

- 1) The SAQA Board met on 8 and 9 March to inform the strategic direction the organisation will take in the medium term.

<http://www.saqa.org.za/docs/news/2018/Board%20Statement%201of2018.pdf>

- acknowledged that transformation in education and training cannot be achieved without decolonisation and Africanisation and have therefore adopted a position whereby SAQA will consult with all the other bodies within the NQF family to develop shared meanings and understandings while SAQA's position on these matters is being further refined.
- the SAQA Board approved the re-registration of qualifications and part-qualifications currently registered on the GFETQSF and the HEQSF) for three years from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2021. The re-registration of qualifications and part-qualifications currently registered on the OQSF was approved for five years from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2023. The re-registration excludes those qualifications that:
 - Do not meet QC requirements for registration
 - Have been reviewed and replaced by new qualifications
 - Are not quality assured or accredited by the QCs
 - Do not meet the SAQA requirements as per the Policy and Criteria for the Registration of Qualifications and Part-qualifications.
- "The SAQA Board approved the procedure for the de-recognition of a professional body in line with the Policy and Criteria for Recognising a Professional Body and Registering a Professional Designation for the Purposes of the National Qualifications Framework Act. Professional bodies have the right to appeal against de-recognition and/or de-registration of their professional designations. In addition, the Board amended the Policy and Criteria for Recognising a Professional Body and Registering a Professional Designation for the Purposes of the National Qualifications Framework Act to allow SAQA to charge professional bodies cost recovery-related fees for all services rendered".

- 2) South African Qualifications Authority launches pilot digital Certificate of Evaluation to benefit foreign qualifications holders

<http://www.saqa.org.za/docs/news/2018/SAQA%20launches%20pilot%20digital%20Certificate%20of%20Evaluation.pdf>

In SAQA's effort to become more efficient they have launched a pilot digital certificate of evaluation to benefit foreign qualification holders for a year. They are the first quality authority in the world to launch such a certificate. It will save time because the process happens in real-time

3) Changing discourse on Private Higher Education

<http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20180330094427597>

Wondwosen Tamrat, a Professor at KZN, wrote this article for University World News.

Private higher education plays an important role in the education sector addressing deficiencies and providing opportunities. Government plays a significant role through appropriate legislation and policies, which..”remains one of the most critical levers for lending credence to, and advancing the growth of, the private education sector”’.

In many African countries, support for Private Higher education is happening in various forms:

- Loans and bursaries
- Loans made to Institutions at concessional rates
- Institutional grants
- Favourable taxation
- Provision of land

Countries mentioned are Ethiopia, Ghana, Tunisia, Kenya, Tanzania, Lesotho, Mozambique, Malawi, Mauritius, Uganda, Namibia, Nigeria and Zimbabwe.

Progressive government policies can be instrumental in fostering private higher education institutions as effective partners in national and regional endeavours for social and economic development. Of course, government policy pledges need to be honoured to translate intentions into realities – an area where African countries are often cited for falling short.

4) A dire need to cultivate entrepreneurship and innovation in SA

<https://www.iol.co.za/sunday-tribune/news/a-dire-need-to-cultivate-entrepreneurship-and-innovation-in-sa-14185300>

University of KwaZulu-Natal deputy vice chancellor: research, Professor Deresh Ramjugernath says that South Africa needs to up its game in the world of innovation and entrepreneurship.

He said it was important for all stakeholders in the public and private sectors and academia to embrace innovation and entrepreneurship as a means of socio-economic upliftment. Real innovation in medium and hi-tech entrepreneurship we will see significant economic growth and job creation
He was the keynote speaker at the Sparks Innovation event

“He said the future of jobs and associated skills development in Africa rested on technological advances being made through what is now widely known as the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Last year, a study by the World Economic Forum (WEF) showed that 39% of core skills, required across industries in South Africa, would be completely different by 2020.

While the WEF predicted large job losses to hit white-collar sectors worldwide, mostly among people in administrative roles, professions in IT, mathematics, architecture and engineering are expected to gain around 2million jobs"

- 5) The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are challenging the way in which universities educate their students

<http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20180409134900175>

There are 17 SDGs, for example, no hunger, zero poverty, quality education, gender equality, clean water and sanitation.

According to the article, It's a moral obligation for everyone to address these SDGs. There are 4 dimensions that must be considered to achieve these goals

- From an education point of view the implementation of the SDGs requires, awakening the moral conscience of students and researchers alike
- make sustainable and inclusive development the responsibility of all societal actors.
- "It challenges simplistic thinking and prioritises nuanced solutions to complex problems.

The implementation of the SDGs requires graduates with the ability to be conversant in more than one discipline. It's one thing to be able to work in multidisciplinary teams. The SDGs take things a step further: they require graduates who are able to understand elements of the solutions they seek to provide that go beyond their respective academic disciplines"

- The SDGs, fourthly, place a great deal of emphasis on science, technology and innovation. Implementing the SDGs will require graduates with the ability to innovate and to move beyond conventional solutions. This is, to a large extent, part of the core business of universities. Yet, for some reason, connecting policy-makers with the research and innovation needed for the effective implementation of the SDGs remains tricky.

"Postgraduate programmes that prioritise building expertise and specialisation in one field will remain important. Yet, the SDGs create the need for programmes that prioritise interdisciplinary programmes that foster competence in more than one academic discipline, whilst also developing critical skills needed to implement responses to complex developmental challenges".

“... University of Pretoria we are attempting to face these challenges head-on in designing our Masters in Development Practice. The degree focuses on responding to each of the four challenges discussed above”.