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**DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

NO. 1463

29 October 2021

**NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK ACT, 2008 (ACT NO. 67 OF 2006)  
OCCUPATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS SUB-FRAMEWORK POLICY**

I, Bonginkosi Emmanuel Nzimande, Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, in terms of section 8(2)(b) of the National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008 (Act No. 67 of 2008), hereby publish the *Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework Policy* as set out in the Schedule hereto.

All *Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework* policies previously determined and published by the Minister in the Gazette in terms of the above cited section, are hereby revoked. This Policy shall come into effect on the date of the publication of this Notice.

**Dr BE Nzimande, MP****Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation**

Date: 2/09/2021



## **Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework (OQSF) Policy, 2021**

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**LIST OF ACRONYMS**

<b>ACRONYM</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
<b>CAT</b>	Credit Accumulation and Transfer
<b>CHE</b>	Council on Higher Education
<b>DHET</b>	Department of Higher Education and Training
<b>EISA</b>	External Integrated Summative Assessment
<b>GENFETQSF</b>	General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-Framework
<b>HEQSF</b>	Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework
<b>NAMB</b>	National Artisan Moderation Body
<b>NEET</b>	Not in Employment, Education or Training
<b>NLRD</b>	National Learners' Records Database
<b>NQF</b>	National Qualifications Framework
<b>OQSF</b>	Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework
<b>QAP</b>	Quality Assurance Partner
<b>QC</b>	Quality Council
<b>QCTO</b>	Quality Council for Trades and Occupations
<b>RPL</b>	Recognition of Prior Learning
<b>SAQA</b>	South African Qualifications Authority
<b>SDA</b>	Skills Development Act
<b>SDP</b>	Skills Development Provider
<b>SETA</b>	Sector Education and Training Authority
<b>Umalusi</b>	Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training
<b>WIL</b>	Work Integrated Learning

**GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

<b>Term</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Accreditation</b>	Means an official approval awarded to a Provider by a Quality Council to offer qualifications registered on the National Qualifications Framework.
<b>Accredited Provider</b>	Means a legally established institution (public or private) that has been recognised, usually for a particular period of time, by a Quality Council (QC) or its appointed agent, as having the capacity or provisional capacity to offer a qualification or part-qualification registered on the NQF at the required standard.
<b>Application</b>	Means the functional combination of the practical component and the workplace component through skills learning or simulated work experience learning.
<b>Apprenticeship</b>	In line with the SDA, Act 97 of 1998 an apprenticeship means a learnership in respect of a listed trade, and includes a trade-test in respect of the trade.  In the context of this policy an apprenticeship means a learning programme in respect of an officially listed trade or occupational qualification, which includes an EISA in respect of that trade or occupation.
<b>Articulation</b>	Means the process of forming systemic, specific and individual possibilities of connection between occupational qualifications and/or part-qualifications to allow for the horizontal, vertical, lateral and diagonal movement of learners through the formal education and training system and its linkages with the world of work.
<b>Assessment</b>	Means the process used to identify, gather and interpret information against the required competencies in a qualification or part qualifications in order to make a judgement about a learner's achievement.
<b>Certificate</b>	Means a document indicating formal recognition by the QCTO of an occupational qualification or part-qualification awarded to a successful learner.
<b>Cognate</b>	Term used to mean similar or related.
<b>Comparability</b>	Means the degree of similarity between two or more qualifications /part qualifications in terms of purpose, level, credits, and learning outcomes in order to determine the extent of credit accumulation and transfer within or between institutions. The matching of curricular properties should be considered when comparability is determined.
<b>Credit</b>	Means a measure of the volume of learning required for a qualification or part-qualification, quantified as the number of notional study hours required for achieving the learning outcomes

Term	Description
	specified for the qualification or part-qualification. As a guide one (1) credit is equated to ten (10) notional hours of learning. This may be different for the work place component of the qualification.
<b>Credit Accumulation</b>	Means the totaling of credits required to complete a qualification or part-qualification.
<b>Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT)</b>	Means the practice of accumulation credits from one or more cognate learning programmes in an institution and transferring those credits to be recognized towards a qualification/part qualification in the same or different institution.
<b>Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT) system</b>	Means an arrangement whereby the diverse features of both credit accumulation and credit transfer are combined to facilitate lifelong learning and access to the workplace.
<b>Credit matrix</b>	Means a system in which learning outcomes can be arranged and compared in levels of increasing complexity based on agreed groupings of credits, such as in modules/subjects or part qualifications.
<b>Credit transfer</b>	Means the vertical, horizontal or diagonal relocation of credits towards a qualification or part-qualification registered on the same or different level, registered on the same or different Sub-Framework.
<b>Entry requirement</b>	Means the minimum academic knowledge and practical competencies, and or work experience that a learner must have completed to be able to be admitted for a qualification and or part qualification. This may include recognition of other forms of prior learning such as non-formal and informal learning and work experience deemed as comparable for entry. In the South African context, entry requirements also take into account the broad socio-political issues of access.
<b>Exit Level Outcomes</b>	Means the knowledge, skills and attitudes that a learner should have obtained or mastered on completion of a qualification or part qualification and against which the learner is assessed for competence.
<b>External Integrated Summative Assessment (EISA)</b>	The EISA is a final assessment which integrates the knowledge, practical and/or workplace experience to assess the competence of a learner against the stated exit level outcomes of an occupational qualification, part-qualification or skills programme.
<b>Final Integrated Supervised Assessment (FISA)</b>	Means a supervised final assessment for which assessment processes, tools, and results are recorded towards the achievement of a historically registered qualification or skills programme.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-Framework (GENFETQSF)</b>	Means the Sub-Framework of the NQF for General and Further Education and Training that is developed and managed by Umalusi.
<b>Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF)</b>	Means the sub-framework of the NQF for Higher Education that is developed and managed by the CHE.
<b>Internship</b>	Means the position of a learner or trainee who works in an organization, sometimes without pay, in order to gain work experience or satisfy requirements for a qualification.
<b>Learnership</b>	Means a learning programme registered with the DHET which consists of a structured learning component of a specified nature and duration, and which leads to a qualification registered on the NQF related to an occupation. A learnership is based on an agreement entered into between the learner, the institution and the employer.
<b>Learning Programme</b>	<p>Means a structured and purposeful set of learning experiences that lead to a qualification, part-qualification or skills programme</p> <p>The Skills Development Act, Act 97 of 1998 and the Sector Education and Training Workplace Based Learning Programme Agreement Regulations (No 1241 of November 2018) as published in the Government Gazette No 42037, Vol 641 of 16 November 2018 defined as a learning programme as follows:</p> <p>A Learning Programme includes a learnership, an apprenticeship, a skills programme and any other prescribed learning programme which includes a structured workplace experience component.</p>
<b>Level Descriptor</b>	Means a statement describing learning achievements at a particular level of the NQF that provides a broad indication of the types of learning outcomes and assessment criteria that are appropriate to a qualification or part-qualification at that level.
<b>Lifelong learning</b>	Means the learning that takes place in all contexts in life from a life-wide, life-deep and lifelong perspective - formally, non-formally and informally. It includes learning behaviours and obtaining knowledge as well as understanding and covers attitudes, values, and competences for personal growth, social and economic wellbeing, democratic citizenship, cultural identity, and employability.
<b>Minister</b>	Means Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation.
<b>Module</b>	Means an assessed/assessable unit of learning with a defined outcome and associated credits.
<b>National Learners' Records Database (NLRD)</b>	Means the electronic management information system of the NQF under the authority of SAQA, which contains records of qualifications, part-qualifications, learner achievements, recognized professional bodies, professional designations and associated information such as registrations and accreditations.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>National Qualifications Framework (NQF)</b>	<p>Means the comprehensive system, approved by the Minister of Higher Education Science and Innovation for the classification, registration, publication and articulation of quality-assured national qualifications and part-qualifications.</p> <p>The South African NQF is a single integrated system comprising three coordinated qualification sub-frameworks for General and Further Education and Training, Higher Education, and Trades and Occupations respectively.</p>
<b>Notional hours of learning</b>	Means the agreed estimate of the learning time that it would take an average learner to meet the defined learning outcomes; it includes consideration of contact time, research, completion of assignments, time spent in structured learning in the workplace, individual learning and assessment. Ten (10) notional hours equate to one (1) credit.
<b>National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act</b>	Means the National Qualifications Framework Act (No. 67 of 2008).
<b>Occupational qualification</b>	<p>The SDA defines an occupational qualification as “a qualification associated with a trade, occupation or profession resulting from work-based learning and consisting of knowledge unit standards, practical unit standards and work experience unit standards.”</p> <p>In the context of this policy an Occupational Qualification means a qualification associated with a trade, occupation or profession developed and quality assured under the auspices of the QCTO and consisting of knowledge/theory and application (practical skills/work experience/simulated work experience) components and an External Integrated Summative Assessment.</p>
<b>Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework (OQSF)</b>	Means the sub-framework of qualifications developed and managed by the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO).
<b>Occupational Standards</b>	Means statements of work performance that reflect the ability to successfully execute the functions of an occupation.
<b>Outcomes</b>	Means contextually demonstrated end products of specified learning process, which include knowledge, skills and values. Outcomes could be generic or specific.
<b>Parity of esteem</b>	Means placing equal value and status to qualifications that are on the same NQF Level, but have different routes of study. Parity of esteem is achieved when both qualifications progress equally to employment or to further studies.
<b>Part-qualification</b>	Means an assessed unit of learning with a defined outcome that is or will be, registered as part of a qualification on the NQF.
<b>Post-School Education and Training</b>	Means Education and Training opportunities for people who left school as well as adults who may never have been to school but require educational opportunities.



Term	Description
<b>Qualification</b>	Means a registered national qualification consisting of a planned combination of learning outcomes which has a defined purpose or purposes, intended to provide qualifying learners with applied competence and a basis for further learning and which has been assessed in terms of exit level outcomes, registered on the National Qualifications Framework and certified and awarded by a recognized body.
<b>Quality Council (QC)</b>	Means one of the three councils tasked with developing and managing one of the Sub-Frameworks of the NQF in order to ensure that agreed quality standards are met. These Quality Councils are Umalusi for the GENFETQSF; the CHE for the HEQSF; and the QCTO for the OQSF.
<b>Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO)</b>	Means the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations established in terms of the Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998.
<b>Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)</b>	Means the principles and processes through which the prior knowledge and skills of a person are made visible, mediated and assessed for the purposes of alternative access and admission, recognition and certification, or further learning and development.
<b>Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA)</b>	Means a sector education and training authority established in terms of section 9(1) of the Skills Development Act to perform functions set out in section 10 of this Act.
<b>Simulated work experience</b>	Means learning achieved through exposure and interactions gained through a simulated workplace environment that a learner has to complete towards the achievement of a qualification or part-qualification registered on the OQSF.
<b>Skills Development Act</b>	Means the Skills Development Act (No. 97 of 1998).
<b>Skills Development Provider</b>	Means a provider of occupational learning  a) established, deemed to have been established as such or registered with the department; and b) accredited by the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations to offer occupational qualifications in terms of the Skills Development Act.
<b>Skills Programme</b>	Chapter 5 of the SDA, Act 97 of 1998 defines a skills programme as "a skills programme that is occupationally based and when completed will constitute/contribute a credit towards a qualification registered on the NQF.
<b>South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)</b>	Means the Qualifications Authority contemplated in Chapter 4 of the NQF Act.
<b>Standard</b>	Means the set criteria, norms and model that are prescribed.
<b>Sub-Framework of the NQF</b>	Means one of three coordinated qualifications Sub-Frameworks which make up the South African NQF as a single integrated

<b>Term</b>	<b>Description</b>
	system, namely: the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-Framework (GENFETQSF), the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF), and the Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework (OQSF).
<b>Trade</b>	Means an occupation contemplated in section 26B of the Skills Development Act for which an artisan qualification is required.
<b>Work Experience</b>	Means the exposure and interactions gained through being in the work place.
<b>Workplace-based Learning</b>	Means the learning achieved through exposure and interactions required to practice, gained while integrating the knowledge, skills and attitudes required in the workplace.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is a comprehensive system for the "classification, registration, publication and articulation of quality-assured national qualifications", as stipulated in Section 4 of the NQF Act.
- 1.2 In terms of section 7 of the NQF Act, the NQF comprises of three co-ordinated qualifications Sub-Frameworks for:
  - 1.2.1 General and Further Education and Training, as contemplated in the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, Act 58 of 2001 administered by Umalusi.
  - 1.2.2 Higher Education, contemplated in the Higher Education Act, Act 101 of 1997 administered by the Council on Higher Education (CHE); and
  - 1.2.3 Trades and Occupations, contemplated in the Skills Development Act (SDA), Act 97 of 1998, administered by the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO).
- 1.3 The objectives of the NQF, as outlined in Section 5 of the NQF Act, are to:
  - 1.3.1 Create a single integrated national framework for learning achievements;
  - 1.3.2 Facilitate access to, mobility and progression within, education, training and career paths;
  - 1.3.3 Enhance the quality of education and training; and
  - 1.3.4 Accelerate the redress of past unfair discrimination in education, training and employment opportunities.
- 1.4 The objectives of the NQF are designed to contribute to the full personal development of each learner and the social and economic development of the nation at large. SAQA and the Quality Councils (QCs) must seek to achieve the objectives of the NQF by:
  - 1.4.1 Developing, fostering and maintaining an integrated and transparent national framework for the recognition of learning achievements;
  - 1.4.2 Ensuring that South African qualifications meet appropriate criteria determined by the Minister as contemplated in Section 8 of the NQF Act and that they are internationally comparable; and
  - 1.4.3 Ensuring that South African qualifications are of an acceptable quality.
- 1.5 It is against this background that the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, in terms of Section 8 (2) (e) of the NQF Act, has determined as policy the three sub-frameworks that comprise the NQF.

## 2. LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

2.1 The NQF Act identifies the roles and responsibilities of the different structures/bodies that are responsible for ensuring the achievement of the objectives of the NQF. In this regard, the following roles in relation to the NQF are highlighted.

2.2 Roles and responsibilities:

2.2.1 The Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation has overall responsibility for the NQF and for determining the qualification design for the occupational qualifications sub-framework.

2.2.2 SAQA is responsible for the development and implementation of policy and criteria, after consultation with the QCs, for the development, registration and publication of qualifications and part-qualifications.

2.2.3 The QCTO performs its functions in accordance with Sections 24 to 27 of the NQF Act, 2008 and Section 26H of the Skills Development Act, 1998.

2.2.4 In terms of Section 26H: Functions of the QCTO:

- (1) The QCTO must advise the Minister on all matters of policy concerning occupational standards and qualifications.
- (2) The QCTO must perform its functions in terms of this Act and the National Qualifications Framework Act.
- (3) Subject to any policy issued by the Minister in terms of Section 26F, the QCTO is responsible for-
  - a) establishing and maintaining occupational standards and qualifications;
  - b) the quality assurance of occupational standards and occupational qualifications and learning in and for the workplace;
  - c) designing and developing occupational standards and qualifications and submitting them to the South African Qualifications Authority for registration on the National Qualifications Framework;
  - d) ensuring the quality of occupational standards and qualifications and learning in and for the workplace;
  - e) promoting the objectives of the National Qualifications Framework Act and the Skills Development Act;
  - f) liaising with the National Skills Authority on the suitability and adequacy of occupational standards and qualifications and on the quality of learning in and for the workplace;
  - g) liaising with the South African Qualifications Authority, other Quality Councils and professional bodies responsible for establishing standards

and qualifications or the quality assurance of standards and qualifications; and

h) performing any other prescribed function.

(4) The QCTO has all such powers as are necessary to enable it to perform its functions in terms of this section.

(5) The Minister may issue written instructions, which are not inconsistent with any policy made by the Minister in terms of Section 26F, to the QCTO regarding the performance of its functions in terms of Subsection (3).

(6) The QCTO must comply with -

a) any policy determined by the Minister in terms of Section 26F; and

b) any written instruction issued by the Minister in terms of Subsection (5).

2.2.5 In summary the QCTO is responsible for/to -

a) the development and management of the QQSF and for advising the Minister on matters relating to the QQSF in consultation with SAQA;

b) quality assurance in occupational education and training; and for the development of standards, occupational qualifications and part-qualifications;

c) ensure that RPL, CAT and assessment (Section 27(h) (ii)) as well as the level descriptors (Section 27(g)) are part of its sub-framework.

### **3. PURPOSE OF THE OCCUPATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS SUB-FRAMEWORK (QQSF)**

3.1 The purpose of the QQSF is to facilitate the development and registration of quality-assured occupational (including trade-related) qualifications, part-qualifications and skills programmes from NQF Level 1 to 8. The QQSF makes available occupational qualifications and part-qualifications that give people access to occupations, trades and/or relevant professions.

3.2 The QQSF gives effect to the Ministerial determination of the Sub-frameworks that comprise the National Qualifications Framework, Government Notice 1391 published in Gazette No. 44031 of 24 December 2020. It meets the needs of existing and emerging sectors by ensuring that all learners, professionals, workers, unemployed and those classified as NEET (not in employment, education or training), are equipped with relevant and portable competencies that support lifelong employability.

3.3 The QQSF is designed to:

3.3.1 Facilitate the education and training of post-school learners who will contribute to the social, cultural and economic development of South Africa and participate successfully in the variety of skills needed in the global economy.

3.3.2 Be comparable with occupational qualifications offered by foreign institutions and international standards, where applicable.

- 3.3.3 Be suitably flexible to accommodate the development of emerging trade and occupational qualification types and part-qualifications as the need arises.
- 3.3.4 Be simple, easy to understand and user-friendly for the occupational education and training system and its stakeholders.
- 3.3.5 Facilitate the articulation of occupational qualifications and part-qualifications within the QQSF, and between the QQSF and the other two NQF Sub-Frameworks - and assist learners to identify potential progression routes (options), such as entry, exit and learning pathways, particularly in the context of lifelong learning.
- 3.3.6 Facilitate vertical, horizontal and diagonal progression within the sub-framework, and across the NQF through articulation with the other sub-frameworks.
- 3.3.7 Facilitate articulation through the utilisation of articulation pathway maps for each registered occupational qualification and part qualification both within and between sub-frameworks.

#### **4. SCOPE AND APPLICATION**

- 4.1 The QQSF policy applies to all occupational qualifications and part-qualifications that are registered on the QQSF of the NQF in South Africa, and which are offered by legally operating skills development providers.
- 4.2 The QQSF regulates occupational qualifications and part-qualifications in terms of their development, provisioning, implementation and quality assurance as part of the post school education and training system.
- 4.3 The QQSF promotes the facilitation of access to as well as mobility and progression within education, training and career paths.
- 4.4 The QQSF contributes to enhancing the quality and transparency of education and training in the post school education and training system.

#### **5. THE OCCUPATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS SUB-FRAMEWORK (QQSF)**

- 5.1 Occupational qualifications and part-qualifications are competency based. Such qualifications or part-qualifications enable learners to acquire the knowledge, skills and values required for a specific occupation, trade or profession.
- 5.2 The QQSF consists of registered qualifications and part qualifications which consist of two key components viz, knowledge/theory and application, where:
- 5.3 Application means the functional combination of the practical component and the workplace component through skills learning or simulated work experience learning.
- 5.4 For certain categories of occupational qualifications and part-qualifications as specified by industry, the key components may be specified as knowledge/theory, practical and work experience.

5.5 The OQSF provides for 9 (nine) occupational qualification types which are as per the Ministerial Determination of the Sub-frameworks that comprise the National Qualifications Framework, Government Notice 1391 published in Gazette No. 44031 of 24 December 2020.

5.6 The table below reflects the determined qualification types on the NQF as per the Ministerial Determination in Government Notice 1391 published in Gazette No. 44031 of 24 December 2020

NQF Sub-Framework/ Quality Council	NQF Level	NQF Sub-Framework and Qualification Type		NQF Sub-Framework/ Quality Council
Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF) Council on Higher Education (CHE)	10	Doctoral Degree Doctoral Degree (Professional)		Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework (OQSF) Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO)
	9	Master's Degree Master's Degree (Professional)		
	8	Bachelor Honours Degree Post Graduate Diploma Bachelor's Degree	Specialised Occupational Diploma	
	7	Bachelor's Degree Advanced Diploma	Advanced Occupational Diploma	
	6	Diploma Advanced Certificate	Occupational Diploma Advanced Occupational Certificate	
	5	Higher Certificate	Higher Occupational Certificate	
General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-Framework (GFETQSF) Umalusi	4	National Certificate	National Occupational Certificate	
	3	Intermediate Certificate	Intermediate Occupational Certificate	
	2	Elementary Certificate	Elementary Occupational Certificate	
	1	General Certificate	General Occupational Certificate	

### 5.7 Occupational Qualification

- 5.7.1 The SDA defines an occupational qualification as a qualification associated with a trade, occupation or profession resulting from work-based learning and consisting of knowledge unit standards, practical unit standards and work experience unit standards
- 5.7.2 An occupational qualification should have a minimum of 120 credits and meet requirements described in section 24 of this policy.
- 5.7.3 An occupational qualification must contain between 5% and 10% of soft skills which may include inter alia personal development, self-learning, workplace preparation, personal finance management, basic entrepreneurship or emotional intelligence, etc. This is in line with the 10 competences of the level descriptors.

## 5.8 Part-Qualifications

- 5.8.1 An assessed unit of learning that meets requirements of a part qualification will be registered as part of a qualification.
- 5.8.2 Part-qualifications will be developed and published in accordance with the SAQA Policy and Criteria for the Registration of Qualifications and Part-qualifications of the NQF;
- 5.8.3 The design of a part-qualification:
- a) Part-qualifications must have knowledge/theory and application learning components;
  - b) Part-qualifications as specified by industry, the key components may be specified as knowledge/theory, practicals and work experience.,
  - c) Part-qualifications could be part of more than one occupational qualification;
  - d) Part-qualifications should indicate the name of the registered or to be registered qualification(s) of which it forms part;
  - e) Part-qualifications should have no more than 120 credits;

## 5.9 Skills Programmes

- 5.9.1 A skills programme is a QCTO-accredited learning programme that is occupationally based and which, when completed, will constitute credits towards a qualification or part qualification registered on the NQF.
- 5.9.2 Minimum requirements for admission to a skills programme are specified in the skills programme document.
- 5.9.3 The minimum duration of a skills programme is two weeks (with a minimum of 8 credits).
- 5.9.4 Skills programmes must have a link of a minimum of two qualifications/part qualifications for which CAT may apply.
- 5.9.5 A record consisting of Skills Programmes and learners who achieved against programmes will be maintained by the QCTO.
- 5.9.6 Successful completion of a Skills Programme would require that a learner should have completed a final supervised assessment.
- 5.9.7 Skills Development Providers must submit to the QCTO such Skills Programmes that they seek to offer. The QCTO will accredit the Skills Development Provider to offer the Skills Programmes if the required criteria have been met.
- 5.9.8 A Skills Programme can be developed from a number of qualifications and or part-qualifications.
- 5.9.9 Learners completing a Skills Programme will be issued with a certificate.
- 5.10 Exceptions will be dealt as provided for in Section 22 of the Ministerial Determination in



Government Notice 1391 published in Gazette No. 44031 of 24 December 2020.

- 5.11 The OQSF recognises multiple routes (including but not limited to, apprenticeship, learnership, internship, candidacy (as stated in Workplace Regulations), e-learning, CAT and RPL) towards the attainment of an occupational qualification or part-qualification.
- 5.12 Competency is demonstrated through the successful completion of a final supervised assessment. Access to the EISA process can be obtained via the relevant qualifications as well as through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).
- 5.13 The OQSF provides for:
- 5.13.1 Flexibility and options with respect to trade, occupational and professional related qualifications. Also, flexibility by creating learning pathways from part-qualifications to qualifications over time or from one learning programme to another as learners pursue their careers.
  - 5.13.2 Post-school opportunities comparable to those in the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework. OQSF qualification offerings differ in nature from, but are cognitively comparable to HEQSF qualifications - which creates the potential for parity of esteem between qualifications across the Sub-Frameworks of the NQF.
  - 5.13.3 Part-qualifications that represent sets of employable skills as well as a mechanism for the recognition and credentialing of skills within the informal economy.
  - 5.13.4 Integration of occupational qualifications and part-qualifications into the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and a basis for development of standards and quality assurance as well as a mechanism for improving the coherence in the skills development system.
  - 5.13.5 The development and implementation of Occupational standards for industry and the labour market through defining the learning outcomes and learning associated with occupational qualifications and part-qualifications.
  - 5.13.6 Consistent use of qualification titles and their designators and qualifiers.
  - 5.13.7 Standards determined by industry or a profession, based on standards recognised by industry or the profession.
  - 5.13.8 The development and implementation of differentiated OQSF qualifications.

## **6. STANDARDS IN THE OQSF**

### **6.1 Occupational Standards**

- 6.1.1 The development of occupational standards for occupational qualifications contributes to the successful implementation of the OQSF. Occupational qualifications that are developed should comply with the Policy for The Registration and Criteria to Register Qualifications and Part-qualification of the NQF.

- 6.1.2 Occupational standards are statements of work performance that reflect the ability to successfully execute the functions and apply the required knowledge, skills and understanding in an occupation.
- 6.1.3 Occupational standards are used to provide a reference point for identifying the modules that should be included in each qualification, together with the learning outcomes to be achieved.
- 6.1.4 Occupational standards are developed in a collaborative way by a Community of Expert Partners approved by the QCTO, which comprise expert representatives from industry, institutions of education and training, training providers, labour representatives and professional bodies concerned - which ensures the deep relevance of lifelong learning and work as well as of qualifications with their constituent modules and rules of combination.

## 6.2 Setting and maintaining standards for the QQSF

- 6.2.1 The standards for occupational qualifications and part-qualifications are established and maintained in the:
  - a) Development and review of occupational qualifications and part-qualifications;
  - b) Provisioning of occupational qualifications and part-qualifications through approval of quality assurance partners;
  - c) Final external integrated summative assessment of a learner's occupational competence; and
  - d) Certification of occupational qualifications, part-qualifications and skills programmes.

## 7. QUALIFICATIONS, VOLUMES OF LEARNING AND CREDITS

- 7.1 To be consistent with the NQF, as a whole the QQSF uses notional hours as a general measure of the amount of learning required by the average learner to demonstrate competence in an occupational qualification or part-qualification, which is stated as the number of credits required to achieve the qualification or part-qualification.
- 7.2 The duration of training and learning is specified in credits per module for the knowledge/theory and application (practical skills/work experience/simulated work experience) components.
- 7.3 The allocation of credits follows the NQF requirement of ten (10) notional hours as equivalent to one (1) credit. This may be different for the work place component of the qualification.

## 8. ACCUMULATION OF CREDITS TOWARDS QUALIFICATIONS

- 8.1 Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT) is a process regulating the practice of

accumulation of credits from one or more cognate learning programmes in an institution and transferring those credits to be recognised towards a qualification/part qualification in the same or different institution.

- 8.2 In terms of the CAT principles, any and all credits for an incomplete qualification or part-qualification may be recognised as meeting part of the requirements for another qualification or part-qualification in line with the CAT policy.
- 8.3 RPL and CAT will be implemented in terms of approved QCTO policies.

## 9. QUALIFICATION TYPES

- 9.1 The QQSF has nine qualification types mapped onto the first eight levels of the 10-level South African NQF. The QQSF comprises the following qualification types:

Type	NQF Level
General Occupational Certificate	1
Elementary Occupational Certificate	2
Intermediate Occupational Certificate	3
National Occupational Certificate	4
Higher Occupational Certificate	5
Advanced Occupational Certificate Occupational Diploma	6
Advanced Occupational Diploma	7
Specialised Occupational Diploma	8

- 9.2 The nine qualification types and their designated variants will replace current occupational certificate types.
- 9.3 The Minister, on the advice of SAQA and in consultation with the QCTO, may approve a new qualification type and its unique descriptor when a proven need arises as a result of developments in knowledge, production, skills development, or acknowledged international good practice.
- 9.4 The Minister may also, and where appropriate, approve the relocation of certain qualification types to other sub-frameworks of the NQF.
- 9.5 The use of qualification types in the occupational qualifications context, is regulated by this policy.
- 9.6 An occupational qualification type may only be used if the qualification fulfils the specifications for the type.
- 9.7 Each occupational qualification and part-qualification type is fully described in Section 24 of this policy.

- 9.8 If the need arises the QCTO may extend its scope to include occupational qualifications and part-qualifications at NQF levels 9 and 10 with the approval of the Minister.

## 10. QUALIFICATION DESCRIPTORS

- 10.1 The QCTO occupational qualifications as per Ministerial Determination in Government Notice 1391 published in Gazette No. 44031 of 24 December 2020 will be registered from Levels 1 to 8 of South Africa's 10-level NQF.
- 10.2 Part Qualifications will be registered at any level of the NQF.
- 10.3 The South African NQF Level Descriptors provide coherence for applied competences and learning outcomes in qualifications and part-qualifications, at particular levels of complexity; they provide guidelines for differentiating the increasing levels of complexity, for qualification development and delivery, for assessment, and for international comparability.
- 10.4 Ten categories are used in the NQF Level Descriptors, to describe the applied competences at the 10 NQF levels. The 10 categories of competence at each level are:
- a) scope of knowledge,
  - b) knowledge literacy;
  - c) method and procedure;
  - d) problem-solving;
  - e) ethics and professional practice;
  - f) accessing, processing and managing information;
  - g) producing and communicating information;
  - h) understanding systems and context;
  - i) managing learning; and
  - j) accountability.

## 11. NAMING OF QUALIFICATIONS AND QUALIFICATION TYPES

- 11.1 The naming convention of full occupational qualifications is designated as follows:
- a) Firstly, by the **Type**: e.g. General Occupational Certificate; Elementary Occupational Certificate; Intermediate Occupational Certificate; National Occupational Certificate; Higher Occupational Certificate; Advance Occupational Certificate; Occupational Diploma; Advanced Occupational Diploma; and Specialised Occupational Diploma.
  - b) Secondly, by the **Qualification Descriptor**: e.g. occupation applicable for that qualification. (e.g., Occupational Certificate: Plumber; Financial Markets Practitioner; Pharmacy Technician).
  - c) Thirdly, where required, a **qualifier** may be inserted to specify the qualification specialisation i.e., the discipline/field of study that contributes to the academic/vocational/occupational/professional identity in a particular area/branch of knowledge. The qualifier delineates the context of the qualification or part qualification (e.g., Electrician (High Voltage)).
  - d) Fourthly by the **NQF Level** to indicate the level of complexity of the qualification, e.g., National Occupational Certificate: Rigger, NQF Level 4.

- e) Fifthly, by **Credits** to indicate the duration of learning required to complete the qualification.

11.2 The naming convention of part-qualifications is designated as follows:

- a) Firstly, by the **Type**: i.e. Part Qualification
- b) Secondly, by **Name** applicable for that part qualification as defined by industry (e.g. Assistant Plumber).
- c) Thirdly, where required, a **qualifier** may be inserted to specify the part qualification specialisation i.e. the discipline/field of study that contributes to the academic/vocational/occupational/professional identity in a particular area/branch of knowledge. The qualifier delineates the context of the qualification or part qualification (e.g., Domestic).
- d) Fourthly, by the **NQF Level** to indicate the level of complexity of the part qualification.
- e) Fifthly, **Credits** to indicate the duration of learning required to complete the part qualification.

11.3 The naming convention of skills programmes is as follows:

- a) Firstly, by the **Type**: i.e., Skills Programme.
- b) Secondly, by **Name** applicable for that skills programme as defined by industry (e.g., Plumber Hand).
- c) A skills programme should not have a name similar to that of a qualification or part qualification registered on the NQF.

## 12. ACCESS TO AND PROGRESSION IN OCCUPATIONAL LEARNING

- 12.1 All occupational qualifications on the OQSF specify the minimum entry requirements, which include the possibilities for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) as well as Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT).
- 12.2 The QCTO develops and oversees the implementation of RPL and CAT policy for the OQSF context that is aligned to the DHET and SAQA policies, criteria and guidelines for articulation, RPL and CAT.
- 12.3 The QCTO will publish its sub-framework policies for RPL and CAT that are aligned to National policies for RPL, CAT and articulation.
- 12.4 Within the context of the OQSF, RPL addresses the principles and processes through which the prior knowledge and skills of a person are made visible, mediated, and assessed, for the purposes of:
  - a) alternative access and admission to qualifications and/or part-qualifications on the OQSF; and/or
  - b) alternative access to the External Integrated Summative Assessment (EISA).

## 13. WORK EXPERIENCE LEARNING

- 13.1 Work experience may be dealt with through the application component utilising actual work-based learning, simulations, virtual reality, artificial intelligence and other innovative

approaches that create environments that enable the learning of the competencies required.

- 13.2 Work experience learning must be integrated with theory/knowledge and practical learning.

#### **14. RECOGNITION OF COMPLETED TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT**

- 14.1 All Occupational qualifications are certified by the QCTO and indicate the achievement of the occupational qualification or part-qualification.
- 14.2 Completion of a qualification and part qualification requires a learner to complete an EISA.
- 14.3 Completion of a Skills Programme will require a learner to complete a final supervised assessment.
- 14.4 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) comprises:
- a) Making visible evidence of prior non-formal and informal learning that is adequate for access to the EISA.
  - b) Successful completion of the EISA at an accredited assessment centre.

#### **15. QUALIFICATION, PART QUALIFICATION AND SKILLS PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT**

- 15.1 Occupational Qualifications, Part-Qualifications and Skills Programmes will be developed based on market demand or potential market demand supported by reputable research conducted on Informal and Formal economies.

#### **16. SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROVIDER ACCREDITATION**

- 16.1 The QCTO will approve and issue accreditation for Skills Development Providers to offer Occupational Qualifications and/or Part-Qualifications and Skills Programmes
- 16.2 Accredited Skills Development Providers wanting to offer Occupational Qualifications and/or Part-Qualifications registered on the NQF or QQSF-registered Skills Programmes outside the borders of the Republic of South Africa must obtain approval from the quality assurance governance structures in those countries and submit same to QCTO.
- 16.3 Accredited Skills Development Providers wanting to offer foreign qualifications in South Africa must obtain approval from the quality assurance governance structures from those countries and inform the QCTO. This will only apply if the foreign qualification is not similar to an QQSF Occupational Qualifications or Part-qualifications or Skills Programme offered in the Republic of South Africa.

## 17. QUALITY ASSURANCE

- 17.1 Quality assurance within the QQSF covers all aspects of the qualifications, from qualification design and development to the implementation of the occupational qualifications and part-qualifications, the accreditation of skills development providers, the external integrated summative assessment and certification of successful learners.
- 17.2 The primary goal of quality assurance is to ensure the standardisation of processes and continuous compliance to set standards so that credible certificates are issued to qualifying learners.
- 17.3 Quality assurance is elaborated upon in the QCTO quality assurance framework and policies.

## 18. CERTIFICATION

- 18.1 Certification is the formal recognition of the learner having completed all aspects of an occupational qualification or part-qualification or skills programme.
- 18.2 The requirements to achieve the qualification, part-qualification and skills programme inform the certification process.
- 18.3 The entire quality assurance cycle culminates in the issuing of a certificate.
- 18.4 The QCTO is responsible for the issuing of certificates for all occupational qualifications, part-qualifications and skills programmes and to ensure that the certificates issued are credible.
- 18.5 An integral part of the QCTO certification responsibilities is to:
- a) Develop, maintain, implement and monitor policies and directives for certification;
  - b) Maintain acceptable standards for awarding certificates, and
  - c) Maintain a certification system and infrastructure that includes appropriate security arrangements.
- 18.6 The QCTO is further responsible for verifying the authenticity of the certificates that it has issued.
- 18.7 Language of qualification certificates and statement of results issued:
- a) The QCTO promotes multilingualism; and
  - b) To enable employers, skills development providers, parents and others to understand the achievements and attributes represented by a qualification title, a certificate must be issued in English, or on special request with valid reasons, in any other official language.

**19. QCTO MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM**

- 19.1 Details of occupational qualifications and part-qualifications on the OQSF and information on accredited skills development providers, including learner achievements, will be recorded on the QCTO management information system for submission to the National Learners' Records Database.

**20. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

- 20.1 Registered occupational qualifications stipulate legal requirements for compliance with legislation relating to specific occupations.

**21. NON-COMPLIANCE WITH POLICY**

- 21.1 Non-compliance with the provisions of this policy shall be dealt with in accordance with the QCTO's disciplinary processes.

**22. IMPLEMENTATION DATE**

- 22.1 This policy comes into effect on the date of publication in the Gazette and remains in effect until it is revoked or amended by notice in the Gazette.

**23. IMPLEMENTATION AND TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS**

- 23.1 The registration end date for Pre-2009 qualifications and unit standards registered on the OQSF shall be 30 June 2023.
- 23.2 The last date of first-time learners enrolling for Pre-2009 qualifications and unit standards registered on the OQSF shall be 30 June 2024.
- 23.3 The last date of achievement for learners enrolled for Pre-2009 qualifications and unit standards on the OQSF shall be 30 June 2027.
- 23.4 The OQSF will ensure that the accreditation periods for Pre-2009 qualifications coincide with the Ministerial Determination.
- 23.5 All qualifications registered on the OQSF must be aligned to the NQF Level Descriptors by 30 June 2023, to ensure coherence in learning, and to enable the allocation of qualifications to particular levels in order to assess their comparability and parity of esteem.
- 23.6 The Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation may, on the advice of the SAQA and/or a Quality Council, publish exceptions on the Determination from time to time.
- 23.7 Records of learner achievements for qualifications or part-qualifications that have reached the last date of enrolment and last date of achievement remain valid.



- 23.8 Existing QQSF qualifications viz. Occupational Certificates will be revised and reregistered with qualification types in accordance with the New Ministerial Determination by 2025.
- 23.9 The QCTO will work with Umalusi and the CHE to ensure that the articulation routes involving the qualifications in the QQSF exist in practice by 2025.

## 24. OCCUPATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS DESCRIPTORS AND QUALIFICATION TYPES

### A. GENERAL OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATE

#### Type specifications

**NQF Exit Level:** 1 (The NQF Level allocation will be as per the SAQA level descriptors)

**Minimum total credits:** 120

#### Type

General Occupational Certificate

#### Descriptor

As per the requirements of the occupation. Example: General Occupational Certificate: Footwear Hand Lacer and Hand Inter-lacer, NQF Level 1

#### Abbreviations

Example: Gen. Occ. Cert: Footwear Hand Lacer and Hand Inter-lacer

#### Purpose and characteristics

This is an entry level occupational qualification. The qualification is primarily occupational, with a strong industry-oriented focus. The qualification also serves to provide learners with the basic knowledge/theory and application techniques for occupational studies in their chosen field of study.

This qualification signifies that the learner has attained a basic level of occupational knowledge and application in a particular occupation and is capable of applying such knowledge and competence in an occupation or role in the workplace with supervision. The General Occupational Certificate includes simulated work experience.

#### Minimum admission requirements

The minimum entry requirement is stipulated in each registered General Occupational Certificate.

#### Progression

Completion of the General Occupational Certificate meets the minimum entry requirement for admission to a cognate qualification example: Elementary Occupational qualification on the QQSF or similar qualifications on the GFETQSF.

## **B. ELEMENTARY OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATE**

### **Type specifications**

**NQF Exit Level:** 2 (The NQF Level allocation will be as per the SAQA level descriptors)

**Minimum total credits:** 120.

### **Type**

Elementary Occupational Certificate

### **Descriptor**

As per the requirements of the occupation Example: Elementary Occupational Certificate: Weaving Machine Operator, NQF Level 2

### **Abbreviations**

Example: Elem. Occ. Cert: Weaving Machine Operator

### **Purpose and characteristics**

This is an elementary level occupational qualification. The qualification is primarily occupational, with a strong industry-oriented focus. The qualification also serves to provide learners with the elementary knowledge/theory and application techniques for occupational studies in their chosen field of study.

This qualification signifies that the learner has attained an elementary level of occupational knowledge and application in a particular occupation and is capable of applying such knowledge and competence in an occupation or role in the workplace with minimal supervision. The Elementary Occupational Certificate includes simulated work experience and some practical experience.

### **Minimum admission requirements**

The minimum entry requirement is stipulated in each registered Elementary Occupational Certificate.

### **Progression**

Completion of the Elementary Occupational Certificate meets the minimum entry requirement for admission to a cognate Intermediate Occupational Certificate on the OQSF or similar qualification on the GFETQSF.

**C. INTERMEDIATE OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATE****Type specifications**

**NQF Exit Level:** 3 (The NQF Level allocation will be as per the SAQA level descriptors)

**Minimum total credits:** 120

**Type**

Intermediate Occupational Certificate

**Descriptor**

As per the requirements of the occupation. Example: Intermediate Occupational Certificate: Functional Yard Operator, NQF Level 3

**Abbreviations**

Example: Interm. Occ. Cert: Functional Yard Operator

**Purpose and characteristics**

This is an intermediate level occupational qualification. The qualification is primarily occupational, with a strong industry-oriented focus. The qualification also serves to provide learners with the basic knowledge/theory and application techniques for occupational studies in their chosen field of study.

This qualification signifies that the learner has attained an intermediate level of occupational knowledge and application in a particular occupation and is capable of applying such knowledge and competence in an occupation or role in the workplace. The Intermediate Occupational Certificate typically includes simulated work experience without supervision and practical experience.

**Minimum admission requirements**

The minimum entry requirement is stipulated in each registered Intermediate Occupational Certificate.

**Progression**

Completion of the Intermediate Occupational Certificate meets the minimum entry requirement for admission to a cognate National Occupational Certificate on the OQSF or similar qualification on the GFETQSF.

## D. NATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATE

### Type specifications

**NQF Exit Level:** 4 (The NQF Level allocation will be as per the SAQA level descriptors)

**Minimum total credits:** 120

### Type

National Occupational Certificate

### Descriptor

As per the requirements of the occupation. Example: National Occupational Certificate: Strata Control Practitioner: Electrician, NQF Level 4

### Abbreviations

Example: Nat. Occ. Cert.: Electrician

### Purpose and characteristics

This is an equivalent qualification to the National Senior Certificate or to the National Certificate (Vocational) 4 where similar theoretical subjects have been covered. Additional theoretical competence may be required where a learner wants to use the Occupational Certificate for admission to other sub-frameworks. This is an occupational qualification, with a strong industry-oriented focus. The qualification also serves to provide learners with the knowledge/theory and application techniques for occupational studies in their chosen occupations. It emphasises selected general knowledge/theory together with a more specific application.

This qualification signifies that the learner has attained a certain level of knowledge/theory and application in a particular occupation, is capable of applying such knowledge and competence in an occupation or role in the workplace, and supervise other learners with similar or lower qualifications. The National Occupational Certificate includes simulated or actual work experience and practical experience.

### Minimum admission requirements

The minimum entry requirement is stipulated in each registered National Occupational Certificate.

### Progression

Completion of the National Occupational Certificate meets the minimum entry requirement for admission to an appropriate Higher Occupational Certificate. Accumulated credits may also be presented for admission into a cognate Higher Occupational Certificate or similar qualification in the HEQSF.

**E. HIGHER OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATE****Type specifications**

**NQF Exit Level:** 5 (The NQF Level allocation will be as per the SAQA level descriptors)

**Minimum total credits:** 120

**Type**

Higher Occupational Certificate

**Descriptor**

As per the requirements of the occupation. Example: Higher Occupational Certificate: Contact Centre Manager; NQF Level 5

**Abbreviations**

Example: Higher. Occ. Cert.: Contact Centre Manager

**Purpose and characteristics**

This is an entry-level post-secondary occupational qualification. The qualification is occupational, with a strong industry-oriented focus. The qualification also serves to provide learners with the cognitive introductory knowledge/theory, conceptual tools and practical techniques for occupational education studies in their chosen field of study. It emphasises selected general principles together with procedures that are more specific and their application.

This qualification signifies that the learner has attained a post-secondary level of occupational education knowledge/theory and competence in a particular field or occupation and is capable of applying such knowledge and competence in an occupation or role in the workplace. The Higher Occupational Certificate includes simulated work experience.

**Minimum admission requirements**

The minimum entry requirement is stipulated in each registered Higher Occupational Certificate.

**Progression**

Completion of the Higher Occupational Certificate meets the minimum entry requirements for admission to an appropriate Occupational Diploma. Accumulated credits may also be presented for admission into a cognate qualification registered on the HEQSF.

## F. ADVANCED OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATE

### Type specifications

**NQF Exit Level:** 6 (The NQF Level allocation will be as per the SAQA level descriptors)

**Minimum total credits:** 120

### Type

Advanced Occupational Certificate

### Descriptor

As per the requirements of the occupation. Example: Advanced Occupational Certificate: Nuclear Power Plant Process Controller, NQF Level 6

### Abbreviations

Example: Adv. Occ. Cert.: Nuclear Power Plant Process Controller

### Purpose and characteristics

This qualification is primarily industry-oriented. It emphasises selected general principles together with more specific procedures and their application and/or technology transfer.

The qualification provides learners with a sound knowledge base in a particular field or discipline and the ability to apply their knowledge and skills to a particular career or occupational context, while equipping them to undertake more specialised and intensive learning. Programmes leading to this qualification tend to have a strong occupational or career focus and learners and holders of this qualification are normally prepared to enter a specific niche in the labour market. Advanced Occupational Certificate qualifications includes application which have work experience learning or simulated work experience.

### Minimum admission requirements

The minimum entry requirement is stipulated in each registered Advanced Occupational Certificate.

### Progression

Completion of the Advanced Occupational Certificate meets the minimum entry requirement into a cognate Advanced Occupational Certificate on the OQSF or similar qualifications on the HEQSF.

**G. OCCUPATIONAL DIPLOMA****Type specifications**

**NQF Exit Level:** 6 (The NQF Level allocation will be as per the SAQA level descriptors)

**Minimum total credits:** 360

**Type**

Occupational Diploma

**Descriptor**

As per the requirements of the occupation. Example: Occupational Diploma: Nuclear Power Plant Process Controller, NQF Level 6

**Abbreviations**

Example: Occ. Dip.: Nuclear Power Plant Process Controller

**Purpose and characteristics**

This qualification is primarily industry-oriented. It emphasises selected general principles together with more specific procedures and their application and/or technology transfer.

The qualification provides learners with a sound knowledge base in a particular field or discipline and the ability to apply their knowledge and skills to a particular career or occupational context, while equipping them to undertake more specialised and intensive learning. Programmes leading to this qualification tend to have a strong occupational or career focus and learners and holders of this qualification are normally prepared to enter a specific niche in the labour market. Occupational Diploma qualifications includes application which have work experience learning or simulated work experience.

**Minimum admission requirements**

The minimum entry requirement is stipulated in each registered Occupational Diploma.

**Progression**

Completion of the Occupational Diploma meets the minimum entry requirement into a cognate Advanced Occupational Diploma on the QQSF of similar qualifications on the HEQSF.



## H. ADVANCED OCCUPATIONAL DIPLOMA

### Type specifications

**NQF Exit Level:** 7 (The NQF Level allocation will be as per the SAQA level descriptors)

**Minimum total credits:** 120

### Type

Advanced Occupational Diploma

### Descriptor

As per the requirements of the occupation. Example: Advanced Occupational Diploma: Finance Market Practitioner, NQF Level 7

### Abbreviations

Example: Adv. Occ. Dip.: Financial Market Practitioner

### Purpose and characteristics

This qualification primarily has an occupational orientation, which includes industry specific knowledge that provides a sound understanding of general theoretical principles as well as a combination of general and specific knowledge/theory and their application.

The purpose of the Advanced Occupational Diploma is to develop learners who can demonstrate focused knowledge and skills in a particular field and who have gained experience in applying such knowledge/theory and skills in a workplace or simulated workplace context. An in-depth knowledge, together with practical skills and experience in the workplace, enables successful learners to enter a number of career paths and to apply their learning to particular employment contexts from the outset. Advanced Occupational Diploma programmes include an appropriate application of work experience learning or simulated work experience.

### Minimum admission requirements

The minimum entry requirement is stipulated in each registered Advanced Occupational Diploma.

### Progression

Completion of an Advanced Occupational Diploma meets the minimum entry requirement for admission to a Specialised Occupational Diploma on the OQSF. Accumulated credits may also be presented for admission into a cognate qualification on the HEQSF.

## I. SPECIALISED OCCUPATIONAL DIPLOMA

### Type specifications

**NQF Exit Level:** 8 (The NQF Level allocation will be as per the SAQA level descriptors)

**Minimum total credits:** 120

### Type

Specialised Occupational Diploma

### Descriptor

As per the requirements of the occupation. Examples: Specialised Occupational Diploma: Energy Management Advisor, NQF Level 8; Specialised Occupational Diploma: Internal Audit Manager, NQF Level 8; and Specialised Occupational Diploma: Tax Professional, NQF Level 8.

### Abbreviations

Example: Spec. Occ. Dip.: Internal Audit Manager, Spec Occ. Dip.: Energy Management Advisor

### Purpose and characteristics

This qualification has a number of different purposes, depending on a learner's circumstances and the nature of the qualification. It may provide entry-level professional preparation or specialisation for Bachelor Degree graduates or diplomates by offering an intensive, focused and applied specialisation that meets the requirements of a specific niche in the labour market. For example, a BCom Accounting graduate might register for a Specialised Diploma (Occupational): Tax Professional in order to enter the field of tax revenue and budgets; a BSc (Hon) graduate might register for a Specialised Diploma (Occupational): Energy Management Advisor in order to become an energy management advisor, or a BCom (Hons) graduate might register for a Specialised Diploma (Occupational): Internal Audit Manager in order to become an Auditor in the auditing industry.

Skills Development providers offering this qualification are therefore particularly suitable for continuing professional development through the inculcation of a deep and systematic understanding of current thinking, practice, theory and work experience learning in an area of specialisation. This qualification may also be designed to prepare learners for postgraduate study through the deepening of their knowledge and understanding of theories, work experience and practices in specific occupational disciplines and fields as well as the development of their ability to formulate, undertake and resolve more complex theoretical, practice-related problems and work experience tasks through the selection and use of appropriate methods and techniques.

### Minimum admission requirements

The minimum entry requirement is stipulated in each registered Specialised Occupational Diploma.

### Progression

Completion of a Specialised Occupational Diploma may be presented for entry into a cognate qualification on the HEQSF.