**South Africa**

**Quick guide to identifying credible institutions in South Africa**

*Updated: May 2017*

**Acronyms and names**

**CHE** Council on Higher Education (CHE)

**DHET** Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET)

**GFETQSF** General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-Framework

**HEQSF** Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework

**NLRD** National Learners Records' Database (NLRD)

**NQF** National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

**OQSF** Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework

**QC** Quality Council (QC)

**QCTO** Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO)

**SAQA** South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)

**Umalusi** Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training

**1. Introduction**

The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) maintains records of all credible institutions in South Africa. See SAQA website: www.saqa.org.za. It is not difficult to find out whether an institution is credible in South Africa. You need to look for three things:

1. The provider must be registered;
2. The provider must be accredited to offer a particular qualification or part-qualification; and
3. Even if the provider is registered and accredited, the qualification or part-qualification that they are offering must be registered on the South African National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

**2. Registration of providers**

In South Africa, providers of education must be registered to offer qualifications or part-qualifications. There are only two types of providers:

* Public providers are deemed registered through an Act of Parliament;
* Private providers are registered with the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) (www.dhet.gov.za).

**3. Accreditation of providers**

There is no generic accreditation in South Africa. All providers must be accredited by the relevant Quality Council (QC) to offer a particular NQF qualification or part-qualification which falls within that QC's Sub-Framework in South Africa.

There are only three Quality Councils in South Africa:

1. Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training (Umalusi) ( www. umalusi.org.za) responsible for the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-Framework (GFETQSF);
2. Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) (www.qcto.org.za) responsible for the Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework (OQSF); and
3. Council on Higher Education (CHE) (www.che.ac.za) responsible for the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF).

**4. Registration of qualifications and part-qualifications**

All qualifications and part-qualifications being offered must be registered on the South African NQF.

SAQA is the custodian of the NQF and maintains a register of:

* all NQF qualifications and part-qualifications,
* all NQF providers;
* the learners who have achieved NQF qualifications;
* recognised professional bodies and their professional designations; and
* professionals registered against the professional designations.

There are currently over 17 million records on SAQA's National Learners Records' Database (NLRD). All information is available on the SAQA website: www.saqa.org.za.

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