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The Fifth Annual Commonwealth Teacher Research Symposium



Cover photo: (from left to right)
Dr. Roli Degazon-Johnson, Advisor on Education, Social Transformation Division, Commonwealth Secretariat; Prof. Jonathan Jansen, Rector and Vice-Chancellor, University of Free State; Mr Samuel BA Isaacs, Chief Executive Officer, SAQA



The launch of the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations

Samuel Isaacs: Chief Executive Officer



The new NQF Act (number 67 of 2008) was promulgated in February 2009.

This decision by Parliament was the result of many years of discussion, debate and reflection on how the NQF should be streamlined and improved to best serve the needs of all South Africans. The NQF Act certainly clarifies the purpose and objectives of the NQF as well as the roles and responsibilities of existing NQF partner organisations and brings into being a new NQF partner organisation the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO).

A team of dedicated people have worked tirelessly to develop the draft policies, procedures and organisational requirements needed to give the QCTO life and on 23 February 2010 the Minister of Higher Education and Training officially and proudly launched the QCTO. At this splendid occasion, Minister Nzimande announced the first Chairperson of the QCTO, Mr Wilson Nzimande as well as the QCTO Board members namely: Samuel Isaacs (SAQA), Firoz Patel (NSA), Rolf Stumpf (CHE), Mafu Rakometsi (Umalusi), Bonny Marekwa (POPCRU), Ecliff Tantsi (NUM), Stella Carthy (NEDLAC), Willie Matthiae (NEDLAC), Thulane Mabuza (NCASA), Francis Malesela Maleka (FSCC), Bheki Mahlobo (DHET), Marinale Grange (ATPETD), Elizabeth Thobejane (DHET) and Julius Nyalunga (**the dti**).

He also announced that, to assist the newly appointed QCTO Board in rapidly moving forward, the renowned skills development specialist, Adrienne Bird, was appointed as the acting CEO of the QCTO with immediate effect.

In his speech (see <http://www.education.gov.za/dynamic>) he reiterated the importance of SAQA in its oversight role, and the three Quality Councils in advancing a single integrated NQF that serves all South Africans, especially the poor.

This certainly is not an easy task. The Act requires the four independent statutory bodies to work very closely together. In recent months three words communication, co-ordination and collaboration have been introduced into a wide range of conversations. These three words are being promoted as the essence of what is needed to ensure that a single and successful NQF emerges. At Board level, at CEO level and at organisational level, leaders in all four organisations are being urged to communicate, co-ordinate and collaborate.

The NQF aims to address issues of access, redress, articulation and quality in education and training (which are also issues of social justice). Now is the time to remove the systemic blockages for learners' access and progression. It is time for communication, co-ordination and collaboration across education, training, development and work. Let's embrace the vision of the NQF. Let's give it substance and authority and let's make a real and positive difference for all South Africans.



The Fifth Annual Commonwealth Teacher Research Symposium

Siphokazi Phillip: Assistant Director: Communication



Teachers are a scarce resource all over the world, but this does not stop countries from exploiting teachers that seek employment in foreign countries. The Commonwealth Secretariat recently organised the Fifth Annual Commonwealth Teacher Research Symposium, which was hosted by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) and the University of the Free State (UFS). The theme for the Symposium was

'Enhancing Commonwealth teacher professionalism and status: promoting recognition, registration and standards.'

This is an annual event attended by researchers, officials and representatives of regional and international organisations and higher education institutions. The event has become important in the development of an international community of practice that has been able to directly influence the recruitment, retention and status of teachers across the Commonwealth, through focused research, since its inception in 2006.

The Commonwealth Secretariat organises the event in order to give a platform for sharing research findings from different countries on issues relating to education and training. This year's symposium specifically addressed teacher qualifications and comparability in Commonwealth member countries. The symposium agreed that the recognition of teacher qualifications is a subject that still needs to be researched further, as it does not only impact on individual teachers, but on learners too, with factors such as language and gender playing a major role. The symposium considered the engagement of government ministries to be very important in promoting the status of teachers, as governments and other stakeholders need to understand the importance of teachers and their skills, thereby treating them in a more acceptable and appropriate manner. Professionalisation of teachers in member countries was identified as another area for further research, in order to gain a common understanding of qualifications and standards.

The symposium concluded by committing to effectively promoting strategies to protect teachers across borders and uplift the morale of teachers.



Delegates at the Fifth Commonwealth Teacher Symposium



Sixth Confinteia Conference on Adult Education

Joe Samuels: Deputy Executive Officer



The sixth Confinteia Conference on Adult Education was held on 1-4 December 2009 in Belem, Brazil, and hosted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). The conference was attended by over 1 000 delegates from 160 UNESCO member states, under the theme **Harnessing the power and potential of adult learning and education for a viable future**. Delegates attending the

conference ranged from member states government delegations, civil society and the private sector.

The South African delegation led by the Deputy Minister of Basic Education, Mr. Enver Surty, attended the conference, with Mr Joe Samuels (Deputy Executive Officer: SAQA) being part of the delegation and Dr James Keevy (Diretor: International Liaison, SAQA) attended the conference as a resource person of the European Training Foundation.

The purpose of the conference was to set the global agenda for adult learning and education and life-wide learning for the next 12 years and publish a framework for action. The conference focused on the following sub-themes:

- Policy and Governance
- Participation and Inclusion
- Financing Adult Education
- Quality of Adult Learning Education
- Literacy
- Monitoring and Evaluation

The conference revisited the agreements made at the last Confinteia Conference in Hamburg 1997 and acknowledged that implementation has been very slow and therefore declared that the 2009 conference would focus on action, hence the adoption of the Belem Framework for Action.

Mr Samuels was part of the panel on Adult Learning and Migration. This is an important matter not only for SAQA and South Africa but globally due to the movement of people across national boundaries. Therefore, SAQA's experience in dealing with migrants was most valued at the workshop. He was also part of the drafting committee of the Belem Framework for Action. Dr Keevy participated in a workshop on National Qualifications Frameworks and Adult Education organised by the European Training Foundation. His participation in this workshop was very important as South Africa is seen as a pioneer of NQFs in the world.

The conference highlighted the fact that adult literacy is a challenge in most countries, with women being the most affected group, with insufficient offering of skills and literacy programmes being one of the causes. The Southern hemisphere was identified as one region with a majority of people who do not even have primary school education, where an estimated 75 million children of school-going age either left school or never attended school. This is a great challenge for Sub-Saharan Africa as 80 percent of the population are children. Insufficient training of adult educators was also very high on the agenda.

The conference did not only dwell on challenges and what needs to be done, but also highlighted the inroads that have been made since the 1997 Hamburg conference, where it was noted that adult literacy rates have improved, especially in developing countries. Partnerships in other countries between government and civil society have been strengthened not only focusing on adult learning and education, but diversified to include other societal challenges and drive delivery on agreements signed. Other countries have also taken the whole adult learning and education phenomenon to a higher level where they observe events like the adult learning and education week and some even have learning cities. Cape Town is a South African learning city. Adult learning and education has been highlighted as an important aspect of the lifelong learning process, as it not only focuses on literacy but is a part of the learning continuum ranging from formal to non-formal to informal learning.

Highlights of the conference:

It was the first time since the inception on Confinteia to have a global report on Adult Learning and Education produced at the conference after over 150 countries submitted their national reports on the subject.

The conference had recommendations on the Belem Framework for Action:

- Stating that there is a need for improvement of adult learning and education in Africa and globally, with the **participation and inclusion** of women; prisoners and historically disadvantaged people.
- In order to take strides in adult learning and education and see progress, there needs to be increased **financing** by governments, with at least six percent of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) allocated towards adult learning and education. Currently adult education receives less than a percent of GDP in investment.
- The conference further recommends that in order for adult learning and education system to work in many parts of the



world **governance** is important with transparent and equitable participation in policy development and implementation.

- **Policy** development and improvement for recognition, validation and accreditation of different forms of learning by establishing equivalency frameworks is essential.
- Addressing **quality** issues is also important and to ensure this, professionalisation of educators is the solution.

The forum concluded by committing to periodical monitoring and evaluation of the framework of action in respective countries and internationally, with UNESCO pledging to support member states in their endeavour to improve adult learning and in turn improve the global report.

RPL - Navigating a route for access and qualifications

Siphokazi Phillip: Assistant Director: Communication

Jack Spanner has been a motor mechanic for the past twenty years. He came from humble roots and could not afford to attend a trade school. However, he worked with his uncle and gleaned valuable knowledge before joining the Toyoman Motor plant. He worked on various models and was kept updated on the latest technologies by attending courses. Now Jack wants to formalise his qualifications because his industry requires it. He is advised that he can pursue Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) as the most viable option.

Like Jack, many people in South Africa, especially artisans, have the RPL option open to them. RPL is one of the principles of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). As such SAQA, together with its partners, particularly the Quality Councils (QCs) and other stakeholders, have an obligation to ensure that RPL is in place in the country, from policy right down to its implementation.

This has been a great challenge over the years, as RPL seeks to develop a framework to recognise learning that takes place at work in order to give access to the education system or to give complete qualifications. The difficulty has always been that learning institutions are reluctant to do RPL in order to award a qualification. Instead, they often opt for RPL for access, and look at the learners' achievements to place them at a certain level towards a particular qualification, rather than taking into consideration the learner's experience and award a qualification.

In an interview with SAFM in February 2010, the Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Blade Nzimande, said that the launch of the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) gives hope to the re-engineering and smooth operation of RPL, as the Council is now there to accredit, compare and equate workplace learning to academic learning within trades and occupations. Minister Nzimande said that RPL was a mechanism used to "recognise the experience and training that are acquired in the workplace."

RPL has been prevalent in areas such as "artisan skills", where experienced artisans are taken through assessment in terms of what they have learnt through working and are given appropriate qualifications.

In a follow-up interview with SAFM, the SAQA Chief Executive Officer, Mr Samuel Isaacs said that it is not only institutions of learning that are not sold on the idea of RPL, but employers as well. He echoed Minister Nzimande's sentiments that RPL "recognises learning that has a place other than in the classroom." Employers are still reluctant to accept qualifications received through RPL as they see it as an easy way of getting a qualification. This influences institutions' decisions regarding RPL, as there is no institution that would want to have "learners" that are not employable because the industry is questioning the credibility of the qualification. The whole idea of RPL is to support learners who, for some reason or other left the classroom setting to work, and therefore should never be interpreted "as an easier option" of getting a qualification, according to Isaacs.

In closing, Mr Isaacs stressed that SAQA and the QCs have a major role to play in building and maintaining the credibility of RPL in order to allay the fears of institutions and employers, with the support of the Human Resource Development Strategy. He also said that "many SETAs are working with SAQA to popularise RPL" and that "RPL is embedded in our system."



New qualifications that support national initiatives

Dugmore Mphuthing: *Acting Director: Standards Setting and Quality Assurance*



South Africa has, since the establishment of democracy in 1994, enjoyed rapid development economically and phenomenal improvements in terms of infrastructure. It has been an exciting time for a young country like ours, with development at times promoted and sustained by the fact that we are now noted players in the international arena, and therefore credible hosts for a number of major events in sport, arts and

culture and international conferences.

Any organisation that considers itself a player in the South African economy, but has not seen the need to keep up with developments, is definitely not a significant player in the game. The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), as a player in the education and training industry, definitely saw the gap and the need to develop qualifications that support South Africa's national initiatives.

Looking at where SAQA was coming from when, in September 2008, the Ministers of Labour and Education issued a joint statement signalling the end of the SAQA Act of 1995 and the beginning for the new landscape as per the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act, and associated legislation, which was promulgated in February 2009.

SAQA, since its inception, has had the operational responsibility for the development and ultimately registration of qualifications. This was done in response to stated national priorities like the National Skills Development Strategy; Human Resource Development Strategy; ASGISA and JIPSA. At the micro level, SAQA responded to sectoral and stakeholder needs, for example, sector skills analysis done by the SETAs. Currently, SAQA is in transition between the SAQA Act landscape and the NQF Act landscape. This has meant that while the QCTO was being established, SAQA has had to continue exercising its legacy mandate of developing and registering qualifications.

As a major role player in the education and training sector, SAQA took the responsibility upon itself to respond to the country's skills shortage and needs, informed by national imperatives on the one hand and sector skills plans on the other. In practical terms, we have entered into Joint Implementation Plans (JIPs) with many of the Sector Education and Training Authorities, government departments and diverse stakeholders to help them realise sectoral ambitions to create learning pathways and develop skills to meet their needs. A JIP is a Memorandum of Understanding between

two parties, in this case SAQA and second or third parties to align their material resources as the stakeholders with the qualifications development expertise that SAQA has.

Strategically, SAQA also identified other national priorities that had not been anticipated by sectoral planning authorities. A good example is that of South Africa's successful bid to host the FIFA 2010 Soccer World Cup which prompted SAQA to identify areas where qualifications development needed to be accelerated in order to respond to anticipated needs.

The 2010 FIFA World Cup has seen an increase in demand for otherwise unpredicted qualifications and skills. Qualifications that are directly related to the tournament include sports coaching, which reflects a high interest in sports participation, and administration. Indirectly related qualifications that were considered essential in order to make sure that South Africa hosts a successful world cup are in areas like security (policing and crowd control and management) and emergency medical care. There has also been a further knock-on effect in the tourism, hospitality and general entrepreneurship sectors to maximise economic benefits that are likely to flow from an influx of visitors into the country. Infrastructure development has seen an explosion in a whole range of construction-related qualifications like transport, telecommunications and Information Technology.

In terms of meeting the more regular skills shortages, SAQA has registered a generic Bachelor of Engineering to replace the Bachelor of Technology and Bachelor of Science Engineering qualifications and has developed engineering qualifications at lower levels to support the mining and transport sectors. In keeping with South Africa's increasingly "green" perspective, SAQA has developed unit standards in energy management to augment currently registered engineering qualifications at the highest levels.

On a broader front, SAQA will continue to support the ever changing national initiatives by ensuring the development of a world class NQF with internationally comparable qualifications and by driving initiatives to ensure systemic quality up to delivery level. SAQA's ongoing insistence on Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Accumulation and Transfer will ensure flexibility and mobility of the workforce, thus ensuring easier personal development for individuals and improved national economic performance, social development and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals.



SAQA Addresses HRD's missing link: Career development

Patricia Flederman: Consultant: Careers Advice

A school leaver begged her father for R12,000 - his life savings as a day labourer - to pay for a private college course. He wondered if this investment would propel his daughter into a sustainable livelihood or the family irretrievably deeper into poverty? What should he do?



Accurate, accessible information and guidance on work and study transitions are least available where needed most. Lack of these services is reproducing disadvantage in many ways. It is more affluent people who can most easily access new opportunities in work and study as they are generally in social and professional environments rich in formal networks and cultural capital relevant to mobility in education and work. And

poorer people will find it harder to recover from work and study investments that turn out to be a mistake.

SAQA's brief is to oversee the development and implementation of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). The NQF has developed learning pathways, which provide access to and mobility and progression within education, training and career paths. In late 2007, SAQA began to expand the question of access by asking what navigational tools were available to help the individual, such as the father or daughter mentioned above, to navigate increasingly diverse and complex work and study paths. To find out, SAQA commissioned a study to explore the state of career guidance in South Africa, which was published in November 2008.

The review found that in spite of pockets of quality career development service, most people did not have access to the information, guidance and skill building they need to navigate options and construct their learning and working lives. To address these voids, the central recommendation was that a multi-channel telephone/cellphone helpline be set up to provide accurate, comprehensive, quality information, reliable advice and networks to anyone living anywhere in South Africa.

This kind of career service is a far cry from the old traditional elitist model of career guidance. It begins with the reality of all people's lives and is educationally rather than psychologically based. Also it replaces the old notion of a career choice as a single event, with the idea that people construct their own lives making transitions throughout a lifetime. This new approach to career development was further articulated by internationally renowned career development expert, Professor Tony Watts, who was invited by SAQA to discuss these issues with various groups in Cape Town and Johannesburg, just after the study was completed.

The study was presented to a consultative group representing private and government career development entities and they

formally accepted the study's central recommendation for a multi-channel career information and advice helpline. SAQA agreed to incubate and develop this idea further.

Career helpline models in the UK and New Zealand are surprisingly relevant because they share the goals of inclusive affordable career development outreach services. In 2009 SAQA's study of these models included a visit to Leicester, England in February and a visit to New Zealand's careers helpline as part of an international career development conference in October.

While adapting lessons from the UK and New Zealand, SAQA is building on the 25-year history of CRIC (Careers Research and Information Centre) and its sister network of careers guidance NGOs that linked career development with national development goals.

SAQA developed a Five Year Strategic Business Plan and Proposal for the helpline and is currently seeking funding to establish a national helpline - a core part of a national career development system.

An exciting first is a Services SETA (SSETA) careers advice helpline currently under way specifically for work and careers in the services industry. SSETA has contracted SAQA to set up this helpline, which will eventually link seamlessly with the national helpline.

Vital to a career development system is a strategic leadership and policy environment that provides quality assurance and enhances collaboration. SAQA is joining with others to put energy behind this kind of initiative.



School children at a science expo



NQF Advocacy Project update

John Arnesen: Project Director: NQF Advocacy Campaign



The NQF Advocacy Project has grown in leaps and bounds. This is a phenomenal achievement, given the short space of time and the limited resources that characterised the project thus far.

In summary the NQF Advocacy initiative has three objectives:

- build public awareness, understanding and appreciation for the NQF brand value proposition;
- facilitate internal readiness and appropriate support services to underscore the NQF brand value proposition; and
- monitor the awareness, understanding and appreciation of the NQF brand value proposition within the target audiences.

The NQF brand is rapidly developing its own brand **image** and its own associated brand **experience**, thanks to the tremendous support from the NQF Advocacy Helpdesk team which includes all those from SAQA, DHET, the CHE, UMALUSI, the QCTO, SETAs, Professional Bodies and providers that so willingly go out of their way to assist in providing the right answers to the widely varied questions.

The NQF is actually not an organisation, but more popularly understood as a social construct. The NQF exists as a result of an Act of Parliament. In terms of this Act the NQF is described as a comprehensive system for the classification, registration, publication and articulation of quality assured national qualifications. More popularly the NQF is seen as a framework for communication, coordination and collaboration amongst all the role-players that make the NQF “come to life”. But from the public’s perspective the NQF (brand) is seen as a promise of quality and genuineness behind the provision of learning and the conferring of learning achievement.

As the public is encouraged to interact with the NQF (brand) through the NQF Advocacy Helpdesk, the NQF is being asked to deliver on its original mandate of facilitating access, redress, portability, articulation and thus help build a better life for all.

In the short life of the NQF brand, it is clear how easy it is for the public to understand what the NQF is and how it can work for them. The NQF brand image and experience have grown significantly

in value because of the ability of the NQF Advocacy Helpdesk to deliver on the brand expectation. The NQF brand is emerging as a valued and trusted “navigator, pathfinder, concierge” in guiding the public in the journey of lifelong learning.

The quick acceptance and appreciation of the NQF is because of the great work done in the last 15 to 20 years building the NQF. The foundation of the NQF lies in the NQF’s unwavering commitment to social justice, quality and standards. The strong and just foundation is now reaping tremendous rewards for all the organisations associated with the NQF and for the people of South Africa.



Ms Caroline Eva speaking to visitors of the NQF stand at the Star Workplace Career Expo



Taking the NQF to the public

Siphokazi Phillip: Assistant Director: Communication

Listeners of Ikwekwezi FM got to hear about SAQA, the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), qualifications and career choices in various sectors in their own language. This was the result of a relationship that was established between the SAQA and the public broadcaster, the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC). SAQA seeks to enable all individuals to value, have access to, and succeed in, quality lifelong education and training as signified by the NQF. This is evident in SAQA's communication strategy which seeks to positively influence perception, association and understanding of SAQA's role among its stakeholders and the broader education and training sector. A further role is to inform the public about the NQF and how SAQA ensures quality qualifications and promotes lifelong learning. One of the elements of the strategy is the establishment of relations with the media, particularly those that serve the learner, in order to raise awareness about the importance of quality qualifications.

February 2010 saw the beginning of a relationship between SAQA and the SABC that would lead to both organisations educating the public, a mandate that is shared by both organisations. The principle of this working relationship is to educate the public about SAQA and the NQF with the ultimate aim of enabling them to make informed qualification-related decisions. SAQA and Ikwekwezi FM, a Ndebele SABC radio station, started a pilot project that ran for a period of three months, where SAQA sponsored two education programmes a week.

One of the programmes is the Educator Developer, an hour long programme that aims to promote the culture of learning and teaching, teacher/learner issues, parental issues, Non-Governmental Organisations and all other school-related issues. The format is a phone-in programme where the SAQA representative introduced the topic and the listeners were given an opportunity to ask questions on the topic of the day.

The other programme, Learner Support, is 30 minutes long and aims to promote the culture of learning and teaching, study skills, exam preparation, career guidance, bursaries and literature study. This programme was used for sharing information, where the SAQA representative only interacted with the presenter.

The programmes covered a range of issues related to the NQF. The first programme dealt with SAQA and its role in the development and implementation of the NQF, with quality learning being the focus of the discussion. The next two programmes focused on how SAQA and the NQF ensure quality qualifications. Ikwekwezi listeners were also informed about a service that SAQA offers, i.e the evaluation of foreign qualifications. New qualifications registered on the NQF that support national initiatives was another topic for discussion. There was also a programme on career guidance and career pathways supported by NQF-registered

qualifications. SAQA's partners, Umalusi, the Council on Higher Education (CHE), the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO), Merseta, ETDP SETA and the Services SETA also featured in these programmes. They informed listeners about qualifications and careers in their sectors.

The listeners' responses were good and generally positive. Listeners asked relevant questions that further enriched the programmes and generated content for future programmes.



Ms Ntsiki Gumbe during the first programme of the pilot project



Mr Themba Magasela during the show on evaluation of foreign qualifications



Mr Mandlenkosi Ndukula discussing various qualifications and the career opportunities they provide



Roll-out of the NQF Support Link bursaries to Services SETA providers successful

Tumelo Modisane: Assistant Director: Information Services



The delivery of the NQF Support Link workshops to Services SETA training providers has proved to be successful, says Director of Strategic Support at SAQA, Ms Ntsiki Gumbe. This is in line with SAQA's objective of supporting targeted education, training and development communities to become effective leaders in National Qualifications Framework (NQF) best practices.

This comes after the Services SETA rolled out bursaries to 687 delegates, who are its accredited training providers, to attend the NQF Support Link workshops. The workshops were held in the following provinces: Eastern Cape, Free State, Mpumalanga, Gauteng, Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Northern Cape and Limpopo.

The providers attended five of the seven modules in the learning programme, namely:

- Module 1 – Implementing the NQF,
- Module 3 – the NQF and Learning Programmes,
- Module 4 – the NQF and Assessment,
- Module 5 – the NQF and Learnerships, and
- Module 7 – the NQF and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

The NQF Support Link is a seven-module learning programme developed by SAQA and offered by eDegree, to clarify understanding and promote competence in using the NQF. Its objective is to broaden access to learning about the NQF.

When asked for their comments on the programme, a learner said: “[It] was a very good course – relevant to what one is doing.” Another learner said, “I would like to thank eDegree and the Services SETA for all their hard work and everything to make this training a fruitful one.”

Other comments included: “The facilitator is knowledgeable about the NQF and the learnership process as a whole – more information was provided, “ while another said: “The learning programme module is relevant to my job and useful.”

The responses from the Services SETA learners emphasise one of the reasons why the NQF Support Link was created – to ensure that there is a common understanding and implementation of the NQF, says Ms Gumbe.

The NQF Support Link helps education and training organisations to build capacity and enables effective implementation of systems and processes. At the level of an individual it enables people to manage their own personal and career learning goals and pathways.

This learning programme was originally meant to be a self-study programme. SAQA and eDegree decided to give workshops for learners in response to learner needs. In the workshops learners are able to start completing their portfolios of evidence (PoE) in a workshop setting.

The NQF Support Link is accompanied by the NQF Implementation Toolkit – a stand-alone product that provides practical tools to assist users in the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of learning and skills development processes. The tools include step-by-step descriptions of processes, templates, flowcharts and practical guidelines that will assist people working with the NQF to translate the intent and principles of the NQF into learning programmes and processes.

With changes in the NQF landscape, a greater roll-out is expected this year to help people in the education and training sector to gain a better understanding of the NQF and be able to implement it effectively.



Study tours and visits

Yuven Gounden: Deputy Director: Communication



United Arab Emirates Qualifications Framework Project Study Tour

The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) hosted a delegation from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Qualifications Framework Project and Military Sector during a study tour in February 2010. The UAE is in the process of establishing a national qualifications authority as well as a qualifications framework. A pilot project is about to be launched and implemented in the military sector. The aim of the visit was to learn more about the National Learners' Records Database (NLRD); Standards Setting and Quality Assurance and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

Mr Joe Samuels (SAQA's Deputy Executive Officer) received and welcomed the delegation to SAQA. Mr Wynand van der Merwe, the designated spokesperson for the UAE delegation, gave a brief outline on the purpose of the visit and the education system of the UAE. Dr James Keevy (Director: International Liaison) took the delegates through the overview of SAQA. Ms Yvonne Shapiro (Director: NLRD) presented the NLRD, its purpose and uses. Acting Director for Standards Setting, Mr Dugmore Mphuthing, presented SAQA's model of standards setting and quality assurance. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a worldwide phenomenon, and Dr Heidi Bolton presented SAQA's role in the development of RPL policy and the implementation thereof.

As part of their study tour, the UAE delegation visited other institutions in the country including the Education and Training Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority, the Safety and Security Sector Education and Training Authority, the Assessment College of South Africa (an accredited provider), the Defence Training Institute, and the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations.



The UAE delegation was briefed by SAQA officials

Saudi Arabia's TVTC visits SAQA

The Technical and Vocational Training Corporation (TVTC) in Saudi Arabia was established as a government institution with the mandate of planning and supervising different education and training programmes. All training centres in Saudi Arabia, which used to be run jointly by the Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Education and other technical institutes were transferred to the TVTC. Consequently, the TVTC increased the number of graduates and was able to spread technical education and vocational training in Saudi Arabia. Dr Ali Al-Ghafis, the Governor of Saudi Arabia's TVTC, accompanied by three other officials, undertook a visit to South Africa to familiarise himself with the South African education system, especially the higher education system.

SAQA hosted this delegation on 15 April 2010. Mr Samuel Isaacs, Chief Executive Officer of SAQA, officially welcomed the delegation and outlined the roles and responsibilities of SAQA. This was complemented by presentations by Dr James Keevy (Director: International Liaison), who spoke about SAQA and the NQF environment and Ms Carina Oelofsen, Assistant Director, NLRD, whose presentation was on the mechanics of the NLRD. The delegation thanked SAQA for the valuable information and expressed the desire to engage further with SAQA.



Dr Keevy (right) outlines the role of SAQA to delegates from Saudi Arabia



NQF wins best stand award at the SABC Careers Fair 2010

Emlyn Jordaan: Assistant Director: Communication



The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) exhibited the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) to more than 6 000 learners, educators and parents at the SABC Careers Fair in Pietermaritzburg, from 11-13 May and won the best stand award. The NQF exhibition stand won the award, as it proved to be the best amongst more than 40 stands, visually and in terms of valuable information provided by the

NQF exhibitors (Mr Emlyn Jordaan & Ms Palesa Rakometsi from SAQA) manning the stand.

Around 6 500 learners, educators and parents attended the Fair and approximately 3 000 visited the NQF stand. The NQF

exhibitors made four presentations over the three days to different groups of attendees. Those attending the Fair, including Grade 10-12 learners, had the opportunity to learn about the NQF and how it can benefit them in making good choices regarding learning and careers for a better future. Career guidance initiatives that are currently undertaken by SAQA were also explained. Attendees were encouraged to contact the NQF Helpdesk for any education, training and career-related queries and to regularly make use of the services that the NQF offers.

SAQA has participated in a number of these career expos to interact directly with learners and educators and to inform them about the NQF, the opportunities and benefits it offers and to answer questions and offer advice on careers and learning pathways.

Exhibitions gallery



Ms Palesa Rakometsi and Mr Emlyn Jordaan with the NQF stand trophy



Mr Mandlenkosi Ndukula talking to delegates at the SAQA stand at the Skills & Training Summit



The NQF stand at the Star Workplace Career Expo



Mr Eric Khotsa sharing NQF information with learners visiting the SAQA stand at the SABC Career Fair in Limpopo



Contact Information

SAQA House, 1067 Arcadia Street, Hatfield 0083
Postnet Suite 248, Private Bag X06, Waterkloof 0145
Helpdesk: +27 860 103 188
Fax: +27 12 431 5147
E-mail: saqainfo@saqa.org.za
www.saqa.org.za