

# ENERGY SECTOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING AUTHORITY



## EMPLOYER WORKPLACE GUIDE TO LEARNERSHIPS

### 1. INTRODUCTION

One of the major challenges facing South Africa is the achievement of improved living standards for the majority of the population, increased productivity levels and a higher competitiveness level on the world markets. To this end, the Skills Development Act promulgated in 1998 introduced new training systems to redress the past. This system places special emphasis which enables the formerly disadvantaged to participate more positively in the countries economic activities.

The Learnership Training System is one of the core features of the Skills Development legislation, intended to overcome the historic division between theoretical education and practical skills training. The Learnership system will make education and training more accessible to people in formal employment, in pre- employment as well as specific target groups.

## **2. LEGISLATION**

The three major pieces of legislation driving the development of education and skills Nationally are the:

- Skills Development act.
- The Skills Development Levies Act
- The South African Qualifications Authority Act

This legislation makes provision for the promotion and development of Education and Training Quality Assurance institutions ( ETQA's) and Sector Education and Training Authorities, (SETA's) of which ESETA is one, for both educational and vocational upliftment.

Legislation stipulates that a learnership must consist of both workplace experiential learning as well as academic components and must culminate in a specific qualification registered on the National Qualifications Framework – a National Qualification Certificate as contemplated by the SAQA Act.

A learnership provides a learning experience within a contractual relationship between three parties:

- The learner
- The training provider
- The employer

This makes it necessary for the learner to be employed by the employer for the duration of the learnership contract.

In accordance with regulations contained in Government Gazette no. 7043, a learnership must be registered by the ESETA with the Department of Labour in order for employers to qualify for grant disbursements pertaining to learnerships.

As learnerships are designed, developed and registered, learnership contracts may be signed between the three parties and registered with ESETA.

### **3. IMPLEMENTING LEARNERSHIPS IN THE ENERGY INDUSTRIES SECTOR**

ESETA, in response to the skills development legislation, the National Skills Development Strategy goals, as reflected in the ESETA Sector Skills Plan, is fully committed in its role to implement learnership initiatives. In the implementation of learnerships, the Sector recognises the need for careful selection and design of the learnerships in order to realistically add value to the sector in terms of skills development, optimal use of available funds, and maximum contribution to the National Skills Development Strategy. With this in mind ESETA has taken a consultative approach and works closely with all stakeholders and subject experts in the design and implementation as part of its strategic planning to ensure that:

- Potential benefits within each chamber of the sector are realised
- General administration, monitoring and reporting is efficient and effective
- Sector equity aims are addressed
- Donor or internal funding, as well as the human resource are optimally utilised to ensure maximum returns for the sector.

Learnerships will be implemented in the following manner:

- Initially, all learnerships will be formalised but managed and monitored as pilots and will commence as the learnerships are registered and learnership agreements have been entered into
- All learnerships initiated, will be monitored in accordance with the ETQA procedures and quality management requirements.
- Conversion of current apprenticeship agreements to learnership agreements will be facilitated by the ESETA ETQA
- Internal and external incentives for the implementation of learnerships will be made known to all stakeholders
- Internal incentives will be revised annually through chamber consultation
- Learnership strategy, policy, processes and procedures will be revised as and when necessary in light of evaluation of monitoring results as learnerships progress
- All registered learnerships shall become public domain
- All learnerships, in order to commence, will have to meet all ETQA accreditation requirements and quality management considerations

### **4. ESETA's ROLE**

ESETA's role is to ensure that all requirements of legislation are adhered to and carried out in the spirit of the relevant acts to enhance and promote the sector business competitiveness in it's aim of growth, development and employment opportunities for more and more citizens.

This may be achieved by:

- Participation and facilitation of the development in respect of identification, design and implementation of learnerships
- Providing guidance on development of sector strategy and policy
- Developing and implementing administrative processes and efficient procedures
- Providing support for all stakeholders party to learnership agreements
- Providing or facilitating all necessary quality assurance services
- Monitoring and open communication with the sector to ensure that the relevance of the learnership is not contested
- Working closely with the ESETA Skills Development Department to ensure that results are in line with envisaged goals of the Sector Skills Plan
- Declining the registration of learnership agreements that do not meet the agreed ETQA requirements
- Deregistering learnership agreements in instances where ETQA requirements cannot be met on a sustainable basis
- Providing incentives to employers, providers and learners for the implementation of learnerships
- Promoting the concept and implementation of learnerships through various channels of communication

## **5. NON-COMPLIANCE WITH POLICY AND ETQA CONSIDERATIONS**

In the event of non-compliance by any party to learnership agreements or any ETQA provision, this ETQA through its relevant chamber committee will attempt to resolve any difficulties in a conciliatory manner

In the event of difficulties or problems that cannot be resolved through reasonable consultation, the ESETA ETQA and relevant Chamber Committee reserves the right to censure non-compliance with this policy by enforcing the word of rule of all or any one of the following processes:

- Termination and deregistration of learnership agreements
- Exclusion of and replacement of employer or provider to new agreement
- Review of accreditation and appropriate adjustment of status
- Withdrawal of funds if applicable
- Reclamation of funds, incentives or discretionary grants disbursed for learnerships
- Any means by provision in law

## **6. DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURE**

### **DISPUTES BETWEEN THE LEARNER AND EMPLOYER**

These may arise during the learnership period and will be dealt with in the context of the relevant contracts of employment, which in turn are subject to the provisos of the relevant labour laws. These disputes are in general subject to the employer/labour recognition agreements and are presented to the CCMA for resolution.

### **DISPUTES BETWEEN THE LEARNER AND PROVIDER**

These disputes fall within the jurisdiction of the ESETA ETQA and the relevant internal procedures will be followed. The ETQA dispute procedures are formulated subject to the provisions of the relevant SAQA Act, which allows for disputes to be referred to SAQA should resolution fail at this level.

## **7. ACCOUNTABILITY**

Once approved by the ESETA Authority, the implementation and administration of this policy becomes the direct responsibility of the ETQA Head of Department and the Learnership Manager.

Any modification to this policy will only be deemed valid once approved by the ESETA Authority and having been modified by way of relevant QMS review procedures.

## **WHAT IS A LEARNERSHIP?**

A learnership is a structured programme, of necessary training and essential practice, designed to take place over the period of one year. It is structured in that it combines elements of education and training, with working experience. At the end of the learnership, learners have the opportunity of being assessed and

certificated as competent, at a level comparable with people working on a full-time and permanent basis in an Industry.

A learnership is a fixed-term agreement between employer and learner (employee) and is possibly the only fixed-term agreement that does not give rise to any expectation of ongoing employment at the end of the learnership in the case of Section 18.2 Learners (unemployed or pre-employed).

The principle benefit of a learnership is that the employer has the benefit of receiving a Learnership Grant from the Energy SETA, which will cover part or all of the costs of on-the-job training and education, any external training and education, assessments and also, where the learner is a new employee and not an existing employee, a Wage Subsidy.

The reason that an industry would be prepared to fund a learnership in a particular company is that where this type of development occurs, the entire industry benefits from an improvement in skills levels and also pre-qualified pools of skilled people (determined by industry demand) become available for employment in jobs for which they have been trained in, and assessed as competent, for.

### **The design of a learnership**

Industry stakeholders (employers and employees) work within the framework of a Standards Generating Body (SGB) to identify all possible competencies and outcomes associated with a particular job. All possible expectations from an employee are mapped into a Qualifications Framework, which forms the backbone of a learnership.

In the design of a learnership, industry and job experts meet and agree on how expertise and competency should be recognised in the workplace and what elements of on-the-job teaching and coaching might be required to fully develop the competencies of the learner. These elements are captured into an instrument known as a Portfolio of Evidence. Completing the Portfolio of Evidence through a process of Performance Management, on-the-job, will result in the employers responsibility for the learner (employee) being fulfilled.

The design of a learnership is specific with regard to directing what on-the-job training will be required directly from a Team leader, Supervisor or Line Manager. It is also specific in directing what essential education is required from external Training Providers.

## **BENEFITS AND COSTS FOR EMPLOYERS**

### **Benefits of skilled people:**

- They are more likely to do the correct thing the first time;
- They make fewer mistakes because they know what they are doing;

- They are more likely to get the best out of the machines they use because they are able to exploit the potential of equipment in ways that people without skills cannot. This is true whether the machine is a lathe or a multi million rand continuous process control consol;
- They tend to work more independently, needing less supervision and are more likely to find solutions to problems that present themselves in the normal working day;
- They are more likely to experiment and find smarter rather than harder ways of working;
- They are more motivated because they see the point, and know why what they are doing is important to the overall business. They also appreciate that the cost of getting things wrong will put orders in jeopardy and hence impact on their employment security.
- Aids factor.

#### **Intangible benefits:**

- If you as an employer are seen to value the skills people already have and assist them to get more skills, they are less likely to leave for other jobs.
- If you enter into learning contracts with unemployed people, then you will be contributing to building up the skills pool for yourself and others. It will become less difficult to recruit the skills you need when you need them.

#### **Costs**

Before counting the costs of training, remember that there are real costs to not training. If you simply try and recruit skilled people, locally or abroad, you will be competing with other employers who are trying to do the same. One consequence is that you are likely to pay a premium to attract these sought after workers. If employers don't train, then these premium costs will rise over time and your wage bill will do the same.

But it is true that there are costs associated with training. A person in training is not as productive as a fully qualified person, they are more likely to make mistakes, there are fees for externally provided training and inevitable costs in having an in-house training function.

There are also costs involved in mentoring and supervising learners and managing the training process. These costs mount, but like research and development, they are a necessary investment.

There is also financial assistance to help you. This takes two principle forms:

- a) Cash grants from the Energy Industries SETA and
- b) Tax incentives.

ESETA must check whether or not there are enough funds for the learnership grant before they make a definite commitment. Leadership grants are “discretionary” for this reason. You can, of course, continue with the learnership even if there is no grant paid – but no doubt you would like to take this into account when making the decision on whether or not to proceed.

### **How do you apply for a learnership (SETA) grant?**

1. Any intent to be an employer in a learnership can be communicated to the Learnership Manager in the ESETA by phone, fax, e-mail, etc., indicating the company and membership details, the learnership title, the number of learners you are prepared to employ and the name(s) of the Team leader, Supervisor or First-Line Manager to whom the learner would report.
2. The Learnership Manager is responsible for pre-qualifying your application and obtaining any outstanding information from you. Thereafter the Learnership Manager is responsible for officially lodging your application on the ESETA Management Information System.
3. The application is then forwarded to the ETQA section who are responsible for contacting you to qualify your workplace in terms of the criteria set-out in the Learnership design, i.e. have you got the necessary equipment etc ?
4. If you have not submitted a Workplace Skills Plan to the ESETA, the Skills Planning Manager is responsible for assisting you to complete a plan. If you have submitted such plans, the Skills Planning Manager will ensure that the learnership intent is reflected in your plan.
5. Finally, the Learnership Manager is responsible either directly or indirectly through an Industry Body, for ensuring that the actual “Contracting Activities” between Employer, Learner and Provider occurs.
6. It is the Learnership Manager’s responsibility to network you with an accredited Training Provider if you have no internal access to such provision.

### **How do you apply for a tax incentive?**

1. In addition to claiming learnership grants from your SETA, you can also claim a tax incentive when you register a learnership agreement with your SETA. Only learnership agreements that are formally registered with your SETA will qualify – as SARS will check with the SETA before approving the claim.
2. You will have two opportunities to claim, one at the beginning of the learnership and one at the successful conclusion of the learnership.

3. As long as the apprenticeship system remains in place the same claims can be made for apprenticeships.
4. To claim the tax exemption employers must provide SARS with the following information:
  - The name of the SETA with which the learnership agreement is registered.
  - The tile and code of the learnership allocated by the Department of Labour.
  - The full names and ID numbers of the learners that are involved.
  - Proof that the employer has complied with all the requirements of the Skills Development Levies Act, 1999.
5. SARS has developed a form that should be completed by employers claiming the deduction for an allowance for a learnership. This should be attached to the relevant return of income. The form will provide for a declaration that the employer has complied with the Skills Development Levies Act and it will not be necessary for an employer to attach any further proof in this regard.
6. Where an employer has a number of learnership agreements it is not necessary to complete a form for each one. It will be sufficient to compile a schedule for all the registered learnerships, provided that all of the information requested in the SARS form is included. The schedule must be signed by the employer with a declaration that the provisions of the Skills Development Levies Act have been complied with.
7. New deductions are not permissible if the employer who is party to a learnership agreement changes and only one deduction is allowable for a learner in a learnership in any one year.
8. If a deduction has been allowed and the learnership terminates (other than because of the death of the learner), any deduction that was allowed will be recouped for tax purposes.

## **WHAT WILL HAPPEN DURING THE LEARNERSHIP?**

A skills programme is a description of a work application relating to a particular job. The learnership is broken up into a number of logical stand-alone skills programmes. The average learnership might comprise between five-to-ten separate skills programmes. Together they comprise one year's worth of rotations and experiences in the workplace, designed to entrench competency and evidence application.

The team leader, supervisor or first-line manager is responsible for ensuring that a learner is rotated through the required number of skills programmes i.e. practices and learns each component of the job.

For the applications of a skill in the workplace the team leader, supervisor or first-line manager is required to ensure that the checklists and on-the-job assessments are completed and signed off. These assessment

activities become evidence of the competency of the learner and are referred to by the ESETA as “Portfolios of Evidence”.

At the end of the learnership, there is one final assessment designed to integrate the evidence to make a statement about the learner in terms of the objectives of the entire learnership. Standardised assessment guides will be available to all providers and employers to ensure a high level of consistency in assessment practice nationwide.

Assessment records are nothing other than tools for effective Performance Management i.e. they allow a team leader, supervisor or first-line manager to measure a person against the standards and outcomes identified by the Industry as important factors in a job, and to provide both positive and remedial feedback for improvement and enhanced productivity.

### **The process**

1. As each assessment is completed and signed off, it must be submitted to the relevant contact person at the training provider.
2. The training provider will then review the evidence and provide feedback to the team leader, supervisor or first-line manager
3. If feedback is positive, the next assessment must be applied.
4. If feedback requires remediation, the assessment must either be re-done or the sections re-done as specified by the training provider.
5. On receipt of the final integrative assessment, the training provider will assign an assessor to formally begin what ESETA refers to as the Summative Assessment Process.
6. This will take place primarily at the assessment centre, but may sometimes require workplace involvement as well.
7. At the end of the Summative Assessment Process, the training provider will notify the team leader, supervisor or first-line manager of the result of the Assessment Process and whether a recommendation is to be made for certification.
8. If not, the training provider will notify the team leader, supervisor or first-line manager of the components required for remediation prior to repeating the Summative Assessment Process.

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Please note that during the learnership the ESETA Quality Assurance Department will conduct site visits and review material changing hands between the learner, the team leader, supervisor or first-line manager and the training provider to ensure a strong Quality Assurance hand on the process.

### **WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG DURING THE COURSE OF THE LEARNERSHIP?**

ESETA will ensure that team leaders, supervisors and first-line managers have access to a hotline to deal with issues which cause concern either in the employment relationship or with specific reference to aspects of the learnership. They will also ensure that where necessary, face-to-face meetings with experts will take place to resolve the issues.

Learners will have access to the ESETA ETQA Head of Department, employed to deal with all issues of concern to the learner

Any contractual issues, such as applications for cancellation of the learnership, transfer of learners between employers, applications for withdrawal as an employer, etc, will be dealt with in the first instance by the Learnership Manager.

### **HOW WILL PAYMENT OF THE LEARNERSHIP GRANTS BE MADE?**

Grants will be paid as learners achieve credits on the NQF, whether through achievement of unit standards during the course of the learnership or as part of an initial Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process. Grants will be per credit achieved, the sum paid per credit depending upon the priority attached to the learnership by the ESETA.

Detailed procedure to be added when agreed.

### **IMPLEMENTING THE LEARNERSHIP**

To ensure that implementation is as efficient and effective as possible, you will probably need to establish a committee that will take overall responsibility for the learnership. The committee will be involved in both the planning and implementation of the learnership. The Training Committee established for the Workplace Skills Plan may also fulfil this role.

#### **Planning**

You will need to:

- Establish identify the roles, functions and responsibilities of committee members;
- Identify other important role-players, e.g. mentors, assessors, coaches, lecturers;

- Outline the training needs of all the role-players to enhance their capacity to participate effectively in implementing learnership.

## **Implementing**

You will need to:

- Conduct staff development and training;
- Align or develop learning materials;
- Develop assessment policies and procedures;
- Prepare organisational and administrative systems to accommodate new learners;
- Sign (employment) contracts;
- Sign learnership agreements.

It is likely that many of the structures, systems, policies and procedures will already be in place. There is no need to reinvent the wheel; simply allow for adjustment or alignment to fit in with new legislation and standards.

In addition, the purpose of the project team should also be to:

- Facilitate planning, preparation and implementation of the learnership;
- Ensure the credibility and legitimacy of the learnership;
- Promote the learnership to gain support from all stakeholders both within the workplace and in the wider community;
- Create an environment where all parties are committed to the learnership by sharing information, communicating and consulting with stakeholders;
- Access and manage resources for the learnerships;
- Monitor the progress of the learnership and evaluate its impact over time.

## **LEARNERSHIP AGREEMENTS**

A Learnership Agreement is a legally binding document that sets out the rights and duties of employers, providers and learners. It offers protection to the parties and those they represent, and ensures that each party to the agreement complies with their end of the bargain.

### **Rights of learners, employers and providers in terms of a learnership agreement**

(Your rights/duties are shown in bold)

Learner	Employer	Training Provider
Has the right to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be educated and trained;</li> <li>• Have access to resources to receive training;</li> <li>• Have performance assessed and have access to the assessment results;</li> <li>• Receive a certificate on completing the learnership;</li> <li>• Raise grievances in writing with the SETA concerning any shortcomings in the training.</li> </ul>	<b>Has the right to require the learner to:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Perform duties in terms of the agreement;</b></li> <li>• <b>Comply with the rules and regulations concerning the employer’s business concern.</b></li> </ul>	Has the right to have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to the learner’s books, learning material and to the workplace if required.</li> </ul>

**Duties of learners, employers and training providers**

Learner	Employer	Training Provider
<b>The learner must:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Work for the employer;</b></li> <li>• <b>Be available for and participate in all learning and work required:</b></li> <li>• <b>Comply with workplace policies and procedures;</b></li> <li>• <b>Complete any time sheets or any written assessment tools to record relevant work experience; and</b></li> <li>• <b>Attend all study periods and theoretical learning sessions with the provider.</b></li> </ul>	<b>The employer must:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Provide learners with appropriate training and facilities at the work and with adequate supervision;</b></li> <li>• <b>Release learners during working hours for off-the-job education and training;</b></li> <li>• <b>Pay learners the agreed allowance for both on-the-job and approved off-the-job training;</b></li> <li>• <b>Conduct on-the-job assessment or cause it to be conducted;</b></li> <li>• <b>Keep up-to-date records of the learning and periodically discuss progress with learners;</b></li> <li>• <b>Comply with the Skills Development Act (1998) and all related legislation.</b></li> </ul>	<b>The training provider must:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide education and training in terms of the agreement;</li> <li>• Provide the learner with support as required;</li> <li>• Record, monitor and retain details of training provided to the learner;</li> <li>• Conduct off-the-job assessment or cause it to be conducted;</li> <li>• Provide reports to the employer on the learner’s performance.</li> <li>• Provide reports to the Seta on the learners progress.</li> </ul>

## **LEARNER RECRUITMENT & SELECTION**

Individual employers should decide how many workers they are willing to release to participate in a learnership. Employers should also decide on the number of learners they are willing to accommodate in their organisations as either employed, pre-employed or as unemployed worker. Ideally, these numbers should be based on the targets set in the workplace skills plan.

It is likely that training providers would wish to participate in the recruitment and selection process.

You will need to:

- Identify the number of learners that could participate in the learnership from your workplace.
- Identify the total number of learners that can be accommodated at your workplace, including unemployed or pre-employed workers.
- Establish selection criteria by determining entry-level requirements, including a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process.
- Develop learner recruitment strategies for employed, pre-employed and unemployed workers.
- Establish systems and procedures to screen, pre-select, interview candidates and inform of outcome.
- Specify the learner allowance (for pre/unemployed learners).
- Sign a learnership agreement with each successful candidate.
- Sign an employment contract with candidates not already employed stipulating the terms and conditions of employment.

## **SELECTING TRAINING PROVIDERS**

In addition to education and training offered by government institutions, such as technikons and technical colleges, there is a wide range of private companies involved in education and training services.

In order to ensure that providers can deliver and evaluate learning programmes that culminate in specified registered standards and qualifications, the employer should insist on seeing evidence that the provider is accredited to deliver those standards and qualifications. The ESETA can assist employers in identifying appropriate training providers.

## **ESTABLISHING THE SUITABILITY OF THE WORKPLACE**

Any employer wishing to participate in a learnership in the Energy sector will be expected to demonstrate their suitability to do so by complying with the requirements for accreditation as a training provider as laid down in the ESETA ETQA Accreditation Policy.

### **Organisational issues**

To provide an ongoing education and training service of consistent worth, the organisation needs to satisfy the ESETA ETQA that they achieve certain basic requisites.

### **Track record**

Indicators of a good track record include:-

- Credibility amongst peer provider organisations
- Length and scope of operation in the same field
- Successful results in the relevant fields
- Client recommendations

### **Finances**

A sound financial status is a critical criterion for accreditation. Some indicators of a sound financial status are:-

- Audited accounts
- Interim balance sheets
- Monthly cash flow statements
- General financial / monthly reports

### **Records / Admin**

An organisation has to be able to keep accurate record of the progress of its learners, and be able to communicate all relevant information in this regard to the ESETA ETQA. Reports produced should contain the following information:-

- Number of trainees under training
- Number of trainees completed training over a given period
- Number of trainees assessed as competent / not competent / withdrawn
- Unit standard titles or qualification titles trained
- Duration of training
- Biographical data on trainees (I.D. number etc.)
- Comparative analyses (period to period, course to course etc.)
- Instructor / trainer / assessor details
- Trainer / trainee ratios etc.

### **Facilities:**

Obviously, different types of training require different types of facilities so it is impossible to detail exactly what facilities are necessary to make the delivery of training successful in specific situations, but general requirements should include:-

- Adequate space
- Meet necessary health and safety requirements
- Correct lighting and ventilation
- Low noise levels
- Relevant protective clothing and equipment

- Relevant training aids
- Relevant materials for practical training
- Suitable machinery or equipment for demonstration and work skill practice

## **TRAINING**

To obtain valid measurable results from training entails taking numerous differing approaches dependent on the unique circumstances surrounding the desired learning. There are certain principles which must form part of any training programme for it to be successful. It is these basic principles which form the criteria for accreditation in this section.

### **Trainer competence:**

Much of the success of a training programme depends on the qualifications and skills of the trainer. Trainer skills cover a wide spectrum and are virtually impossible to generalise on. The following is a list of only the most generic of these skills deemed essential to training success.

- Ability to communicate to target population
- Ability to use specified training aids
- A thorough understanding of course material and the standards the training is to achieve
- A recognised trainer skills (ETD Practitioner) qualification including facets such as, preparation, admin, RPL assessment etc.
- Relevant experience and competency in area to be trained

### **Training effectiveness:**

The true measure of the worth of any training is the effectiveness with which it achieves what it has set out to. The following four criteria weigh heavily in any application for accreditation.

#### **Selection:**

Unless the right person is selected for the right training and is properly briefed as to the responsibilities, it is doubtful whether training will succeed. Simply pushing persons through courses cannot be defined as worthwhile training. Grouping of trainees is an important consideration in specific circumstances, but a situation where willing payers are lumped together on a 'first come first served basis' is not considered in the best interest of effective training.

#### **Attainment of objectives:**

Organisational issues and the training process followed are important factors, but in the final analysis, it is the attainment of course objectives and standards that really determine the success of the training. There are however, a number of qualifiers to the statement.

- The success must not be a one off chance

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- It must not be at the expense of any other facet of the operation
- It must be long term, not fleeting
- It should not have any negative side-effects on learners
- It should strengthen the base for learning

#### **Results management:**

It is widely accepted that if you can't measure it you can't manage it. The ESETA ETQA believes that the results of all training can and must be quantified in terms of:-

- Costs of training
- Benefits to the trainee
- Benefits to organisation
- Benefits to the industry or field as a whole

Therefore any honest attempt at the measurement of the training will weigh heavily in the decision on accreditation.

#### **Follow-up:**

Training is not simply what goes on in the classroom or the training environment. To be successful the key element is ensuring that the learning is implemented back in the workplace with the desired results. It is therefore the responsibility of the provider, in conjunction with the learner and the organisation to have mechanisms in place for assessment and monitoring of this aspect. The ESETA ETQA will have a flexible approach to follow-up and will be interested to learn from the different approaches of those providers seeking accreditation.

#### **Assessment:**

The ETQA will follow two approaches to the registration of assessors.

- Accredited providers will register assessors for specific unit standards or qualifications, and
- where organisations are not seeking accreditation as providers, the ETQA will register assessors directly.

In both cases the criteria for the registration of assessors will be the same as set out by the accreditation policy.

#### **Management systems**

In addition to the criteria laid down by the ESETA ETQA, any organisation wishing to effectively participate in a learnership will probably have to establish or adapt organisational management systems to ensure effective learning in the workplace. Employers should ensure that the following are in place:

- **administrative systems** to facilitate an environment conducive to effective implementation of the learnership. E.g.:
  - policies and procedures;
  - a workplace skills plan;
  - a business plan which sets out the employer's goals relating to education and training;
  - learnership agreements;
  - reporting and communication systems and procedures;
  - record-keeping systems.
- **Human resources** such as supervisors, coaches, mentors, skills development facilitators. Make sure that their roles and responsibilities have been identified and clarified. Training for staff involved in the learnership may also have to be planned, e.g.:
  - Provide for training of ETD practitioners;
  - Incorporate ETD practitioner standards into the job descriptions for trainers, coaches and mentors;
  - Work towards registering ETD practitioners with the ETDP SETA;
  - Provide coaches and mentors with the necessary training;
  - Ensure that assessors are trained and confident in their responsibilities.

Other requirements include, for example:

- Human resource policies are developed, aligned or adapted to accommodate pre/unemployed learners;
  - Recruitment, selection and appointment policies are aligned to accommodate pre/unemployed learners;
  - Employment contracts have been developed for pre/unemployed learners;
  - Workers and staff at the workplace have been informed and encouraged to provide support for the learners.
- **Physical resources** to ensure effective learning
    - Suitable policies are in place for the management, maintenance and upgrading of facilities, resources and materials;
    - Premises take into account health and safety standards at the workplace;
    - Access of learners is organised to tools, equipment, buildings and telecommunication links where required, and any other facilities e.g. canteen, childcare, healthcare etc.;
    - Uniforms and protective clothing for learners are supplied in required.
  - **Financial resources** to facilitate effective education and training by ensuring, for example:
    - A thorough breakdown of the costs of the learnership;
    - Costs of learnership implementation are budgeted for;
    - Claimable grants are applied for from the SETA;

- Payment of learner allowances is accommodated in the payroll system.

## **DEVELOPING OR ALIGNING LEARNING MATERIALS**

A learning programme is defined as a set of structured opportunities for learning, through which a learner could become competent. The credit split specified for a learnership is a minimum of 30% and a maximum of 70% of the required credits obtained through applied competence at work. It is quite conceivable therefore that a learnership requires a learner to spend considerably more time at the workplace than at the learning institution.

To ensure value is added to the learnership, in terms of the time spent on the job, education and training has to be structured into manageable chunks of learning or subjects.

Learning materials are the concrete products that are the result of learning programme and course design activities. A learning programme consists of any learning material and/or aids in any medium or combination of media. Once the work experience component of the learning programme has been established, learning materials can be developed and designed or aligned. Existing materials may just need to be aligned to NQF requirements.

To achieve this, preparations have to be made to:

- Identify structured work-experience components for the specific workplace;
- Ensure that instructional components of the learning programme are aligned to the needs of the workplace;
- Confirm the manageable chunks of learning (topics/modules) that can be offered at your (or another) workplace;
- Schedule work experience and instructional learning in ways that minimise disruptions at both the workplace and learning institution.
- Select and develop methods of delivery at the workplace, for example role-plays, self-study, exercises, coaching, simulations etc.
- Develop, adapt or align materials that:
  - Clearly lay out objectives and learning outcomes
  - Indicate study time (notional hours per section of the material)
  - Promote active teaching and learning and engage learners intellectually and practically
  - Encourage learner responsibility for learning
  - Utilise adult education approaches to learning and teaching.

## ASSESSMENT

As already mentioned, up to 70% of the learning programme can consist of structured work experience. The employer must assess learners in accordance with the stipulated assessment criteria that indicate the required level of performance for each outcome.

It is essential that assessors have the capacity to conduct assessment effectively. In order to prepare for assessment employers in collaboration with providers should:

- Identify, appoint and train workplace assessors
- Obtain relevant assessment guides
- Draft an assessment plan
- Determine when and where assessment will take place
- Communicate assessment policies to assessors and learners

## THE STRUCTURED WORK EXPERIENCE

The workplace experience is meant to be outside the safety of the classroom in a real-world context. Learners will be required to adapt and re-contextualise their learning to function successfully in complex and unpredictable circumstances. The learning at this stage is very important for the building of the elements of competence and the capacity for life long learning and self-improvement.

To ensure that the learner is in a position to make the most of their work experience, it is essential that they undergo a comprehensive induction process at the commencement of the learnership. This should include:

<b>Organisational and job factors</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• overview of organisation, structure, environment, standards and philosophy</li> <li>• overview of policy and procedures, organisational roles and department functions</li> <li>• safety and emergency measures, first aid facilities, fire drills, stock room maintenance etc</li> <li>• terms and conditions of employment</li> </ul>
<b>Personal factors</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• remuneration, leave, medical aid, parking, canteen, employee rights, grievance and disciplinary issues, etc.</li> <li>• function required of the individual, job descriptions</li> <li>• code of conduct at workplace and provider</li> <li>• rules and regulation: telephone, stationery, lunches etc</li> </ul>

<b>Group integration factors</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• formal and informal aspects of work (e.g. everyone is on first name basis in the workplace)</li> <li>• the culture and values of the organisation</li> <li>• life skills, learning about work, business etiquette.</li> </ul>
<b>Learnership factors</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that the learnership agreement is signed by all parties involved.</li> <li>• Explain the concept of outcomes-based learning, the use of standards and the nature of assessment.</li> <li>• Ensure that learners understand what their obligations are, what they are reasonably entitled to expect and what the rights and obligations of the other parties to the agreement are.</li> <li>• Explain how the learning programme will work (how the learning will be scheduled).</li> <li>• Discuss the assessment process: what will be required in terms of assessment and competence? The learner's role and the assessor's role. What will happen if the person is assessed as not yet competent – can they be trained again, when and assessed when – after what period? What is the appeal process?</li> <li>• Discuss the practicalities such as accommodation, transport, allowances</li> <li>• Discuss issues around the reintegration into the workplace</li> <li>• Introduce the learner to all the staff members who will be responsible for their welfare. Inform them of who will mentor the learner and what kinds of mentoring will be provided. Explain that the mentoring at first will be more intensive and supportive and that it will lessen as the learner becomes more self-sufficient.</li> <li>• Ensure that the learner receives the necessary equipment, books, learning materials.</li> <li>• Ensure that learners who are to receive an allowance, do actually get their money.</li> <li>• Counsel workers who are on the learnership about the temporary sacrifices they may need to make during the programme.</li> <li>• Clarify the period of the learnership, explain the maximum period and define when the contract will end.</li> </ul>

In addition, you will need to:

- Draw up the workplace timetable – rotation schedule, indicating the nature of the workplace instruction.
- Provide learners with a job description, contract of employment, details on company benefits etc.
- Involve the shop steward/staff representative at the launch of the learnership.
- Ensure ETDP practitioners (external to the company) are familiar with the company's grievance and disciplinary procedures.
- If there is more than one learner in your organisation, set up a networking group/study group which can act as its own support structure.

### **Maintaining a positive learning environment**

The employer needs to provide a learning environment that is challenging but 'safe', so that learners feel comfortable asking questions or admitting to uncertainty. The general principles of adult learning are applicable in creating such an environment:

- Adults are motivated to learn as they develop needs and interests that the learning will satisfy;
- Adult orientation to learning is life- or work-centred;
- Learning needs to preferably centre around experiences, the analysis of those experiences and their application to work and life situations;
- Adults need to be self-directing and the role of the coach is to engage in a process of inquire, analysis and decision making with the learner rather than merely transmit knowledge.
- Coaching must make allowance for differences in learning style and pace of learning.

### **Remember that learning is more effective if it:**

- Takes place in a supportive, respectful environment
- Can be built on the individual's experiences
- Takes place in the context of problem solving
- Is enhanced by feedback and through doing
- Is facilitated by a variety of training methods
- Is an active process

### **Coaching and mentoring**

Ideally, a supportive learning environment will have a coach and mentor assigned to each learner. The structured workplace experience and coaching is not merely about showing the person how to perform the tasks, but rather about helping the learner to learn. This means guiding and encouraging the learner to achieve results by helping the person learn while doing the job. The role of the mentor is to guide the learner towards achieving the learning outcomes.

To ensure that both the learner and the employer gain as much as possible from each learning opportunity, it is essential that the coach/mentor be appropriately trained.

As a coach you need to:

- Be alert to coaching opportunities wherever they arise – whether in the individual's work or groups, or even through involving them in discussion of your problems and priorities;
- Choose your time for coaching. Sometimes it is necessary to act immediately if you see something going badly wrong; at other times you will do better to let people reflect on their errors before they can benefit by discussing them;

- Never concentrate solely on errors. If you are going to criticise weaknesses, begin by making sure the individuals know how much you value their strengths;
- Not try to tackle more than one or two weaknesses at a time;
- Give priority to those weaknesses that have most effect on the performance of the individual and the team;
- Make sure individuals know what you expect them to be doing and what you expect them to accomplish, preferably having discussed this with them first;
- Not insist that everything be done your way (unless there is some supremely good reason why it must be). Ask people questions that get them thinking out their own better ways of doing things;
- Encourage people to consider alternative ways of doing things; and support them in their attempts to put new ways into practice;
- Identify other people in your team who could/should be coaching, and make it part of their duties to do so;
- Review your coaching, and insure adequate time is being given to each individual.

As a mentor you need to:

- Encourage learners to take the initiative to ask for assessment as soon as they feel ready;
- Ensure that the environment allows learners to deal promptly with difficulties which may discourage or de-motivate them;
- Identify potential barriers to learning (personal problems, colleagues, nature of the work, etc);
- Clarify responsibilities and redefine mentor/coach and learners job description. Key result/performance area documents need to include the new responsibilities;
- Ensure that the management of the organisation shares the vision and understands the newly-legislated learning environment;
- Make time for the learner and keep the scheduled appointments;
- Offer support without necessarily rescuing, let the learner make mistakes if needs be and offer to support the learning from the experience;
- Assist learners to become their own teachers through self-directed learning;
- Find out the learner's immediate learning needs and goals by asking, "what do you need to learn?";
- Meet with the learner and establish a learning action plan.