

**SKILLS DEVELOPMENT  
SOUTH AFRICA**



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## Biography

Jacques Farmer is a Prisma Training Solutions Training Director, hailing from Potchefstroom, South Africa. He is a Lecturer at the north west university and is directly involved with the MQA with regards to Occupational Qualification designs. In addition, he has over 15 years of experience in the training industry coupled with an honours degree in Human Resource Development. He's also currently studying towards a BCom Honours in Industrial Psychology.

His Prisma responsibilities are extensive and include the designing and evaluation of training programmes, management of training, moderating assessments, assisting with designing of new and old training programmes, and developing distance learning programmes for mining employees among much, much more. With his combined military, training, and lecturing background, he often finds new and innovative ways of handling current day training needs in the unpredictable mining industry.

## Background and History

There are many challenges facing training and education in South Africa. Our priorities are to achieve access and equity, as well as high-level excellence and innovation.

Since the advent of democratic government in 1994, South Africa has been building a new education and training system whose goal has been to meet the needs of a democratic society. Policy developments have been aimed at democratising the education system, overcoming unfair discrimination, expanding access to education and training opportunities, and improving the quality of education, training and research. Some important successes have been achieved. The rapid expansion of enrolments in universities and colleges, quality improvements in parts of the system, desegregation and the opening up of opportunities to black and woman students are unprecedented in our history. In addition, we have established a skills levy system that provides the necessary resources to enhance skills development.

## National Skills Development Strategy III

The key driving force of this strategy is improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the skills development system. This strategy represents an explicit commitment to encouraging the linking of skills development to career paths, career development and promoting sustainable employment and in-work progression. NSDS III seeks to encourage and actively support the integration of workplace training with theoretical learning, and to facilitate the journey individuals make from school, college or university, or even from periods of unemployment, to sustained employment and in-work progression. Emphasis is placed on training to enable trainees to enter the formal workforce or create a livelihood for themselves. The emphasis is particularly on those who do not have relevant technical skills or adequate reading, writing and numeracy skills to enable them to access employment.

NSDS III will seek to promote a skills development system and architecture that effectively responds to the needs of the labour market and social equity. The strategy seeks to establish and promote closer links between employers and training institutions and between both of these and the SETAs.



## National Qualification Framework

The National Qualifications Framework Act 67 of 2008 provides for the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). The NQF is a comprehensive system, approved by the Minister of Higher Education and Training, for the classification, registration and publication of articulated and quality-assured national qualifications and part-qualifications.

The South African NQF is a single integrated system comprising three co-ordinated qualifications Sub-Frameworks for General and further Education and Training, Higher Education and Trades and Occupations.

The objectives of the NQF are to:

- Create a single integrated national framework for learning achievements;
- Facilitate access to, and mobility and progression within, education, training and career paths;
- Enhance the quality of education and training;
- Accelerate the redress of past unfair discrimination in education, training and employment opportunities.

The objectives of the NQF are designed to contribute to the full personal development of each learner and the social and economic development of the nation at large.

## South African Qualifications Authority

The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) was established by Parliament to:

- Advance the objectives of the NQF;
- Oversee the further development and implementation of the NQF;
- Co-ordinate the Sub-Frameworks.

### Framework levels

The NQF is organised as a series of levels of learning achievement, arranged in ascending order from one to ten. Each level on the NQF is described by a statement of learning achievement known as Level Descriptors. There is one set of level descriptors for the NQF.

### Sub-Frameworks

The NQF is a single integrated system which comprises of three co-ordinated qualifications Sub-Frameworks. These are:

- General and Further Education and Training Sub-Framework (GFETQSF)
- The Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF)
- The Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework (OQSF)

The Sub-Frameworks have qualifications registered at the following NQF levels:

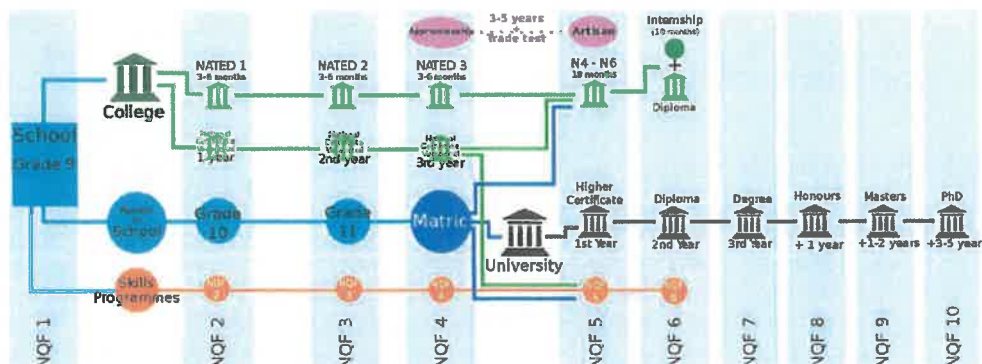
- GFETQSF - levels 1 to 4;
- HEQSF - levels 5 to 10;





- QQSF - levels 1 to 6. For NQF levels 7 and 8 the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations can motivate for a qualification only in collaboration with a recognised professional body and the Council on Higher Education, in a process co-ordinated by SAQA.

## NQF Levels



## Establishment of SETAs

In March 2005, the Minister of Labour, Membathisi Mdladlana, re-established our SETAs (Sector Education and Training Authority). They are concerned with education and training and their job is to help implement the National Skills Development Strategy and to increase the skills of people in their sector. The SETAs replaced the 33 Industry Training Boards but have greater powers and responsibilities. They cover every industry and occupation and are concerned with learnerships, internships, learning programme type matrix and unit-based skills programmes.

SETAs have been established to manage the many skills development needs in both the public and private sectors. Each SETA coordinates skills development in its particular sector. For the purposes of planning and managing the delivery of training, the economy has been divided into 21 sectors, each of which has its own SETA. A sector is made up of economic activities that are linked and related.

So, for example, there is a SETA that deals with the mining sector; another is concerned with skills development in the information technology sector; another is responsible for the manufacturing sector and there is a SETA for agriculture.

### Role of SETAs

The functions and responsibilities of SETAs are set out in the Skills Development Act of 1998. The Act states that the role of a Seta is to:

- Develop a sector skills plan to describe the trends in each sector, the skills that are in demand and to identify priorities for skills development.
- Implement the plan.
- Develop and administer learnerships, which include the traditional apprenticeships of the past, and combine practice and theory. However, learnerships go beyond 'blue-collar' trades — they also prepare people for jobs in the new services sector and for higher para-professional occupations.



- Support the implementation of the National Qualifications Framework, on which any qualification or learning outcome can be registered.
- Undertake quality assurance. In promoting quality provision, Setas will accredit education and training providers; monitor provision to ensure that programmes are being followed; register assessors; collaborate with other education and training quality (ETQ) assurers; report to the South African Qualifications Authority on how they fulfil the ETQ role; and disburse levies collected from employers in their sector.
- Report to the minister and the South African Qualifications Authority. Setas are statutory bodies. This means that they are established by Act of Parliament and are given clear responsibilities to be discharged in the public interest.

#### **A SETA is financed from:**

- the skills development levies collected in its sector;
- moneys paid to it from the National Skills Fund;
- grants, donations and bequests made to it;
- income earned on surplus moneys deposited or invested;
- income earned on services rendered in the prescribed manner; and
- money received from any other source.

## **Skills Development Act**

To provide an institutional framework to devise and implement national, sector and workplace strategies to develop and improve the skills of the South African workforce; to integrate those strategies within the National Qualifications Framework contemplated in the South African Qualifications Authority Act, 1995; to provide for learnerships that lead to recognised occupational qualifications; to provide for the financing of skills development by means of a levy-grant scheme and a National Skills Fund; to provide for and regulate employment services; and to provide for matters connected therewith.

#### **Skills Development levy**

A Skills Development Levy (SDL) is a levy imposed to encourage learning and development in South Africa and is determined by an employer's salary bill. The funds are paid to the South African Revenue Services (SARS), which acts as a collecting agency for the applicable SETA. and are to be used to develop and improve skills of employees. Companies pay 1% of the total amount paid in salaries to employees as their SDL.

SARS collects all SDLs of which 20% goes to the National Skills Fund and 80% to the SETAs. SETAs retain:

- 10.5% for their own administration
- 0.5% the Quality Council for Trades and Occupation (QCTO) for quality assurance
- 20% is dispersed back to compliant and participating employers. These grants are called mandatory grants that employers get after structuring their Work Skills Plan (WSP). After getting this grant, employers use it to train their employees.
- Allocate 49% to their Pivotal pool of funds.
  - 80% of this Pivotal pool of funds is available to employers in the form of a Pivotal Grant (subject to application and success submission of a Pivotal Grant Plan)
  - 20% is reserved for Discretionary funding of compliant employers (subject to application/allocation).



- Non-compliant or non-participating employers' Mandatory Grant is swept into the discretionary pool.
- SETAs may also apply for additional funding from the National Skills Fund for special projects.
- Should the SETA not use the funds at their disposal they are swept back to the National Skills Fund (NSF).

The National Skills Fund supports skills development projects that don't fall under the SETAs. The fund enables the state to:

- drive key skills strategies,
- meet the training needs of the unemployed, non-levy paying cooperatives, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community structures and vulnerable groups,
- promote strategic partnerships and innovation in project delivery,
- drive change towards partnership-based programmes, and
- contribute significantly to raising the low base of education and training in our country, guided by our government policies of redress and promoting equity.

## **Mining Qualifications Authority**

The Mining Qualifications Authority (MQA) is a Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) responsible for the administration of skills development programmes for the mining and minerals sector in South Africa. It was first established under the Mine Health and Safety Act No.29 of 1996 and later registered as a SETA under the Skills Development Act No.97 of 1998.

### **Vision**

A competent, health and safety orientated mining and minerals workforce

### **Mission**

Ensure that the mining and minerals sector has sufficient competent people who will improve health and safety, employment equity and increase productivity standards

### **Values**

- Continuous Learning
- Empowerment
- Professionalism
- Honesty and Mutual Respect
- Service Excellence

### **Strategic Objectives**

- Promote efficient and effective governance and administration
- Improve skills development planning and decision-making through research
- Promote work-based skills development to support transformation in the mining and minerals sector
- Facilitate access to occupationally directed learning programmes for the unemployed
- Support mine community training initiatives to access economic opportunities



## Social Labour Plan

The Social and Labour Plan requires applicants for mining and production rights to develop and implement comprehensive Human Resources Development Programmes, mine Community Development Plan, Housing and Living Conditions Plan, Employment Equity Plan, and Processes to save jobs and manage downscaling and/or closure. The above programmes are aimed at promoting employment and advancement of the social and economic welfare of all South Africans whilst ensuring economic growth and socio-economic development.

### Objectives of the Social and Labour Plan

The objectives of the Social and Labour Plan are to:

- Promote economic growth and mineral and petroleum resources development in the Republic
- Promote employment and advance the social and economic welfare of all South Africans
- Ensure that holders of mining or production rights contribute towards the socioeconomic development of the areas in which they are operating as well as the areas from which the majority of the workforce is sourced
- To utilize and expand the existing skills base for the empowerment of Historically Disadvantaged South Africans and
- to serve the community.

## Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE)

Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) aims to ensure that the economy is structured and transformed to enable the meaningful participation of the majority of its citizens and to further create capacity within the broader economic landscape at all levels through skills development, employment equity, socio economic development, preferential procurement, enterprise development, especially small and medium enterprises, promoting the entry of black entrepreneurs into the mainstream of economic activity, and the advancement of co-operatives. B-BBEE needs to be implemented in an effective and sustainable manner in order to unleash and harness the full potential of black people and to foster the objectives of a pro-employment developmental growth path.

### Skills Development in B-BBEE Scorecard

The B-BBEE Codes demand a far greater investment in Skills Development with an emphasis on accredited training and learnerships - transferring hard skills to black employees and black unemployed persons. Little weight (maximum of 15%) is given to soft skills. The amended generic scorecard allocates 25 points to the Skills Development element and it is thus vital to score well in this element.

In addition, the Skills Education Training Authorities (“SETA”) Workplace skills plan and Actual training report and Pivotal skills report, need to be approved by the relevant sector SETA. Organisations can no longer afford to ignore SETAs but instead need to foster partnerships with them. It is crucial for an organisation to develop and submit a Workplace Skills Plan to its applicable SETA in order to qualify to be awarded points on the BBBEE scorecard for skills training expenditure. This plan must be submitted before the SETA’s submission due date





otherwise the measured entity will not be awarded any points on the BEE Scorecard for the Skills Development element and will be discounted with a compliancy level.

### **Benefits of skills development on the B-BBEE scorecard**

- The cost for your Skills Development Facilitator can be claimed as a training expense
- SETA grants such as the mandatory, pivotal and discretionary grants can help you to fund training programmes
- SARS offers a tax break of up to R120 000.00 per participant on a learnership
- SARS also allows a deduction of R 1 000.00 per young person per month that you employ, which equals an annual saving of R 12 000.00

## **Sector Skills Plan**

SETAs must draw up a sector skills plan (SSP), which is important when making decisions about the priorities for skills development. The SSP provides the framework and background for the Seta's actions. In terms of the Skills Development Act 1998 (as amended in 2008), the MQA is required to develop a Sector Skills Plan (SSP) and submit it to the DHET, followed by the facilitation and monitoring of its implementation. Furthermore, the NSDS III states that the core responsibility of SETAs is to develop sector skills plans. In addition, the SSP is required to guide skills development interventions within the MMS. The main purpose of the SSP, which covers skills development in the MMS over a five-year period, is to:

- Determine skills development priorities after an analysis of the skills demand and trends, and supply issues within the sector.
- Identify a set of sectors specific [skills development] objectives and goals that will meet sector needs, economic or industrial growth strategies and meet scarce and critical skills [needs] in the sector.
- Identify strategies to address these objectives and goals.
- Identify activities that will support these strategies.
- Report on performance in relation to these objectives and goals (this will receive attention in the subsequent updates of the SSP and as part of on-going quarterly performance reporting requirements).

SETAs implement their SSP plan by:

- starting learnerships;
- approving workplace skills plans from employers;
- giving funds to employers, trainers and workers; and
- watching over education and training in their sectors.

## **Training Reports**

If an organisation contributes to the Skills Development Levy they must submit a Workplace Skills Plan (WSP). And Annual Training Report (ATR), showing your progress against your last WSP. This will qualify the organisation for the Skills Development grant (Mandatory, Discretionary and PIVOTAL).

According to the Services SETA website, a WSP is "...a strategic document that articulates how the employer is going to address the training and development needs in the workplace." We all recognise the need for training; most companies have a training department of some description. But a comprehensive skills development plan helps to ensure training is not only reactive to needs that emerge but is designed to develop the skills and talents of the



organisation holistically so it can meet its strategic goals as well as the personal training needs of individuals.

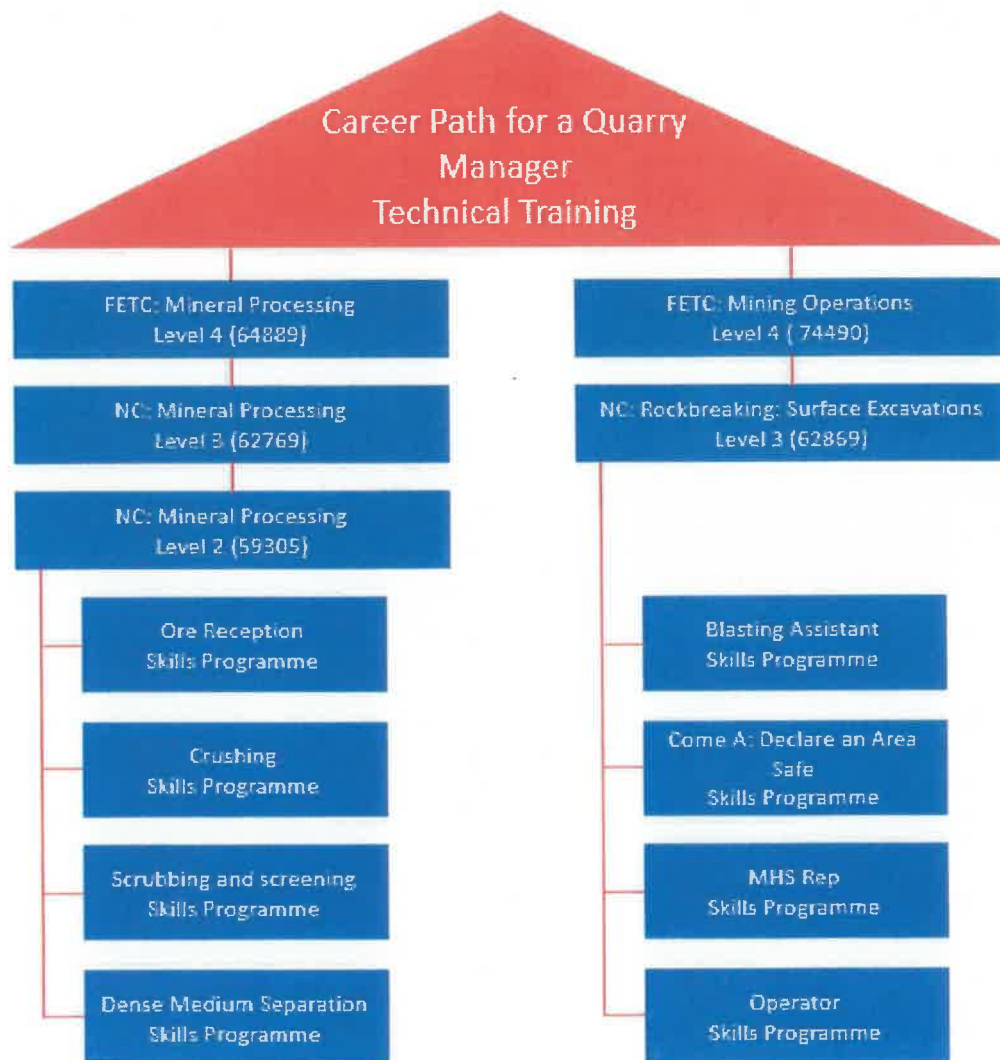
The ATR is submitted at the same time as the WSP, but it reports on progress against the previous year's WSP. As mentioned above, failure to submit the ATR will result in suspension of the grant an organisation would otherwise be entitled to for the coming year's WSP. It is a helpful document that will enable you to measure the achievement of priorities in terms of skills and the progressive capacity development of your organisation and therefore your competitiveness.

An ATR should report on:

- Number of training interventions delivered (and skills priorities addressed)
- Number of employees trained
- Occupational areas covered
- Learning methods used
- Training spend
- Process used to develop the report
- Name of the Skills Development Facilitator



## Career Pathway in the Aggregate Sector



In the mining sector there are two certificates, namely:

- Mine Overseer
- Mine Manager

These two certificates do not cater to the aggregate sector because it is directed to underground mining purposes. ASPASA and relevant role players have started to design a career pathway specifically to cater for the aggregate sector.

Mineral processing NQF level 2 is quite a straight forward qualification that encompasses:

- Dense Medium Separation
- Scrubbing and Screening
- Crushing



- Ore reception

Mineral processing Level 3 is for site supervisors and Level 4 is for senior supervisors / plant managers.

The second qualification is relates to surface mining.

A person can enter the aggregate environment with an operator skills programme, there after a learner can enhance their career prospects by completing the Mine Health and Safety Rep Skills Programme and completing the Declare an area safe or Examiner Make safe area before working begins skills programme.

After 18-24 months as a mining operator we then attach him to the blasting section. The learner completes a skills programme called blasting assistant where they will do everything a normal blaster would do except having the authority to press home charge.

Employees with leadership qualities and capabilities are identified and are placed on a National Certificate: Rockbreaking Surface Excavation learnership which is focused on surface blasting. This qualification enables a person to conduct blasting operations in the mine and allows an employee to be legally appointed as a mine supervisor.

The next qualification is the FETC: Mining Operations is designed for a mine supervisors / shift boss / site supervisor. Its is designed in 4 disciplines:

- Underground Hard Rock
- Underground Coal
- Surface
- Small Scale Mining

The aggregate sector falls under the surface mining. The surface discipline is then divided into modules, namely:

- Design blasts for surface excavations
- Develop a short-term surface excavation scheduling
- Coordinate surface excavation operations
- Apply strata control techniques and processes in surface excavations
- Implement and maintain services and infrastructure in surface excavations
- Construct and maintain roads in surface excavations
- Demonstrate an understanding of surface excavation
- Carry out basic surveying and calculations in surface excavations
- Implement and monitor grade and quality control for surface excavations
- Demonstrate an understanding of extraction and the beneficiation of minerals on surface excavations
- Coordinate the development of surface excavation operations
- Carry out blasting environmental testing
- Lift and move a load using mechanical lifting equipment





## QUALITY CONCIL FOR TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS (QCTO)

The Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) is a Quality Council established in 2010 in terms of the Skills Development Act Nr. 97 of 1998. Its role is to oversee the design, implementation, assessment and certification of occupational qualifications, including trades, on the Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework (OQSF).

The QCTO also offers guidance to skills development providers who must be accredited by the QCTO to offer occupational qualifications.

The QCTO is one of three quality councils that ensure the quality and standards of education and training in South Africa- Umalusi is responsible for institutions reporting to the Department of Basic Education and the Council for Higher Education is responsible for quality at institutions of higher learning.

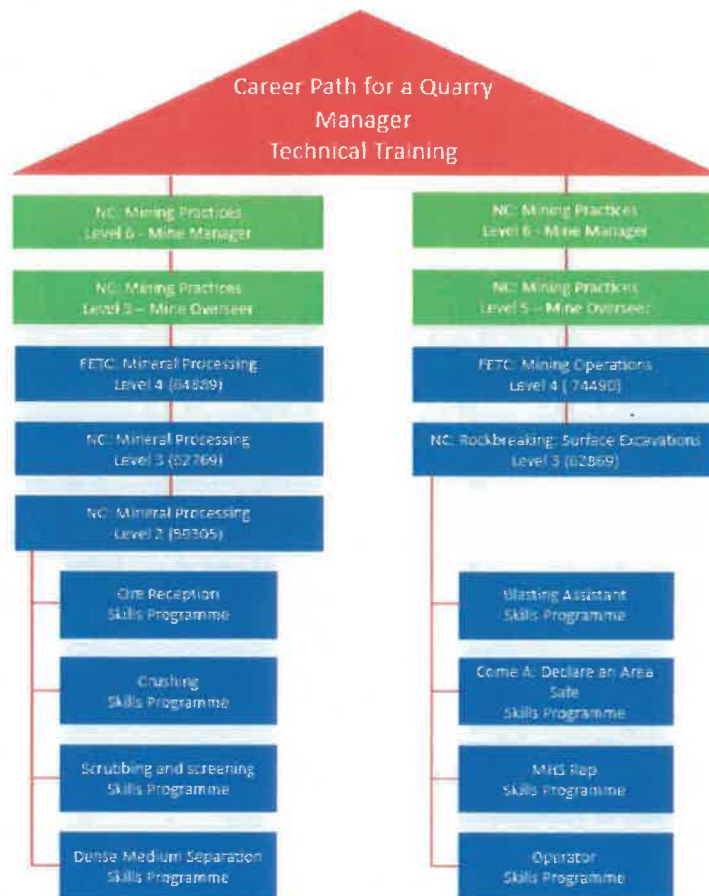
QCTO is responsible for defining the labour related needs into qualifications and the quality assurance of occupational qualifications, including workplace training. Training providers will have to show that training is registered, quality-assured and offered with clear quality assurance to show that they are a reputable service provider.

In summary the QCTO is responsible for:

- Establishment and management of the Occupational Qualification Sub-framework (OQSF)
- Occupational Qualifications development and maintenance
- Accreditation of Skills Development Providers
- Accreditation of Assessment Centres
- Assessment
- Certification
- Research and Knowledge Development
- Stakeholder Management and Advocacy



## Moving Forward



South Africa is preparing to create a new career pathway for persons interested in mining at NQF level 5 & 6. After completing the Level 4 qualification, learners will soon be able to complete level 5 & 6 qualifications:

- National Certificate: Mining Practices NQF 5 – Currently known as Mine Overseer
- National Certificate: Mining Practices – NQF 6 – Currently known as Mine Manager

These qualifications have 4 disciplines, namely:

- Underground Hard Rock
- Underground Coal
- Surface Mining
- Small Scale Mining

Once the level 5 & 6 qualifications are complete learners will be able to appointed as a Mine Manager.



## Closing Statement

Nelson Mandela once remarked "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world". This is indeed true for South Africa where we are enhancing the skills of our labour force ensuring that they have the necessary skills to compete in the global economy. We achieve this through the creation and implementation of policies, skills development frameworks and funding from our Government and the Private Sector that I have alluded to earlier.

Thank You

Jacques Farmer

