

## What is the QCTO?

The QCTO acronym stands for the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations. It was established in 2008 by the Skills Development Act to perform certain functions which include but is not limited to the following:

- Design and develop occupational standards and qualifications and submit them to the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) for registration on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF);
- Establish and maintain occupational standards and qualifications;
- Ensure the quality of occupational standards and qualifications and learning in and for the workplace.

It is the third qualifications council to be established, the other two being the Council on Higher Education (CHE) and the Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training, better known as Umalusi.

For more information about the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO), please visit their website, currently housed on the SAQA website [www.saqa.org.za](http://www.saqa.org.za). There are also some FAQs at [www.nqf.org.za/page/faq/qcto](http://www.nqf.org.za/page/faq/qcto).

## What is an Assessment Quality Partner (AQP)?

The QCTO appoints Development Quality Partners (DQPs) to whom they delegate the function of developing occupational qualifications, under the direction of the QCTO. Assessment Quality Partners (AQPs) are appointed by the QCTO to develop standardised assessment instruments for external summative assessment of the QCTO qualifications, to manage the external assessment and forward the results to the QCTO as required. There is only one AQP for each qualification or part qualification.

As part of its Service Level Agreement with the QCTO, the IEB will be establishing a record of providers of

Foundational Learning Competence and also a database of assessment centres for the FLC. Information about these processes will be made available shortly and interested organisations will be invited to participate.

## What is Foundational Learning Competence (FLC)?

Foundational Learning Competence is a part qualification consisting of two learning areas: Communications and Mathematical Literacy. It describes the minimum competence needed in these two key areas that is required by people to function optimally in the world of work. The FLC describes the minimum competence required of learners to deal successfully with occupational learning at NQF Levels 2–4.

The school-leaving qualification, the National Senior Certificate, is registered at NQF Level 4. Hence the Foundational Learning Competence addresses the needs of learners in the occupational qualifications that are registered on the NQF at Levels 2, 3 and 4 i.e. below Grade 12.

The Foundational Learning Competence is a compulsory part of all new qualifications developed under the auspices of the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) at NQF levels 3 and 4. This does not mean that developers of qualifications at NQF Level 2 cannot include Foundational Learning as a requirement. It has replaced the 'fundamentals' in Mathematics and Communications that were required previously in all qualifications at NQF Levels 1 to 4.

It is a part qualification registered at NQF Level 2. It has a credit value of 40, 20 for Foundational Learning Competence in Communications and 20 for Foundational Learning Competence in Mathematical Literacy.

There are three documents that describe the learning required for the FLC, namely the Foundational Learning Competence Part Qualification (which contains the Exit Level Outcomes and Associated Assessment Criteria for both Communications and Mathematical Literacy), the Foundational Learning Competence Communication in



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English: Curriculum Framework and the Foundational Learning Competence in Mathematical Literacy: Curriculum Framework. These are registered with the QCTO, and provide detailed specifications of knowledge, content, applied skills, range statements and assessment requirements.

Providers may offer FLC learning programmes in order to prepare learners to write the FLC external assessment. Programme development must be done in relation to the curriculum frameworks and compliance with these documents is an indicator in the provider accreditation process for this part qualification. Both curriculum framework documents are available on the IEB website ([www.ieb.co.za](http://www.ieb.co.za)).

### Who will provide the Foundational Learning Competence programmes?

The IEB will maintain a list of providers who wish to offer the FLC learning programme and will make the updated list available on its website ([www.ieb.co.za](http://www.ieb.co.za)). Those wishing to engage the services of a FLC provider, recorded on the database of providers of FLC, should note the following:

- Before recording a provider onto the list, the IEB will conduct a desk-top exercise to check, as far as possible, the accuracy of the information provided on the form.
- Those engaging the services of providers recorded on the list need to ensure that they have their own contracts and conduct their own checks on the provider, e.g. sustainability, before entering into any agreement.

### What are the criteria for a skills development provider to be recorded on the IEB database of providers for Foundational Learning Competence and what process must be followed?

Since Foundational Learning Competence is a new area of operation, the **criteria** for a provider to be recorded on the database are developmental by nature. There are however some key criteria that apply.

- The provider must have an established head office of operation with a physical as well as a postal address. In addition, it must have the following:
  - A telephone (landline)
  - A fax line
  - Internet access: email is essential; a website is advisable.
- The provider must have an established record in the offering of training for adults in Communications and Mathematical Literacy or Mathematics up to and including NQF Level 4. The provider should have been accredited either by Umalusi or one of the SETAs.
- It is preferable that the provider be able to offer provisioning in both learning areas.
- The facilitators who will offer Foundational Learning Competence programmes must be subject-specific experts. Hence FLC facilitators can be teachers qualified in the learning areas of Communications or language (English) and Mathematics or Mathematical Literacy. Adult facilitators, in addition to their facilitation qualifications, ought to have learning area specialisation, i.e. an appropriate qualification in the fields of Communications (English) or Mathematical Literacy or Mathematics. Once the FLC facilitator course is registered, facilitators of the FLC who are not qualified teachers in the learning area are well advised to complete the course.
- The provider must undertake to ensure that facilitators are familiar with the demands of the Foundational Learning Competence requirements. The qualification for the FLC Facilitator is in the QCTO processes. The IEB will monitor progress and keep FLC providers informed.

### IEB Vision

To advance quality teaching and learning in South Africa through an assessment process of integrity, innovation and international comparability.



### Introduction

On 18 May 2012, the IEB was appointed as the **Assessment Quality Partner (AQP)** of the **Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO)** for the part qualification, **Foundational Learning Competence (FLC)**.

