

## **MQA BURSARY AND WORK EXPERIENCE POLICY**

**APRIL 2017 TO MARCH 2018**

### **MQA BURSARY POLICY**

#### **1. PREAMBLE**

The principal aim of the bursary project will be to provide financial support to competent and financially deserving students who have applied for financial assistance to the MQA to access academic or vocational studies. The Mining Qualifications Authority strives to contribute towards the development of our communities, particularly in mining and mineral related fields.

#### **2. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY**

The prime purpose of the MQA Bursary Policy is to ensure contribution towards human resource development and to promote the mining and minerals sector through education and training by providing financial assistance amongst South African students.

#### **3. LEGISLATIVE MANDATE**

This policy derives its mandate from:

- 3.1 The Skills Development Act (Act No. 97 of 1998)
- 3.2 National Skills Levies Act No. 97 of 1999
- 3.3 National Human Resource Development Strategy
- 3.4 National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS III)
- 3.5 Higher Education Act No. 101 of 1997
- 3.6 Further Education and Training Act No. 98 of 1998
- 3.7 South African Qualifications Authority Act, 1995 (Act No. 58 of 1995)
- 3.8 Treasury Regulations

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

In previous years, the Mining and Minerals Sector (MMS) was confronted by a number of businesses, legislative and transformational challenges. The demands for increased production, adherence to safety and labour legislation, and transformation of the sector to reflect the demographics of South Africa, has emphasized the need for critical skills development especially in the higher educational and occupational levels.

The critical skills have been confirmed in the MQA's Sector Skills Plan (SSP), and include technical, professional and management skills. In an effort to address the need for these skills, a substantial investment has been made on the part of companies associated with the Mining and Minerals Sector.

#### **5. POLICY OBJECTIVES**

The overall objectives of the MQA Bursary Scheme are to:

- Contribute to the development of core skills in the MMS, especially in the higher educational and occupational levels.
- Support the transformation of the MMS.
- Increase the number of previously disadvantaged bursars qualifying in selected disciplines and entering employment within the MMS.
- Enhance the image of the MMS as an employer of skilled people and thereby attract school leavers into selected disciplines within the MMS.
- Provide the MMS with a pool of suitably qualified bursars for permanent employment.

The MQA Bursary Scheme achieves its purpose through:

- Facilitating a proactive planning approach in addressing the subject of core skills within the MMS.
- Partnering and Supplementing the Bursary Schemes sponsored by employers, labour and the DMR, by awarding bursaries to financially disadvantaged Bursars. In addition the MQA may enter into a MoA with the MQA Stakeholders (Labour, State and Employers) on an as needed basis for assistance with the management of bursars.
- Facilitating the development of Non-Employer Bursars by providing grants to employers who provide work experience opportunities to Non-Employer Bursars.
- Facilitating the monitoring of progress of qualified MQA Bursars within the MMS, and the provision of support and appropriate skills training where necessary.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the MQA Bursary Scheme in addressing core skills.

## **5.1 Awarding of MQA Bursaries**

Bursaries shall be awarded provided that:

- 5.1.1 Core skills are identified in accordance with the approved proactive planning approach.
- 5.1.2 Adequate funds are available to support the full complement of bursars for the full duration of the academic year of the approved course.
- 5.1.3 Reasonable assurance can be provided that the bursars will be afforded the opportunity to undergo work experience as specified by the academic institution.

## **6. MQA TARGET GROUP**

### **6.1 Target Group of the MQA Bursary Scheme**

The MQA Bursary Scheme shall apply to:

- 6.1.1 University or University of Technology (Degree, Diploma and B Tech) Bursars.
- 6.1.2 Vocational development of University Bursars during the December/January vacation period.
- 6.1.3 Practical development for University of Technology Bursars who require on the job related experience as a pre-requisite for the awarding of a diploma.

### **6.2 Disciplines supported**

The MQA Bursary Scheme shall apply to MMS disciplines that are identified on an annual basis, as part of a proactive MQA planning approach to identify and address core skills within the MMS.

### **6.3 MQA Bursary Scheme Funding**

The MQA Board shall allocate sufficient funds annually for the maintenance of the MQA Bursary Scheme, subject to funds availability.

## **6.4 Value of MQA Bursary Scheme**

The MQA Bursary Scheme shall provide for a full value bursary to be paid, and shall consist of an amount as determined by the MQA in its sole discretion which shall be equal to:

- 6.4.1 100% of the registration and tuition fees for the year of the curriculum for the qualification. This amount includes the cost of compulsory excursions and seminars.
- 6.4.2 100% of the fee for accommodation and meals in a residence administered by the academic institution.
- 6.4.3 100% of living out allowance (paid to bursars) for bursars not staying in the residence administered by the academic institution (value is determined by the average bursars residence accommodation cost).
- 6.4.4 A cash book allowance, the value of which will be determined annually.

## **7. THE BURSARY COMMITTEE**

- 7.1 Be responsible for the selection of qualifying bursary students in line with MQA Bursary policy
- 7.2 Receive, interview (where necessary) and recommend eligible bursary applicants.
- 7.3 Recommend successful applicants to the MQA Approval Delegation.
- 7.4 Ensure that all successful applicants complete and sign the Bursary Agreement, with the CEO/COO signing on behalf of MQA.

## **8. MQA BURSARY SCHEME QUALIFYING CRITERIA**

### **8.1 The following criteria will be applied for bursars to be considered for a MQA Bursary:**

#### 8.1.1 Academic Courses

The MQA Bursary Scheme shall apply to bursars studying an academic course which falls within one of the selected disciplines within the MMS, as listed below;

- Mining Engineering
- Metallurgical Engineering (Extractive only)
- Mechanical Engineering
- Electro-Mechanical
- Mining Survey
- Geology
- Electrical Engineering (Heavy Current only)

- Chemical Engineering (Mineral Processing)
- Jewellery Design and Manufacturing
- Environmental Health and Management
- Analytical Chemistry
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Rock Engineering

8.1.2 Further consideration would be given to requests from MQA Stakeholders where other disciplines than depicted in 8.1.1 are catered for. The MQA Approval delegation would authorise such requests.

## **8.2 The MQA Bursary Scheme shall apply to:**

8.2.1 Students entering their first year of study who possess a National Senior Certificate in the subjects and with subject grades that are required by the academic institution (or such equivalent qualification as that the institution may determine), for undergraduate studies.

8.2.2 In addition to the above, meet any other entrance criteria as prescribed by the academic institution.

8.2.3 Bursars entering their second, third or fourth year of study who meets the requirements as specified under the “Bursary Continuation, Suspension and Reinstatement” principles contained in this policy.

## **8.3 Preferential Conditions**

The MQA shall give preferential consideration to South African Individuals and financially needy bursary applications.

## **8.4 Additional Conditions**

The MQA Bursary Scheme shall give additional consideration to:

- 8.4.1 Female Applicant;
- 8.4.2 Applicants living in rural areas;
- 8.4.3 Orphans Applicants

## **9. ELIGIBILITY OF QUALIFYING BURSARS**

Not all Applicants meeting the specified qualifying criteria of the MQA Bursary Scheme shall necessarily be interviewed or awarded a MQA Bursary.

### **9.1 Bursary Awarding Conditions Precedent**

The award of the MQA Bursary shall be subject to the following conditions precedent namely:

- 9.1.1 The bursars are accepted for the course at the academic institution approved by the MQA.
- 9.1.2 The bursars' parents or legal guardian, or other person acceptable to the MQA, have provided a Surety ship for the payment of the bursars' obligations arising out of the bursary agreement.
- 9.1.3 Should a bursar be registered with an academic institution which does not comply with the requirements of qualifications, as specified by the MMS, it shall be required of the bursar to change his/her academic institution.

## **10. DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE BURSARY APPLICANTS**

Prior to processing any bursary application, applicants shall;

- 10.1 Complete and sign the application form fully and completely (accompanied by the relevant certified documents)
- 10.2 Provide certified copies of all relevant academic certificates, identity documents, testimonials, appropriate financial invoices/statements, results/progress reports.
- 10.3 Avail themselves for interviews and assessments on request if deemed necessary by the Bursary Committee
- 10.4 To register for a minimum of 4 (four) subjects per semester/trimester
- 10.5 Not to change field of study after initial career selection without the approval of the Bursary Committee. A motivation letter must accompany the application.
- 10.6 Timeously advise and notify The Bursary Scheme Administration Team of any changes to their contact details such as phone/mobile numbers, e-mail and physical address.
- 10.7 To attend and participate in all lectures, tutorials and academic support programs during the academic year.
- 10.8 Not to change accommodation arrangements for the entire academic year after initial selection on whether to stay in accommodation provided by the institution or private

accommodation.

- 10.9 Undergo all tests and examinations (written and oral) as required in terms of the performance requirements of the course and institution.
- 10.10 Complete all set assignments, experiential/practical work and all other tasks as required in terms of the performance requirements of the course and institution.
- 10.11 Always strive to obtain satisfactory results for assignments, tasks, tests and examinations in order to progress in the course of study.
- 10.12 Bursars will not cancel any modules/subjects without informing and getting approval from MQA
- 10.13 If bursars wish to suspend their studies for medical and any other reason, they must inform and seek approval from MQA.
- 10.14 All bursars to sign a letter of consent to give MQA access to their academic results and or records.
- 10.15 Not to bring MQA to disrepute in their dealings.

## **11. EXCLUSIONS FOR BURSARY FUNDING**

- 11.1 Accommodation damage or repair costs to property shall be for the student's account.
- 11.2 Extra mural activities/fees billed for by the Institution on the statement like transport, sports clubs, religious and cultural organization, etc.
- 11.3 Payment of failed or repeat subjects.

## **12. SERVICE OBLIGATION**

The awarding of a MQA bursary will be subject to the following obligations:

- 12.1 Bursars shall agree to enter into a service obligation compelling the bursars to take up employment within the MMS for a period not less than the period of the bursary;
- 12.2 The service obligation period shall consist of a period not less than the number of years equal to the number of years in which the MQA has made payments either to bursars, or on bursars' behalf.
- 12.3 After completing their studies, bursars are obliged to annually confirm their employment (for a period equal to the number of years they received financial assistance/funding) to MQA and non-compliance of this clause will be regarded as a breach, whereupon MQA can reclaim the amount spent on the bursar.
- 12.4 The MQA may in its sole discretion waive the service obligation, in which event bursars shall have no claim whatsoever against the MQA. If the service obligation is waived by the MQA, bursars shall not be obliged to repay the bursary debt;

- 12.5 The service obligation shall not apply to bursars for whom the MQA is unable to secure permanent employment with an associated organization within the MMS;
- 12.6 Bursars who, for whatever reason, withdraw from the MQA Bursary Scheme shall be obliged to pay back the MQA for costs incurred.

### **13. BURSARY AWARDING AUDIT**

An annual audit may at the discretion of the MQA be carried out to ensure that the application, interviewing, selection and awarding were done correctly in terms of the stipulations of this policy.

### **14. BURSARY CONTINUATION, SUSPENSION, CONTINUATION AND REINSTATEMENT**

In exercising its discretion whether or not the bursary is to be continued, suspended or reinstated, as the case may be, the MQA shall take into account academic results, as well as additional factors:

#### **14.1 Academic Results**

- 14.1.1 Bursars that fail more than 50% of their modules/subjects shall automatically be suspended from the bursary scheme. Bursars who have been removed from the bursary scheme may re-apply for a bursary upon successfully completing the failed courses at their own expense subject to the academic institution permitting them to register for all the qualifying courses required to be completed for the succeeding year of study;
- 14.1.2 Bursars who fail two courses/subjects shall be allowed to continue at the MQA discretion provided that the results of the other courses passed indicate that the bursars will be able to cope with the new courses as well as the repeat course or promoted.
- 14.1.3 The bursary scheme shall not cover the cost of repeat subjects.
- 14.1.4 Bursars who have failed one or more courses, who are in work experience at the time of receiving their results shall be allowed to continue with the work experience but will be expected to complete the course/s at their own cost.
- 14.1.5 All MQA bursary holders will be given an opportunity to reapply for funding annually by completing the necessary application forms to grant them continuation in the scheme. They will be advised in writing.
- 14.1.6 Bursars found to have more than one Bursary scheme will immediately be suspended from the bursary scheme.

## **14.2 Additional Factors**

These are factors which the MQA shall consider to be material which, without derogating from the generality thereof, may include the following:

- 14.2.1 The general progress of bursars in all subjects, including those in which they have not obtained a pass.
- 14.2.2 Whether or not the prescribed duration of the course is extended as a result of bursars having failed any subject.
- 14.2.3 Permission by the academic institution to repeat the year, despite bursars having failed
- 14.2.4 The satisfactory performance of bursars during any periods of work experience
- 14.2.5 The availability of MQA funds.
- 14.2.6 The priority of the subjects being studied by bursars, insofar as the needs and requirements of the MQA are concerned.

## **15. ASSUMPTIONS**

The MQA will only provide financial assistance to students based on the availability of funding.

The accommodation fee should NOT exceed the tuition fees for that academic year as per the Public Financial Management Act of 1999.

## **16. CONDUCTING BURSARY SITE VISIT TO INSTITUTIONS**

- 16.1 The policy will be reviewed as determined by new developments
- 16.2 MQA shall conduct monitoring of bursary allocation.
- 16.3 Submission of academic performance records.
- 16.4 Graduates shall be monitored at the end of each academic year through submission of their academic records.

The MQA Work Experience Scheme, was established during the NSDS I with the objective of creating and supporting a pool of high level of technical and management talent within the Mining and Minerals Sector (MMS). The MQA continues to assist students at HET institutions with practical training through Work Experience to allow the students to obtain their qualifications.

The MQA shall facilitate the provision of work experience opportunities for its own bursars, non-employer bursars and non-MMS bursars, by requesting the assistance of employers to provide this

training, by becoming host-providers.

The work experience period shall provide the host-provider with the opportunity to assess the MQA bursars and non-MMS bursars as potential in-house bursars to be supported by themselves and or potential employees upon qualification.

### **1. MQA work experience grant**

The MQA shall incentivize employers to become host-providers through the payment of a grant for MQA bursars, non-employer bursars and non-MMS bursars placed with the employer for work experience.

The MQA shall determine the value of the grant, and revise the value of the grant on an annual basis, based on the amount of funds available.

The MQA shall annually, in accordance with the approved proactive planning approach, and well in advance for potential host-providers to plan, determine the grant per learner placed.

### **2. Host-providers' obligations**

The host-providers shall be expected to comply with the prescribed grant criteria when hosting student for work experience.

The host-providers shall be expected to provide, where applicable, the following to bursars undergoing work experience:

- i. Transport to and from work.
- ii. Accommodation and meals.
- iii. Basic insurance cover afforded to all employees.
- iv. The host-providers shall apply their own discretion whether to pay bursars undergoing work experience an allowance and, if so, at what level.