

CERTIFICATION POLICY
MADZIVHANDILA COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE

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1. ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AgriSETA	- Agricultural Sector Education and Training Authority
DALRRD	- The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development
HOD	- Head of Department
LDARD	- Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
NLRD	- National Learner's Record Database
MEC	- Member of Executive Council
NQF	- National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008 (Act 67 of 2008)
RPL	- Recognition of Prior Learning
SAQA	- The South African Qualifications Authority
TSCA	- Madzivhandila College of Agriculture

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Central to the Madzivhandila College of Agriculture (TSCA)'s commitment to quality is the provision of a guideline for the management of certification that is compliant with the principles of sound corporate governance.

The Policy on Certification provides for guidelines for the certification of individuals who have met all the relevant requirements for a full or part qualification. The legal framework in which this Policy vests, is stipulated.

3. INTRODUCTION

Madzivhandila College of Agriculture is accredited by Council of Higher Education to offer 3-years diploma programs (Diploma in Agriculture in Animal Production and Diploma in Agriculture in Plant Production) at NQF level 6, and AgriSETA to offer skills programmes (short-learning programmes, RPL programmes, Learnerships). The skills programs are offered at NQF levels 1-4 National Certificates in Animal Production and Plant Production. This Policy forms part of the institutional Quality Management System and specifies the principles for ensuring that programme offerings abide by academic standards and empower students / candidates to contribute to their communities and the economy of the future.

4. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the Policy is to provide guidelines for the certification of students who have met all the relevant requirements for a diploma qualification or skills program. This Policy seeks to ensure that effective mechanisms are in place to quality assure the processing and issuing of certificates, and to maintain the integrity of the processes leading to certification of qualifications offered by the College.

OBJECTIVES

In order to ensure that integrity, accuracy and credibility is maintained, TSCA undertakes to:

- Articulate the requirements for completion of a qualification that leads to certification as registered with South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) and accredited by the Council on Higher Education (CHE).

- ensure that certification takes place only when the student has satisfied all the requirements for the award of the qualification.
- Ensure that the data submitted to the Council on Higher Education for subsequent submission to SAQA to meet the requirements of the National Learner's Record Database (NLRD) for the period, is true and correct.
- Ensure that where Credit Accumulation and Transfer procedures have been implemented, the relevant exempted modules are indicated as such on the student's academic transcript

5. AUTHORITY

This Certification Policy for Madzivhandila College of Agriculture, is issued under the custodianship of the Hon Member of Executive Committee (MEC) for Agriculture and Rural Development in Limpopo and the Head of Department (HOD) as accounting officer of the Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (LDARD).

6. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This Policy is benchmarked against and should be read in the context of the relevant legislation underpinning the principles against which institutional policies and operating procedures are developed, implemented and maintained. These include:

- Constitution of the Republic of South Africa: 1996
- Higher Education Act (Act 101 of 1997)
- CHE: Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) Criteria for Programme Accreditation: November, 2004
- SAQA: National Policy and Criteria for Designing and Implementing Assessment for
- NQF Qualifications and Part Qualifications and Professional Designations in South Africa
- Protection of Personal Information Act, Act 4 of 2013.

All the relevant teaching and learning policies of the institution as per the Quality Management System including: RPL Policy and Prospectus.

(This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Strongroom Policy of the College.)

7. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

This Policy is relevant to all students, staff and farmers (learners on skills programme).

8. DEFINITIONS

College – Madzivhandila College of Agriculture

Learning programme - the combination of courses, modules or units of learning (learning materials and methodology) by which a person can achieve the learning outcomes for a qualification.

Qualification - the formal recognition of the achievement of the required number and range of credits and other requirements at specific levels of the NQF determined by the relevant bodies registered by SAQA.

Quality assurance - the process of ensuring that the degree of excellence specified is achieved.

Records – recorded information, regardless of format or medium, which has been created, received, used, accessed and maintained by TSCA as evidence and information in pursuance of its legal obligations or in the transaction of business. Included are e-mails, records in electronic format and records other than correspondence

Students – an individual who is participating in a learning programme with the purpose of achieving credits for standards and or qualifications.

Learners – a person enrolled for short course / skills programme

A learnership - is a work-based learning programme that leads to a nationally recognised qualification that is directly related to an occupation, for example an accountant, construction worker, health care worker, IT technician or motor mechanic

9. POLICY PRONOUNCEMENT

9.1 PROVISIONS OF THE CERTIFICATION POLICY

9.1.1 CERTIFICATION OF DIPLOMA QUALIFICATION

9.1.1.1 Approval for certification

Upon completion of a formal learning programme, the following procedure is followed to approve the certification:

- The relevant head of learning program (head of Department of plant production or head of Department of animal production) must submit the statement of results to the Registrar for confirmation that the student has completed all the requisite requirements in the programme as registered with SAQA and accredited by CHE
- The Registrar will validate the results and prepare and present the list of potential graduates to the Examination office and quality assurance office.
- The final mark will be discussed at the Examination and quality assurance office and the final Academic Transcript is prepared and signed.

9.1.1.2 Awarding of a Qualification

The following rules apply:

- A student must attain the pass mark for each module that comprises the programme
- The student is deemed to have complied with all the requirements for the award of the qualification as rectified by the Registrar

The following rules apply when awarding a qualification with distinction:

- The rules governing the final promotion mark are reflected in the College 's annual prospectus and all students are required to consult the prospectus in the year in which they registered, for information on the rules pertaining to their programme
- Students must achieve an average of 75% over the entire programme
- Students who received credits towards a qualification as a result of achievements in similar programmes at other registered and accredited institutions, will not obtain a TSCA qualification with distinction. This is due to fact that the word 'exemption' will appear on the Academic Transcript for the relevant modules, which will then be excluded from the calculation of the overall mark.

9.1.1.3 Issuing of Academic Transcripts

Requests for academic transcripts must be made in writing or via email to the relevant head of academic programme or Registrar. All Transcripts have to be signed and quality checked by the Registrar.

9.1.1.4 Issuing of certificates

Certificates that are prepared must be signed off by the College principal as well as the Registrar and must be stored under secure conditions until distribution at the graduation ceremony.

- Certificates that are not collected at the graduation ceremony must be stored securely in the student's file and must be signed for when collected by the student.
- The notarial seal (embossed College logo) is kept in the College safe which is only accessible by the Registrar and the Administrative Assistant. No blank certificates are stored in hard copy format.
- All certificates are generated on the computers of the Administration Assistant or the Head of Administration, which are both password protected.

9.1.1.5 Re-issuing of Certificates

With regards to the issuance of qualification certificates:

- Incorrect or certificates damaged whilst in the possession of the College, are retained by the College and a new certificate will be issued. The incorrect or damaged certificate must accompany the application for a new certificate, when it is being presented for signature by the relevant authority. The incorrect or damaged certificate will then be shredded by the Registrar before releasing the re-issued (duplicate) certificate.
- A student who loses his/her certificate may apply in person and provide a certified copy of their ID or passport.
- Any certificate of qualification to be re-issued will indicate "replacement certificate" on the front of the certificate. It will be re-issued using the same certificate number as the one being replaced.
- There will be a fee payable for any re-issue owing to loss or damage by the student.

9.1.1.6 Security measures for issuing of certificates

In order to prevent any fraudulent claims for certificates, the following security measures are in place:

- Each certificate issued is photocopied and stored in the student file as part of records.
- All certificates are embossed and have a unique certificate number printed on them which is recorded against the students' name.
- The certificate numbers are recorded in a certificate register and the students' identity number appears on the certificate.

9.1.1.7 Certificate content and requirements

Certificates are printed on the College premises, with the TSCA logo in full colour. The following information must appear on the Certificate:

- The student's full names and surname as it appears on their ID document.
- The student's identity number / passport number and student number.
- Unique certificate number.
- The qualification name and registration number as it appears on the NQF.
- The reason for issuing: "AWARDED".
- The level of achievement (Merit/ Distinction) if applicable.

- The signatures and titles of the Principal and The Registrar.
- The date issued and official embossed emblem

9.1.1.8 Storage of student records

- All student records are recorded in a secure student record database according to the rules and procedures outlined in the Management Information system Policy.
- Hardcopies of all student records are stored securely in a lockable filing cabinet accessible only by the Registrar, Administration Assistant and the Academic Heads and the records must be kept indefinitely.

9.1.2 CERTIFICATION OF SHORT COURSES / SKILLS PROGRAMS

- Only individuals who have met the assessment requirements of skills programs may be issued with the relevant certificate of achievement. Successful short course candidates receive a certificate according to their short course name regardless of whether the achievement was acquired through RPL or formal training. Procedure for certification through RPL is contained in RPL Policy.
- For short courses based on credited unit standards as registered with Agri-SETA, the relevant head of learning programme shall verify completion of the program for subsequent submission of the assessed Portfolios of Evidence to Agri-SETA for issuing of the certificates.
- For certification of non-credited courses / workshops, the learners' records of attendance are processed by relevant head of learning program. The certificate is issued to all attendees who have 100% attendance and must be signed by the relevant head of learning program and the College principal.
- The learnership candidates will be awarded a recognised qualification. The learnership candidates will be given an official certificate that will state the qualification, which will indicate the area in which they have developed skills during the learnership.
- A learnership certificate will be issued by the institution on which the learners have contract with; for example: Agriseta. However, this will be done in collaboration with the College as the training provider that will be offering the classroom-based training of the learnership

9.1.3 GRADUATION CEREMONY

- There may be no formal graduation ceremony for short courses / skills programs.
- Diploma certificates are presented at the annual graduation ceremony following course completion in the previous year, with the Academic Head being responsible for coordinating the graduation ceremony.

All students are encouraged to attend the graduation ceremony and the following criteria will apply at the ceremony:

- Awards may be issued to students who achieve excellence in the programme.
- Certificates will be issued to all students who have successfully completed their Diploma qualification.
- Students with outstanding fees may attend the ceremony but will not receive the certificate until such time as all outstanding fees are settled.
- Students who attend the graduation ceremony will be entitled to invite two additional guests to attend.
- Students who are unable to attend the graduation ceremony are required to collect their certificate or award from the Administration Office personally and must sign that it has been collected. If that is not possible then the person collecting must provide a letter from the student, together with a copy of the student's ID document, and must sign that it has been collected. If a request is received to post the certificate/award, then it will be posted via registered mail to the address provided by the student at the time.

9.2 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring and evaluation as well as advocacy of this Certification Policy will be conducted by Madzivhandila College of Agriculture itself.

9.3 DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Any dispute in relation to this Policy, its application and implementation shall be managed in line with the College 's dispute resolution and grievance mechanisms.

10. DEFAULT

No deviation from this Certification Policy will be allowed. Should there be a need to deviate from the prescripts of the Policy, it will only be after:

- i) Written motivation for the request to deviate has been submitted to the HOD of the LDARD.
- ii) Written permission for the deviation has been provided by the HOD of the LDARD

11. INCEPTION DATE

The inception date of this Certification Policy is the date of approval – as indicated on the cover page of this Policy document.

12. TERMINATION AND REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed every three years (or as and when need arise) and may be replaced by a transversal Policy presented by DARLRD at any time. Should the Policy still be in the review process by the time it lapses, an extension period is applicable and the approved Policy remain valid until the reviewed version is approved.

13. ENQUIRIES AND REPORTING

All enquiries regarding this Certification Policy, should be directed towards: Madzivhandila College of Agriculture at 015 962 7200. This specific College is responsible for the timeous review, circulation, advocacy, availability and feed-back regarding this Policy document. The specific College of Agriculture is responsible for reporting towards oversight bodies in the event of enquiries with regards to this Policy document.

Recommended:



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