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Memo to: Skills Development Provider (Existing and New Applicants)

Dear Skills Development Providers

**PSETA GUIDELINES FOR SDPs ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TECHNOLOGY-BASED LEARNING INTERVENTIONS.**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Quality Council for Trades Occupations (QCTO) has in terms of Section 26I (2) of the Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998 (SDA) as amended, and the Council's delegation policy, delegated the Quality Assurance Partner (QAP) functions to the Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority (PSETA).
- 1.2 The delegation was conferred to the PSETA as of 27 September 2012 and it is limited to the Public Service sector. Amongst others the delegation requires that the PSETA:
  - i. Accredit Skills Development Providers (SDPs) for the qualifications or part qualifications listed in the schedule in terms of criteria determined by the QCTO. This relates to the Historically Registered Qualifications;
  - ii. Monitor the provision by providers of Learning Programmes leading to the qualifications or part qualifications in order to ensure that the criteria for accreditation are being complied with;
  - iii. Evaluate learner assessment and the facilitation of moderation of learner assessment by providers;
  - iv. Register assessors and moderators to undertake assessments and moderation for specified qualifications or part qualifications in terms of criteria determined by the QCTO;

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- v. Certify qualified learners in accordance with the policy determined by the Minister in terms of section 26F of the SDA;
  - vi. Maintain a comprehensive learner information management system;
  - vii. Upload learner data to the National Learner Records Database (NLRD) according to the NLRD load specifications; and
  - viii. Perform such other functions consistent with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act and the SDA as the QCTO may from time to time allocate to the SETA in writing.
- 1.3 The delegation expires once the qualifications delegated to the PSETA are reviewed and replaced by qualifications developed and registered on the Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework (OQSF) or until the qualifications reach their registration end date and teach out periods or when the qualifications are withdrawn by the QCTO.
- 1.4 The delegations is subject to the following terms and conditions:
- i. The QCTO may review the quality management policies and procedures of the PSETA and examine the activities of the Quality Assurance Partner (QAP) department;
  - ii. The PSETA must ensure the integrity of quality assurance by exercising its delegated functions separately and independently from any provision of education and training; and
  - iii. The performance by the SETA of its delegated functions must advance the objectives of the NQF as contemplated in section 5 of the NQF Act.
- 1.5 Any changes to the delegation will be communicated through the QCTO/SETA Forum where PSETA has representation.
- 1.6 The advent of the Fourth Industrial Revolution and more recently the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, has necessitated the need to fast track the use of alternative methods of provision of learning. While we acknowledge that some SDPs have already started piloting various methods of technology-based learning, it is a fact that many other SDPs require assistance with implementation thereof. This memo therefore aims to provide interim guidance while a formal policy framework is being finalised for accreditation of technology-based learning.

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## 2. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE

- 2.1. The purpose of this memo is to provide guidelines regarding educational provision leading to an award or part of an award which is delivered and/or supported and/or assessed through means which generally do not require the learners to attend particular classes or events at particular times and particular locations. This includes practice such as e-learning, distance learning, blended learning, flexible learning, instructor led training and the use of web-based materials to supplement classroom-based learning.
- 2.2. The Guidelines outlines the minimum requirements that the PSETA expects should be met by skills development providers when delivering this provision.
- 2.3. The requirements of this guidelines are in addition to the normal expectations on SDPs, as detailed through the accreditation process.
- 2.4. In this time of crisis, the PSETA stands by the SDPs and learners and is committed to finding flexible solutions to ensure that education and training continues without interruption. The PSETA will continue to update its stakeholders as the situation develops.

## 3. CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES

- 3.1. In order for the PSETA to award approval for an SDP to implement technology-based learning, the following minimum requirements must be met:
  - i. The SDP must be already accredited with the PSETA. This includes secondary SDPs with programme approval status.
  - ii. The SDP must provide details of the platform to be used for technology-based learning.
  - iii. The SDP applicant shall produce proof of ownership or a duly Service Level Agreement for an technology-based learning platform
  - iv. The SDP must submit a comprehensive and signed E-Learning Policy
  - v. The SDP must provide evidence of PSETA registered constituent ETD Practitioners i.e. Assessors, and Moderators bearing the scope or exceeding that of the applicant SDP;

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- vi. The SDP must indicate how learners will get access to the learning material
- vii. The SDP must indicate in detail the support that will be provided to learners.

These must include:

- This policy must detail how learners will be enrolled on the e-learning platform and documentation that would need to be submitted to the PSETA for enrolment on the SETA MIS.
- Access to the portal must also be addressed in terms of security and authenticity.
- It should also outline the guidance and continued support that will be offered to learners. This could be technical or academic support.
- It is also critical that different kinds of learning styles are taken into consideration to ensure that no learner is disadvantaged.

### 3.2. Management of Assessments;

- i. The SDP must outline how assessments are going to be conducted. Both Formative and Summative assessments must be provided for. This must take into account the principles of assessment. This must include both pre- and post-assessment activities.

### 3.3. Delivery

SDPs should ensure learners have access to:

- information that sets out the respective responsibilities of institution for the delivery of the programme, module, or element of study;
- module descriptors, to show the intended learning outcomes and teaching, learning and assessment methods of the module(s);
- a clear schedule for the delivery of their study materials and for assessment of their work.

SDPs should ensure that learners can be confident that:

- study materials, whether delivered through staff of a programme presenter or through web-based or other distribution channels, meet the expectations of the institution in respect of the quality of teaching and learning-support material for a programme or element of study leading to one of its awards;
- the provision is subject to regular monitoring and periodic review process.

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SDPs should ensure that:

- the platform is able to capture and keep records of learner engagements. This is particularly important to ensure notional hours are accounted for.
- Sufficient learning activities are available
- Learners have access to an online tutor

#### **4. ACCREDITATION STATUS AND DURATION**

##### **4.1. Accreditation**

The technology-based learning approval is directly linked to the accreditation status of the SDP.

##### **4.2. Programme Approval**

All programme approval SDPs must ensure that their accreditation with their primary quality assurance bodies are valid as the PSETA e-learning approval will be aligned with their accreditation period.

#### **5. PROCESS FLOW FOR TECHNOLOGY-BASED LEARNING APPLICATION AND APPROVAL**

The steps listed below shall be followed by the PSETA QAP staff when processing the e-learning applications:

- SDP submits a formal letter with policy mentioned above indicating intention to implement e-learning or technology-based learning.
- PSETA QAP acknowledges the application;
- Conduct QMS desktop evaluation;
- Conducts virtual inspection of the e-learning portal;
- Report compiled and recommendation made to the QA Manager;
- QA Manager presents the recommendations to the Accreditation Decision Committee for adjudication
- The Accreditation Decision Committee reviews and approves/not approve
- Approval letter issued to qualifying SDPs.

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## 6. APPEALS

The appeals will be handled as per the approved PSETA Appeals Policy.

Yours Sincerely,



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Mr Benjamin Motlhabane

Manager: Quality Assurance

Date: 12 May 2020

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