifications in these fields.

SAQA has not only initiated a review and revision of trade qualifications in the manufacturing and engineering sector, but has also registered qualifications in welding at Levels 2-4, which will contribute to the target of 50 000 artisans by 2010.

Furthermore, a substantial number of qualifications in the manufacturing and engineering sector, services sector, construction sector and financial and governance sector serves to prove SAQA's broad-based response to national priorities.

SAQA has taken pains to ensure that the quality of learning contributes to what the South African society and economy needs in a sustainable way, in addition to the current short- to medium-term initiatives.

SAQA's National Learners' Records Database has proved very valuable to the Department of Labour and also nationally, in terms of providing information about the availability of skills in the country, in the past, and I look forward to the launch of the updated Trends in Higher Education publication, which will assist us with making decisions in that regard.

SAQA has also continued to fulfil its statutory responsibility in a responsible and accountable manner and I have to congratulate SAQA on the good work done during the reporting period.

MMS Mdladlana, MP

Minister of Labour