



# ENSURING THE EXPERTISE TO GROW SOUTH AFRICA

**Training Academy Policy**

**A-01-POL**

**REVISION 2: 16 November 2017**

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<b>Document No.:</b> A-01-POL	<b>Revision No.:</b> 2	<b>Effective Date:</b> 16/11/2017	
<b>Subject: Training Academy Policy</b>			
<b>Compiler:</b> J Cato	<b>Approving Officer:</b> Council	<b>Next Review Date:</b> 16/11/2021	Page 1 of 19

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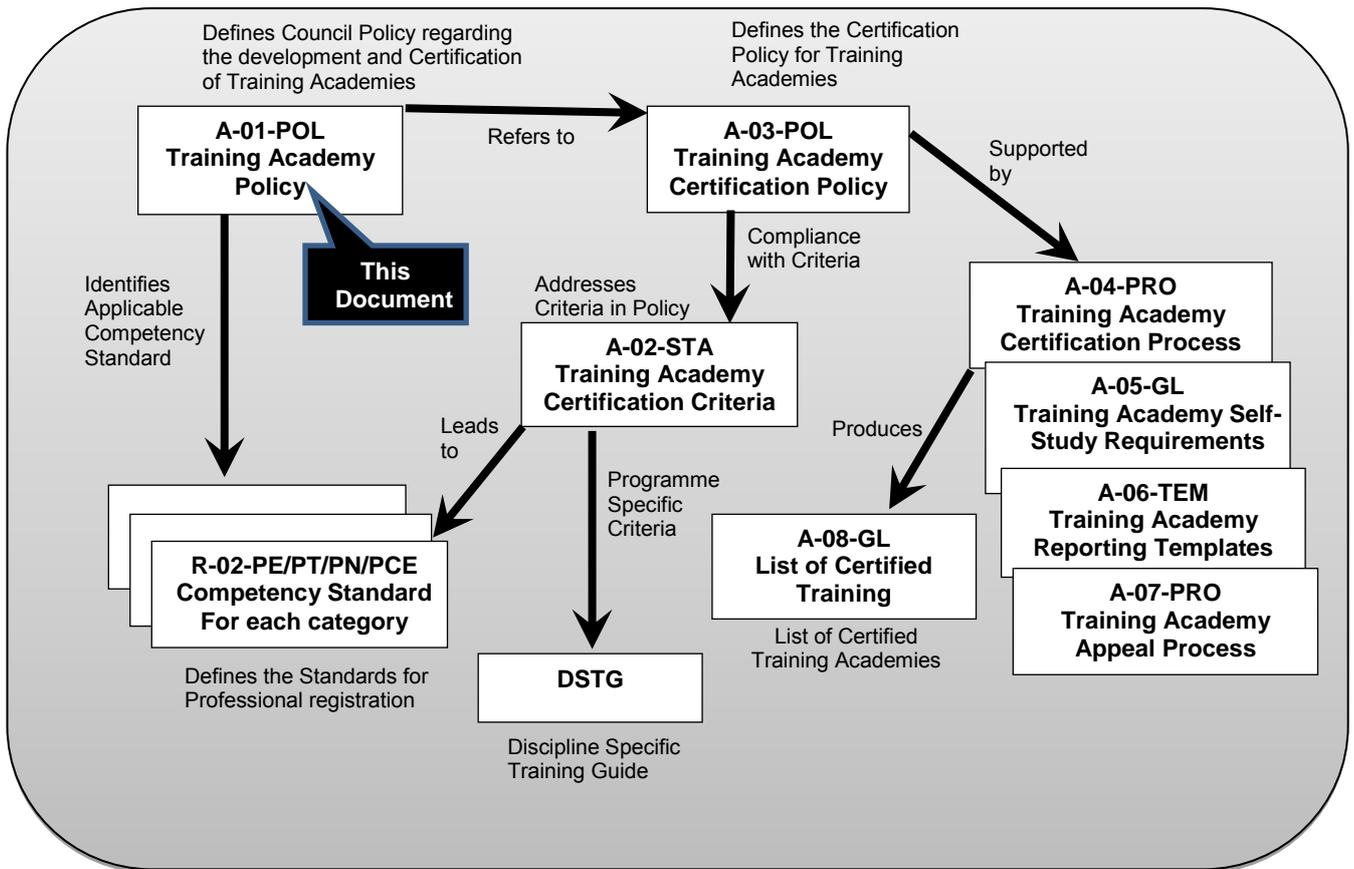
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**BACKGROUND: THE ECSA ACADEMY SYSTEM DOCUMENTS**

The documents that define the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) system for a Training Academy Establishment and Certification are shown in Figure 1 below, which also locates the current document.



**Figure 1: Documents defining the ECSA Training Academy System**

**1. PURPOSE**

This document defines policies set by the Council of the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) governing the establishment and certification of training academies for candidates (experiential learning) and graduates (Work Integrated Learning (WIL)). The policy gives effect to provisions of the Engineering Profession Act No 46 of 2000 (the Act) with regard to Section 13 (i).

The standards, criteria, policies and procedures that define the training academy establishment and

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certification system are defined in a set of documents whose structure is shown in Figure 1 above.

This policy encompasses the following:

- Section 2 Criteria for Establishing and Certifying a Training Academy
- Section 3 Purpose of and Principles underlying a Training Academy Certification System
- Section 4 Assessment of Submitted Training Reports
- Section 5 Criteria Relating to the Awards Ceremony

This policy is supported by competency standards, competency guidelines, processes for assessments, training and mentoring guidelines, discipline specific training guides, application guidelines, standard forms and information specific to particular work contexts. Relevant documents are referred to at various places in this policy.

## **2. CRITERIA FOR ESTABLISHING AND CERTIFYING A TRAINING ACADEMY**

This section defines the criteria for certifying engineering training programmes which are generic and are applied to the different organisations for each category of registration and each discipline.

Academy Criteria are defined for the two stages in the lifecycle of a training programme:

- i. Producing Professionals: Training programmes that have produced cohorts of professionals.
- ii. Planning Academy: New training programmes submitted for initial evaluation.
- iii. Guiding experienced engineers to receiving professional status.
- iv. Providing CPD rated skills programmes to assist professionals to maintain their qualifications.

### **2.1 Criteria for Training Programmes that have Produced Cohorts of Professionals**

#### **2.1.1 Criterion 1: Competency outcomes**

The programme must be planned to address the key training areas as defined in the competency standards and are in principle divided into six groups as follows:

- Engineering Problem Solving;

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- Managing Engineering Activities;
- Impacts of Engineering Activities;
- Exercise Judgment, Take Responsibility and Act Ethically;
- Initial Professional Development; and
- Relevant Legislation, Regulations and Codes of Practice for the environment the candidates are working in.

### **2.1.2 Criterion 2: Work horizon**

The organisation must have a work horizon within the training programme that:

- Is set at the appropriate level as defined in the standards for professional registration for each category;
- Allows all graduates to complete the training programme; and
- Is not less than the minimum certification period of four [4] years.

### **2.1.3 Criterion 3: Suitably qualified mentors**

The provider must provide suitably qualified mentors, as evidenced by the following:

- Be registered with ECSA in an appropriate category and discipline;
- Have contextual knowledge in the area of the applicant's offered evidence;
- Have not been subjected to any misconduct or found guilty of any offence;
- Have not been refused registration on all grounds stated in Section 3(i-vi) of the EPA;
- Have not had their registration cancelled as contemplated in Section 20 of EPA;
- Compliance with all ECSA CPD requirements;
- Compliance with all ECSA registration requirements as a professional;
- Have a minimum of 5 years of experience;
- The mentoring strategy and methodology is designed to achieve the outcomes of

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the programme with students who meet the stated admission criteria.

- Where Work-Integrated Learning is required for credit towards the qualification, the mentor ensures that learning is executed effectively including:
  - The learning objectives and outcomes to be achieved are defined and agreed with the academic provider;
  - On-going communication with the academic provider;
  - Monitoring and recording of the relative objectives.
- Mentors must also ensure that the following are achieved:
  - The expected outcomes for each programme are defined and documented and are available to all graduates/students;
  - The level of achievement required of the graduates/students and the consequences should the student not satisfy the specified outcome;
  - Suitable learning opportunities are provided to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge and skills specified in the programme outcomes;
  - The programme is effectively co-ordinated;
  - The progress of the graduates/students is appropriately monitored and where necessary, provides structured and monitored interventions.

#### **2.1.4 Criterion 4: Resourcing and sustainability of the training programme**

The training programme must be adequately planned, resourced, led and executed to ensure that it is sustainable over the period of certification as evidenced by the following:

- The number of graduates admitted takes into account the work horizon of the organisation to offer good quality training to meet the professional requirements.
- The selection and admission of graduates is linked to the organisation's equity and diversity plans.
- The organisation must provide the following:
  - A desk for each graduate/student allocated to the training programme;
  - A personal computer/laptop which has the relevant licensed software loaded for each graduate/student allocated to the training programme to carry out the necessary work as may be required.

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- Internet facilities for each graduate/student allocated to the training programme, to enable each graduate/student to research as may be required and upload their reports to ECSA as may be required.
- The organisation must have a work horizon that allows candidates to complete their relevant training on actual projects. There must be a horizon of work for at least one certification cycle, i.e. the next four [4] years.
- A strategy for recruitment, development and retention of quality mentors is in place and is aligned with the diversity plan of the institution.
- The number of mentors is sufficient for the programme and does not exceed the following:
  - 1 mentor to 4 graduates (1:4) if the mentor is from the organisation; or
  - 1 mentor to 10 graduates (1:10) if the mentor is sourced externally.
- The mentors must possess the range of specialities and abilities to enable the graduates to achieve the outcomes of the training programme.
- The organisation must also have suitably qualified and/or experienced supervisors to coach candidates on the work assigned to them.
- Budgetary allocations for the training programme including mentor remuneration must be adequate and effectively utilised.
- Staff responsible for the training development programme must be adequately qualified, experienced and skilled in line with the Skills Development Act.
- Funding for the programme must be adequate.
- Realistic criteria must be applied for acceptance of graduates into the training programme.
- The training programme must be quality assured.
- The organisation must be able to take on disabled candidates.

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***2.1.5 Criterion 5: Response to previously identified deficiencies and concerns, capacity for improvement and programme review***

In the case of deficiencies and concerns identified at the previous visit, such identified deficiencies and concerns must be adequately addressed.

**2.2 Criteria for New Programmes submitted for Initial Desktop Evaluation**

An Initial Desktop Evaluation on a new training programme considers the extent to which the programme:

- Satisfies Criterion 1, as judged from a fully detailed proposed programme;
- Presents a scheduled work horizon plan that demonstrates how the organisation meets Criterion 2;
- Presents detailed CVs of all proposed mentors to meet the sub-criteria of Criterion 3;
- Presents evidence of planning and institutional commitment to the programme and providing resources for both start-up of the programme and on an on-going basis against the sub-criteria of Criterion 4; and
- Has at least one member qualified as specified by the Skills Development Act.

**3. PURPOSE OF AND PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THE TRAINING ACADEMY CERTIFICATION SYSTEM**

The certification system assures the public, students, employers, funders and other stakeholders that a certified training academy fulfils its key purposes as follows:

- To train graduates using actual projects to achieve the professional competencies required for registration at ECSA;
- To provide students with Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) using actual projects to accrue credits at a rate of one credit per 30 hours of work towards their qualification; and

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- The mentoring process is effective.

Fulfilment of the key purposes is confirmed by the organisation's compliance with the criteria defined in section 2 above.

Training academies are responsible for and have freedom to design and execute training programmes that prepare graduates to meet the desired outcomes defined in ECSA's competency standards for any category of registration in any discipline.

Providers are expected to apply best practice in programme provision as defined in criteria 3 and 4 of document E-03-P in the implementation of their programmes. These criteria support the achievement of criteria 1 and 2 and effective delivery. Satisfying Criterion 4 also gives confidence that the programme is sustainable over the certification period and that the capacity for necessary improvements exists.

Certification of a training academy signifies that the training programme complies with the relevant criteria for Stage 1 of the assessment process for professional registration in an appropriate category in a particular discipline.

Graduates of certified training academies will enjoy the benefit of progressing straight to the Professional Review as defined in R-01-POL.

#### **4. OBJECTIVES OF THE CERTIFICATION OF ACADEMY TRAINING PROGRAMMES**

- The objective of certifying a academy training programmes is to establish whether a training programme meets the relevant certification criteria for such a training programme. Certification serves several functions. It:
  - Determines whether graduates meet the assessment process Stage 2 requirements for registration as a professional in the relevant category;
  - Establishes whether the graduates of a training programme are ready for registration as a professional in the relevant category;
  - Assures the public of the quality of the training programme for the relevant category and discipline;
  - Encourages improvement and innovation in engineering training in response to national and global needs;
  - Reduces application approval times (waiting period); and

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- Reduces costs or has no costs for the final approval process.

## 5. STRUCTURE OF THE DOCUMENTATION

The structure of the training academy certification documentation and relationships among individual documents is shown in Figure 1. The documentation system is modular and has a number of elements as described below:

### 5.1 Training Academy Certification Policy

This document (A-03-POL) defines the manner in which an organisation may make an application for the initial evaluation of new training programmes and subsequent certification of the same to remain a Certified Training Academy.

### 5.2 Standards

These documents specify the competency standards required for each category of registration, which are also incorporated into the certification criteria for the various types of training programmes:

- R-02-PE: Competency Standard for Engineers;
- R-02-PT: Competency Standard for Engineers (Technologists);
- R-02-PN: Competency Standard for Engineers (Technicians).

### 5.3 Training Academy Certification Policy

This document (A-03-POL) defines the policy regarding the Certification of Training Academies.

### 5.4 Certification Criteria

The certification criteria are defined in section 2 above and document A-02-STA, and the set of requirements that indicate that a training programme is of adequate quality, including the structure, the competency outcomes achieved, the training process, and its resourcing and sustainability.

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### 5.5 Training Academy Certification Process

Document (A-04-PRO) details the process.

### 5.6 Training Academy Reporting Templates

Document (A-06-TEM) provides all the necessary templates for the Certification of an Academy.

### 5.7 Training Academy Self Study Requirements

Document (A-05-GL) provides the details for the self-study requirements.

### 5.8 Academy Appeal Process

Document (A-07-PRO) details the appeals process for decisions regarding the certification of a training academy.

### 5.9 List of Certified Training Academies

Document (A-08-GL) provides a list of all Certified Training Academies and the relevant certification period.

## 6. EMPLOYER AND CANDIDATE BENEFITS

### 6.1 Employer Benefits

- Registration is quicker
- Candidates are trained by experienced mentors
- Employer has sight of the graduates' progress.

### 6.2 Candidate Benefits

- Produces well-rounded registered candidates

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- Addresses Stage 1 of the professional registration process
- Incrementally logs training and allows a view of the percentage completed.

## 7. ASSESSMENT OF SUBMITTED TRAINING EXPERIENCE REPORTS (TERS)

This section defines how the submitted training reports (TERS) per graduate from the certified training academies will be assessed. This assessment will determine if the graduate meets the necessary outcomes for professional registration as defined in the competency standards and detailed in R-01-POL.

- Each graduate must submit their relevant TER as defined in R-01-POL to ECSA for assessment.
- ECSA will assess individual TERS against each outcome as defined in R-02-PE/PT/PN/PCE with the relevant guidance for each outcome given in R-08-PE/PT/PN/PCE.
- ECSA will provide a status report on the graduate's progress against the required outcomes. The graduate must reach 90% before being able to submit their Final Engineering Report for Assessment.
- ECSA will use the following table to determine the percentage a graduate has completed by adding each assessment outcome as they progress. Only the highest assessment value for each outcome will be counted.

For example, if one TER is submitted in terms of outcome 1 and the candidate is assessed to be at a contributing level, his percentage completed will reflect 8%. If the candidate then submits another TER to address outcome 2 and is assessed to be at a performing level, his percentage completed will now reflect 8% + 10% = **18%**. The candidate is required to address each outcome until they have reached a minimum percentage of 90%. The candidate may submit an additional TER for outcome 1 that could be assessed to be at a performing level; his percentage completed will now reflect 10% + 10% = **20%**, an increase of 2% to move from one Degree of Responsibility to another.

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**Table 1: Degrees of Responsibility**

OUTCOMES	Degree of Responsibility				
	A Being Exposed	B Assisting	C Participating	D Contributing	E Performing
<b>Outcome 1</b> Define, investigate and analyse engineering problems	2%	4%	6%	8%	10%
<b>Outcome 2</b> Design or develop solutions to engineering problems	2%	4%	6%	8%	10%
<b>Outcome 3</b> Comprehend and apply advanced knowledge: principles, specialist knowledge, jurisdictional and local knowledge	2%	4%	6%	8%	10%
<b>Outcome 4</b> Manage part or all of one or more engineering activities	2%	4%	6%	8%	9%
<b>Outcome 5</b> Communicate clearly with others in the course of his or her engineering activities	2%	3%	4%	6%	8%
<b>Outcome 6</b> Recognise and address the reasonably foreseeable social, cultural and environmental effects of engineering activities	2%	4%	6%	8%	9%
<b>Outcome 7</b> Meet all legal and regulatory requirements and protect the health and safety of persons in the course of his or her engineering activities	2%	3%	4%	6%	8%
<b>Outcome 8</b> Conduct engineering activities ethically	2%	3%	4%	6%	8%
<b>Outcome 9</b> Exercise sound judgement in the course of engineering activities	2%	3%	4%	6%	8%
<b>Outcome 10</b> Be responsible for making decisions on part or all of complex engineering activities	2%	3%	4%	6%	8%
<b>Outcome 11</b> Undertake professional development activities sufficient to maintain and extend his or her competence.	2%	3%	4%	6%	8%
<b>Exposure to:</b> Relevant Legislation, Standards & Codes of Practice.	0%	1%	2%	3%	4%

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Progression of training for graduate / candidate over a 3 year period

Once 90% is achieved, the candidate must complete the Engineering Report (ER) according to the requirements in R-01-POL and submit the ER for assessment.

Once the Engineering Report has been assessed to meet the relevant requirements, the graduate is considered to have completed 100% of the training required for the relevant category and can proceed directly to the Professional Review.

Each outcome must achieve a minimum degree of responsibility of level D, contributing to the attainment of their minimum percentage of 90% required to proceed to the next stage.

## 8. CRITERIA RELATING TO THE AWARDS CEREMONY

- ECSA will hold an annual award ceremony to recognise the efforts of those involved in the Certified Training Academies.
- ECSA will select no more than three [3] candidates who presented innovative projects at their Professional Review to present those at the award ceremony.
- ECSA proposes awards for the following categories:

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- Best Candidate
  - Best Mentor
  - Best Academy
- ECSA will establish an ad-hoc Award Evaluation Committee (AEC) that will assess the candidates, mentors and academies in order to determine appropriate winners for each category.

### 8.1 Best Candidate

- Must have completed a minimum of three [3] years of training in a certified academy.
- The AEC will assess each application against the following criteria:
  - Most complete (no additional information requests)
  - Best articulated application
  - Shortest training period

### 8.2 Best Mentor

- Must have mentored a minimum of four candidates in a certified academy.
- The AEC will assess each mentor against the following criteria:
  - Percentage (%) of candidates who achieve registration on their first attempt.
  - The number of candidates who are short-listed for the best candidate.

### 8.3 Best Training Academy

- Must have valid Certification for Training Academy.
- The AEC will assess each training academy against the following criteria:
  - Percentage (%) of candidates who achieve registration on their first attempt.
  - The number of candidates who are short listed for best candidate.
  - The number of mentors who are short listed for best mentor.

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## 8.4 The award ceremony

The award ceremony will follow a standard format as follows:

- Welcome & Introduction by ECSA CEO
- Presentation of Professional Registration Certificates to all academy candidates who achieved professional registration.
- Selected candidate presentation.
- Best Candidate Award
- Best Mentor Award
- Best Academy Award
- Selected candidate presentation
- Thanks & Closure.

## 9. DEFINITIONS

**Accredited Qualification:** A qualification awarded on successful completion of an accredited programme.

**Competency Assessment:** A summative assessment of an individual's competency against the prescribed standard based on evidence in the individual's work, reports by qualified observers, and other tests that may include a professional review.

**Competency Standard:** Statement of competence required for a defined purpose.

**Initial Professional Development:** Systematic participation in the activities typical of Continuing Professional Development but carried out prior to professional registration.

**Mentor:** A professionally registered person who guides the competency development of a candidate in an appropriate category.

**Practice Area:** A distinctive area of knowledge and expertise developed by an engineering practitioner by virtue of the path of education, training and experience followed.

**Standard:** In the educational context, see document E-01-P; in the registration context, see

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*Competency Standard and Prescribed Standard*

**Supervisor:** A person who oversees and controls engineering work performed by a candidate. This person also undertakes the responsibility of adequately coaching the candidate to fulfil the requirements for registration.

**Certification:** formal recognition awarded to an education or training programme through a quality assurance procedure that it meets criteria laid down for the type of programme.

**Certified training programme:** a programme that has been evaluated and recognised by ECSA as meeting stated criteria.

**Certification criteria:** statements of requirements that must be satisfied by a programme in order to receive certification.

**Assessment:** the process of determining the capability or competence of an individual against standards by evaluating performances.

**Category:** a mode of registration defined in or under the ECSA Act which has a distinctive purpose, characteristic competencies, defined principal routes to registration and educational requirements.

**Engineering problem solving:** the process of finding solutions through a conscious, organised process that relies on the application of engineering knowledge and skills as well as generic competencies.

**Evaluation:** determining compliance of a result with prescribed criteria, based on documentation, inspection and the application of judgment supported by reasoning.

**Graduate:** a qualifying learner, irrespective of whether qualification is a degree or diploma.

**Level:** a measure of learning demands in terms of types of problems, knowledge required, skills and responsibility, expressed in terms of level descriptors.

**Programme:** a structured, integrated teaching arrangement with a defined purpose and pathway leading to a qualification.

**Qualification:** the formal recognition of a specified learning achievement, usually awarded on successful completion of a programme.

**Stage 1:** a point in the process of professional registration at which a person's qualification is assessed against the required qualification educational outcomes.

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**Standards:** in the context of engineering training programmes, statements of outcomes to be demonstrated, the level of performance and content baseline requirements.

**Engineering Problem Solving:** Problem solving is the understanding and judgement of a problem, providing the solution using applicable knowledge.

**Managing Engineering Activities:** Management is directed at achieving engineering results through the management of people, resources, processes, systems and money; this involves:

**Impacts of Engineering Activities:** Recognise and address the reasonably foreseeable social, cultural and environmental effects of engineering activities.

**Exercise judgment, take responsibility and act ethically:** Be responsible for making sound decisions and acting ethically on part of or all engineering activities.

**Initial Professional Development:** Undertake professional development activities, accredited or non-accredited, sufficient to maintain and extend his or her competence, during the candidacy phase.

**Relevant Legislation, Standards & Codes of Practice:** Understanding the applicable legislation, codes of practice for the practice areas of the candidates.

## 10. ABBREVIATIONS / ACRONYMS

**CPD:** Continuing Professional Development

**IPD:** Continuing Professional Development prior to registration

**ECSA:** Engineering Council of South Africa

**PR:** Professional Review

**SDF:** Skills Development Facilitator.

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#### REVISION HISTORY

Revision Number	Revision Date	Revision Details	Approved By
Rev 0.2	16/01/2017	New Concept Document	JH Cato / CEO
Rev 0.2	15/02/2017	Comments and amendments	Working Group
Rev 0.2	29/03/2017	Further comments and amendments	Working Group
Rev 0.2	10/04/2017	Approved with minor amendments	PDSGC Approval
Rev 0.2	18/05/2017	Approved	Council Approval
Rev 1.0	19/09/2017	Amendment to align with other documentation	JH Cato
Rev 1.0	28/09/2017	Incorporated workshop comments received	JH Cato
Rev 2.0	9/10/2017	Approved with minor amendments	PDSGC
Rev 2	16/11/2017	Approved and aligned with approved QMS template	Council

#### The Policy for: Training Academies

Revision 2 dated 16 November 2017 and consisting of 19 pages has been reviewed for adequacy by the Business Unit Manager and is approved by Executive: Policy Development and Standards Generation (**PDSG**)

  
 .....  
 Business Unit Manager

31/07/2018  
 .....  
 Date

  
 .....  
 Executive: **PDSG**

01/08/2018  
 .....  
 Date

The definitive version of this policy is available on our website.

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