

Enhancing Access to and Success in Post-School Education and Training, for the Future World of Work

**Ensuring Integrity and
Compliance in Certification
under the OQSF**

**Skills Development Provider
Stakeholder Engagement**



1. Certification Achievements Over the Years

QCTO's achievements are anchored in over a decade of progressive certification:

- Legacy Trade Certificates – certification began on 21 November 2013, with 173,674 certificates issued.
- Occupational Certificates – certification started on 14 April 2016, with 17,479 issued to date.
- Skills Programme Certificates – certification launched in October 2022, with 3,782 issued.

Together, these achievements amount to close to 200,000 certificates, empowering learners and strengthening South Africa's workforce.

2. The Digitisation Project: Strengthening Integrity

From July 2018 to March 2024, QCTO successfully implemented a Digitisation Project, transforming the management of learner records:

- 1.6 million learner records were digitised and indexed (All Previously Paper Based)
- 461,830 historic trade records were digitised.
- A central learner records database was established for secure and efficient access.
- Verification and replacement processes were streamlined, reducing turnaround times.

This initiative enhanced data integrity, security, and national verification capabilities, ensuring fraudulent activities are prevented while strengthening quality assurance

3. Understanding QCTO Certification Processes

- QCTO certification ensures that every learner's achievement is **valid, credible, and verifiable**. SDPs play a central role in this process.

3.1 Categories of Certificates

- **First Issue** – awarded after successful completion of trade tests or EISAs.
- **Replacement Certificates** – issued when originals are lost, damaged, or destroyed.
- **Re-Issue Certificates** – for corrections to learner details, or administrative errors, or when lost before issued to learner

4. Step-by-Step Certification Workflows

- 4.1 Occupational Certificates

After an **External Integrated Summative Assessment (EISA)**:

- QP recommends results approval to QCTO Assessment Unit within **21 days**.
- QCTO Assessment Unit verifies and approves.
- Certification Unit issues the Occupational Certificate and notifies the QP.

The External Integrated Summative Assessment (EISA) is vital for ensuring the quality of occupational qualifications. Consistent with the White Paper for Post-School Education and Training, it provides an independent check that exposes poor training practices, safeguards qualification integrity, and promotes continuous improvement among providers.

4. Step-by-Step Certification Workflows (Continued)

4.2 Skills Programme Certificates

- SDP submits moderated results within 21 working days of the FISA.
- Assessment Unit verifies and recommends certification.
- Certification Unit issues the certificate and notifies the SDP.

Assessment standards for the FISA of each skills programme are crucial to ensuring both quality and consistency, and it is essential that the Assessment Unit rigorously verifies these standards to guarantee credible and reliable certification outcomes.

4. Step-by-Step Certification Workflows (Continued)

4.3 Pre-2009 Certificates

The Pre-2009 certification responsibility remains with the QCTOs relevant Quality Partner(SETAs')

- All first issue certificates must be completed by the relevant Quality Partner
- Certificates should be issued with 21 working days from the point of external moderation
- The QPs must ensure that all achievement data is loaded onto the NLRD.

5. Roles and Responsibilities for SDPs

5.1 For Occupational Qualifications

- Submit learner enrolment data to the QCTO in the prescribed format after enrolling learners at their site.
- Quality assure learner data to ensure it complies with QCTO data load specifications before submission.
- Ensure collection of learner certificates from the relevant Quality Partner (QP) within the stipulated timelines.
- Maintain secure records of learner achievements and issued certificates, ensuring availability for audit and verification purposes.
- Support learners with first-line certificate queries and liaise with the QP or QCTO as required to resolve any issues

5. Roles and Responsibilities for SDPs

5.2 For Skills Programmes

- Verify learner and programme information.
- Submit results in the prescribed QCTO format within the required timeframe.
- Maintain assessment records and distribute certificates to learners.
- Apply for re-issues where necessary and pay certification fees within 30 days.

5.2 For Re-Issues and Replacements

- Applications must include a certified ID copy, affidavit, proof of payment, and the original certificate (if applicable).
- Lost certificates must be reported promptly, with investigations conducted where required.

5. Security in Certification

- QCTO ensures the **security and integrity** of certificates through:
 - **Controlled system access** and audit trails.
 - **Secure printing** and storage environments.
 - **Zero tolerance** for fraud and misrepresentation.
 - Regular reporting of fraudulent cases to SAQA.

6. QCTO's Exclusive Mandate for Certification on the OQSF

- **Sole Authority:**
Under **Section 26J(f) of the Skills Development Act**, only the QCTO is empowered to issue certificates for qualifications on the Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework (OQSF).
- **No Unauthorized Delegation:**
While certification functions may be delegated under **Section 26I(1)**, no entity may certify on the OQSF without formal authorisation from the QCTO.



6. QCTO's Exclusive Mandate for Certification on the OQSF

- **Statutory Role:**
The **National Qualifications Framework Act** recognises the QCTO as the statutory Quality Council responsible for overseeing the development, registration, quality assurance, and certification of occupational qualifications.
- **Fraud Prevention:**
Section **32A(1) of the NQF Act** criminalises any misrepresentation or fraudulent certification, reinforcing that no entity other than the QCTO (or an authorised delegate) may issue valid certificates for the OQSF.
- **Enforcement Powers:**
The QCTO may withdraw accreditation, take legal action, and refer matters for criminal prosecution where unauthorised certification is identified.

7. QCTO Verification Services

- **Verification is a critical service offered by QCTO to confirm the authenticity of certificates:**
 - QCTO verifies Skills Programme, Occupational, and Trade Certificates issued by QCTO, DHET, and former Departments of Labour/Manpower.
 - Requests are processed via a secure online system, accessible on the QCTO website.
 - Turnaround Time: 5 working days for registered verification clients.
 - Fee: R61.00 per verification.
 - Misrepresentation Reporting: QCTO submits monthly reports on fraudulent qualifications to SAQA.

These services ensure trust in the integrity of QCTO-issued qualifications.

8. Escalating Outstanding Certificates to QCTO

- **When certificates remain outstanding despite following standard procedures, SDPs may escalate the matter to the QCTO Certification Unit for intervention.**
- **How to Escalate**
 - Send an email to certification@qcto.org.za with the subject line:
 - “Escalation Request: Outstanding Certificates – [Name of SDP]”
 - Clearly state that you are requesting intervention for outstanding certificates.
 - Provide all required details in an editable format (e.g., Excel) to facilitate tracking and resolution.

8. Escalating Outstanding Certificates to QCTO

Required Information for Escalation

- The escalation submission must include the following details for each learner:
 1. Learner Full Name
 2. ID Number
 3. Qualification Name / Trade Name
 4. SAQA ID (for qualifications) or SP ID (for skills programmes)
 5. Assessment / Test Date
 6. Date Results Were Submitted to QCTO
 7. Name of SDP / QP
 8. Contact Person at SDP (with email and phone number)
 10. Any Reference Numbers (QCTO, NAMB, or SETA reference)
 11. The Last Email or Correspondence sent by the SDP following up on the matter

Providing complete and accurate information ensures that the Certification Unit can track the application efficiently and resolve the outstanding certificates without further delays.

Relevant Policies

- Policy for the certification of learner achievements for trades and occupational qualifications on the OQSF
- Policy on certificate printing and storage of certificate background paper
- Policy for Verification of Trades and Occupational Qualifications on the OQSF
- QCTO website www.qcto.org.za – under the publication tab – policies
- For more information or queries please email:
 - Certification@qcto.org.za
 - Verification@qcto.org.za
- *For urgent queries please email paul.r@qcto.org.za*

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Thank you



Report it if you know it!

Our Core Values



VuvuZELA
Let your voice be heard

It's your Call

Let your voice be heard and **stop**
fraud, corruption, misconduct,
bribery, intimidation and theft

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Vuvuzela Hotline (App Stores)



0867 261 681



qcto@thehotline.co.za



30916



PO Box 10512 Centurion, 0046