

COUNCIL DELIBERATIONS: 02 OF 2020/21

56th QCTO Council Meeting Deliberations

17 March 2021, Virtual Meeting

The Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) held its 56th Council Meeting on 17 March 2021. This meeting marked the second meeting of the third Council of the QCTO and was conducted virtually.

Council also expressed its appreciation to the QCTO management for hosting a successful second Council Workshop on 16 March 2021 as part of its onboarding.

The Chairperson, Mr Samuel Zungu, again congratulated the new council members on their appointment and wished them well on the five-year journey that lies ahead. The Chairperson further encouraged ongoing endeavours by the QCTO towards excellence and he quoted Aristotle and said that: *“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then is not an act, but a habit.”*

Council further congratulated Dr Whitty Green on his appointment as the Chief Executive Officer of the Council on Higher Education (CHE) on 1 February 2021 and welcomed him as member to the Council. Council also took note of the resignation of Mr. Yershen Pillay as member of the Third Council on 8 March 2021 and wished him every success with his appointment as Chief Executive Officer of the Chemical Industries Education and Training Authority (CHIETA).

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|  | <p>QCTO Council</p> | <p>The QCTO Council consists of 16 members appointed by the Minister of Higher Education, Science, and Innovation (MHESI).</p> <p>Council has duly notified the Minister of the current vacancies within the Council and hope to appoint two (2) members with one (1) from the Organised Community and one (1) from the Organised Labour, respective Constituencies.</p> <p>The Council is entrusted with the responsibility to steer the QCTO towards achieving its mandate as stipulated in the founding legislation which is the National Qualifications Framework Act (Act no. 67 of 2008) as amended, and the Skills Development Act (Act no. 97 of 1998) as amended.</p> <p>Council noted the following documents:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CEO Report 2. Terms of Reference of Committees of Council 3. Financial Report for Quarter 3 of 2020/21 4. Quarter 3 Performance Report 5. PFMA Checklist and 6. Audit and Risk Committee Report <p>Council approved the following documents and policies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. QCTO Plan for Quality Assurance of N4-N6 Programmes 2. Revised Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework (OQSF) Policy 3. Reviewed Risk Management Policy 4. Reviewed Risk Management Framework 5. Reviewed Risk Management Strategy 6. Reviewed Fraud Risk Register 7. Reviewed Fraud Prevention Policy 8. Reviewed Whistleblowing Policy 9. Reviewed Language Policy 10. Reviewed Security Policy 11. Review of certification and verification fees |
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| | | <p>Council noted the progress made by the QCTO Office with the recommendations and appointment of some chairpersons and members to the following Committees of Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Occupational Qualifications, Assessment and Certification Committee (OQACC) 2. Quality Assurance of Occupational Qualifications Committee (QAOQC) 3. Research and Innovation Committee (RIC) <p>Council further noted the challenges with finding suitable candidates with the right skills mix and qualifications to serve on these committees and advised QCTO to engage with potential candidates through head hunting. Details of the head hunting process will be made available in due course.</p> <p>Council also requested QCTO to communicate with the Minister of Higher Education Science and Innovation (MHESI) its support of the draft DHET COVID-19 Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Skills Strategy (ERRSS) and indicate QCTO's readiness in terms of its Draft Plan of Action (POA) in Response to this Strategy noting the resource requirements and impact of the skills levy holiday on QCTO's sustainability.</p> <p>QCTO to ensure ongoing engagement with strategic partners on funding opportunities as well as support for the implementation of its Plan of Action (POA) in response to DHET's ERRSS.</p> |
|  | <p>Executive Committee (EXCO)</p> | <p>Council received nominations of members to serve on the Executive Committee (EXCO) of Council. The Deputy Chairperson will be appointed at EXCO's first meeting scheduled for 27 May 2021.</p> |
|  | <p>Revised Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework (OQSF) Policy</p> | <p>Council noted the publication of the Determination of the Sub-Frameworks that comprises the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) in the Government Gazette (No. 44031, Vol. 1391) on 24 December 2020 by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET).</p> <p>Council has further approved, for recommendation to the Minister, the Revised Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework (OQSF) Policy. The Revised OQSF policy, will give further impetus to the PSET sector by providing a range of qualification types and skills programmes. This will no doubt assist learners to identify potential progression routes (options), like entry, exit and learning pathways, particularly in the context of lifelong learning. It will also facilitate the articulation of occupational qualifications and part-qualifications (including skills programmes) within the OQSF, and between the OQSF and the other two sub-frameworks.</p> |

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|  | <p>Committee of Council: Audit and Risk Committee (ARC)</p> | <p>Council noted the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) report as well as the The Engagement Letter and the Draft Auditor-General of South Africa's (AGSA) Audit Strategy 2020/21. Council further noted the imminent conclusion of the tender process and appointment of a new internal audit company.</p> |
|  | <p>Portfolio Committee: Higher Education, Science, and Technology</p> | <p>The Chairperson, Mr. Samuel Zungu, together with the Acting Chief Executive Officer (CEO) at that time, Mr. Thomas Lata, made a presentation to the Portfolio Committee on 18 November 2020 on progress with the implementation of the articulation policy for the Post-School Education and Training (PSET) system. The Committee was generally pleased with the presentation made by the QCTO.</p> |
|  | <p>Quarter 3 of 2020/21 Performance Report</p> | <p>Council noted the Performance Report for Quarter 3 of 2020/21 as well as the Overview Report, the Summary of outcomes against performance indicators and the Performance Table.</p> <p>The report indicated the achievement of 11 (79%) out of the 14 quarterly targets. Council noted the improved quarterly performance and encouraged officials to ensure continued improved performance for the fourth quarter as well as the annual performance.</p> |
|  | <p>CEO Report</p> | <p>Council noted with appreciation the comprehensive CEO Report for the period 13 November 2020 until 26 February 2021 as well as the number of strategy projects that the organisation is involved with both nationally and internationally.</p> <p>Council noted the signing on 1 December 2020 of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Youth Employment Service (YES) and QCTO's commitment in support of Presidential Youth Employment Initiative (PYEI) and the South African Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP) and Implementation Plan of the ERRP, launched by President Ramaphosa on 15 October 2020.</p> <p>Council further noted the Draft DHET COVID-19 Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Skills Strategy (ERRSS). Council commended and endorsed QCTO's Draft Plan of Action (POA) in Response to DHET's Skills Strategy. Council commented that the Plan of Action (POA) should include the resources required as well as a Monitoring and Evaluation tool that will allow QCTO to periodically report progress on the implementation of the POA to Council.</p> |
|  | <p>Annual Performance Plan 2020/21</p> | <p>Council noted the approval, by the Minister Nzimande, of the amended Annual Performance Plan (APP) for 2020/21 on 9 August 2020. The purpose of the amendment was to adjust targets to indicators in view of the National COVID-19 Lockdown.</p> |
|  | <p>Financial Reports</p> | <p>Council duly noted the Financial Report for quarter three of 2020/21.</p> <p>Council expressed its concern with budget cuts, QCTO funding sources and the long term impact of COVID-19 on QCTO's sustainability.</p> |

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|  | COVID-19 Response | Council noted the QCTO's response and gradual return to the office from 23 March 2021 under the current risk-adjusted (lockdown) level. |
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The 57th QCTO Council Meeting will take place on 24 June 2021.

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Date: 24 March 2021

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