

# REGISTRATION OF PRIVATE FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING (FET) COLLEGES

## INFORMATION ABOUT WHAT THE PUBLIC, STUDENTS AND PARENTS SHOULD LOOK FOR BEFORE THEY ENTER INTO ANY CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT WITH A PRIVATE COLLEGE

### Call for application to register as a private FET college

On 6 June 2005 in the *Government Gazette No. 27660* the Minister of Education called for submission of applications from existing private institutions offering qualifications that are registered at Level 2 to 4 of the National Qualifications Framework(NQF). The closing date for the submission of these applications was 30 May 2006. This date applied to private institutions that were offering FET qualifications as at 30 May 2006. It did not apply to new institutions that are in a start-up phase or old companies that want to start offering FET qualifications.

### End of the transitional arrangement period

According to the notice that was published by the Minister of Education in *Government Gazette No 28911* of 1 June 2006, with effect from **1 January 2008**, no person, other than a public FET college or an organ of state, shall be allowed to offer FET qualifications unless such a person is registered or provisionally registered as a private FET college in terms of the Act. Any person who contravenes the Act is guilty of an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine or imprisonment not exceeding five years or to both fine and imprisonment.

The implications of the Minister's notice is that all private education institutions offering FET qualifications which did not lodge application for registration with the Department of Education before **31 December 2007** are operating illegally.

### National register of private FET colleges

Currently, the Department is processing applications received for registration of private FET colleges. In order to enable the public to make informed decisions when choosing a private FET college, the Department is legally bound to keep a *National Register of Private FET colleges*. Any member of the public can inspect the register to determine which private colleges are registered to offer FET qualifications.

The *National Register of Private FET colleges* is available on the Department of Education's website at: [www.education.gov.za](http://www.education.gov.za).

In addition, there is a *Private FET College Extension List* on the Department of Education's website at: [www.education.gov.za](http://www.education.gov.za). These private colleges on the Extension List are those that have been granted authority by the Registrar of the Private FET colleges to offer FET qualifications until their applications are finalised. Extensions are granted in instances where the Department has not yet finalised the determination of an application due to the following reasons:

- Late submission of applications
- Outstanding information not submitted for processing
- Outstanding accreditation reports.

For further details regarding the list of provisionally registered colleges, contact the Department of Education on 0800 734338. Enquiries can be faxed to 012 323 8817.

### Parents, students and the public must verify the qualifications offered by private colleges

Before making any payment or entering into a contractual agreement with a private college, the student must confirm the registration status of the college with the Department of Education. Enquiries on the registration status of private FET colleges and private HE institutions must be directed to the national Department of Education at 012 312 5878 and 012 312 5320 respectively.

Students, parents and the public must always verify the college's credentials before enrolling on a programme. Students wishing to enrol with private colleges can protect themselves by:

- Insisting on seeing a brochure with details of the college and qualifications offered.
- Completing an enrolment form of which they keep a copy;
- Studying the student agreement carefully before enrolling ;
- Insisting on information regarding semester and examination timetables;
- Satisfying themselves that the college has adequate resources both physical and human, needed for the delivery of the qualifications; Verifying claims of offering internationally recognized qualifications by a college, while it is not registered to operate in South Africa. Contact the Department of Education for verification;
- Being on the look out for the false use of the names of world-renowned colleges.

In addition, before students, parents and the public determine whether a qualification for which they wish to enroll has NQF currency or value, they should look out for the use of the following terms:

### Certificate

#### The minimum duration of the qualification

- The minimum duration of study for a certificate is one academic year which includes contact time, self-study, assignments and practical exposure.

#### The SAQA ID number of the qualification

- A qualification registered on the NQF must have a SAQA ID Number.

#### The NQF Level of the qualification

- FET Certificate means qualifications that are registered at Levels 2, 3 or 4 of the NQF.

#### Number of credits of a qualification

- FET certificate consists of a minimum of 120 credits.

### Diploma

#### The minimum duration of the qualification

- The minimum duration of study for a diploma is two academic years which includes contact time, self-study, assignments and practical exposure.

#### The SAQA ID number of the qualification

- A qualification registered on the NQF must have a SAQA ID Number.

#### The NQF Level of the qualification

- Diploma means qualifications that are registered at Levels 5 to 6 of the NQF.

#### Number of credits of a qualification

- Diploma consists of a minimum of 240 credits.