Information on Education and Training Quality Assurance (ETQA)
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Vision:
To be recognised as the leader in the development of a highly skilled knowledge-based information society.

Mission:
The MICT Seta generates, facilitates and accelerates the processes of quality skills development at all levels in the MICT sector.
Introduction

A Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) is a body established under the Skills Development Act (RSA, 1998c) whose main purpose is to contribute to the improvement of skills in South Africa through achieving a more favourable balance between demand and supply, and by ensuring that education and training:

♦ Acknowledges and enhances the skills of the current workforce, (in addition to ensuring that new entrants to the labour market are adequately trained);
♦ Meets agreed standards within a national framework;
♦ Is provided subject to validation and quality assurance;
♦ Where appropriate, is benchmarked against international standards (NTB, 1999);
♦ Are accredited by South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) as Education and Training Quality Assures (ETQAs) within the economic sector (distinguished in Regulation 2(3) of the ETQA Regulations (RSA, 1998a) from the education and training sector and the social sector), and therefore fulfill all the functions of ETQAs as set out in Regulation 9 (RSA, 1998a); and
♦ Monitor education and training in the sector.

What is the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)?
A statutory body responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of the NQF.

What is the NQF?
NQF stands for National Qualifications Framework, in short, the NQF is the set of principles and guidelines by which records of learner achievement are registered to enable national recognition of acquired skills and knowledge, thereby ensuring an integrated system that encourages life-long learning.

What is a Qualification?
A qualification is a learning outcome, made up of a cluster of unit standards, including fundamental, core and elective learning. This is to ensure that learners are not only competent in a particular field, but that they are
developed holistically with competence in inter alia, communication and numeracy, etc. This is subject to the definition and rules of combination as defined in section 8(1) of the National Skills Body Regulations.

A qualification is characterized by learning outcomes critical cross-field and specific outcomes which provide the learner with opportunities for further (lifelong) learning (for definitions of these terms, see RSA, 1998b). Subject to SAQA approval, a qualification can be registered on the National Qualifications Framework. Once thus registered, the qualification becomes “public domain property” (RSA, 1998b).

A qualification means the formal recognition of the achievement of learning. This is subject to the definition and rules of combination as defined in 8(1) of the NSB Regulations. A learning programme on the other hand is the process which one embarks upon in order to fulfill that achievement.

**What is a Unit Standard?**

A unit standard describes the desired education and training outcomes and their assessment criteria of learning for which the learner will get credits. A combination of relevant unit standards makes up a qualification.

**MICT Seta ETQA is committed to:**

- Promoting and accelerating quality education, training and development for all in the workplace;
- Promoting and Communicating qualifications and standards linked to priority skills in the ICT sector for sustainable growth, development and equity;
- Promoting employability and sustainable livelihoods through skills development in the ICT sector;
- Assisting designated groups, including new entrants to participate in accredited work, integrated learning and work-based programmes to acquire qualifications to enter the Labour market and self-employment;
- Ensuring and improving the quality and relevance of provision by and amongst constituent providers; and
- Liaising with all stakeholders, constituent providers, other ETQAs, national and provincial government departments on quality assurance processes and activities.
What is an ETQA?
ETQAs were established as part of The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) structure to ensure consistency and quality in training and education across all fields. MICT Seta was accredited as an ETQA by SAQA in February 2001 to quality assure provision of nationally recognized education and training qualifications and/or unit standards within the Media, Information and Communications Technology (MICT) sector. The MICT Seta has retained its accreditation status as an ETQA for all the qualifications and unit standards that it had previously been accredited by SAQA.

Functions of an ETQA are to:
♦ Accredit constituent education and training providers for specific standards or qualifications registered on the NQF;
♦ Promote quality amongst constituent providers;
♦ Monitor and audit quality provision of education and training, and achievement in terms of NQF qualifications and unit standards;
♦ Evaluate assessment and facilitate moderation of constituent providers;
♦ Register assessors and moderators;
♦ Certificate constituent learners who have achieved full qualifications;
♦ Co-operate with other ETQA’s across all sectors towards cross-sectional quality assurance;
♦ Recommend new or modifications of standards and/or qualifications to the standards Generating Body (SGB);
♦ Maintain a database that is Acceptable to SAQA on learners’ records of achievements, registered assessors and moderators, and accredited constituent providers; and
♦ Submit reports to SAQA and Department of Higher Education and Training (DHE&T).

Advantages of the ETQA:
♦ Ensure that the provider complies with the required standards for learning and assessment services;
♦ Learners are assured of a quality learning experience;
♦ Credits obtained from an accredited provider will be nationally and internationally recognized; and
Employers using accredited providers can qualify for Learnership tax rebates and discretionary grants.

**Responsibilities and services of the MICT Seta ETQA**

The MICT Seta ETQA performs among others the following services:

- The accreditation of constituent providers falling within its primary focus;
- Programme evaluation and approval of providers falling within and outside its primary focus;
- Facilitating the development and registration of qualifications and/or unit standards with Standard Generating Bodies (SGBs);
- The registration of assessors and moderators against qualification and/or standards;
- Monitoring and auditing of quality provision of education and training;
- Quality assurance of learner progress achievements and certification of learners;
- Monitoring the quality management system of accredited providers (i.e. policies, procedures, and mechanisms for the management of assessment and moderation);
- Promoting quality and building the capacity of amongst constituent providers; and
- Quality assurance of Learnerships and skills programmes.

**Accreditation**

Accreditation is the certification status that is granted to a training provider for a stipulated period of time not exceeding 5 years wherein the provider demonstrates the capacity to fulfil the function with SAQA’s quality assurance system and specific criteria as defined by the primary focus ETQA. The accreditation process is governed by the SAQA principle of ONE PROVIDER, ONE ETQA. A provider regardless of the sector in which they are active, can only be accredited by one ETQA. Providers should therefore apply for accreditation to one primary focus ETQA.

**What is accreditation?**

Accreditation may be defined as “the certification, for a particular period of time, of a body or an institution as having the capacity to fulfill a
training and or assessment function in the quality assurance system set up by the South African Qualifications Authority in terms of the Act. Accreditation will therefore be awarded only when a provider meets all ETQA conditions and requirements for accreditation against unit standards and qualifications as specified in the ETQA Regulations (No. R1127 of 1998).

What are the benefits of accreditation?

♦ Assurance that the training provider complies with the required national standards for quality learning and assessments;
♦ Assurance that learners are receiving quality lifelong learning experiences from an accredited training provider delivering NQF registered qualifications and/or unit standards;
♦ Continuance of extension of scope to deliver programmes outside their ETQAs primary focus;
♦ Credits obtained from an accredited training provider will be nationally recognised. This also ensures accessibility, portability, progression and articulation of a learner with other registered qualifications and unit standards;
♦ Credible registered assessors and moderators to ensure adherence to quality standards of assessments and moderations;
♦ Constant monitoring and auditing by the ETQA to ensure maintenance of quality education and training by an accredited training provider; and
♦ Employers using accredited training providers receive grant payments as per Skills Development Levies Act (Act No. 9 of 1999).

What does the accreditation process entail? Any training provider wishing to be accredited by MICT Seta should meet the following requirements and criteria, but these are not limited to the ones highlighted below.

1. Submit a portfolio of evidence with the following documents:

♦ Registration in terms of DoE, DHE&T (e.g. SDL and OHS), DTI (Legal Entity), SARS, and other applicable legislation as may be required;
♦ Organizational details including organizational chart;
♦ Quality management system (policies, procedures and review mechanism on HR, Learners, Financial, Assessment, Moderation, RPL, Administration, Certification, etc);
♦ Record keeping and documentation system;
♦ Internal Audit;
♦ Management Review; and
♦ Others that may be required.

2. **Submit learning programmes for evaluation to demonstrate the ability to develop deliver and evaluate these programmes against unit standards or qualifications.**

   *This will include but is not limited to the following:*

   ♦ Programme alignment to registered unit standards and qualifications;
   ♦ Programme design, development, delivery and evaluation;
   ♦ Assessment (including RPL) and moderation systems and tools;
   ♦ Practitioner expertise and registration (i.e. facilitator, assessor, and moderator CVs, certificates, service level agreements and other relevant information);
   ♦ Learners support services;
   ♦ Learners record management system; and
   ♦ Others that maybe required.

**Accreditation process flow:**

1. The Provider express their interest through email or telephonically, to be accredited by MICT Seta ETQA;

2. The ETQA forwards the accreditation requirements and application form to the provider;

3. The provider completes the application and compiles a portfolio and submits to MICT Seta within 30 days;

4. If primary focus is with MICT Seta, the ETQA will evaluate the portfolio submission;

5. The Provider will submit, mapped and aligned training material
(Facilitator guide(s), Learner guide(s) and Assessment guide(s)). For programme evaluation and approval;

6. The ETQA will conduct an on-site evaluation for the training;

7. If PoE, Programme, and Training Site are compliant, the ETQA Evaluators will submit reports for each process with recommendations to the ETQA Senior Manager for a decision;

8. The ETQA communicates the decision to the provider through confirmation letter;

9. If decision is accepted by the provider, the ETQA prints the accreditation certificate;

10. The provider may appeal the decision if they are not happy with the outcomes; and

11. The provider reapplies when the accreditation period expires.

How ETQA ensures quality provision by accredited training providers:

1. **Monitoring and auditing of quality provision of education and training.** All accredited providers will be monitored and audited at least once during their accreditation period to ensure that the quality of learning meets the SAQA and ETQA requirements in terms of learning programme delivery and quality management systems. The monitoring and auditing processes will also be used to identify areas of further development by the provider or de-accreditation where a provider is found to be totally not complying with the accreditation requirements.

2. **Registration of Assessors and Moderators.** The ETQA registers constituent assessors and moderators to ensure that its constituent providers have a pool of subject specialist assessors and moderators to draw on for the period of accreditation to conduct and manage assessments and moderations. **Assessor:** A qualified person who has been trained, endorsed by the ETDP Seta and registered with the MICT Seta to plan and conduct assessments against registered NQF qualifications and /or unit standards for which he/she has the relevant subject matter expertise.
Moderator: A qualified person, who has been trained, endorsed by the ETDP Seta and registered with the MICT Seta to ensure that the assessment of learning outcomes described in the NQF standards and/or qualifications are fair, valid and reliable. This person must also have the relevant subject matter expertise to conduct moderations on assessments.

3. Quality assurance of learner achievement. The ETQA will ensure that providers have in place a quality management system that includes policies, procedures, systems, processes and mechanisms for the management of assessments (internal and external). The universal assessment principles of fairness, validity and reliability will form the foundation for handling assessment, moderation and verification processes.

4. Certification of learners: In addition to record keeping and database facilities, ETQAs are responsible for issuing certificates on learner achievements. Certification of learners against registered qualifications/unit standards will be carried out after the ETQA has conducted verification and confirmed the moderation findings and endorsed the learner results. The ETQA will strive to ensure that credibility and integrity of the certification process is maintained.

What is the relationship between the MICT Seta providers and other Seta ETQA?

If a provider accredited by MICT Seta wishes to offer qualifications and/or unit standards outside the scope of the MICT Seta’s primary focus, the provider applies for an extension of accreditation which may be awarded upon approval by the MICT Seta. This is done on the basis of a contractual agreement (MoU) between the two Seta ETQAs. The training provider must submit the details of the programmes applied for and these will be forwarded to the ETQA concerned. The process is as follows:

- Receive letter of intent and application form to extend accreditation;
- Check providers application for primary focus and ETQA status;
- Process application for extension of accreditation;
- Forward learning programme to the ETQA of primary focus;
♦ Receive acknowledgment and grant permission to ETQA of primary focus to conduct programme evaluation; and
♦ Receive confirmation of programme evaluation/approval from the primary ETQA.

What is the relationship between Seta ETQA’s?

If a provider from another ETQA wishes to offer qualifications and/or unit standards within the MICT Seta’s primary focus, an extension of accreditation may be awarded on successful completion of programme evaluation process. This will also be done on the basis that a contractual agreement i.e Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed with the relevant ETQA. The training provider has been signed with the relevant ETQA.

The training provider must submit programmes for evaluation which include the following documentation:

♦ Proof of accreditation from the primary focus ETQA;
♦ Letter from primary focus ETQA permitting MICT Seta to conduct programme evaluation;
♦ Provider details and organizational alignment;
♦ Policies and procedures on delivery and assessment;
♦ Programme alignment to NQF unit standards and qualifications;
♦ Programme design and development;
♦ Content analysis and methodology;
♦ Assessment and moderation practices, and practitioner expertise;
♦ Learners support services; and
♦ Learner achievement records and management
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