Workplace and Worksite Approval Policy

Effective date: 1 April 2027

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1 LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACRONYM	DESCRIPTION
CHE	Council on Higher Education.
CIPC	Companies and Intellectual Property Commission.
COIDA	Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act.
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training.
EISA	External Integrated Summative Assessment.
ERRSS	Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Skills Strategy.
GENFETQSF	General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-Framework.
HEQSF	Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework.
ISO	International Organization for Standardization.
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding.
NAMB	National Artisan Moderation Body.
NQF	National Qualifications Framework.
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety.
OQSF	Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework.
QC	Quality Council.
QCTO	Quality Council for Trades and Occupations.
QP	Quality Partner.
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority.
SDA	Skills Development Act.
SDLA	Skills Development Levies Act.
SDP	Skills Development Provider.
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority.
SIC	Standard Industrial Classification.
SLA	Service Level Agreement.
SME	Subject Matter Expert.
SMME	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprise.
TCS	Tax Compliance Status.
WPBL	Workplace-Based Learning.
WPBLP	Workplace-Based Learning Programme.

2 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The following terms apply to this document. Where there is any conflict between terms in this document and the OQSF Policy, the OQSF Policy takes precedence. An additional comprehensive list of terms can be found in the OQSF Policy.

TERMS	DESCRIPTION
Act of dishonesty	Any deliberate act of fraud, misrepresentation, forgery, bribery, corruption or other dishonest conduct intended to improperly obtain, retain or use Workplace Approval.
Administrative error or omission	Any error of a technical nature where individuals unintentionally fail to follow the prescribed administrative procedure with the result that information is omitted, something is not done or is neglected in any way that may cause the learner or workplace/site to be advantaged or disadvantaged because of this error or omission.
Applicant	A prospective workplace/site applying for approval as a workplace.
Approved Workplace	A legally established workplace or worksite, whether public or private, that has been granted Workplace Approval for a specific period by the QCTO or a delegated Quality Partner to provide structured workplace-based learning for an occupational qualification, part-qualification or skills programme registered on the NQF at the required standard.
Bias	Workplace Approval/Endorsement practices that hinder or advantage particular workplaces/sites or group of workplaces/sites. An absence of bias is sought, where all workplaces/sites are treated with equal respect and consideration regardless of social, economic, cultural, faith-based, ethnic, gender or other differences.
Capacity	Means the maximum number of learners that the workplace or worksite can host at a specific time, taking into account the approved scope, available equipment, operating space, work opportunities, occupational health and safety requirements, appointed workplace mentors/coaches and learner-to-mentor/coach ratios.
Coach/Workplace Mentor	Means a suitably qualified and experienced person in the same occupation, trade or field as the learner, appointed by the approved workplace or worksite to guide, support and monitor the learner during the structured work-experience component.
Credibility	A respected process or product which results from a fair, valid, and reliable validation process designed to enhance the quality of an occupational qualification, part-qualification, or skills programme (where applicable).
Imposter	Unauthorised use of approval status means the use or attempted use of another organisation's Workplace Approval without written authorisation and approval by the relevant authority.
Occupational health and safety compliance	Adherence to laws, rules, and standards designed, as prescribed by the Act, to protect the health and safety of employees and learners in the workplace.
Permanent physical address	The fixed physical address from which the workplace or worksite ordinarily operates and against which the approval is issued.

Quality Assurance (Workplace context)	The process of ensuring that specified standards or requirements for an occupational qualification, part-qualification, or skills programme (where applicable) development, workplace/site approval, coaching, learner administration, performance evaluation, and the recording of achievements have been met.
Reliability	The overall consistency of a measure. A measure is said to have high reliability if it produces similar results under consistent conditions.
Scope	Means the number of the structured work experience component modules of a specific occupational curriculum a workplace/site is approved to offer.
Service Letter	Means a satisfactory and verifiable employment record where: i. the workplace/site, as an employer of the appointed coach, can be contacted as a reference and/or ii. an affidavit confirming service where previous employer no longer operates, or iii. letters from the clients where the appointed coach was previously self-employed.
Skills Development Provider	A legally established institution, whether public or private, that has been accredited or recognised by the QCTO as having the capacity and capability to offer an occupational qualification, part-qualification or skills programme registered on the NQF at the required standard.
Supervisor	A supervisor is a person who oversees, directs and evaluates employees' work to ensure that tasks are completed correctly, efficiently and in line with required standards or goals. The supervisor may also serve as the coach or workplace mentor or may be a separate person who works in coordination with the coach or workplace mentor.
Transparency	The extent to which the workplace/site approval criteria and processes are known, visible to, and understood by the organisations and the various role-players in the workplace approval process.
Technology-Supported Worksite	A worksite that uses approved digital tools, platforms, simulation systems, virtual environments, augmented reality or related technologies to support the delivery, monitoring or verification of workplace-based learning.
Workplace	A fixed physical location at which a learner undertakes structured workplace-based learning by applying relevant knowledge and practical skills in an operational environment that produces goods, provides services or performs recognised work functions.
Workplace/site Approval	Workplace/site Approval means a single approval granted by the relevant Quality Partner, in the format prescribed by the QCTO, confirming that an applicant meets the minimum requirements to provide structured workplace-based learning through a workplace, worksite or technology-supported worksite, within the approved range, scope and capacity.
Workplace/site Approval Letter	A formal approval letter issued in the form prescribed by the QCTO, confirming that the workplace or worksite has been granted Workplace Approval for the

	approved qualification, part-qualification or skills programme, including the approved range, scope, capacity, address and mode of delivery.
Workplace Based Learning (WBL)	Learning achieved through structured exposure to work and workplace interaction that a learner must complete towards an occupational qualification, part-qualification or skills programme registered on the OQSF, where applicable.
Workplace based learning programme	An intervention as contemplated in an occupational qualification which a person internalises knowledge, skills and competencies and gain insights through exposure to work by achieving specific outcomes to enhance employability.
Worksite	A worksite means a movable, temporary, simulated or virtual environment where a learner applies relevant knowledge and practical skills in an integrated manner to produce, maintain or deliver goods or services, where such mode of learning is permitted by the curriculum and applicable quality assurance requirements.

3 PREAMBLE

3.1 The Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) was established through the Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act No. 97 of 1998), as amended, as one of the three Quality Councils.

3.2 The Skills Development Act (SDA) and the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act 67 of 2008, as amended, with specific reference to (Chapter 5 Sections 26 and 27) outline the mandate of the QCTO.

3.3 The main functions of the QCTO are divided into five domains, which are:

3.3.1 Qualifications;

3.3.2 Accreditation and Workplace Approval;

3.3.3 Assessment;

3.3.4 Certification; and

3.3.5 Quality Assurance.

3.4 The QCTO aspires to contribute to a skilled and capable workforce by effectively and efficiently managing the Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework (OQSF), setting standards, developing and quality assuring national occupational qualifications, part-qualifications and skills programmes for trades, occupations and, where appropriate, professions.

3.5 This Policy establishes a consistent framework for planning, implementing, monitoring and quality assuring workplace and worksite approval within the Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework.

3.6 This policy maintains the following values of the QCTO:

3.6.1 Innovation and Excellence;

3.6.2 Empowerment and Recognition;

3.6.3 Respect and Dignity;

3.6.4 Ethics and Integrity;

3.6.5 Ownership and Accountability; and

3.6.6 Authenticity.

3.7 The submission of an application to the QCTO constitutes the applicant's acknowledgement that the QCTO and its Quality Partners may collect, process, verify, store, disclose and use information submitted. Such processing shall be undertaken in accordance with the Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013 (Act No. 4 of 2013) (POPIA), and other applicable legislation.

4 PURPOSE

4.1 This policy establishes the standards for the approval, monitoring, renewal, suspension and revocation of workplaces and worksites that provide the structured work-experience component for occupational qualifications, part-qualifications and occupational skills programmes registered on the OQSF, where applicable.

4.2 The purpose of this Policy is to establish nationally standardised criteria and guidelines across all sectors and occupational qualifications for the approval of workplaces and worksites to deliver the structured work-experience component of relevant interventions.

4.3 Workplace Approval within the OQSF is based on the applicant workplace or employer demonstrating existing capability and capacity to meet the minimum requirements to host and provide workplace-based learning for the relevant OQSF-registered qualification, part-qualification or skills programme, where applicable.

4.4 Approved workplaces and worksites must maintain the minimum Workplace Approval requirements for each OQSF-registered qualification, part-qualification or skills programme, where applicable, throughout the approval period.

4.5 Persistent or material non-compliance may result in corrective action, suspension or revocation, taking into account the seriousness, frequency and effect of the non-compliance and subject to a procedurally fair process.

5 LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

5.1 This policy is informed by, but not limited to, the latest amended versions of the following legislation, regulations, policies and related prescripts:

5.1.1 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996;

5.1.2 Ministerial Determination of the Sub-Frameworks that comprise the National Qualifications Framework, Determination No. 1391 dated 24 December 2020, published under Government Gazette No. 44031;

5.1.3 National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act 67 of 2008, as amended;

5.1.4 Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework Policy (OQSF);

5.1.5 Skills Development Act (SDA), (Act 97 of 1998), as amended;

5.1.6 Sector Education and Training Authorities Workplace Based Learning Programme Agreement Regulations, 2018 as amended;

5.1.7 Annexure A Of National Treasury Instruction No. 1 of 2024/2025 (or the latest thereof) - National Travel Guidelines;

5.1.8 Skills Development Levies Act, 1999, as amended;

5.1.9 Grants Regulations, 2012, as amended;

5.1.10 Trade Test Regulations, 2014, as amended; and

5.1.11 Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993 (Act No. 85 of 1993), and Mine Health and Safety Act, 1996 (Act No. 29 of 1996), as amended.

5.2 This policy must be read in conjunction with the latest versions of the following QCTO policies:

5.2.1 The Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework (OQSF) Policy, 2021;

5.2.2 The Accreditation Policy;

5.2.3 The Quality Assurance Policy;

5.2.4 Revised Policy: Generic National Artisan Workplace Data, Learner Grant Funding and System Policy, 2017, as amended; and

5.2.5 Workplace Approval Criteria and Guidelines, as amended.

6 SCOPE AND APPLICATION

6.1 This policy applies to:

6.1.1 Approved workplaces and worksites;

6.1.2 Quality Partners; and

6.1.3 Any entity that is formally participating within the OQSF.

6.2 This policy covers Workplace Approval for the following occupational qualifications, part-qualifications and skills programmes, where applicable, within the OQSF:

6.2.1 Historically registered qualifications, including NATED qualifications;

6.2.2 Legacy Trades;

6.2.3 Unit standard-based qualifications;

6.2.4 Historical Skills Programmes;

6.2.5 Occupational Qualifications;

6.2.6 Occupational part-qualifications; and

6.2.7 Occupational skills programmes.

6.3 The applicant may apply for one Workplace/site Approval, which may cover a workplace, worksite or technology-supported worksite, where such mode of delivery is permitted by the curriculum and applicable quality assurance requirements.

6.4 A Skills Development Provider and a workplace may operate within the same organisation or premises only where there is clear functional, operational and evidentiary separation between the provider function and the workplace/site function.

6.5 Where an applicant performs both Skills Development Provider and workplace/site functions, the applicant must demonstrate separate governance, supervision, learner records, resources, personnel responsibilities and evidence collection for each function.

6.6 A workplace or worksite may also provide practical learning activities ordinarily offered by the Skills Development Provider, provided that those activities are clearly distinguished from, and separately evidenced against, the structured workplace-based learning component.

7 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Role player	Key responsibilities	Accountability and evidence
7.1 QCTO	Set the national policy framework, prescribe minimum requirements, approve templates, provide oversight, sample workplace approval audits, monitor Quality Partner implementation and issue directives where necessary.	Accountable for national consistency, policy maintenance, quality assurance oversight, reporting and corrective action where systemic non-compliance is identified.
7.2 Quality Partner	Receive workplace/site approval applications referred by the QCTO, screen applications for completeness, appoint suitably qualified evaluators or subject matter experts, conduct or coordinate physical or virtual site visits, and submit recommendations for approval or decline outcomes to the QCTO within the prescribed turnaround time. Quality Partners must monitor approved workplaces/sites and manage complaints and appeals through their internal processes.	Maintain application records, evaluation reports, recommendation reports, approval and decline outcome records, gap-closure evidence, monitoring reports, complaint and appeal records, audit evidence and monthly schedules of all approved workplaces/sites submitted to the QCTO for verification, oversight and national reporting.
7.3 Applicant workplace or worksite	Submit a complete and truthful application, provide valid supporting documents, make required personnel, equipment, infrastructure and records available for evaluation, comply with occupational health and safety requirements, and disclose any material change affecting approval status.	Accountable for the accuracy of information submitted, learner safety, continued compliance, learner continuity arrangements and cooperation during monitoring or verification visits.
7.4 Approved workplace or worksite	Provide structured work experience within the approved scope, range and capacity, make competent workplace mentors or coaches available, maintain required resources and evidence, support learners to complete workplace-based learning requirements, and participate in learner induction, grievance, disciplinary and escalation processes together with the Skills Development Provider and learner.	Keep updated learner records, logbooks (digital or physical), workplace evidence, mentor or coach records, occupational health and safety evidence, learner-transfer plans and proof of corrective actions where required.
7.5 Workplace mentor or coach	Guide, support and monitor learners during the structured work-experience component, confirm learner exposure to required work activities, maintain progress evidence and report learner or workplace risks to the responsible workplace representative.	Accountable for accurate learner progress records, signed workplace evidence, coaching schedules and escalation of learner support or safety concerns.
7.6 Subject Matter Expert or evaluator	Evaluate whether the workplace or worksite meets the prescribed minimum requirements for the specific qualification, part-qualification	Submit signed evaluation reports, checklists, evidence records, site visit notes, virtual visit

Role player	Key responsibilities	Accountability and evidence
	or occupational skills programme, verify evidence and make a recommendation to the relevant Quality Partner.	evidence where applicable, and clear recommendations with reasons.
7.7 Skills Development Provider	The Skills Development Provider where learners are enrolled is responsible for ensuring that each learner completes all required knowledge modules, practical skills modules and workplace-based learning modules in line with the curriculum and assessment requirements. The provider must ensure that learners are properly inducted, including on the escalation process; that the roles and responsibilities of the learner, employer/workplace and provider are clarified, documented and signed by all relevant parties; that issues are first addressed between the learner, workplace and provider in line with the applicable disciplinary and grievance policies; that learner safety, COIDA cover, personal protective equipment, learner support, learner payments or stipends where applicable. Ensure that other applicable requirements are in place; and that assessment arrangements, approved assessment centres and learner transportation to assessment centres are arranged where applicable.	The Skills Development Provider is accountable for maintaining signed learner, employer/workplace and provider agreements; induction records; curriculum sequencing records; learner placement records; proof of learner safety arrangements, COIDA, personal protective equipment and stipend or payment arrangements where applicable. Keep and provide evidence proving completion of all knowledge, practical and workplace-based learning modules; assessment records; Statements of Results; assessment centre confirmations; transport arrangements where applicable; and communication records with learners, approved workplaces and the relevant Quality Partner.
7.8 **Learner**	Participate in workplace-based learning, comply with workplace rules, complete required workplace records and report any risk, barrier or concern through the QCTO or Quality Partner.	Maintain learner logbooks, attendance records, workplace evidence and any declarations or incident reports required by the workplace or Quality Partner.

8 WORKPLACE/SITE APPROVAL PROCESS SUMMARY

8.1 Any employer, workplace or worksite that wishes to host or provide the structured workplace-based learning component of an OQSF-registered occupational qualification, part-qualification or occupational skills programme must be formally approved before learners are placed.

8.2 Unless expressly delegated in writing by the QCTO, Quality Partners evaluate applications and make recommendations to the QCTO. The QCTO retains oversight authority for approval, decline, suspension, revocation and withdrawal decisions, and may authorise a Quality Partner to issue approval letters in the prescribed format.

8.3 All Workplace Approval Letters for any qualification in the OQSF issued from 1 April 2027 must bear both the QCTO and relevant Quality Partner logos. Workplace Approval Letters issued before this date by any SETA will remain valid until their expiry date.

8.4 The QCTO may implement the Workplace Approval process in partnership with its Quality Partners, as per the SETA function outlined in section 10(c)(i) of the Act and in line with the QCTO-SETA/QP signed Service Level Agreement.

8.5 Quality Partners must deal directly with the applicant, as the QCTO does not promote the use of intermediary institutions, individuals or agents.

8.6 The QCTO, in partnership with the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), is managing the transition from historically registered qualifications to occupational qualifications, part-qualifications and occupational skills programmes. Prospective workplaces and worksites are encouraged to apply for approval against current occupational qualifications, part-qualifications or occupational skills programmes, where applicable, and to verify the applicable last dates for enrolment and achievement before investing resources in expiring qualifications.

8.7 A QCTO-accredited Skills Development Provider whose core business is training and development may not be approved as a workplace by the QP unless it is also legally established and operationally engaged in the production of goods or delivery of services relevant to the qualification, part-qualification or skills programme applied for.

8.8 The QCTO and its Quality Partners reserve the right to decline Workplace Approval applications for historically registered qualifications listed in section 6.2 where an appropriate occupational qualification, part-qualification or skills programme is available.

8.9 Workplace/site Approval is specific to the occupational qualification, part-qualification or occupational skills programme, including the approved range, scope, capacity, address and mode of delivery.

8.10 The sequencing of knowledge modules, practical skills modules and workplace-based learning modules must be determined, planned, implemented and monitored by the accredited Skills Development Provider, in line with the curriculum and assessment requirements, provided that valid evidence is collected to confirm that the learner has completed all required components.

8.11 Workplace-based learning is required where prescribed by the relevant occupational qualification, part-qualification, occupational skills programme or NATED Diploma requirement, and must be supported by verifiable evidence such as logbooks, workplace records, supervisor confirmations or other approved evidence.

8.12 Copies of identity documents, qualifications and other documents specifically identified in the application requirements must be certified within the six months preceding the application date. All other supporting documents must be current, valid and verifiable.

8.13 The QCTO's objective is for a complete Workplace Approval application to be processed and finalised within 90 working days, excluding periods where the application is awaiting outstanding information, applicant action, gap-closure evidence, appeal submissions or other applicant-related delays. The processing clock starts when a complete application and applicable fee are received; pauses when written information is requested from the applicant; and resumes when the requested information is received.

Step	Action	Responsible party	Timeline
1. Application	Complete the application form and pay applicable fees	Applicant	N/A
2. Desktop Evaluation	Acknowledgement Letter and notify the applicant of outstanding information, where applicable.	Quality Partner or QCTO	Within 10 working days from receipt of the complete application and fees where applicable.
3. Submission of outstanding information	Submit any outstanding information requested by the Quality Partner.	Applicant	Within 10 working days from notification.
4. Site visit	Arrange and conduct a physical or virtual site visit.	Quality Partner	Within 60 working days from receipt of a complete application or gap-closure submission.
5. Evaluation report	Submit the Workplace/site Approval report to the relevant Quality Partner.	Evaluator or Subject Matter Expert	Within 5 working days from the site visit. (Part of the 60 days)
6. Recommendation to QCTO	Consider the report and make an approval or decline recommendation.	Quality Partner	Within 30 working days from receipt of the report. (Part of the 60 days)
7. Approval letter or Decline	Issue the Workplace/site Approval letter with a unique approval number where the outcome is positive.	QCTO or Quality Partner where arranged	Within 30 working days from the positive outcome.
8. Lodge an Appeal	Complete the appeal form and pay applicable fees	Applicant	Within 10 working days from decline letter date.
9. Quality assurance	Conduct announced or unannounced visits to confirm continued compliance.	QCTO or Quality Partner	During the approval period.
Overall processing objective	Process and finalise a complete Workplace/site Approval application.	Quality Partner	Within 90 working days, excluding applicant-related delays or gap-closure periods.

8.14 The applicant is responsible for ensuring that all submitted documents are lawful, accurate, current and verifiable. False, altered, misleading or fraudulent documents may result in decline, suspension, revocation, reporting to the appropriate authority or other lawful action, depending on the nature and seriousness of the matter and after due process.

8.15 Quality assurance may include announced and unannounced site visits by the QCTO and its Quality Partners to ensure that the approved workplace or worksite maintains the minimum Workplace Approval requirements.

8.16 Failure to maintain the minimum Workplace Approval requirements during the approval period may result in corrective action, suspension or revocation, subject to written notice, an opportunity to respond, consideration by an authorised decision-maker, written reasons and learner-protection arrangements.

8.17 Where Workplace Approval is suspended or revoked, the Skills Development Provider where learners are enrolled remains responsible under this Policy and applicable agreements to support learner continuity at another approved workplace or worksite.

8.18 Workplace simulation may only be used as a workplace-based learning intervention where expressly permitted by the relevant curriculum document and in compliance with all applicable legislative, regulatory and quality assurance requirements. Simulations may be used for knowledge and practical modules.

8.19 Under no circumstances may workplace simulation be implemented as a substitute for workplace-based learning where the curriculum or applicable regulations require actual workplace exposure.

9 WORKPLACE/SITE APPROVAL PLANNING

9.1 The QCTO mandate and delegated QP's mandate allows it to approve legal organisations within the Republic of South Africa. The following should be noted when planning for Workplace/site Approval:

9.1.1 Proof of compliance with the Companies Act 71 of 2008 juristic requirement is mandatory. This evidence may take the form of CIPC registration documents or proof of establishment according to the Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995 for labour organisations. State entities, such as State-Owned Companies, are exempt from the above juristic requirement, subject to providing a letter to that effect.

9.1.2 Proof of compliance with the Income Tax Act 58 of 1962 at the time of Workplace Approval must be provided through a current Tax Compliance Status. State entities, such as State-Owned Companies, are exempt from the above tax compliance requirement, subject to providing a letter to that effect.

9.1.3 Proof of capacity to offer each occupational qualification, part-qualification or occupational skills programme applied for. This requirement is associated with the minimum infrastructure requirements, as well as legal and supporting systems for learners.

9.1.4 Details of foreign personnel must be accompanied by valid certified copies of their passports and work permits, issued within six months of the application date and valid for the duration of the qualification, authorising them to work within the Republic of South Africa in accordance with the Immigration Act 13 of 2002.

9.1.5 Proof that suitably qualified and experienced coaches or mentors are available for each programme applied for. Applicants must submit each coach's CV, certified ID and qualification copies issued within six months of the application date, and a service or appointment letter. Foreign qualifications must include a SAQA evaluation.

9.1.6 The permanent physical address where learners will be coached or mentored must comply with the Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993 (Act No. 85 of 1993), the Mine Health and Safety Act, 1996 (Act No. 29 of 1996), where applicable, and any other related regulatory requirements.

9.1.7 Proof of OHS requirements shall be a valid OHS audit conducted by an authorised person (internally or externally appointed) for the duration of the Workplace Approval.

9.1.8 Proof of COIDA requirement shall be a valid COIDA certificate or a valid liability letter.

9.2 Workplace Approval is issued for a specific site.

9.2.1 Multiple applications and OHS compliance evidence must be submitted where Workplace Approval is required for different physical addresses or workplace or worksite locations.

9.2.2 The training, learning, practical training, assessment or workplace site identified in the accreditation application should ordinarily be located within 30 km of the approved Skills Development Provider, Assessment Centre or Trade Test Centre.

9.2.3 Where the site is located more than 30 km from the approved venue, the applicant must submit a motivation setting out how learners or candidates will be transported, who will be responsible for the transport costs, and the period for which such transport arrangements will apply.

9.2.4 Learners may undertake approved workplace-based learning activities at an alternative site where operational exposure requires such movement, provided that the alternative site falls within the approved scope and range, meets equivalent occupational health and safety, resource, supervision and evidence requirements, and has been notified to and accepted by the relevant Quality Partner before placement. Learner movement between sites must be recorded and monitored.

9.2.5 A change of site for more than 12 months requires Workplace Re-Approval, as the new site must meet the minimum requirements. A new Workplace Approval Letter must be issued against the new site visit. The workplace or worksite must apply for approval before moving the physical address to ensure compliance with this Policy.

9.2.6 All Workplace Approval applications for any occupational qualification, part-qualification or skills programme, where applicable, must have a physical address within the Republic of South Africa in line with the Domicile Act 3 of 1992, even if the qualification, part-qualification or skills programme can be offered virtually at worksite level. The physical address is normally where the workplace or worksite is based.

9.2.7 For workplaces or worksites that use mobile sites, the physical address must be in accordance with Companies and Intellectual Property Commission requirements. A permanent physical address is mandatory, even where the occupational qualification, part-qualification or skills programme, where applicable, can be offered through mixed-mode or multi-modal workplace-based learning.

9.2.8 All applicants must provide proof of a physical address, even where the programme is delivered through a mobile worksite. The physical address is where the workplace or worksite is based and must be in line with Companies and Intellectual Property Commission requirements. Two or more workplaces or worksites may not be approved using the same physical address for the same qualification unless there is a detailed plan indicating learner allocation and the coach or mentor-to-learner ratio.

9.3 Qualification documents can be downloaded from both SAQA and QCTO websites. Associated curriculum documents can be downloaded from the QCTO website.

9.4 Applicants are required to provide proof of their understanding of the occupational qualification, part-qualification, or skills programme (where applicable) content by means of

9.4.1 Workplace Resource Matrix. A matrix must be completed comprehensively for each Module or Topic covering tasks that will be completed to achieve the required Exit Level Outcomes (ELO) for work experience learning where applicable.

9.4.2 Workplace experience can also be acquired through Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs).

9.4.3 Workplace-based learning experience must be undertaken in line with curriculum requirements, and verifiable evidence of such experience must be formally recorded and made available on request, such as logbooks, journals and videos.

9.4.4 If a workplace or worksite cannot cover the entire scope, a formal agreement in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding, Service Level Agreement or related legal agreement with another approved workplace or worksite must be in place to cover the outstanding scope.

9.4.5 In a situation where both workplaces are not yet approved, but combined, do meet the requirement of the scope, a joint workplace approval process is to be effected, based on separated workplace approval applications being submitted.

9.4.6 It must be practical for such facilities and equipment to be available for learners as and when required.

9.4.7 The quality standard demonstrated during Workplace Approval must be maintained throughout the approval period.

9.4.8 Proof of such agreements, fully signed by both parties, must be provided as evidence before approval for Workplace Approval.

9.5 Applicants must provide proof of Financial Stability to prove that the learners will not be left stranded before they complete the workplace components of the occupational qualification, part-qualification, or skills programme (where relevant) in a form of:

9.5.1 A letter from the independent auditors or from the accountants that are qualified to offer the audit opinion;

9.5.2 Bank guarantees or balances detailing all Work Based Modules and cost associated to each module per learner; and

9.5.3 Audited Financial Statements (AFS), Annual Reports (AR).

9.6 Approved workplaces and worksites must ensure that all learners enrolled or undertaking workplace-based learning activities under their responsibility have the minimum required medical fitness tests, where applicable, and relevant coverage in the event of any incident or accident during workplace-based learning. All health and safety regulations must be complied with.

9.7 Applicants are encouraged to communicate directly with the QCTO or the relevant Quality Partner.

9.7.1 The QCTO communicates only with the applicant, being the workplaces and worksites.

9.7.2 Applicants must ensure that workplace approval related decisions are made by an authorised and accountable person or executive authority.

9.7.3 Where an applicant chooses to use a consultant or third party, a fully signed Power of Attorney must be submitted, clearly stating the authorised powers, limitations and validity period of the appointment.

9.7.4 The QCTO and its Quality Partners will not be responsible for, or involved in, any investigation, court case, complaint or dispute arising from the applicant’s use of a consultant or third party.

9.7.5 The QCTO and its Quality Partners will not be liable for any misinformation, delay, damage or loss caused by such consultant or third party.

10 IMPLEMENTATION

10.1 The Workplace Approval application must be accompanied by the following minimum documents. Documents requiring certification must be certified within the six months preceding the application date and must be valid and verifiable at submission.

10.1.1 CIPC registration documents or proof of legal establishment, excluding government entities where an exemption letter is provided, in line with section 9.

10.1.2 Tax Compliance Status (TCS) (Not applicable for Government entities, subject to their provision of the exemption letter) in line with section **Error! Reference source not found.**;

10.1.3 Coach or mentor curriculum vitae, certified identity document copies, certified copies of relevant qualifications and service or appointment letters for each qualification, part-qualification or skills programme applied for, in line with section 9.

10.1.4 Occupational health and safety evidence in line with section 9, including one or more of the following, where applicable:

10.1.5 ISO 45001, OHSAS 18001 or another recognised occupational health and safety management system certificate, where applicable;

10.1.5.1 OHS Certificate audit report, or

10.1.5.2 The latest OHS evaluation report. Where an internal OHS evaluation report is issued, it must not be older than three months from the date of application.

10.1.6 Proof of Financial Stability in line with section 9.5;

10.1.7 Registration requirements by statutory professional bodies where applicable (e.g., Registration of Artisan-on trade related interventions, ECSA, HPCSA);

10.1.7.1 Proof of Artisan Registration required.

10.1.7.2 MoUs or SLAs with other approved workplaces, including prescribed tools and equipment, must be provided where the applicant relies on another workplace to cover components not available at the applicant workplace. The agreement must clearly allocate responsibilities for learner supervision, occupational health and safety, evidence collection, learner movement, insurance, record keeping and continuity arrangements.

10.1.7.3 Approval of a workplace/site does not constitute accreditation as a Skills Development Provider and does not authorise the applicant to offer knowledge modules unless separately accredited or authorised to do so by the QCTO.

10.1.7.4 Proof of Workplace Resource Matrix.

10.2 The applicant will be furnished with the relevant Workplace Approval checklists and other guidelines, as well as dates for the physical or virtual Workplace Approval site audit, by the relevant Quality Partner or any of its appointed evaluators. For trade-related interventions, approval through physical workplace visits must be used as the preferred method within the approval process.

10.3 The applicant must:

10.3.1 Formally accept the date for a Workplace/site Approval audit and be fully prepared for the audit, with all required evidence, documents, tools, human resources and infrastructure listed in the checklist readily available;

10.3.2 Indicate in advance all sites that need to be audited, as well as any sites with which the applicant has a Memorandum of Understanding;

10.3.3 Have a reliable network and sufficient data for a virtual site visit, which may take the entire day. A virtual site visit requires the applicant to move around the premises and show all requested information, and the network must be reliable and stable throughout the premises;

10.3.4 Ensure that lack of preparation does not delay the audit, as lack of preparation may result in the application being declined. If the applicant is still not prepared within 21 working days of the initial visit, the applicant will be required to re-apply;

10.3.5 Request all Workplace Approval visit cancellations in writing from the relevant Quality Partner at least seven working days before the scheduled site visit. Failure to do so may result in all associated costs being recovered from the applicant before any further application may be processed by the QCTO or its Quality Partners;

10.3.6 Notify the QCTO and the relevant Quality Partner in writing of any relocation, change of site, change of physical address or material change affecting the approved workplace, worksite or technology-supported worksite before such change is implemented. If the QCTO or the relevant Quality Partner conducts an announced or unannounced quality assurance visit and finds that the approved site has been vacated, relocated or is no longer operational without prior written notification and approval, the applicant shall be liable for the full cost of the visit, including but not limited to travel, accommodation, subsistence, evaluator or subject matter expert costs and any other related costs incurred;

10.3.7 Pay any applicable fees for Workplace/site Approval applications, appeals, re-applications, extensions, renewals or related quality assurance services, where such fees are approved and published or communicated through an authorised QCTO fee schedule, circular, guideline or directive. Payment of a fee does not guarantee approval, and all applications and appeals remain subject to the prescribed minimum requirements, evaluation outcomes and applicable quality assurance processes; and

10.3.8 Notify the relevant Quality Partner of any cancellation at least seven working days before a scheduled visit. Where a cancellation results in non-refundable travel, accommodation or consultant costs, the applicant may be held liable for such costs, subject to being afforded an opportunity to make representations.

10.4 The Workplace/site Approval site audit may be done physically or virtually, and all site visits shall be recorded and will be conducted on a platform preferred by the QCTO or its Quality Partners for administration and audit purposes.

10.4.1 A virtual site audit will be conducted with the aim of capturing as much evidence as possible, starting from the street where the prospective workplace is located, the surrounding environment and all applicable tools and infrastructure.

10.4.2 All Workplace Approval audits, whether physical or virtual, must be conducted by suitably qualified subject matter experts or evaluators appointed by the QCTO or the relevant Quality Partner.

10.4.3 The recommended outcome of the Workplace Approval audit must be submitted to the relevant Quality Partner for consideration and recommendation to the QCTO, unless the Quality Partner has been expressly delegated decision-making authority in writing.

10.4.4 Evidence of physical or virtual site visits may be requested from the Quality Partner as a quality assurance measure.

10.5 A formal Workplace Approval Letter must be issued by the QCTO or an authorised Quality Partner in the format prescribed by the QCTO for applicants that meet the minimum Workplace Approval requirements. The letter must indicate the approved range, scope, capacity, physical address and mode of delivery.

10.6 An applicant whose application is declined may remedy the outstanding requirements through gap closure within 5 days, after which a new application must be submitted.

10.6.1 Unsuccessful or incomplete remedial actions will result in the application being declined.

10.6.2 All decline recommendations must be supported by adequate evidence, including but not limited to evaluation reports, completed checklists, photographs, audio and video recordings or screenshots, site visit notes and any other evidence relied upon to support the recommendation.

10.7 The QCTO may sample Workplace Approval audits and send its officials to verify the audits conducted.

10.8 Evidence of corruption, fraud, forgery, extortion, bribery, uttering of forged documents or submission of false, altered or misleading documents may be reported to the appropriate law-enforcement authority for investigation. Any restriction, suspension or revocation must be supported by evidence, authorised by the appropriate decision-maker and implemented after due process.

11 QUALITY ASSURANCE

11.1 The QCTO and its Quality Partners may conduct announced or unannounced quality assurance visits to determine whether the approved workplace or worksite still meets the minimum Workplace Approval requirements.

11.2 Failure to maintain the initial minimum Workplace Approval requirements may result in corrective action, suspension or revocation, subject to the procedural fairness requirements in this Policy.

11.3 The QCTO and its Quality Partners may, from time to time, invite all approved workplaces and worksites to attend compulsory provincially based capacitation workshops.

12 COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

12.1 The Workplace Approval requirements are based on compulsory minimum requirements for a workplace or worksite to successfully provide workplace-based learning for an OQSF qualification, part-qualification or skills programme, where applicable, while complying with the minimum required legal prescripts.

12.2 Minimum requirements remain compulsory and may not be waived through an appeal. However, an applicant may appeal a decision where there is evidence of procedural unfairness, factual error, incorrect application of the criteria or new material evidence. Appeals must be submitted to the relevant QP and will be evaluated against the same approved minimum requirements.

12.3 Disputes, complaints, queries and appeals must be lodged through the relevant QP channels.

12.4 Any appeal lodged with a QP must be reported to the QCTO, and the QP must pursue reasonable steps to resolve the appeal within 45 calendar days from the date on which the appeal was lodged.

12.5 Where the Quality Partner is unable to resolve the appeal within the prescribed period, the appeal must be escalated to the QCTO for investigation. The QCTO must consider the matter and issue a final appeal decision within 90 calendar days from the date on which the appeal was originally lodged.

12.6 The QCTO has a Fraud Prevention and Whistle-Blowing Policy that can be accessed from the QCTO website.

12.7 The Skills Development Provider and workplace/site must ensure that all learners are inducted on the agreed grievance, disciplinary and escalation processes. Learner, workplace or provider-related issues must first be reported to and addressed by the relevant Skills Development Provider and workplace/site in line with their signed agreements and applicable grievance and disciplinary policies.

12.8 Unresolved grievances may be escalated to the QCTO or the relevant Quality Partner, including through approved contact points or hotlines, where the matter was reported to the Skills Development Provider and workplace or worksite and was not resolved within a reasonable period. Direct reporting is permitted where internal reporting is unsafe, inappropriate or reasonably likely to prejudice the complainant, including where there is immediate danger, suspected fraud, retaliation, harassment, criminal conduct or involvement of senior management.

12.9 Criminal matters must be reported to the South African Police Service.

13 NON-COMPLIANCE WITH POLICY

13.1 Submission of false, altered, misleading or fraudulent documents is a serious breach of this Policy. Any such submission may result in the Workplace Approval application being declined, suspended or revoked, after consideration of the evidence and due process.

13.2 The QCTO or an expressly delegated Quality Partner may suspend or revoke Workplace Approval where an approved workplace or worksite fails to comply with the stipulated Workplace Approval and quality assurance requirements. Such decisions must follow a procedurally fair process and may be appealed through the appeals process in section 12.

13.3 The QCTO reserves the right to withdraw or terminate Service Level Agreements with Quality Partners that fail to comply with this Policy. Such decisions may be appealed through a formal appeals process established and overseen by the Appeals Committee of the QCTO.

14 IMPLEMENTATION AND TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

14.1 This policy comes into effect on 1 April 2027.

14.2 The following transitional arrangements are provided for:

14.2.1 Workplaces are requested to contact the applicable Quality Partner should they want a pre-2009 qualification, unit standard or skills programme to be re-registered, re-aligned to an occupational qualification, part-qualification or skills programme, or developed. Preference will be given to qualifications in high demand, as well as qualifications listed in the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Skills Strategy and green skills.

14.2.2 All Workplace Approval Letters for any qualification in the OQSF issued from 1 April 2027 must bear both the QCTO and Quality Partner logos. Workplace Approval Letters issued before this date by any SETA will remain valid until their expiry date.

14.2.3 NAMB Workplace Approval Criteria and Guidelines will continue to apply until the last date of achievement for the historically registered qualification.

14.2.4 The current SETA Workplace Approval processes will continue to apply until the last date of achievement for the historically registered qualification.

14.2.5 Quality Partners that are currently approving workplaces/sites must continue to perform this function until such time as a revised agreement or implementation arrangement is concluded between the QCTO and the relevant Quality Partner.

14.2.6 All workplaces/sites approved by Quality Partners must be submitted to the QCTO on a monthly basis in the format prescribed by the QCTO, for verification, oversight, record keeping and national reporting.

14.2.7 Where an applicant has a valid workplace/site approval issued within the previous two years for the same or related scope, the existing approval may be used as part of the application evidence, and the applicant must submit only the additional or updated documents applicable to the new application, as determined by the QCTO or the relevant Quality Partner.

15 POLICY REVIEW

15.1 This Policy must be reviewed at least once every three years, or earlier where required by legislative, regulatory, operational or organisational changes. The Occupational Quality Assurance Branch is responsible for initiating and coordinating the review.