ETDP SETA
Verification Policy
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ETDP SETA VERIFICATION OF LEARNER ACHIEVEMENTS POLICY

PART 1: POLICY BACKGROUND

1.1 Vision and Mission of ETDP SETA

The vision of the ETDP SETA is to promote and facilitate the development and improvement of the skills profile of the sector’s workforce in order to benefit employers, workers and employees in the sector.

The mission of the ETDP SETA is to promote, facilitate and develop an Education, Training and Development sector in which:

- the skills levels of employees and workers are raised
- there is a healthy relationship between supply and demand in the labour market
- there are diverse and flexible routes for initial and in-service education and training
- the quality of education and training provided is improved
- the levy grant system is efficiently administered
- there is regular liaison with public and private providers, employers, other SETAs, the Department of Basic Education, the Department of Higher Education and Training, the National Skills authority and South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), and its structures
- internal and external communication is effective in order to advance national human resource and skills development
- there is dialogue and interaction between public and private entities in the sector with regard to skills transfer and training
quality service delivery is encouraged

employers, workers and employees in each sector benefit from quality training, higher productivity and harmonious human development.

1.2 Relevant legislation, regulation and guidelines

The legislation that is applicable to this policy includes but is not limited to:

- The Skills Development Act (97 of 1998)
- The Skills Development Amendment Act (37 of 2008)
- The Promotion of Administrative Justice Act (3 of 2004)
- The National Qualification Framework Act (67 of 2008 - replaced the SAQA Act)

Relevant SAQA Regulations, Criteria and Guidelines include:

- Education and Training Quality Assurance bodies Regulations (No R1127 of 1998)
- Criteria and Guidelines for the assessment of NQF registered unit standards and qualifications (2001)
- Criteria and Guidelines for the registration of assessors (2001)
- Criteria and Guidelines for providers (2001)
- Criteria and Guidelines for short courses and skills programmes (2004)
• Guidelines for ETQAs: Equitable accreditation for SMME providers of education and training (2004)

• Guidelines for ETQAs: Procedures for the monitoring and auditing of ETQAs (2004)

• Guidelines for Integrated Assessment (2005)

This policy does not seek to replace any requirements for assessments, moderation and verification imposed by legislation and to the extent that this policy is inconsistent with any legislation or regulatory requirements, such legislation and regulations will prevail.

The onus is upon the skills development provider to ensure compliance with legislative requirements for the assessment, moderation, verification and certification of learners.

Since 2003 the ETDQA has had its own guidelines on assessment, moderation and verification. These have been regularly revised and updated (the latest versions are from 2010). This policy document is informed by these ETDP SETA documents as well as by the legislative context and SAQA requirements. The Guidelines are available and these should be used by constituents seeking more detailed guidance and advice on good assessment practices.
PART 2: PURPOSE AND APPLICABILITY OF POLICY

2.1 Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

a) Ensure that assessments of qualifications and unit standards which are within the ETDP SETA’s primary focus are valid, reliable and credible.

b) Ensure that assessment policies are implemented in a way that is strategically appropriate and practicable for the ETD sector.

c) Inform skills development providers, ETDQA constituent assessors and moderators and ETDP SETA staff of the policy, principles and procedures for verification of learner achievement.

d) Ensure that the learner achievements uploaded to the ETDP SETA reflect a genuine learner competence against unit standards and qualifications registered on the NQF.

e) Ensure the credibility of workplace & classroom assessment methods and instruments.

f) Confirm assessment and moderation decisions for certification purposes.

2.2 Scope

This policy covers:

- Verification of learner achievements policies and procedures; and
- Appeals against unfair verification decisions
2.3 Scope of applicability

The policy applies to all processes conducted by ETDP SETA staff and external consultants related to the verification of assessment. This includes:

- ETDQA accredited skills development providers;
- ETDQA registered constituent assessors, moderators and verifiers; and
- ETDP SETA staff.
PART 3: VERIFICATION OF LEARNER ACHIEVEMENTS

3.1 Principles of verification

a) The ETDP SETA shall use resources economically, efficiently and effectively when conducting verifications.

b) The ETDP SETA administration of verification shall be developmental, especially regarding emerging and SMME providers, who shall be given advice and an opportunity to improve their practice.

c) The ETDP SETA shall ensure procedural fairness in that skills development providers shall:
   - be given notice of at least 14 working days for preparing for the verification
   - be given a chance to make representations in response to the verification report
   - be informed about right to appeal.

ETDQA decisions regarding the verification of learner achievements shall be transparent, equitable and fair.

3.2 Definition of verification

Verification is a planned and systematic process for validating learner achievements and ensuring compliance to SAQA and ETDP SETA certification criteria. It is a means of ensuring that two or more providers delivering the same unit standards and/or qualifications are assessing consistently to the same standard, using valid instruments, and meeting the national standard registered on the NQF.
SAQA refers to this function as ‘external moderation’. SAQA uses the term ‘verification’ to mean the checking, by an ETQA, of the accuracy of the information on learner results before certification is authorised. Verification of learner achievements for standards and qualifications allocated to it by SAQA is conducted and managed by the ETDQA, and its verification process includes both external moderation and the verification of information.

3.3 Types of verification

The ETDQA conducts two types of verification, namely:

- On-site: this is the verification that takes place at the provider’s premises, and is sometimes called external moderation
- Off-site: this is the verification that takes place at the ETDP SETA offices, under special conditions as stipulated by the ETDP SETA. This is a desk-top exercise and focuses on compliance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Verification</th>
<th>Techniques</th>
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| Off-site verification | ▪ Review and evaluate the implementation of policies and procedures  
▪ Review reports from assessors and moderators  
▪ Review and evaluate moderation and assessment processes and practices  
▪ Validate assessment instruments against unit standards/qualification |
## Type of Verification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Techniques</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review and evaluate the implementation of policies and procedures</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluate the implementation by comparing the actual evidence to confirm if evidence meets the requirements of the rules of evidence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review and evaluate record systems and records</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analyse workplace reports on application of skills and range and duration of experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review and evaluate moderation and assessment processes &amp; practices</td>
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<tr>
<td>Validate assessment instruments against unit standards/ qualification and assessment</td>
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<td>Validate the assessment decisions against evidence requirements</td>
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<td>Interview assessors, learners and moderators where applicable</td>
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<td>Observe assessment and moderation where applicable</td>
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3.4 Frequency of verification

In the case of full qualification, on-site verification will occur at least twice a year, or after the completion of 60 credits. Where a qualification has 240 credits, at least four verifications shall be conducted.

In the case of skills programmes/single unit standards, each provider will require at least one on-site verification every six months.

In addition, off-site verifications will take place in relation to each batch of learners before their results are endorsed for certification. This is essential to confirm the accuracy of the information submitted by the providers. This verification must be requested by the skills development provider, and should be timed to coincide with the completion of assessment and moderation of a batch of learners.

3.5 Roles and responsibilities of the ETDP SETA

The ETDP SETA shall:

Conduct verification for all unit standards and qualifications falling within its primary focus

- Make all the logistical arrangements required for verification;
- Deploy ETDQA registered constituent verifiers to conduct verifications at the skills development providers’ premises and/or site of provision;
- Provide support to skills development providers where necessary;
- Conduct verification within the specified time periods;
- Have systems in place to upload endorsed learner achievements for qualifications to the NLRD at the intervals stipulated by SAQA; and
• Receive and document feedback and recommendations from its verifiers on the procedures and templates and evaluate and review these documents in response to the feedback every three years.

3.6 Roles and responsibilities of skills development providers

Skills development providers shall:

• Appoint an internal moderator to oversee and conduct the moderation;

• Request verification from the ETDQA for a specified time; the requested time must be after the assessment and moderation has been completed;

• Ensure that all the documentation, resources and personnel required for verification are in place and easily accessible to the verifiers;

• Generate the required reports, including assessment and moderation reports and reports of any complaints or irregularities and how these were addressed;

• Design and implement a record keeping system in compliance with ETDQA requirements;

• Have procedures in place to inform learners of their achievements and up-date internal learner records;

• Have systems in place to upload the endorsed learner achievements to the ETDP SETA; and

• Ensure all relevant personnel understand and apply the ETDP SETA assessment, moderation and verification policies.
3.7 Policy Provisions

a) The ETDP SETA shall conduct verification of learner achievements of all qualifications and unit standards falling within its primary focus.

b) Verification of learner achievements will be conducted by ETDQA registered constituent verifiers.

c) The constituent verifier will make recommendations on the endorsement or non-endorsement of the learner achievements to the ETDP SETA.

d) The ETDP SETA will evaluate the verification reports and make a final decision on the endorsement of the learner achievements.

e) The ETDP SETA will communicate the verification decision to the skills development provider in writing.

f) The skills development provider will upload the endorsed learner achievements to the ETDP SETA data network.

3.8 Policy and procedures for on-site verification processes

a) The skills development provider must complete and submit the Verification Request Form to the ETDP SETA, at least twenty working days in advance of the date requested.

b) The ETDP SETA must evaluate the request form within ten working days of its receipt, and allocate and confirm the date of the verification with the provider.

c) The ETDP SETA shall deploy the ETDQA constituent verifier to the skills development provider site on the agreed date.

d) The constituent verifier will conduct the verification and generate a report with recommendations on the standard form and submit it to the ETDP SETA for approval.
e) The ETDP SETA will make a final decision regarding the verifier report within 10 working days of receipt of the report.

f) The ETDP SETA will inform both the skills development provider and the verifier of the final decision.
SECTION 4: APPEALS AGAINST THE OUTCOME OF THE VERIFICATION OF LEARNER ACHIEVEMENT

4.1 Reasons for appeals

The provider may feel aggrieved by the outcome of verification for the following reasons:

- The correct verification procedures were not followed;
- The allegations that an irregularity was identified were not substantiated; and/or
- The skills development provider was not given an opportunity to represent itself.

4.2 Appeals Procedure

- The skills development provider lodges an appeal with the ETDP SETA;
- The ETDP SETA institutes an investigation;
- The ETDP SETA makes recommendations, which are then communicated to the skills development provider;
- The ETDP SETA implements penalties where appropriate;
- If the provider still feels aggrieved by the recommendations of the ETDP SETA, the skills development provider may escalate the appeal to SAQA.

The ETDP SETA Appeals Policy and Procedures are covered in more detail in the Assessment and Moderation Policy document.
DEFINITIONS

The definitions of the terms below apply to their use in this policy document:

- "accreditation" means the certification, usually for a particular period of time, of a person, a body or an institution as having the capacity to fulfil a particular function in the quality assurance system set up by the South African Qualifications Authority in terms of the SAQA Act.

- "accreditation scope" means the list of qualification(s) and/or unit standard(s) for which a body is accredited for a defined purpose.

- "assessor" means the person who is registered by the relevant Education and Training Quality Assurance body in accordance with criteria established for this purpose by a Standards Generating Body to measure the achievement of specified National Qualifications Framework standards or qualifications, and "constituent assessor" has a corresponding meaning.

- "Education and Training Quality Assurance body" (ETQA) means a body accredited in terms of section 5(1)(a)(ii) of the SAQA Act, responsible for monitoring and auditing achievements in terms of national standards or qualifications, and to which specific functions relating to the monitoring and auditing of national standards or qualifications have been assigned in terms of section 5(1)(b)(i) of the SAQA Act.

- "high-stakes assessments decision" means an assessment decision that has consequences with significant implications for the life opportunities, safety and well-being of learners or other people.

- "moderation" means the process which ensures that assessment of the outcomes described in National Qualifications Framework standards or qualifications is fair, valid and reliable.

- "moderator" means someone who is competent to conduct a moderation process.

- "primary focus" means that activity or objective within the sector upon which an organisation or body concentrates its efforts.
• "skills development provider" means a body that delivers learning programmes which culminate in specified National Qualifications Framework standards or qualifications and manages the assessment thereof

• "quality assurance" means the process of ensuring that the degree of excellence specified is achieved

• "registered standards" means unit standards or qualifications registered on the National Qualifications Framework

• "registration scope" means the list of registered standards for which an assessor or moderator is registered with the ETDP SETA as an assessor or moderator