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**SOUTH AFRICAN QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY (SAQA)**

In accordance with Regulation 24(c) of the National Standards Bodies Regulations of 26 March 1998, the Standards Generating Body (SGB) for

Social Work

registered by Organising Field 09 – Health Sciences and Social Services, publishes the following qualification for public comment.

This notice contains the titles, fields, subfields, NQF levels, credits, and purpose of the qualification. The full qualification can be accessed via the SAQA web-site at www.saqa.org.za. Copies may **also** be obtained from the Directorate of Standards Setting and Development at the SAQA offices, SAQA House, 1067 Arcadia Street, Hatfield, Pretoria.

Comment on the qualification should reach SAQA at the address **below** and no later **than 77 June 2007**. All correspondence should be marked Standards Setting – Social Work addressed to

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SOUTH AFRICAN QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

QUALIFICATION:
Master of Social Work

SAQA QUAL ID	QUALIFICATION TITLE		
58582	Master of Social Work		
SGB	PROVIDER		
SGB Social Work			
ETQA			
QUALIFICATION TYPE	FIELD	SUBFIELD	
Masters Degree	9 - Health Sciences and Social Services	Promotive Health and Developmental Services	
ABET BAND	MINIMUM CREDITS	NQF LEVEL	QUAL CLASS
Undefined	180	Level 8 and above	Regular-ELOAC

PURPOSE AND RATIONALE OF THE QUALIFICATION

The purpose of this qualification is to provide qualifiers with:

- Advanced research skills in a chosen field of social work.
- The knowledge and skills to engage in independent social work research, selecting from a range of appropriate research designs, technologies, methods and techniques in the chosen focus area of social work.
- The ability to produce and communicate the research findings.
- Advanced, in-depth knowledge of a specific field of social work and social welfare.
- The competencies to effectively, critically and systematically access, analyse, process, transform and critically evaluate existing knowledge in order to achieve an integrated synthesis in the research field.
- The ability to practically apply advanced professional skills in the chosen field.

This qualification also allows access to continuation of learning, namely the NQF Level 8 PhD in Social Work.

Rationale:

This qualification is designed to provide the necessary advanced knowledge and research skills in social work, thereby promoting the achievement of social work's core Purposes as bedded in the following internationally accepted definition:

- The social work profession promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being. Utilising theories of human behaviour and social systems, social work intervenes at the points where people interact with their environments. Principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work. [International Federation of Social Workers and International Association of Schools of Social Work, 2000].

Due to the fact that social work encompasses such a broad spectrum of themes, fields and/or inter-disciplinary areas, it is essential to provide a qualification that enables candidates to acquire advanced skills, competencies, knowledge and values in Social work as well as a degree of independent thinking.

Social work plays a major role in addressing the many needs of South African society through social work services provided within many sectors such as government departments, businesses, non-governmental organisations and in private practice. Dynamic and

professionally sound leadership is vital within these sectors in order for social work to impact on social needs.

This social work qualification is also designed to enable candidates to pursue further personal and professional development and to promote life-long learning.

RECOGNIZE PREVIOUS LEARNING?

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LEARNING ASSUMED TO BE IN PLACE

Candidates who register for this qualification must have an NQF Level 7 qualification in Social Work and be registered with the SACSSP as a social worker.

Applicants who fall outside of the above criteria, but who can demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the service provider, that they have an appropriate, related qualification. experiential or work-based learning, which has taken the candidate to the equivalent of an NQF Level 7 Social Work qualification, may be considered for admission into this social work programme.

Given the ethical parameters of social work education, training and practice, learners must be registered with the SACSSP (South African Council for Social Service Professions) as social workers, in terms of section 17 of the Social Service Professions Act, 1978.

QUALIFICATION RULES

A qualifier undertaking this qualification will demonstrate the following competencies at NQF Level 8 for a total of 180 credits:

- Advanced application of concepts, knowledge, methods, ethics, theories and analytical processes in relation to a chosen focus area of social work and social welfare.
- Access, analyse, transform and critically evaluate existing knowledge in relation to the chosen area of social work and social welfare.
- Access, process, produce and communicate information effectively to colleagues and other groups.
- Engage in independent social work research and produce findings in the form of a research report selecting from a range of appropriate research designs, methods, techniques and technologies in the chosen focus area.
- Demonstrate in-depth understanding of own position in relation to major debates within social work and the chosen field of social work and social welfare.
- Demonstrate specialist forefront knowledge and expertise in the chosen field of social work and the competency to apply these creatively and innovatively within the chosen field.
- Critically analyse and evaluate the outcomes of social work interventions, techniques, strategies, or processes in the chosen field.
- Demonstrate advanced understanding of social work values, principles of human rights and social justice and competency in their application in the chosen focus field.
- Demonstrate advanced understanding of social work values, principles of human rights and social justice and competency in their application in the chosen focus field.

Research is embedded in this qualification whether the candidate earns it through either successfully completing:

- A single advanced research project; culminating in the production and acceptance of a dissertation.

- A coursework programme requiring a high level of theoretical engagement and intellectual independence and a research project with the credits earned being equally divided between coursework and the research project written up as a dissertation.

EXIT LEVEL OUTCOMES

1. Demonstrate advanced application of concepts, methods, ethics, theories and analytical processes in relation to a chosen focus area of social work and social welfare.

2. Access, analyse, transform and critically evaluate existing knowledge

3. Access, process, produce and communicate information effectively to colleagues and other groups.

4. Engage in independent social work research and produce findings in the form of a research report selecting from a range of appropriate research designs, methods, techniques and technologies in the chosen focus area.

5. Demonstrate in-depth understanding of own position in relation to major debates within social work and the chosen field of social work and social welfare.

6. Demonstrate specialist forefront knowledge and expertise in the chosen field of social work and the competency to apply these creatively within the chosen field.

7. Critically analyse and evaluate the outcomes of social work interventions, techniques, strategies, or processes in the chosen field.

8. Demonstrate advanced understanding of social work values, principles of human rights and social justice and competency in their application in the chosen focus field.

Critical Cross-Field Outcomes:

All the Exit Level Outcomes and the associated assessment criteria listed in the qualification are consistent with the following Critical Cross-field Outcomes listed in Section 7(3) of the NSB Regulations:

- Identify and solve problems using critical and creative thinking.
- Work effectively with others as a member of a team, group, organisation and community.
- Organise and manage oneself and one's activities responsibly and effectively.
- Collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information.
- Communicate effectively using visual, mathematical and/or language skills in the modes of oral and/or written presentation.
- Demonstrate cultural and aesthetic sensitivity in dealings with clients, colleagues and communities.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by recognising that problem-solving contexts do not exist in isolation.
- Demonstrate ethical and professional behaviour.
- Lay the foundation for life-long learning and ongoing competency.

ASSOCIATED ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

1.
 - Discussions reflect a clear understanding of the context (including policy, legislation and global issues), appropriate concepts, methods, ethics, theories and analytical processes in the chosen field.

- Presentations reflect the appropriate application of the relevant concepts, methods, ethics, theories and analytical processes in the chosen field.
 - Written work on the chosen field displays critical analyses and a degree of intellectual independence.
- 2.
 - Current literature and research are accessed, **analysed** and transformed systematically in the chosen focus area.
 - Evaluations demonstrate clear evidence of effective application of the principles of social work research practice.
 - Conclusions and recommendations are justified by the use of appropriate evidence and arguments.
- 3.
 - Discussions reflect the ability to obtain, process and communicate information effectively to colleagues and other groups.
 - Presentations display analytical skills and a degree of intellectual independence.
 - Written and oral communication convey and appropriately highlight the information to specific target groups.
- 4.
 - The research inquiry is planned and conducted on the basis of a range of appropriate research designs, methods, techniques and technologies for the specific research problem.
 - Research themes are appropriately identified and demarcated.
 - Analyses of the research theme include a comprehensive and critical review of current literature and investigations.
 - Selected research methods, techniques and technologies are based on a clear understanding of social work research theory & practice.
 - Research reports critically and coherently describe theoretical arguments, the research process, methodology, results, conclusions and recommendations.
 - Research reports display skill in extrapolating key findings, justifiable conclusions and making feasible recommendations,
- 5.
 - Motivations of own position to specific debates are based on a sound integration of relevant theory, practice, research and a degree of independent, creative thinking.
 - Discussions demonstrate understanding of one's own position and its feasibility in relation to major debates.
 - Written and oral formats clearly and cogently communicate explanations of own position.
- 6.
 - Analyses of the problems and issues reflect a purposeful and critical application of advanced theory, current knowledge and expertise in the focus area.
 - Interventions and/or recommendations reflect purposeful and creative plans to seek solutions based on theory and proven methods in the chosen field.
 - Discussions and/or interventions reflect advanced application of appropriate skills, strategies and techniques in accordance with corresponding theoretical assumptions in the chosen field.
 - Research and/or interventions include the appropriate and creative use of social work tools and/or data relevant to the chosen field.
- 7.
 - Evaluations comprehensively describe outcomes of interventions, techniques, strategies or processes in relation to the stated goals and in accordance with corresponding theoretical assumptions.
 - Evaluations critically analyse outcomes in accordance with the identified needs and issues within the chosen focus area.

- Evaluations are purposefully used as the basis for planning, implementation and recommendations.

8.

- Discussions reflect the integration of social work values with human rights principles and social justice in the chosen focus field.
- Descriptions demonstrate a coherent understanding of the application of social work values, human rights principles and social justice in the chosen focus field.
- Analyses and/or practice reflect the purposeful application of social work values, human rights principles and social justice in the chosen focus field.
- Analyses and/or practice exhibit a critical understanding of the ethical principles guiding social work practice in the chosen field.

Integrated Assessment:

The following assessment strategies are used to ensure that exit level and critical cross-field outcomes are achieved:

- Written/oral assignments and/or assessments.
- Examinations and/or seminars.
- Independent research report assessed by an internal assessor and at least one external assessor.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARABILITY

Social Work is an internationally recognised profession with an internationally accepted definition by the International Federation for Social Workers and the International Association of Schools of Social Work. Countries in all continents throughout the world recognise it as an essential profession, and offer learning programmes at numerous levels. In addition, specialised fields of practice are recognised and taught at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

This Masters qualification compares favourably to similar qualifications in the international arena. This has been verified through the South African structures affiliated to the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW). The IASSW has formulated a **draft** document on Global Qualifying Standards for Social Work Education and Training and continues to work on and promote global standards. It should be noted that the Chairperson of the Global Qualifying Standards Committee is a South African and has served on the SGB for Social Work since its inception.

In order to benchmark this qualification with universities and other providers of postgraduate education, a survey was undertaken of qualifications offered internationally using personal contact, corresponding through e mail and searching the internet.

It is clear that all continents and the vast majority of countries offer Social Work and related qualifications. It is also a general trend to offer Social Work at a Masters level. Another general trend that is evident is that the Social Work Masters qualifications may be generic or specialised. The specialised fields vary vastly from Mental Health to Development Studies. It is also interesting to note from this survey that a number of countries continue to develop and initiate new areas of specialisation in Social Work at a Masters level.

Countries where Masters qualifications in Social Work are offered:

Australia:

Masters qualifications in Social Work are offered in Australia although there tends to be a separate Masters for Research and for a Structured Masters. An example of the Structured Masters is the Masters in Community Services offered by the Victoria University, Melbourne. However, Sydney University indicated that it does not offer a Masters degree.

Botswana:

The University of Botswana offers a Masters degree in Social Work which is entitled Masters in Development Studies.

Germany:

Various universities offer a Masters qualification which is normally specialised. They offer an MA in Inter-cultural Management and in Comparative European Social Studies which are offered internationally in English whilst specific programmes are offered in German in specialised fields such as MA in Community Development, Clinical Social Work, Social Management and MSW Social Work as Human Rights Profession. Currently 2 Masters degrees are being planned directly after the Bachelor qualification in Social Work which will be more general, namely MA Social Work and Education and MA Health Management.

Japan:

Masters qualifications in Social Work are also offered by the tertiary education institutions in Japan. The Japan Women's University, for example offers a Master of Social Work qualification which is a 2 year programme and includes a dissertation. In this way the structured component and the research component of a qualification at this level is combined.

New Zealand:

Masters qualifications in Social Work are offered at 4 universities. There is diversity in the programmes offered as some offer generic Social Work Masters qualifications and others specialist qualifications in various fields of practice.

Norway:

Masters of Social Work (MSW) qualifications are also offered throughout Norway. Some examples of these qualifications are MSW in Family Therapy, Value-based Leadership and Diaconi. Another MSW qualification is in the process of being planned for implementation and this will be specifically linked to International Social Work.

Slovenia:

The universities in Slovenia also make provision for Masters in Social Work qualifications. The general trend is to offer them in specific fields of specialisation, namely Mental Health in the Community, Disability Studies, Illegal Drugs and Social Work Responses, Social Management, Probation and Social Work.

United Kingdom:

Providers offer a 2 year learning programme for a Masters in Social Work qualification, for example London Met University. Many of the providers focus on structured programmes which do not necessarily include research. University of Newcastle on Tyne is an example of a provider that offers the qualification on a structured basis and the focus is frequently specialised in a field of practice.

United States of America:

Contact was made with the umbrella body known as the Council on Social Work Education based in Virginia. The Masters in Social Work qualification is offered throughout the United States of America and is a 2 year learning programme. It is also possible to specialise in various fields.

Universities that do not offer Master degrees:

- From the Philippines the indication was that no Master qualification in Social Work is offered and, in fact, they only offer qualifications at undergraduate level.
- The University of Nairobi also does not offer any Post graduate qualifications in Social Work including a Masters.
- The University of the West Indies, St Augustine, Trinidad, Tobago has a Social Work department offering a Social Work undergraduate degree and a specific diploma in Social Work on a post graduate level but does not offer a Masters qualification in Social Work at this stage.

In conclusion, comparing the international scenario to the situation in South Africa regarding the Master of Social Work qualification it can be stated that all universities in South Africa with Social Work departments presently offer an MSW qualification. Taking the merging of universities into account there are 17 universities with this qualification.

In South Africa the qualification is also offered as a Research and as a Structured Masters with various specialisations. It is also generally a 2 year learning programme. Consequently, it can be concluded that there are many similarities between the South African and international scenarios.

ARTICULATION OPTIONS

Qualifiers with an NQF Level 8 Social Work qualification may proceed to a Doctors programme in Social Work (NQF Level 8).

Articulation possibilities exist both within the tertiary institution offering the Social Work programme and across tertiary institutions.

MODERATION OPTIONS

Internal and external moderation must be available according to the provider's policy. However, external moderation must be available for **candidates** at Exit Level 8.

CRITERIA FOR THE REGISTRATION OF ASSESSORS

The minimum basic requirements for assessors are the following:

- Internal assessors must be registered with the SACSSP and have at least a Masters degree in Social Work (NQF Level 8).
- External assessors must have an appropriate qualification and/or appropriate experience in the chosen focus area.

Assessors must be registered with the relevant ETQA

NOTES

This qualification replaces qualification 23995, "Master of Social Work", Level 8, 180 credits

Registration of Providers:

Providers must be registered as such by the relevant ETQA.

UNIT STANDARDS

This qualification is not based on Unit Standards.