

SAQA AND ECSA AGREE TO CO-OPERATE

The **South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)** and the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) have developed a model in terms of which both organisations recognise each other's functions and responsibilities under their respective Acts of Parliament and the value which both organisations can contribute for the benefit of the Country.

As a professional Council, ECSA is charged with statutory responsibilities to promote public health, safety and interests as they are impacted on through the activities of engineering professionals. This is achieved through the setting of standards for educational qualifications and for training and professional development of persons wishing to register as professionals with ECSA. Fundamental to the system of registration is the fact that the profession is controlled by peers drawn from the profession.

As an organ of State, SAQA is charged with statutory responsibilities to ensure the development and implementation of a National Qualification Framework which contributes to the full development of each learner and to the social and economic development of the nation at large.

Since the objectives of both organisations overlap significantly in the area of higher education in engineering the need was expressed that a synergistic and cohesive approach should be adopted in terms of which ECSA will execute its responsibilities primarily in terms of its own Act but will, at the same time, fulfil its functions to facilitate, lead and co-ordinate the Standards Generating Body (SGB) for Engineering and be an Education and Training Quality Assurance Body (ETQA) under SAQA's umbrella, without having to duplicate its efforts in respect of standard setting and quality assurance.

The benefit for SAQA is that its objectives are achieved through full co-operation with an internationally recognised and experienced professional body. A further advantage to SAQA is that it has ready access to considerable expertise from within the profession. This co-operation will make a significant contribution to SAQA's objective to improve the social and economic development of the nation.

The benefit for ECSA is that this agreement will significantly enhance ECSA's visibility in the country, thereby enhancing access into the profession. A greater awareness of registration of engineering qualifications as an integral part of the NQF, will enhance ECSA's ability to promote public safety, health and interests.

Since the principles contained in this co-operation apply equally well to the other recognised statutory professions in the Country, SAQA and ECSA are entering into negotiations with the other professions with the view to developing a national model of co-operation.

Joint release issued by SAQA and ECSA.

Signed at Bruma, Johannesburg on 20 April 2000.

Signed by
Samuel Isaacs, Executive Officer (SAQA) & Paul Roux; Registrar (ECSA)