

Minister Nzimande appoints SAQA board

23 February 2016 - The Department of Higher Education and Training announced earlier this week that it had appointed the SA Qualifications Authority's new board for a term, starting in January 2016 and running until December 2020.

The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act, 2008 (Act No. 67 of 2008) provides that the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) continues as a juristic person to oversee the further development and implementation of the NQF.

SAQA is accountable to the Minister of Higher Education and Training (the Minister) and the objectives of SAQA are to:

- (a) Advance the objectives of the NQF (chapter 2)
- (b) Oversee the further development and implementation of the NQF; and
- (c) Co-ordinate the three sub-frameworks, namely: The Higher Education Qualifications sub-framework, the General and Further Education and Training sub-framework and the Occupational qualifications sub-framework.

The functions of SAQA, subject to the Act, are to:

1. Oversee the implementation of the NQF Act
2. Advise the Minister on NQF matters
3. Oversee the implementation of the NQF in accordance with the implementation framework prepared by SAQA after the consultation with the Quality Councils (QCs)
4. Develop a system of collaboration to guide mutual relations of the SAQA and QCs
5. Resolve disputes regarding the QCs
6. Develop content of level descriptors of qualifications
7. Develop and implement policy and criteria for the registration and publication of qualifications and part qualifications
8. Register a qualification or part qualifications
9. Develop policy and criteria for assessment, recognition of prior learning and credit accumulation and transfer
10. Develop policy and criteria for recognising professional bodies
11. Collaborate with international counterparts on all mutual interest concerning qualifications frameworks
12. Share international best practise with QCs and other interested parties

13. Conduct research or commission investigations on issues important to the development and implementation of the NQF
14. Maintain records of education and training qualifications, part qualification, learner achievement, recognised professional bodies, profession designations
15. Provide and evaluation and advisory service; and
16. Inform the public about the NQF.

After careful consideration, taking into account the requirements of the NQF Act, the Minister has appointed the following members to serve on the Board with effect from 1 January 2016 until December 2020:

- Dr Vuyelwa Toni Penxa (Chairperson)
- Professor Talvin Gregory Schultz
- Dr Shamrita Devi Bhika
- Mr Bonisile Gantile
- Mr Edward de Klerk
- Professor Jerry O Kuye
- Mr Gordon Choaro Louw
- Ms Pricilla Lynnette Fundisile Nzimande
- Ms Anne Kathleen Oberholzer
- Professor Sarah Howie
- Ms Nadia Starr
- Mr Francis Malesela Maleka.

In addition the chief executive officer (CEO) of the SAQA and the chief executive officers of the Quality Councils (QCs), Council on Higher Education (CHE), Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) and Umalusi are members of the SAQA Board by virtue of their office.

The Minister has appointed Dr Vuyelwa Toni Penxa as the Chairperson of the SAQA Board and expresses his congratulations and appreciation to the new chairperson and the other members of the SAQA Board for their appointment and willingness to undertake the stewardship of this vital national institution.

The Minister of Higher Education and Training expressed his sincere appreciation to the outgoing chairperson Mr Johnson Njeke and the board for maintaining the object of the NQF Act and providing oversight to the functions SAQA has been statutorily tasked with.

He explained that the board had been appointed at a time when the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) was newly established and the NQF was just being implemented.

This board ably led the process including assisting DHET in setting up the Career Development Services at SAQA which has subsequently been handed over to DHET.

The board also oversaw the finalisation of the three qualifications sub-frameworks and the recognition of prior learning among other achievements. They have also kick-started the process of ensuring the integrity of the NQF by initiating a process to establish a register of misrepresented and fraudulent qualifications and part qualifications.

The Minister's wished for the new board to build on the successes of the previous board and take the NQF forward, especially in regards to the recognition of prior learning and the articulation for and of qualifications.