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SACPCMP POLICY ON ACCREDITATION

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

CBE	Council for the Built Environment
CHE	Council on Higher Education
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
HEQSF	Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework
HOD	Head of Department
IPDM	Initial Professional Development Modules
NLRD	National Learners' Records Database
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
PAJA	Promotion of Administrative Justice Act 3 of 2000
OQSF	Occupational Qualifications Sub-framework
QCTO	Quality Council for Trades and Occupations
SACPCMP	The South African Council for the Project and Construction Management Professions
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training

Definitions

Assessment	**Formative Assessment** According to the NQF Glossary of Terms formative assessment is, "A range of formal, non-formal and informal ongoing assessment procedures used to focus teaching and learning activities to improve student attainment, or which are required for the purpose of a year mark". **Summative Assessment** According to the NQF Glossary of Terms summative assessment is, "Assessment conducted at the end of sections of learning, at the end of a whole learning programme, or at any point in the learning programme, to evaluate learning related to a particular qualification, part-qualification, or professional designation".
Course	According to the SAQA's Criteria and Guidelines for Short Courses and Skills Programmes, course refers to the content of an educational programme "whereby learners may progressively attain the applied knowledge as described in unit standards and/or qualifications".
Credit	According to the NQF Glossary of Terms a credit is, "A measure of the volume of learning required for a qualification or part-

	qualification, quantified as the number of notional study hours required for achieving the learning outcomes specified for the qualification or part-qualification. One credit is equated to ten (10) notional hours of learning".
Notional Hours	According to the NQF Glossary of Terms notional hours are, "the agreed estimate of the learning time that it would take an average learner to meet the defined learning outcomes; it includes consideration of contact time, research, completion of assignments, time spent in structured learning in the workplace, individual learning and assessment. Ten notional hours equate to one credit."
Registered Person	Is defined in the Act as a person registered under the categories referred to in section 18 of the Act.
The Act	In this policy 'the Act' refers to the founding legislation of the Council which is the Project and Construction Management Professions Act 48 0f 2000.

1. Introduction

The CBE *Policy Framework on Accreditation of Built Environment Programmes* outlines the purpose of accreditation as "to review, evaluate, enhance and publicly recognise quality in built environment programmes" and that "accreditation should be conducted in the spirit of helping to develop and support newly established or transforming HEI not be seen as prescriptive or punitive".

Thus, the SACPCMP's objective for accreditation is the assessment of an institution against a predetermined set of requirements to ensure competency and desired professional conduct among graduates. Accreditation is therefore vital for the continued sustainability of the SACPCMP and its underlying professions.

2. Legislative and Policy Framework

The South African Council for the Project and Construction Management Professions is established through the Project and Construction Management Professions Act 48 of 2000, hereafter referred to as 'the Act', Sections 13 (a) to (c) outline the powers of the SACPCMP concerning accreditation:

   i.   Subject to sections 5 and 7 of the Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act No. 101 of 1997), to conduct accreditation visits to any educational institution which has a department, school or faculty offering Project and Construction Management educational programmes. Council must conduct at least one such visit during its term of office. If the Council does not conduct an accreditation visit within that term of office, it must notify the Minister accordingly and provide him or her with reasons for the failure to do so;

   ii. Either conditionally or unconditionally to grant, refuse or withdraw accreditation to all educational institutions and their educational programmes regarding Project and Construction Management;

   iii. To consult with the Council on Higher Education (CHE) established in terms of the Higher Education Act of 1997 regarding matters relevant to education in Project and Construction Management;

Furthermore, the Act outlines in Section 18 (b) (i) with reference to the registration of candidates, the requirement for the SACPCMP to accredit examinations at any educational institution offering educational programmes in Project and Construction Management.

According to the South African Government, "Providers of education and training must apply for accreditation with an Education and Training Quality Assurance (ETQA) body under the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA). All providers of education and training offering full qualifications must be registered with the Department of

Higher Education and Training (DHET). The education and training provider has to offer unit standards and/or qualifications that fall within the primary focus area of the ETQA body of the relevant Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) or professional body"[1].

Educational programmes offered in South Africa are bound and governed by the South African Legislative framework for Education, namely:

- Skills Development Act 97 of 1998
- Higher Education Act 101 of 1997
- South African Qualifications Authority Act 58 of 1995
- National Qualifications Framework Act 67 of 2008

The above legislations also outline the establishment and powers of quality assurance bodies that are responsible for accreditation of educational programmes for:

- the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF) from National Qualification Framework from NQF Levels 5 to 10, namely the Council on Higher Education (CHE)
- the Occupational Qualifications Sub-framework (OQSF) from NQF Level 1 to 8, namely the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO)

Therefore, qualifications obtained in South Africa must be registered with the Department of Higher Education and Training based on the cited legislative framework, accredited by the relevant Quality Council (i.e., CHE or QCTO) and the qualifications registered on the NQF by SAQA.

Section 43 (c) to (g) of the *Policy and Criteria for Recognising a Professional Body and Registering a Professional Designation for the Purposes of the National Qualification Framework Act (Act 67 of 2008)* states that, in order for a professional designation to be registered, it must:

- be part of a progression pathway within or across the NQF Sub-frameworks. This means that a hierarchy of two or more related qualifications and/or professional designations that allow for vertical progression within a profession.

This means that the Council must consider all Qualification Sub-frameworks for accreditation to create qualifications pathways into its professions.

Lastly, this Accreditation Policy is guided by the CBE *Policy Framework on Accreditation of Built Environment Programmes*.

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[1] South African Government. 2022. *About ETQA accreditation as a provider of education and training*. [online] Available at: https://www.gov.za/services/education-and-training-bodies/accreditation-provider-education-and-training

3. Policy Prescripts

3.1.   Eligibility for Accreditation

As outlined in Section 2 above, the NQF Act stipulates the legislative requirements of a qualification obtained in South Africa. The Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 and Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 stipulate the quality assurance requirements for educational institutions and their educational programmes. Thus, in order for an institution in the Republic of South Africa to be deemed eligible for accreditation, the following will apply:

a) It must be an educational programme that leads to the conferring of a full qualification
b) It must Registered on the NQF
c) The institution must be accredited by the relevant quality assurance body as follows:
   i.   It is accredited by the Council for Higher Education (CHE) if it is an academic qualification.
   ii.   It is accredited by the Quality Council for Trades and Occupation (QCTO) if it is an occupational qualification.
   iii. It is accredited by the relevant Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) if it is a Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) College.

3.2.   Accreditation Phases

3.2.1. Candidacy Phase

The candidacy phase will apply to institutions who have a new educational programme that does not have a first cohort of graduates. Once the programme has been registered with SAQA, the institution can apply, with supportive evidence, for recognition of the programme for candidacy by the Council. This will be done in two parts:

a) Endorsement of Educational Programmes as part of the requirement for DHET registration and Quality Assurance Body accreditation. This process is outlined in the *Criteria and Process for the Endorsement of Educational Qualifications*.
b) Paper-based assessment of the programme after SAQA registration to provisionally accredit the educational programme.

The above will be undertaken after an application is received from the educational institution in the format determined by the SACPCMP.

3.2.2. Accreditation Phase

The Accreditation Phase will apply to educational institutions who have an educational programme with a first cohort of graduates. The following will be required:

a) The institution demonstrates that they conform to the Accreditation Policy and guidelines of the CHE and the SACPCMP during the candidacy phase.

b) The accreditation process of the programme follows after the graduations of the first cohort of students.

c) The institution completes a self-evaluation document in line with the accreditation criteria.

The above will be undertaken after an application is received from the educational institution in the format determined by the SACPCMP.

3.2.3. Re-Accreditation Phase

The Re-Accreditation Phase is for institutions who have already been accredited by the SACPCPMP.

At the end of the accreditation cycle, the Council will contact institutions to request submissions for re-accreditation. The above will be undertaken after an application is received from the educational institution in the format determined by the SACPCMP.

3.3. Accreditation Support

The SACPCMP has established the Heads of Department (HOD) Forum to support departments striving for accreditation with the SACPCMP. Through this forum the SACPCPM will:

a) conduct regular workshops on the information requirements and process of accreditation for educational institutions.

b) disseminate the information required for accreditation within an accreditation cycle including the required norms, ratios or standards.

c) conduct information sessions with the educational institution before an accreditation visit.

3.4. Accreditation Cycle

An accreditation cycle is concurrent with the term of office of the SACPCMP Council which is four (4) consecutive years, beginning in the financial year after the appointment of a new SACPCMP Council.

3.5. Accreditation Visits

As per Section 13 (a) of the Act, the SACPCMP must conduct at least one accreditation visit within the term of office of an SACPCMP Council. Thus, the SACPCMP will conduct one accreditation visit to an educational institution within an Accreditation Cycle. In the exceptional case where an institution is conditionally accredited a return visit will be made within a shorter interval within the Accreditation Cycle.

3.6. Accreditation Criteria

The accreditation criteria for an Accreditation Cycle will be stipulated in the *Criteria and Process for the Accreditation of Educational Programmes* gazetted for that cycle. These criteria will indicate mandatory minimum requirements which will be reviewed during the accreditation process, for the cycle informed by legislative and other national imperatives. These will be as follows:

3.6.1. The formative and summative assessments of the programme, including:
   a) The appropriateness of the assessment considering the outcomes expected from the programme.
   b) The moderation of the assessment.
   c) Pass and fail rates, and reasons for significant deviations from the norm.

3.6.2. Course details (for the assessment of the relevance of curriculum to the profession), including:
   a) The objective of the courses (modules) constituting the programme, notional hours and credits allocated.
   b) The delivery of the courses and their appropriateness.
   c) The outcomes expected from the courses and their relevance to the profession and alignment to registered unit standards and/or qualifications.
   d) Relevance of course material.

3.6.3. Academic staffing levels and capacity

3.6.4. Academic staff qualifications and experience

3.6.5. Available facilities

3.6.6. Financial resources available to the programme

3.6.7. Appeal procedures as required by Promotion of Administrative Justice Act 3 of 2000 (PAJA)

The gazetted *Criteria and Process for the Accreditation of Educational Programmes* will also outline the curriculum framework for the relevant Accreditation cycle. This will specify:
   a) The **core knowledge** that must be embedded in the programme.
   b) Inclusion of a diverse range of specialisation in the built environment to ensure continued relevance of the base knowledge of prospective

applicants who desire to be registered which will be seen regarded as **electives**.

c) The integration of ethical responsibilities and best **professional conduct** required of a Registered Person.

d) Development of important learning and personal attributes as required of Registered Persons regarded as **graduate attributes**.

e) Development of outward-looking professionals rich in social values in their professional practice **public policy priorities**.

3.7. Accreditation Panel

3.7.1. Composition of Accreditation Panel

The Accreditation Panel will be constituted by the SACPCMP Council using the following criteria:

a) Panel members are chosen with regard to the type of institution accredited (i.e., university of technology, university or TVET college).

b) The panel is constituted in a transparent manner according to published selection guidelines.

c) Neutrality is preserved through monitoring of conflict of interest.

d) Programme-specific reviewers and programme specific evaluation focused on curriculum and quality assurance issues.

e) All key stakeholders should be represented as outlined in the SACPCMP's Strategic Stakeholder Map, namely:

    i. An industry representative (professional expertise)

    ii. Academic representative from an academic unit similar in nature to the department whose programmes are being accredited (peer review)

    iii. Government representatives

    iv. Public Representative (relevant to the SACPCMP Strategic Stakeholder Map)

    v. SACPCMP Representatives

f) Inclusion of observers from the Council for the Built Environment (CBE), Quality Assurance bodies (e.g., CHE, SETAs etc.) and international bodies (in the instance where there is an international agreement in place).

Criteria for the appointment of Accreditation Panel Members for an accreditation cycle will be stipulated in the gazetted *Criteria and Process for the Accreditation of Educational Programmes*.

3.7.2. <u>Functions of Accreditation Panel</u>

The functions of the accreditation panel are to:

a) Conduct Accreditation Visits
b) Evaluate Educational Programmes through the evaluation of self-evaluation reports.
c) Recommend accreditation outcomes to the SACPCMP Council namely, the:
   i. Conditional accreditation of an educational institution and its educational programme/s;
   ii. Unconditional accreditation of an educational institution and its educational programme/s;
   iii. Withdrawal of accreditation of an educational institution and its educational programme/s.
d) Conduct annual audits of educational programmes and departments through the evaluation of annual report submissions.

3.8.   Accreditation Reporting

3.8.1. <u>Self-Evaluation Report</u>

When applying for accreditation an institution is required to submit a Self-Evaluation Report. This will be done on a standardised template stipulated in the gazetted *Criteria and Process for the Accreditation of Educational Programmes*. This report must be accompanied by supporting documentation which address the criteria stipulated in Sub-Section 3.7 which are described in detailed in the gazetted *Criteria and Process for the Accreditation of Educational Programmes*. These gazetted criteria will also stipulate the standard required for these supporting documents.

3.8.2. <u>Annual Accreditation Report</u>

An SACPCMP accredited institution will be expected to submit annual reports on the aspects highlighted as requiring attention during programme accreditation visit. This will be done on a standardised template stipulated in the gazetted *Criteria and Process for the Accreditation of Educational Programmes*.

Should there be issues of concern, it would then be decided what interventions are necessary. The Accreditation Panel will make recommendations on interventions that are deemed necessary for approval by Council before this is communicated to the concerned institution.

3.9. Dissemination of Accreditation Outcomes

3.9.1. Accreditation Outcome Report to Institutions

Before the conclusion of an Accreditation Visit, the Accreditation Panel should provide initial feedback through an Interim Accreditation Report and feedback session with the institution.

Once the accreditation process is concluded the institution will be provided with a formal report which:
   a) clearly stipulates where accreditation criteria have or have not been met.
   b) inclues recommendations to address any shortcoming identified.

3.9.2. Public Dissemination of Accreditation Outcomes

The Council will clearly communicate to the public which educational programmes have been conditionally or unconditionally accredited or those whose accreditation has been withdrawn.

4. PAJA Imperatives

To give effect to the right to administrative action that is lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair and to the right to written reasons for administrative action as contemplated in section 33 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.

4.1. Procedurally Fair Administrative Action

(1) Administrative action which materially and adversely affects the rights or legitimate expectations of any person must be procedurally fair.

(2) A fair administrative procedure depends on the circumstances of each case.

In order to give effect to the right to procedurally fair administrative action, an administrator (SACPCMP), must:
   i.   give a person adequate notice of the nature and purpose of the proposed administrative action.
   ii.   provide a reasonable opportunity to make representations.
   iii. provide a clear statement of the administrative action.
   iv.   provide adequate notice of any right of review or internal appeal, where applicable; and
   v.   provide adequate notice of the right to request reasons for the administrative action to give effect to the right to procedurally fair administrative action.

In order to give effect to the right to procedurally fair administrative action, an administrator (SACPCMP) may, in his or her or its discretion, also give a person

    vi.   The opportunity to obtain assistance and, in serious or complex cases, legal representation.

    vii.   The opportunity to present and dispute information and arguments; and

    viii.   The opportunity to appear in person.

If it is reasonable and justifiable in the circumstances, an administrator (SACPCMP) may depart from any of the requirements referred to above. In determining whether a departure is reasonable and justifiable, an administrator (SACPCMP) must consider all relevant factors, including:

    ix.   the objects of the empowering provision.

    x.   the nature and purpose of, and the need to take, the administrative action.

    xi.   the likely effect of the administrative action.

    xii.   the urgency of taking the administrative action or the urgency of the matter; and

    xiii.   the need to promote an efficient administration and good governance.

Where an administrator (SACPCMP) is empowered by any empowering provision to follow a procedure which is fair, the administrator may act in accordance with that different procedure. An administrator (SACPCMP) must convene an internal tribunal to hear a case convened by a person aggrieved and seeking relief for just administrative action. The tribunal shall follow the same procedure as that of a case of against a professional for misconduct.

4.2. Remedies of Administrative Action

The tribunal, in proceedings for review, may grant any order that is just and equitable, including orders directing the administrator (SACPCMP):

    i.   to give reasons; or

    ii.   to act in the manner the tribunal requires.

    iii.   prohibiting the administrator from acting in a particular manner.

    iv.   setting aside the administrative action and

    v.   to remit the matter for reconsideration by the administrator, with or without directions; or

    vi.   in exceptional cases, substituting or varying the administrative action or correcting a defect resulting from the administrative action; or

    vii.   directing the administrator or any other party to the proceedings to pay compensation.

    viii.   declaring the rights of the parties in respect of any matter to which the administrative action relates.

    ix.   granting a temporary interdictor or temporary relief or

    x.   as to costs.

5. Version Control

5.1. Maintenance of the policy

The current policy will be reviewed every five (5) years and will be scheduled. Unscheduled reviews will be triggered by the following:

    i.   Legislation changes
    ii.   Benchmarking (changes in benchmarks or new benchmarks)
    iii.   Changes in technology

5.2. Dissemination

The policy will be made available to SACPCMP stakeholders and the general public via the SACPCMP website after publishing in the Government Gazette. It will be disseminated externally on request.