QCTO SKILLS PROGRAMME GUIDELINES

This guidelines document provides a broad overview on QCTO skills programme architecture, content, process and procedure to have a skills programme recorded by the QCTO.

1. DEFINITIONS

1.1 "Articulation" means facilitating the progress and mobility of learners within and across each of the three Sub-frameworks and to the world of work, which is achieved by the intentional design of structure and content of Skills Programmes.

1.2 "Assessment criteria" means the standards used to guide learning and assess learner achievement and/or to evaluate and certify competence.

1.3 "Credits" means the amount of learning contained in a Skills Programme whereby one (1) credit is equal to ten (10) notional learning hours.

1.4 "Entry requirements" means the theory and application (or practical, and/or work experience) that a learner must have completed to be able to be admitted for a Skills Programme. 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 issue of access.

1.5 "Exit Level Outcomes" refer to the outcomes which define the level of performance according to which a candidate completing the Skills Programme is assessed.

1.6 "Learning" means the acquisition of knowledge, understanding, values, skill, competence or experience.

1.7 "Level" means one of the series of levels of learning achievement arranged in ascending order from one to ten according to which the NQF is organised.

1.8 "Notional hours of learning" comprise the total amount of time it would take an average learner to meet the outcomes defined in a learning experience and include, inter alia, face-to face contact time, time spent in structured learning in the workplace, time for completing assignments and research, and time spent in assessment processes.

1.9 "Outcomes" means the contextually demonstrated end-products of specific learning processes, which include knowledge, skills and values. Outcomes could be generic in that they apply across many fields of learning (generic outcomes include aspects such as "ability to problem-solve" or "understanding the world as a set of inter-related systems").

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1.10 "Recognition of Prior Learning" means 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.

1.11 "Skills Development Provider" means a skills development provider contemplated in section 17 of the Skills Development Act.

1.12 "Skills Programme" means an occupationally directed learning programme that allows learners to acquire knowledge and skills in a number of tasks and enable learners to build up credits towards a full or part qualification registered on the NQF. A Skills Programme will be developed by Facilitators, a Community of Experts and Practitioners from the industry, and will be recorded as a national Skills Programme in the QCTO Database.

1.13 "Sub-framework" means one of the Qualifications Sub-frameworks which make up the NQF as a single integrated system: The Higher Education Qualifications Sub-framework, the and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework and the Occupational Skills Programmes Sub-framework.

2. SCOPE

The Skills Programme Guidelines apply to the development and recording of skills programmes on the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations Record Database taking into account the requirements of the Occupational Qualifications Sub-frameworks (OQSF) Policy.

3. OBJECTIVES

To advance the objectives of the OQSF Policy, Guidelines are designed to:

3.1 Facilitate the development and recording of Skills Programmes, which have been \ recommended to QCTO by the Quality Partners and/or Skills Development Providers, where they meet the criteria set out in this guideline;

3.2 Ensure that Skills Programmes are relevant to the world of work and promote responsible citizenship in a democratic society and advance knowledge and innovation for a prosperous South Africa;

3.3 Create a basis for and promote lifelong learning; and

3.4 Support the development of a national career development system.

4. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND RECORDING OF SKILLS PROGRAMMES

4.1   The Skills Development Provider will apply to QCTO to develop a Skills Programme/s.

4.2   The QCTO will check on its list of Skills Programmes if the one applied for is not on its lists of Skills Programmes.

        The QCTO, through its research unit, will look into the relevancy, currency, need and validity of the Skills Programme applied for.

4.3   The Skills Development Provider after receiving an approval from QCTO will develop and submit the Skills Programme to QCTO.

4.4   The developed Skills Programme will be evaluated, moderated and approved by QCTO.

4.5   QCTO will record a Skills Programme as a National Skills Programme.

4.6   Skills Programmes recorded by QCTO must, inter alia:

4.7   Include Purpose and Rationale of the Skills Programmes; and

4.8   State the minimum requirements to obtain the Skills Programme.

4.9   The QCTO is the final authority that records Skills Programmes on the QCTO Database.

4.10   Skills Development Providers or Quality Partners will advise QCTO, in writing, of Skills Programmes that will no longer be offered. These Skills Programmes, even though no longer offered, still form part of the recorded Skills Programme on the QCTO Database.

5. CRITERIA FOR THE RECORDING OF SKILLS PROGRAMMES ON THE QCTO DATABASE

Skills Programmes must:

5.1   Be submitted to QCTO for recording by Quality Partners or Skills Development Providers;

5.2   Comply with the criteria for recording;

5.3   Be written in English; and

5.4   Meet the criteria as laid down by QCTO for the Skills Programme.

6. SKILLS PROGRAMMES COMPOSITION

6.1 Skills Programme composition details

6.1.1 Skills Programme Information

6.1.1.1 Title

6.1.1.2 Sub-title

6.1.1.3 Alternative Titles used by industry

6.1.1.4 Related Occupational Skills Programme

6.1.1.5 Purpose

6.1.1.6 Rationale

6.1.2 Content

6.1.2.1 Knowledge

6.1.2.1.1 Topics

6.1.2.1.2 Total Credits (Duration)

6.1.2.2 Application

6.1.2.2.1 Topics

6.1.2.2.2 Total Credits (Duration)

6.1.3 Minimum Entry Requirements

6.1.4 Assessment

6.1.4.1 Assessment Criteria on Continuous Assessment

6.1.4.2 Assessment Criteria on Supervised Assessment

6.1.4.3 Exit Level Outcomes on Continuous Assessment

6.1.4.4 Exit level Outcomes on Supervised Assessment

6.1.5 Further Learning Pathways (Articulation)

6.1.6 Work Opportunities

6.1.7 Provider Accreditation Requirements for the Skills Programme

6.1.8 As stipulated in the accreditation of Skills Development Provider Policy.

6.1.9 An extension of scope process will be conducted to a Skills Development Provider that has a valid accreditation status.

6.1.10 Physical Requirements

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6.1.11 Human Resource Requirements

6.1.12 Legal Requirements

6.1.13 Safety requirements

6.1.14 Exemptions

6.2 Skills Programme composition items unpacked

6.2.1 Title
The title must comply with the Skills Programme.

6.2.2 The Proposer
The Proposer can be any Skills Development Provider or Quality Partner.

6.2.3 Level of the Skills Programme
The SAQA published level descriptors must be used to help determine the level of the Skills Programme.

6.2.4 Credits
The credits must be calculated on the basis of one (1) credit being equal to ten (10) notional hours of learning. The minimum credit allocation for a Skills Programme must comply with the requirements for the Skills Programme type as determined within the relevant Sub-framework of the NQF.

6.2.5 Rationale
The rationale should:

a.   Provide details of the reasoning that led to identifying the need for the Skills Programme;

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b.   Indicate how the Skills Programme meets specific needs in the sector for which it is developed;

c.   Identify the range of typical learners and indicate the occupations, jobs or areas of activity in which the qualifying learners will operate;

d.   Indicate the learning pathway where the Skills Programme resides; and

e.   Indicate how the Skills Programme will provide benefits to the learner, society and the economy.

6.2.6 Purpose

a.   The purpose should describe the context of the Skills Programme and what it is intended to achieve in the national, professional and/or career context.

b.   The purpose statement should capture what the qualifying learner will know and be able to do on achievement of the Skills Programme.

c.   The Exit Level Outcomes must be linked to the purpose of the Skills Programme.

6.2.7 Minimum Entry Requirements

The minimum entry requirements to the Skills Programme must be stated. The entry requirements should be aligned to the approved institutional/provider admissions policies.

6.2.8 Assessment Criteria and Exit Level Outcomes

a.   The exit level outcomes

The exit level outcomes which are framed against the level descriptors, should indicate what the learner will be able to do and know as a result of completing the Skills Programme. These competencies relate directly to the competencies required for the further learning and/or the work for which the Skills Programme was designed.

b.   Assessment criteria

Assessment criteria are written for the Skills Programme to indicate the nature and level of the assessment associated with the Skills Programme and how the exit level outcomes could be assessed in an integrated way. The criteria can be given as a comprehensive set derived from the level descriptors.

6.2.9   Assessment (Continuous and Supervised)

The assessment undertaken to determine the learners' applied competence and successful completion of learning in the Skills Programme must be stated. This could include reference to formative (continuous) and summative (supervised) assessment; ratio of assignment work (continuous assessment) to supervised assessment; the role of work integrated learning; other forms of integrated learning; and its assessment.

6.2.10 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Institutional RPL (QP or SDP) policies must clearly state how RPL will be applied to gain entry to or achieve the Skills Programme. The RPL policies of QPs and/or SDPs must be made available to QCTO upon such request. The RPL policies of QPs and/or SDPs must be aligned to the QCTO or national SAQA RPL Policy.

6.2.11 Related Qualification/s

If there is a registered qualification/s that is related to the Skills Programme, this should be stated.

6.2.12 Work Opportunities

Possible work opportunities or self-employment opportunities after completing the Skills Programme should be stated.

6.2.13 Further Learning Opportunities

If the Skills Programme has further learning opportunities, this should be stated.

6.2.14   Fees on Accreditation of SDPs

6.2.14.1   The QCTO may charge fees for application and/or accreditation of SDPs that seek to offer Skills Programmes and

6.2.14.2   The QCTO Council will determine fee structure.

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