



MINING QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

2020/21 MQA FINAL RESEARCH AGENDA



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1. INTRODUCTION

The Mining Qualifications Authority (MQA) was first established under the Mine Health and Safety Act No.29 of 1996 and later registered as a Sector Education and Training Authority under the Skills Development Act No.97 of 1998. To this end, the MQA is Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) responsible for the administration of skills development programmes for the Mining and Minerals Sector in South Africa

2. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- 2.1** Promote efficient and effective governance and administration.
- 2.2** Improve skills development planning and decision –making through research.
- 2.3** Promote work-based skills development to support transformation in the mining and minerals sector (MMS).
- 2.4** Facilitate access to occupationally directed learning programmes for the unemployed.
- 2.5** Support training initiatives in mine communities.
- 2.6** Ensure the delivery of quality learning programmes in the mining and minerals sector.

3. LEGISLATION GOVERNING THE MQA

The MQA is a statutory body that has the primary mandate of coordinating skills development processes and programmes in the MMS. The primary objective of the MQA is to support the MMS to continuously develop sufficient and competent persons in occupations that are core to the MMS.

The legislative framework that the MQA operates under, comprises three primary legislative instruments which are:-

- a) Mine Health and Safety Act of 1996;
- b) Skills Development Act of 1998; and
- c) Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act of 2002.

The Mine Health and Safety Act, 1996(Act 29 of 1996) Section 41(3)	The Skills Development Amendment Act, 2003(Act 31 of 2003)	Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act of 28 of 2002.
<p>Established the MQA on June 1996 to advise the minister of Mineral and Energy (now the Minister of Mineral Resources) on:</p> <p>a) The creation of a framework for qualifications and learning achievements in the mining industry to improve health and safety standards through proper training and education;</p> <p>b) Standards and competency setting, assessment, examinations, quality assurance and accreditation in the mining industry and</p> <p>c) Linking and qualifying framework for the manning industry to the National Qualification Framework referred to in the National Qualifications Framework Act, 67 of 2008</p>	<p>Section 4A of schedule 2 “re-established” the MQA as follows:</p> <p>Despite anything to the contrary in either this Act or the Mine Healthy and Safety Act, 1996 (Act 29 of 1996 and with effect from 20 March 2002, the Mining Qualifications Authority, established in terms of section 9(1) of this Act as SETA 16</p>	<p>Establishes that the Minerals and Mining Development Board must in terms of Section 58(1) of this Act “in consultation with the MQA, ensure the promotion of human resources development in the minerals and mining industry”</p>

The Department of Higher Education, Science and Technology (DHES) has recently promulgated the National Skills Development Plan (NSDP) which will take effect on 1 April 2020. The plan identified priorities across sectors of the economy with various outcomes to address the skills shortages and gaps. The MQA is guided by the policies of the Department of Higher Education, Science and Technology. Therefore, any policy changes will be incorporated into the operations, programmes, and activities of the MQA as and when the need arises.

4. IMPORTANCE OF RESEARCH

Research is key to the Post-School Education and Training (PSET) system in realising the vision outlined by the White Paper for PSET. It can provide insights into the PSET system and the constituencies it serves; about the success or otherwise of policies and their implementation; and about the experiences of other countries with similar challenges. It also enables practitioners to test and compare diverse theories and approaches to the provision of PSET as well as the development of leading-edge information, services and applications for the system. Most importantly, research can make available evidence on which the MQA is able to make decisions, review policies and improve systems, services and practices.

5. THE MQA'S RESEARCH PRIORITIES

The MQA research agenda sets to outline research projects to be prioritised for the period April 2020 to March 2021. It is informed by the strategic objective 2 outlined in the MQA strategic plan and annual performance plan. The research agenda aims to lead and collaborate on research projects in skills development priorities within the MMS for the purpose of making informed decisions and creating a credible institutional mechanism for skills development planning and research in the sector.

The purpose of the NSDP is to ensure that South Africa has adequate, appropriate and high quality skills that contribute towards economic growth, employment creation and social development through attainment of eight outcomes. The priorities that stand out in the NSDP for the MMS are as follows:

- Identify and increase production of occupations in high demand
- Linking education and workplace
- Improving the quality of education, skills development and innovation
- Support the growth of the public college system
- Skills development for entrepreneurship
- Support worker initiated training
- Support career development service

Each focus area could generate an indefinite number of themes and topics, and many cross theme changes are possible. The MQA has, however, identified specific focus areas and topics that are of particular priority for the MMS. The MQA works and partners with key public institutions such as universities and other research institutions, to develop an institutional mechanism for skills planning.

To ensure the continual objective decision making and skills development planning; the research projects below are proposed for the 2019/20 financial year.

5.1 Sector Skills Plan 2020/25 - Legislative Imperative

Key features:

- The MQA's sector profile
 - Identifying the key role players
 - Economic Analysis of the MMS
 - Employer and Labour Market analysis
- Identify the key change drivers of the sector and alignment with national strategies and plans
- Identify key skills issues to be addressed for the sector
- Outline the occupational shortages and skills gaps within the MMS
- Provide an analysis of the supply and demand imperatives in the MMS
- Ascertain current and future sector partnerships
- Identify sector priorities in skills development

5.2 WSP/ATR Analysis- Functional Imperative

Key features:

- An analysis of the MMS' organisations in terms of geographic location, company size and sub-sector
- Develop a profile of the workforce of the MMS in terms of population groups, gender, employees living with a disability, South African vs. Non-South African citizens and educational levels
- Describe hard-to-fill vacancies in terms of province, sub-sector as well as reasons why employers identify them as hard-to-fill
- Describe skills development in the MMS as reflected in the ATRs
- Determine the skills development priorities of organisations in the MMS as reflected in the WSPs
- Conduct a comparative analysis with data submitted in previous years
- Compare the data with other information contained in the MQA's database (where available);

5.3 Trends Analysis Update (2010-2020) - Functional Imperative

Key features:

- Trends analysis of WSP-ATR submissions by subsector, company size, and province
- Profile of the MMS' workforce by occupational level, race, gender, nationality, age and disability over the past 10 years
- Trends analysis of training undertaken and planned for employees as reported on the WSP-ATRs in the past 10 years

5.4 Understanding the relationship between the scarce and critical skills (hard-to-fill occupations) and interventions that are implemented in the MMS- Functional Imperative

Key features:

- What is the nature of skills that are reported to be in demand in the MMS?
- What is the nature of supply of skills reported in the MMS?
- What is the relationship between the demand and supply of skills in the MMS?
 - Is there a gap between what is identified and supplied?
 - If a gap exists, what is the nature of that gap and how can it be addressed?
 - What factors influence this gap?
- Provide actionable recommendations that will lead to the improvement of synergy between the demand and supply of skills development in the sector.

**5.5 Assessment of the effectiveness of the partnership between
Community Education and Training Centres (CETs)
and the MQA- Functional Imperative**

Key features:

- What is the scope and aim of CETs from the DHEST perspective?
- What is the nature (purpose and goals, principles) and scope underpinning this partnership in the MQA?
- Identifying the Intention of NSDP in expanding skills development through CETs and how the MQA is implementing this vision
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of these partnerships? What works and what does not work and why?
- What role can the MQA play in assisting the CETs?
- Based on the key findings develop a model for effective and efficient partnership, a model that will lead to improvement of synergy between the MQA and CETs.

**5.6 Exploring the state of managerial progression of Historically
Disadvantaged South African (African, Indian and Coloured)
employees in the MMS- Functional Imperative**

Key features:

- In the past 5 years, how much change has occurred to promote Black employees into managerial positions?
- Ascertain the contributing factors that lead to occupational progression.
- Establish the reasons why progression of Black employees is moving gradually.
- Determine the sector's readiness towards achieving the Mining Charter, 2018's transformational targets.
- Provide specific recommendations that are necessary to improve entry and career advancement of black people with interventions

5.7. Exploring the factors that are impeding attainment of equity targets with respect to people with disability within the Mining and Minerals Sector- Functional Imperative

Key features:

- What is the nature of employment profile with respect to provincial, subsectoral, racial, gender, age and occupational distribution of people living with a disability?
- What are the factors shaping entry into the MMS?
- What interventions are put in place to enable the effective entry of people with disability in the MMS?
- Provide specific recommendations necessary to improve absorption of people with disability in the labour market within the MMS.
- Provide specific recommendations that are necessary to improve entry of people with disability in the MMS.

6. RESEARCH COLLABORATIONS: PARTNERSHIPS WITH PRIVATE AND PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS REGARDING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN THE MMS

One of the principles of the NSDP is to encourage greater inclusivity and collaboration amongst key stakeholders. As such, the NSDP seeks to promote;

- Collaboration through partnerships within the public sector as well as between the public and private sectors to support effective skills development;
- A focus on quality education and training provision and articulation between programme and qualification offerings to ensure effective learning to work pathways;
- A strong focus on workplace-based learning in both public and private sectors;
- Partnerships across the skills development system with both private and public providers; and
- Effective and meaningful stakeholder engagement to support ownership and participation among stakeholders including social partners, individuals, employers, labour, providers, prospective learners, and the public.

7. RESEARCH FUNDING AND PROCUREMENT

The MQA's procurement practice is governed by section 217 of the Constitution of RSA, Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999) and Treasury Regulations. Therefore, procurement decisions on research provision always takes into account cost, equity, fairness, accountability, transparency, functionality and quality considerations. In addition, the MQA as a SETA has put in place systems and procedures to put in effect its approved Supply Chain Management Policy.

The MQA shall enter into private-public partnerships with institutions that express interest form a partnership/s to undertake research in line with the MQA mandate especially its research agenda. The MQA intends to fund research within the scope of its own financial resources.

8. CONCLUSION

The MQA research agenda is informed by the mandate which finds expression in its five year strategic plan and annual performance plan. Through research labour market intelligence is gathered to continually inform and support objective decision making for skills development planning in the sector.

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