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INTERNAL MEMORANDUM


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To: ALL STAFF	
From: DIRECTOR – HUMAN RESOURCE ADMINISTRATION	
Subject: CLARIFICATION ON DEGREES AND DIPLOMAS REGISTERED ON LEVELS 6 & 7 OF THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (NQF) FOR EMPLOYMENT IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE	

1. The Recognised Vocational Qualification (RVQ) system then utilised in the Public Service was terminated as a result of the implementation of the revised management framework implemented with effect from 1 July 1999.
2. This system was mainly used to define appointment/promotion requirements, salary determination and the calculation of cash rewards granted for obtaining higher qualifications.

With the implementation of the Public Service Regulations, we are expected to define the inherent requirements of a post not only in terms of formal qualifications. Despite this, personnel continue to use the RVQ system to determine the relative value of tertiary qualifications held by public servants/applicants when vacant posts are advertised and filled.

In 2001 the Department of Public Service and Administration advised all Departments to replace RVQ levels with NQF levels. (*Refer to Circular 4 of 2001*)

3. The absence of detailed transitional measures between the two frameworks, has created challenges in the implementation of the framework, particularly in the interpretation of qualifications registers on levels 6 and 7 of the NQF.
4. In this regard your attention is drawn to the attached Circular which seeks to clarify the interpretation of Degrees and Diplomas registered on levels 6 and 7 of the NQF for the purpose of employment practices in the Public Service.
5. We hope this will give you a greater level of understanding the adjustment.


DIRECTOR
(Human Resource Administration)

DATE: 10.02.2021



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CIRCULAR 35 OF 2020

TO ALL HEADS OF NATIONAL/ PROVINCIAL DEPARTMENTS, PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATIONS AND GOVERNMENT COMPONENTS

CLARIFICATION ON DEGREES AND DIPLOMAS REGISTERED ON LEVELS 6 AND 7 OF THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (NQF) FOR EMPLOYMENT IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

1. The Minister of Higher Education and Training issued the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act 67 of 2008, effective from 1 June 2009. The introduction of the NQF Act brought about changes to the NQF levels, increasing them from eight (8) to ten (10) levels.
2. In 2006 the DPSA issued a circular attached, providing a conversion table for the RVQ system to the NQF system. The circular was issued to address the need to relate qualifications obtained prior to the introduction of the NQF and which were classified in terms of the RVQ to the NQF. However, SAQA has not provided the detailed transitional measures between the pre-2009 (8-level NQF) and post-2009 (10-level NQF). The implementation of the 10-level NQF also resulted in differences of how the previous RVQ values attached to qualifications, transition between the 8-level NQF and the 10-level NQF.
3. The absence of detailed transitional measures between the two frameworks, has created challenges in the implementation of the framework, particularly in the interpretation of qualifications registered on levels 6 and 7 of the NQF. In the pre-2009 (eight (8)-level NQF), National Diplomas and Bachelor Degrees were classified under one NQF level (i.e. level 6). However, in the post-2009 (ten (10)-level NQF) National Diplomas and Bachelor Degrees are separated into NQF level 6 and 7 respectively.
4. The table below provides clarification to assist in the interpretation of Degrees and Diplomas registered on levels 6 and 7 of the NQF for the purpose of employment practices in the Public Service:

Qualification registered on the 8-level NQF (pre-2009).	Clarification in terms of the current 10-level NQF.
A pre-2009 National Diploma registered at NQF level 6.	This is deemed to be comparable to the two post-2009 Higher Education Qualifications Sub-framework (HEQSF) Diploma qualification types at NQF level 6. Both the National Diploma offered by the Universities of Technology (UoTs) and the National "Nated" Diploma offered by Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges are registered at NQF level 6. While both are registered at the same NQF level, they are not necessarily equivalent as each qualification has a specific purpose and exit-level outcomes.
Employees who were appointed based on a National Diploma achieved pre-2009 and employees who achieved the Diploma post-2009.	Those employees would need to complete a relevant Advanced Diploma or a B-TECH registered at the current NQF level 7 to demonstrate competencies comparable to a Bachelor degree at NQF level 7.
The pre-2009 National First Degrees that were registered on the 8-level NQF, or previously allocated an RVQ value of 13.	This is deemed to be comparable to a Bachelor degree at NQF level 7 on the 10-level NQF.
A pre-2009 Bachelor of Technology (BTech) at NQF level 7.	This is deemed to be comparable to a Bachelor degree registered at NQF level 7 on the 10-level NQF. Learners who achieved this qualification can demonstrate comparable competencies prescribed at NQF level 7.
Employees appointed with a BTech qualification registered at NQF level 7.	Those employees would need to complete a relevant Postgraduate Diploma or Honours degree at NQF level 8 to achieve competencies prescribed at NQF level 8 of the 10-level NQF.
Bachelor of Education (BEd) qualification registered at NQF level 7 pre-2009.	This is comparable to a BEd (Foundation Phase, Intermediate Phase, Senior and Further Education and Training Phase) registered in post-2009 at NQF level 7 of the 10-level NQF. Learners who achieved these qualifications can demonstrate similar competencies pegged at NQF level 7 of the 10-level NQF.
Professional Bachelor Degrees registered at NQF level 7 pre-2009 or previously allocated an RVQ	They are comparable to professional Bachelor Degrees registered in post-2009 at NQF level 8 of


Qualification registered on the 8-level NQF (pre-2009).	Clarification in terms of the current 10-level NQF.
value of 14.	the 10-level NQF. Learners who achieved these qualifications can demonstrate similar competencies pegged at NQF level 8 of the 10-level NQF.

5. It should be noted that although qualifications might be registered at the same NQF level, they cannot necessarily be considered to be equivalent as qualifications are designed to meet targeted learning outcomes. The levels, however, indicates similar learning outcomes of the qualification and the expected cognitive ability of the learner after the learning intervention.
6. Departments need to manage the process of recognizing qualifications carefully to prevent the creation of internal disparities/tensions. The high level translation key below can provide further guidance:

Broad Description of Qualification Types	NQF level Generally allocated
Senior Certificate/National Certificate (Vocational)	4
Certificate or Diploma following less than 3 years' study	5
National Certificate or National Diploma following at least 3 years' study	6
Bachelor's Degree following 3 years' study/Bachelor of Technology	7
Bachelor's Degree following 4 years' study (professional)	8
Masters' Degree	9
Doctorate's Degree	10

Note: Additional qualifications obtained will generally add to the NQF level of the base qualification, e.g. obtaining an Honours' degree after a 3 year Bachelor's Degree on NQF level 7 will lead to an NQF level 8. Higher teachers' diplomas with a 4 year study obtained pre-2009 at Colleges of Education should be consulted directly with SAQA against the inherent requirements of the specific post.

Your co-operation in the above regard will be highly appreciated.


 Ms Yoliswa Makhasi
 Director-General
 Date: 03/12/2020