IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF THE QUALIFICATION MANAGEMENT BODY (QMB)

W&RSETA
WHOLESALE & RETAIL SETA

Skills Development for Economic Growth

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DEDOSA CONSULTING

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ACRONYMS

Acronym	Name
ANC	African National Congress
AQP	Assessment Quality Partner
CHE	Council on Higher Education
DA	Democratic Alliance
DoL	Department of Labour
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DQP	Development Quality Partner
ETQA	Education and Training Quality Assurance Body
FET	Further Education and Training
HET	Higher Education and Training
NDP	National Development Plan
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSA	National Skills Authority
NSDS	National Skills Development Strategy
NSF	National Skills Framework
OQF	Occupational Qualifications Framework
PAYE	Pay as you Earn
QC	Quality Councils
QQA	Qualifications Quality Assurance
QAP	Quality Assurance Partner
QCTO	Quality Council for Trades and Occupations
QMB	Qualifications Management Body
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SARS	South African Revenue Service
SDA	Skills Development Act

Acronym	Name
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
SMME	Small, Medium, Micro Enterprises
SSP	Sector Skills Plan
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
W&RSETA	Wholesale and Retail Sector
WSP	Workplace Skills Plan

Executive Summary

This report details the results of a survey undertaken as part of the Wholesale and Retail Sector (W&RSETA) funded research to assess the effectiveness of the QMB on the achievements of its objectives as stipulated in the QMB Policy. The ultimate aim of the research was to assess the impact of the QMB with respect to contribution towards the scarce and critical skills of the wholesale and retail sector and to contribute into the professionalization of the sector.

The function of the QMB is to provide the SETA with accurate and relevant information for Research and Skills Development Initiatives as required. Furthermore, this body is to advise and give input into various aspects of qualifications, skills development and research in the Wholesale and Retail Sector. This report presents an independent impact assessment of the QMB. It starts with a discussion on:

- QMB as a Global Phenomenon
- The South African Experience
- South African Qualifications Authority
- Skills Development Act
- Department of Higher Education and Training
- Sector Education Training Authorities
- Wholesale and Retail Sector
- National Skills Development Strategy
- Sector Skills Plan
- Qualifications Management Body (QMB)
- Mission and Function of QMB
- The QMB Structure
- Membership of the QMB
- HET and TVET Specialisation Forums
- HET QMB
- TVET QMB
- QMB Progress to Date

The report concludes with a summary of key findings and recommendations including discussion on the views of the stakeholders on the contribution of the QMB in improving the relevance of qualifications in the sector, the extent to which the establishment of the QMB has contributed to achieving quality related impacts, and achieving impacts in relation to lifelong learning, progression, articulation, mobility and recognition across formal and vocational learning in the sector leading to improved employability. The report also discusses the levels of awareness of the QMB among key stakeholder groups and then reports on perceptions of the impact the QMB.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

The Wholesale and Retail Sector Education and Training Authority (W&RSETA) commissioned Dedosa Consulting CC (Dedosa) to conduct an impact assessment of the Qualifications Management Body (QMB) and the functions thereof in line with the Service Level (SLA) with the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) and the Department of Higher Education & Training (DHET). The ultimate aim of the research is to assess the impact of the QMB with respect to contribution towards the scarce and critical skills of the wholesale and retail sector and to contribute into the professionalization of the sector.

1.2 Background

The W&RSETA was established as a legal entity on 20 March 2000 in terms of the Skills Development Act no 97 of 1998. As guided by its mandate, the W&RSETA is required to develop and implement the Sector Skills Plan (SSP) within the framework of the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS); promote and facilitate the skills development in the Wholesale and Retail Sector.

The W&RSETA requires a forum of stakeholders to give input into a number of projects, policies and practices. This necessitated the setting up of a Qualification Management Body (QMB), which is a national forum integrating input on all qualifications within the sector as well as any special projects, as required by W&RSETA from time to time. The QMB integrates and aligns on a national basis, the consultation of all stakeholders in the Wholesale and Retail industry as well as universities of Higher Education and Training (HET) and Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges offering retail programmes.

The mission of the QMB is to:

- Ensure relevant qualifications for occupations from Level 1 to 10 with the support and input from stakeholders
- Ensure qualifications which are integrated and compatible to allow for progression, articulation, mobility and recognition across formal and occupational learning in the wholesale and retail sector.

The function of the QMB is to:

- Provide the SETA with accurate and relevant information for Research and Skills Development Initiatives as required
- Advise and give input into various aspects of qualifications, skills development and research in the Wholesale and Retail Sector.

1.3 Research Objectives

The main objective of the study is to conduct an Impact Assessment of the QMB and the functions thereof in line with the Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) and the Department of Higher Education & Training (DHET). The ultimate aim of the research is to assess the impact of the QMB with respect to contribution towards the scarce and critical skills of the wholesale and retail sector and to contribute into the professionalization of the sector.

The research has a number of specific objectives including the following:

- Assess the impact of the QMB on the achievement of its objectives as stipulated in QMB Policy
- Assess the impact of the QMB with regards to the implementation of the relevant legislation applicable in the W&R Sector
- Measure the impact of the developed qualifications on the W&R Sector in terms of the following:
  - o Uptake, leaner progression, articulation, mobility and recognition across formal occupational learning
  - o Measure the effectiveness of the developed qualifications with regards to the socio-economic needs of the sector

- o Evaluate the effectiveness of the partnerships on qualification development in the sector.
- Identify and report on the impact of the participation of the sub-committees on the QMB process
- Impact assessment to be conducted nationally with regional variations where relevant.

1.4 Expected Outcomes and Deliverables

The research is expected to yield the following outcomes and deliverables as determined by W&RSETA:
- Phase 1: Literature Review
- Phase 2: Research Design and Methodology
- Phase 3: Data Collection
- Phase 4: Data Capturing
- Phase 5: Data Analysis
- Phase 6: Presentation of Findings
- Phase 7: Report Writing (Draft and Final Reports)

1.5 Report Outline

The report is set out in six sections including the executive summary. Section one is the introductory section which highlights the background to the research project. It hence seeks to establish the rationale for undertaking the impact study. It also consists of the research objectives, expected outcomes and deliverables.

Section two presents the research design and methodology for the research which includes the research instruments, data collection methods, coding and data analysis, validation and limitations for the study. Section three consists of literature review which sets the research context and presents the profile of the wholesale and retail sector. Section four examines the literature related QMB.

Section five present research findings of the study and integrates this with literature. Finally, section six present recommendations and make concluding remarks.

SECTION TWO: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

2.1   Introduction

In section one an orientation of the research was provided. This chapter strives to operationalise the theme of the research design and methodology for the study, as well as to substantiate the choices made in conducting the study. The research design is applied so that suitable research methods are used to ensure the attainment of the goals and objectives set out in section one.

2.2   Research Design

Leedy (1997) defines research design as a plan for a study, providing the overall framework for collecting data. MacMillan and Schumacher (2001) define it as a plan for selecting subjects, research sites, and data collection procedures to answer the research question(s). They further indicate that the goal of a sound research design is to provide results that are judged to be credible. For Durrheim (2004), research design is a strategic framework for action that serves as a bridge between research questions and the execution, or implementation of the research strategy.

The initial phase of the research includes the background to the project and provided the summary and synopsis of the QMB. The QMB policy, including the HET and TVET policies and other documents supplied to the researchers were analysed. A review of similar reference material, both nationally and internationally was also conducted. Findings from this research were then considered in order to conduct a selection of the target audience of participants in the research and also the W&RSETA, as well as the regulatory authority, the QCTO and DHET.

Following this, qualitative research was conducted with key stakeholders such as:
- QMB members
- QQA Unit Employees
- W&RSETA employees delegated to perform duties related to qualifications research and development

- Regional Mangers
- Website
- Internal communications

The researchers engaged with the role-players in a controlled environment, through focus groups for some role-players. In addition, structured interviews were more useful with other role-players such as TVET Colleges and DHET.

2.3   Methodology

As the research is qualitative in nature, the sources of data need to be considered and defined. The data becomes the primary source for the model and its implementation in terms of assessing the QMB. The sources of data were evaluated based on the kinds of data that would be available to the researchers and the validity thereof. Thus, a list of data is required to form part of the research methodology to indicate what has been used as reference points.

Data that formed part of the research can be classified into the following:
- Focus Groups were held across the country in Gauteng, Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga, Eastern Cape and Free State. The research subjects were afforded the opportunity to discuss the key ideas that formed part of the research brief. Data was collected in the form of recorded sessions, which was later extracted and coded. The surveys were collected in a controlled environment, ensuring authenticity in the response and validity.
- In addition to this the data which was collected from semi-structured interviews held with research subjects such as the W&RSETA CEO and management was also captured.
- Researchers also attended the monthly QMB meetings, stakeholder forums for each of the selected provinces, TVET Cluster meetings and HET Cluster meetings.
- Current policies (QMB, HET and TVET were made available by the W&RSETA).
- Draft reports developed in the QMB roadshows were requested.

2.4   Research Instruments

Research instruments developed for purposes of the research were research surveys, with open-ended questions, which allowed the participants to provide their unique perspectives when considering the model and how it could be implemented. As there were role-players from a wide spectrum of the vocational and occupation environment, including skills development providers, quality assurance experts, industry and workplace personnel, professional bodies as well as W&RSETA staff, the surveys had to be generic enough in nature so that all role-players would be able to participate and provide data. This ensured that the data collected would be comprehensive in nature.

A mixed research methodology was be used to collect data for the impact assessment of the QMB. These included:

- Literature review (desktop research)
- Personal (face to face) interviews with key stakeholders
- Focus group interviews nationally with regional variations where relevant
- Telephone interviews
- Electronic (email) interviews with key stakeholders

2.4.1 Literature Review

Literature review justifies the research and provides context for conducting a research study. It is a summary and synopsis of a particular area of research, allowing anybody reading the study to establish why a particular research study is being pursued. A good literature review expands upon the reasons behind conducting a particular survey. In summary the purpose of writing a literature review is to:

- Justify the research study
- Ensure you have a thorough understanding of the topic
- Demonstrate the researchers' understanding of the research topic
- Place the research in context
- Give an overview of controversies in past research

2.4.2 Personal (Face to Face) Interviews

A personal interview is also called face-to-face survey. It is a method that is utilized when a specific target population is involved. The purpose of conducting personal interviews is to explore the responses of the people to gather more and deeper information. Personal interviews are used to probe the answers from respondents and at the same time, to observe the behaviour of the respondents, either individually or as a group. The personal interview method is preferred by researchers for a couple of advantages.

Advantages of personal interview method

High Response Rates: One of the main reasons why researchers achieve good response rates through this method is the face-to-face nature of the personal interview survey. Unlike administering questionnaires, people are more likely to readily answer live questions about the subject.

Tolerable Longer Interviews: If you wish to probe the answers of the respondents, you may do so using a personal interview approach. Open-ended questions are more tolerated through interviews due to the fact that the respondents would be more convenient at expressing their long answers orally than in writing.

Better Observation of Behaviour: Researchers can benefit from personal interview survey because it presents a greater opportunity to observe the attitude and behaviour of respondents.

2.4.3 Focus Group Sessions

Focus group research has traditionally been used as a data collection method which essentially assists the researcher with collection of qualitative data. The method involves engaging a small number of people in an informal group discussion, focusing on a particular topic or a set of issues, (Onwuegbuzie, J.A, Dickinson, W.B, Leech, L.N, Zoran, G.A, 2009). This method of data is applied in collecting data from multiple individuals simultaneously. In this form of research, participants are allowed to participate in a non- intimidating manner by spelling out rules of engagement and allowing all participants to feel at ease. This is helpful in ensuring that participants are able to discuss perceptions, ideas, opinions, and their thoughts openly.

The list of participants and the location of the different participants was developed with the assistance of W&RSETA. Dedosa developed focus group questions and spelled out the process of how to the focus group sessions were conducted, including: group interview questions, length of focus group interviews, rules of engagement with and among participants, keeping focus group participants on track.

The advantages of using this method include:

- Capturing participants responses in real space and time on face-to-face interactions
- Being able to strategically prompt questions and further discussions based on the responses that are generated in these face-to-face interactions and that are considered particularly important to interviewer
- Focus groups are an economical, fast, and efficient method for obtaining data from multiple participants (Krueger & Casey, 2000)
- The focus group environment is socially oriented, thereby potentially increasing the overall number of participants
- The sense of belonging to a group can increase the participants' sense of cohesiveness while allowing the participants to feel safe to share information openly (Vaughn, Schumm, & Sinagub, 1996)
- Interactions that occur among the participants can yield important data, while creating the possibility for more spontaneous responses (Butler, 1996)
- Provide a setting where the participants can discuss problems and challenges they face and come up with possible solutions.

2.4.4 Telephone Interviews

A telephone survey is one of the survey methods used in collecting data either from the general population or from a specific target population. Telephone numbers are utilized by experienced interviewers to contact and gather information from possible respondents.

Advantages of telephone interviews

- *High Accessibility* - there's a large scale accessibility associated with it, it also accommodates respondents who have no internet access.
- *Quality Control* - questions are asked in uniform manner, promoting accuracy and precision in provoking responses.
- *Anonymity of Respondents* - this provides the highest level of anonymity for respondents who wish to hold their opinions in confidentiality.
- *Quick Data Processing -* processing, handling and storing the data can be done quicker with ease.

2.4.5 Electronic (Email) Interviews

This method is one of the most widely utilized survey methods, which allows systematic gathering of data from the target audience characterized by the invitation of the respondents and the completion of the questionnaire through email. For the past few years, the internet has been used by many companies in conducting all sorts of studies all over the world and it is one of the faster ways than pencil method and personal interviews (https://meetingminds.cvent.com/events/advantages-disadvantages-online-surveys/).

Some of the **advantages** of choosing this form of data collection include, but are not limited to the following:

- *Ease of data gathering* – in that it is likely to reach more people quicker and in a short space of time, since the internet has become a vast virtual world which connects people globally.
- *Minimal costs* – surveys on the internet is fast and affordable compared to other forms of data collection.
- *Automation in data input and handling* – this makes data handling easier and free from hassles, as the data becomes automatically stored on the survey database, which makes it easier for the researchers to process
- *Increase in response rates* – there is high likelihood that the respondents will answer, although there's need to remind and follow up.

- *Legibility* – online completed surveys are more legible than hand written responses, which makes it easier for the researchers to read the responses.

Although there are advantages in this type of data collection method, there are disadvantages too. The disadvantages include but are not limited to:

- *Limited responses* – in instances where there are challenges with internet access and connectivity, there could be fewer responses or none.
- *Cooperation problems* – internet users could be too busy with other more important things, and bombarded with lots of emails, they can simply delete the questionnaires, leading to no response.
- *No interviewer present* – this could lead to unclear responses, no clarity leading to less reliable data.

In the case of this study, a questionnaire was developed and sent out by email to targeted participants who are located in areas outside of the central meeting points in all the targeted provinces.

In addition to research surveys developed for the role-players in the W&RSETA sector, structured interviews were designed specifically for:

- DHET
- TVET Colleges who have a national footprint, to understand capacity requirements in order to be an assessment centre which can meet the requirements of W&RSETA qualifications and participants.
- Members of the Qualifications Management Board of the W&RSETA to understand the design of the assessment specification documents, the rationale in selecting assessment tools, and to understand how the QMB envisaged implementing and managing the roll-out of these qualifications.

2.5 Coding and Data Analysis

Coding is an analytical process in which data, in both quantitative form (such as questionnaires results) or qualitative (such as interview transcripts) is categorized to facilitate analysis. Iain Hay (2005) outlines a two-step process beginning with basic coding in order to distinguish overall themes, followed by a more in depth, interpretive code in which more specific trends and patterns can be interpreted. Initial coding included many categories. All raw data that was identified as usable was included. The codes were reduced and refined several times to codes that were mutually exclusive as follows:
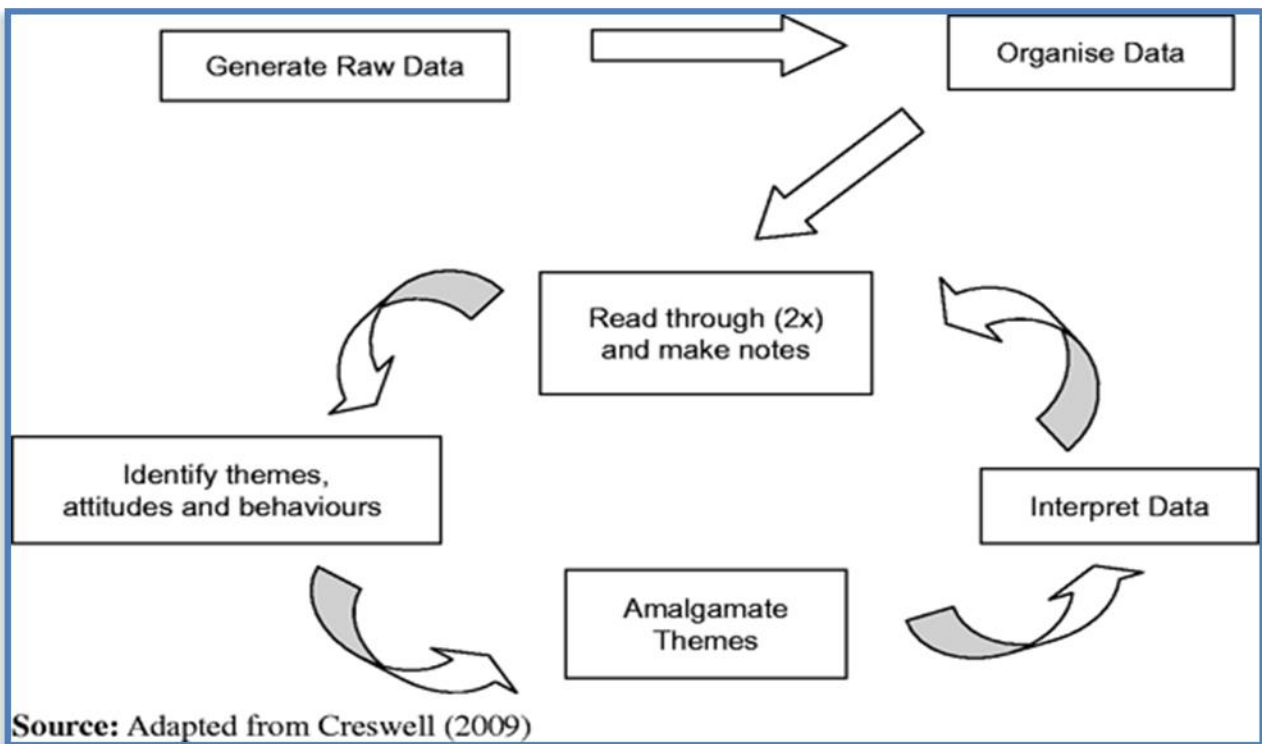
Figure 1: Data Analysis Spiral

Data was analysed using a thematic identifier looking at common trends and language used within the survey at question level. These identifiers were grouped according to categories and data was collected from the questionnaires taking each questionnaire and dissecting it and classifying it according to the identified categories. Independent checks were put in place in which data was cross-referenced and audited to ensure that all findings produced were error free.

All qualitative data analysis involves the same four essential steps:

- Raw data management- 'data cleaning'

- Data reduction, I, II – 'chunking', 'coding'

- Data interpretation – 'coding', 'clustering'

- Data representation – 'telling the story', 'making sense of the data for others'

Memos were created during the coding process as this is integral in the process. The researcher used qualitative research because it is inherently reflexive; as it allows the researchers to delve deeper into their subject, it is important to chronicle their own thought processes through reflective or methodological memos, as doing so may highlight their own subjective interpretations of data. It was therefore crucial to begin memoing at the onset of research as the process initiated critical thinking and productivity in the research. This facilitated easier and more coherent analyses as the project draws on. Memos can be used to map research activities, uncover meaning from data, maintaining research momentum and engagement and opening communication.
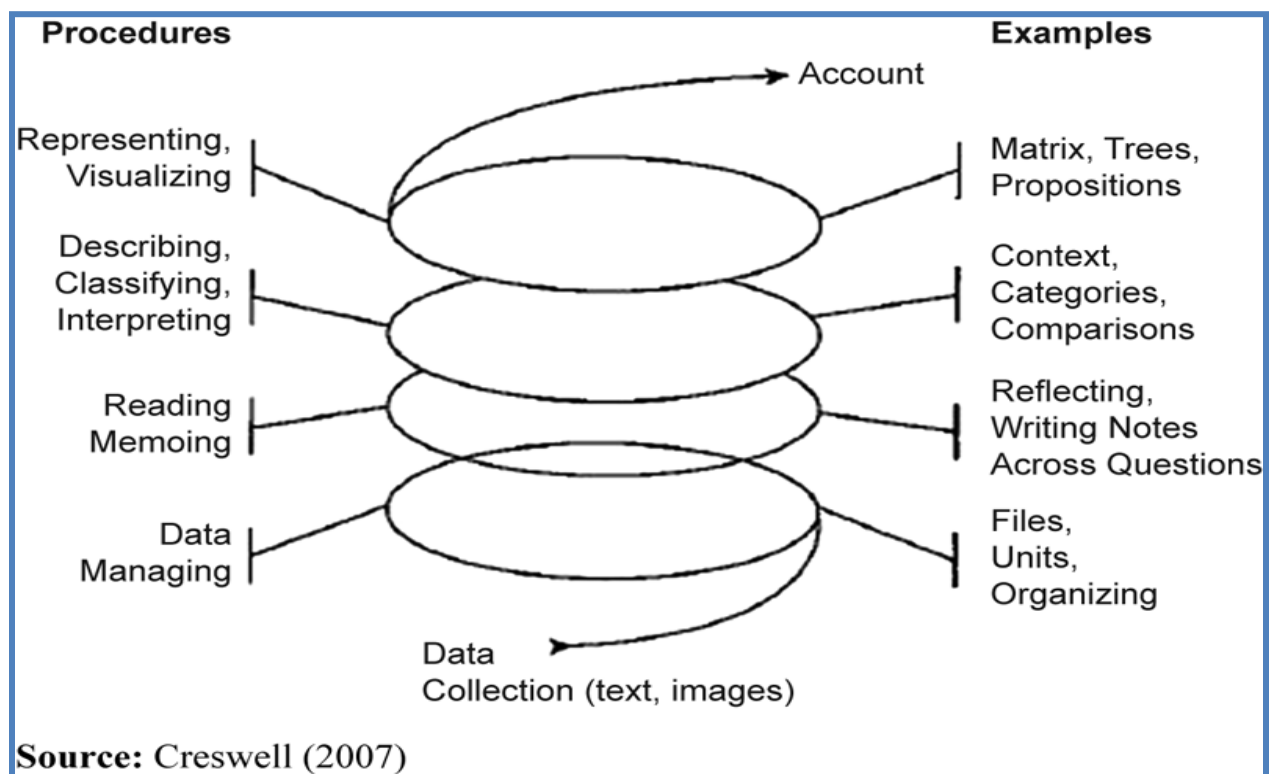
Figure 2: Data analysis spiral

The findings are noted within each section of the survey by first explaining the coding developed for that question. This helps to understand the rationale of the coding as well as provide a context for it.

2.6   Validity

Validity of the data design, collection and analysis was ensured through conducting peer debriefing. This was done both by the researchers to selected peers, as well as by providing the research report in three draft phases, thus allowing all focus group participants to provide input before the research report was finalised.

Grounded theory formed the basis of ensuring validity and considered that the data provided the framework, which lead to useful concepts being identified and developed. The summaries of the focus groups' interactions have been collated, considering each of the discussions. Key concerns and issues have been collected and noted within the recommendations section of this report. These recommendations consider the discussions held with all stakeholders within the assessment process and therefore are a subjective discussion. The subjective nature of this data is acknowledged.

2.7   Research Limitations

Due to the nature of the research problem and key outcomes indicated, very little information or academic work on the subject matter was available. Also, the QMB was established in recent years therefore, there was not much information on which to base and/or benchmark the impact assessment against. Similarly, the W&RSETA that is ultimately the DQP and AQP is still in the process of compiling a comprehensive system of relevant documents, and thus some of these are noted as being in draft form. There are certain policies which have been developed and published, but these are not always supported by procedure and more importantly templates, even draft, for guideline purposes. Finally, the QMB Roadshows which could have provided the much needed feedback were recently conducted and the reports are still not available.

SECTION THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1   Introduction

According to van der Westhuizen (2009), education and training systems across the world are coming under increasing pressure. Industrial sectors are becoming 'knowledge intensive' as global forces increasingly shape international trade patterns and supply chains. We are now entering the era of the 'global skills race'. The policy response in a number of countries has been to form stronger industry/education partnerships. Sector based organisations – usually independent of government – have been established by employers, trade unions and education institutes to tackle skills gaps, build occupational competences and research labour market needs.

Qualification Quality Assurance (QQA) Bodies are delivering some very unique outcomes in a number of countries around the world. Qualifications and courses are being better tailored to specific sectoral or industry needs. QQA Bodies are enabling both countries and companies to become a lot more productive, competitive and skilled. They are helping sectors and supply chains to succeed globally, taking on the many challenges that result from today's fast paced and uncertain world (le Grange, 2005).

3.2   QMB as a Global Phenomenon

Across the globe, the issue of Qualifications Management Bodies (QMBs) is an established phenomenon. According to an ILO survey, some 70 countries have embarked in the process of establishing some kind of a Qualifications Management Bodies (QMBs). However, very little has been documented about the effectiveness of QMBs in bringing about change in skills development systems. Elsewhere, QMBs are interchangeable called Qualifications Quality Assurance Bodies (QQA). These bodies are independent, non-governmental organisations that allow stakeholders to determine unique sector-specific challenges and work to find solutions to these challenges. Typically, the members of the bodies are comprised of senior business, labour and other stakeholders (Bewick and Abbott, 2010).

The QQA Bodies play a key role in developing certification programmes, industry occupational standards, and accreditation. While many of these initiatives are voluntary, many workers have earned

credentials that allows for mobility between occupations and labour markets. The qualification bodies have already done much to help develop a skilled and productive workforce in many countries and they help to bring all interested stakeholders together to find solutions to industry-specific issues and challenges (Bewick and Abbott, 2010).

However Bewick and Abbott, 2010 indicated that QQAs have struggled to achieve the level of influence over vocational education and skills development that is envisaged by their leadership role, principally through a lack of clear mechanisms to give effect to their industry skills leadership role.

While QMBs are a global trend and appear to share common characteristics and aims, in practice the development and - especially - the implementation of these bodies, vary markedly by country. There are different types of bodies, or, put another way, they can have differing purposes. Some are described as communication bodies, aiming to better coordinate the different sub-sectors of a national education and training system, and make the national qualifications system more transparent. Such bodies are most commonly found where the local system is long-settled and sustained by a national consensus.

Some countries, by contrast, see the QMBs as a reform tool, actively improving the national education and training system. They seek to improve the relevance and quality of qualifications and the coherence of the qualifications system. Such frameworks are typically found in either the newer Member States of the EU, for example, or in transition and developing countries. In addition to these domestic motivations, countries also seek to use QMBs to support recognition of qualifications abroad and so facilitate mobility.

3.3   The South African Experience

The South African government realized, in the early 90's, that if a country would like to experience economic growth, they had to utilize their citizens and in order to do this, training would be of the utmost importance. In 1992 eight working groups were established and charged with developing a new national training strategy (Akoojee, 2009). The working groups had representation from trade unions, employers, the State, providers of education and training, the African National Congress (ANC), Education Department, and the Democratic Alliance (DA). Working Group 2 reached agreement on a

new integrated framework and 1994 saw the publication of three documents which laid the foundation for the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act (RSA, 1995).

The quality assurance bodies which quality assures learning in South Africa are:

- UMALUSI, which quality assures secondary education, general education and training and further education and training. It is the original body to quality assures vocational learning and further education and training of the ETQA's.
- Council for Higher Education, which as its names suggests quality, assures higher education.
- The Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) is required to quality assure SETA's and take over the role of quality assurance from the ETQA's.

3.3.1 South African Qualifications Authority

South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) was established to oversee the National Qualifications Framework (NQF's) implementation and development. SAQA has two aims:

- Standards Setting – responsible for overseeing the development of the NQF
- Quality Assurance – oversees the implementation of the NQF

SAQA has been commissioned with both broad and specific functions. The broad functions focus on strategic planning and budgets that will channel the NQF, as well as the development of a system of collaboration between SAQA and the mandates of the Quality Councils (QCs).

SAQA's **specific** functions on the advice of the QCs include:

- Recommending level descriptors to the Minister - ensuring their relevancy (level descriptors are statements describing learning achievement at a particular level on the NQF),
- Preparing policy frameworks that will guide the operations of the QCs (qualifications, assessment, RPL, quality assurance, credit accumulation and transfer, recognition of professional bodies and the registration of professional designations),
- The maintenance of the National Learner Records Database (NLRD),
- The evaluation of foreign qualifications and public information on the NQF.

3.3.2 Skills Development Act

New Zealandimande, 2009 stated that once the foundations for the education and training system had been laid, the Skills Development Act (SDA) was promulgated in 1998.

The purpose of the Act was to:

Develop the skills of the South African workforce,

Increase levels of investment in education and training in the labour market,

To improve the return of investment,

Encourage employers to use the workplace as an active learning environment,

Provide employees with opportunities to acquire new skills.

The following institutions were established by the Act:

- The National Skills Authority (NSA),
- The National Skills Fund (NSF),
- A skills development levy grant scheme (later stipulated in the Skills Development Levies Act of 1999),
- Sector Education & Training Authorities (SETAs),
- Labour centres,
- Skills Development Planning Unit (SDPU).

3.3.3 Department of Higher Education and Training

In practice, this has translated into the creation of a Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), which now covers all post-school education and training institutions and the inclusion of SETAs within this Ministry. The rationale for this development was the need to create a more coherent post-school education and training system that would easily synergise the supply and demand-side ambitions. The inclusion of Universities, Further Education Colleges (former technical colleges) and sector councils into a single Ministry provides the basis for a more coherent skills supply and demand led system. SETAs have become intrinsically linked to the national skills development system. The Ministry reiterated the importance of SETAs to the national landscape by pointing out that they are necessary to

'fulfil their role as a central cog of our skills training and job creation machinery' (New Zealandimande 2009).

3.3.4 Sector Education Training Authorities

Sector Education Training Authorities SETAs have been considered a key feature of the skills development landscape since 1998 and are based upon a number of legislative interventions, including the Skills Development Act (SDA) of 1998, the Skills Development Levies Act of 1999 and subsequent regulations. SETAs, established under the Skills Development Act (1998) were designed to respond to workplace learning. Placed under the Department of Labour, the new institutional and financial infrastructure to regulate workplace training was to be augmented by a National Skills Authority (NSA), there to respond to larger national skills development considerations that existed outside of the responsibility of the sector-based SETAs.

Twenty seven SETAs were established under key economic sectors in 2001, each funded by means of a skills development levy from companies within a particular economic sector. All companies with a payroll commitment in excess of ZAR 500,000,00 (US $65 - 75,000) were required to pay a 1% skills development levy to the national fiscus. The levy is collected as taxes by the Revenue Service (SARS) which allocates 80% to SETAs, with 70% of this being made available to employers by way of grant payments and the remaining 10% to be used for SETA administration. Most of these funds are channelled back to the participating companies on the basis of training conducted. The remaining 20% goes into the National Skills Fund to meet national skills needs.

SETAs act as a quality assurance body for education and training in their sector. All Setas thus have an ETQA department. They specifically, in accordance with the SDA:

Develop a SSP within the framework of the NSDS,

Implement a SSP by:

Approving and monitoring WSPs,

Establishing Learnerships,

Allocating grants to employers, education and training service providers and employees and

Monitoring education and training in this sector.

Promote Learnerships by:

Identifying appropriate workplaces where individuals can gain practical work experience,

Improving and supporting learning through the development of learning methodologies and materials,

Assisting in the conclusion, registration and monitoring of Learnership agreements.

Liaise with the NSA as well as other SETAs on issues including:

National skills strategy,

Skills development policy,

Its own SSP.

Report to the Director-General of Labour on the implementation of its SSP, its income and expenditure,

Liaise with the employment services of the DoL and education councils and other regulatory bodies in terms of education laws of South Africa in order to improve the quality of information:

About employment opportunities,

Between education providers and the labour market.

Facilitate the involvement of the relevant government departments in the activities of the sector in order to:

Address the competency requirements for social delivery,

Address the learning needs of the most vulnerable segments of the sector,

Promote training in Small, Medium, Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) to enable them to qualify for public contracts.

Perform any other duties imposed by the Act or any other function not specifically mentioned, in order to fulfil the objectives of the sector (RSA, 2001).

3.3.5 Wholesale and Retail Sector

The Wholesale and Retail Sector Education and Training Authority (W&RSETA) was established as a legal entity on 20 March 2000 in terms of the Skills Development Act no 97 of 1998. As guided by its mandate, the W&RSETA is required to develop and implement the Sector Skills Plan (SSP) within the framework of the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS); promote and facilitate the skills development in the Wholesale and Retail Sector.

The W&RSETA is an acknowledged leader in terms of the SETAs that currently operate in South Africa. They have had considerable success implementing the National Skills Development Strategy and have proudly embraced their role to foster the development of relevant skills within the rather vast wholesale and retail sector and its numerous sub-sectors. As noted in the research of Winther and Klotz (2013), there are multiple needs across professions and even within them.

3.3.6 National Skills Development Strategy

The National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS), now in its third phase of implementation, is a framework that provides direction and focus areas for a five-year period on initiatives such as learnerships, apprenticeships, internships, adult learning programmes and other workplace integrated learning innovations. Providing targets to the SETAs, the NSDS is a mechanism to not only create a conducive environment for skills development to thrive but also to focus its trajectory ensuring that SETA activities respond to the demands of their respective sectors. These regimes of workplace training and skills development are crucial in expanding the base of scarce and critical skills such as artisans and technicians.

The SETA agenda has been organised under five-year National Skills Development Strategies (NSDS). These provide the basis for using skills to address the national development challenges as evidenced by the vision statement:

 'The overall vision of the NSDS is 'Skills for Productive Citizenship for All' (…) addressing the structural problems of the labour market inherited from the past, and transforming the South African labour market from one with a low skills base to one characterised by rising skills and a commitment to lifelong learning. The NSDS also seeks to ensure that through responsive education and training the labour market is better able to support social development to reverse the challenges inherited from the past, such as poverty, inequality, disease and unemployment. The NSDS is an inclusive strategy that addresses national, provincial, sectoral and individual needs.'

The synergy between the NSDS and SETA activity will provide employers with more choice of the skilled labour they require for innovation, competitiveness and productivity. In the same vein government is able to adequately respond to the skills needs of the country and increase the employability of the

economically active populations. For government to be able to fine tune the NSDS, there is an increasing need to know whether SETA, and by extension firms, activities are adequately aligned with the strategy.

3.3.7 Sector Skills Plan

Each SETA is required to develop a Sector Skills Plan (SSP) within the framework of the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) as prescribed by the Skills Development Act of 1988, Section 10 as amended (2008). Sector skills planning in South Africa must take into account a wide range of policy imperatives that seek to support inclusive sector growth paths that advance economic growth and the social development and transformation agenda. These policies include those relating directly to skills development, those focusing more directly on economic growth and social development, and those which focus on monitoring and evaluation.

The skills sector plan is aimed at assisting W&RSETA in mapping out strategies to tackle the education, training and development needs within the economy. All skills development related interventions have to be aligned with the Skills Development Act and within the framework of the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS). South Africa's NSDS provides guidance as to how skills development programs can be formulated and implemented in alignment with national goals and objectives.

The SSPs are also a critical instrument for building a connected labour market information system across all the sectors, which is an important evidence base for skills development and its impact. SSPs can contribute to enhancing workforce skills, improving productivity, meeting business needs for skilled workers and workers needs for good jobs. These plans also address the triple challenge of unemployment, inequality and poverty from a skills development perspective.

3.4 Conclusion

According to the regions of the world, QQA is not new phenomenon. This has provided background in the case of South Africa. After two decades of democracy, South Africa has achieved much in the way of transformation. However, as the government itself has acknowledged, the pace of change is scarcely fast enough to keep up with accelerating social and economic challenges (Republic of South Africa

2013). In seeking to meet both social and economic aspirations, the government has increasingly identified skills development as a crucial issue.

In the National Development Plan (NDP), skills are seen as both a constraint on socio-economic delivery and a means of simultaneously addressing the need for international competitiveness and the upliftment of those in poverty and those who lack decent work (NDP, 2010). Skills development thus becomes a bridge for crossing the chasm between the 'two nations' that characterise South Africa's uneven historical development: a nation that is part of the global knowledge and consumerist First World and part of the poor and marginalised Third World (NDP, 2010).

SECTION FOUR: QUALIFICATION MANAGEMENT BODY

4.1 Introduction

The W&RSETA requires a forum of stakeholders to give input into a number of projects, policies and practices. This necessitated the setting up of a Qualification Management Body (QMB), which is a national forum integrating input on all qualifications within the sector as well as any special projects, as required by the W&RSETA from time to time. The QMBs function is also to provide the SETA with accurate and relevant information for Research and Skills Development Initiatives as required. Furthermore, this body is to advise and give input into various aspects of qualifications, skills development and research in the Wholesale and Retail Sector.

4.2 Mission and Function of QMB

The mission of the QMB is to:

- Ensure relevant qualifications for occupations from Level 1 to 10 with the support and input from stakeholders.
- Ensure qualifications which are integrated and compatible to allow for progression, articulation, mobility and recognition across formal and vocational learning in the Wholesale and Retail sector.

Its function is to:

- Provide W&RSETA with accurate and relevant information for research and skills development initiatives as required.
- Advise and give input into various aspects of qualifications, skills development and research in the Wholesale and Retail sector.

4.3   The QMB Structure

The QMB structure integrates and aligns on a national basis the consultation processes of all the stakeholders in the Wholesale and Retail industry as well as Universities (HET) and Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges offering retail programme.
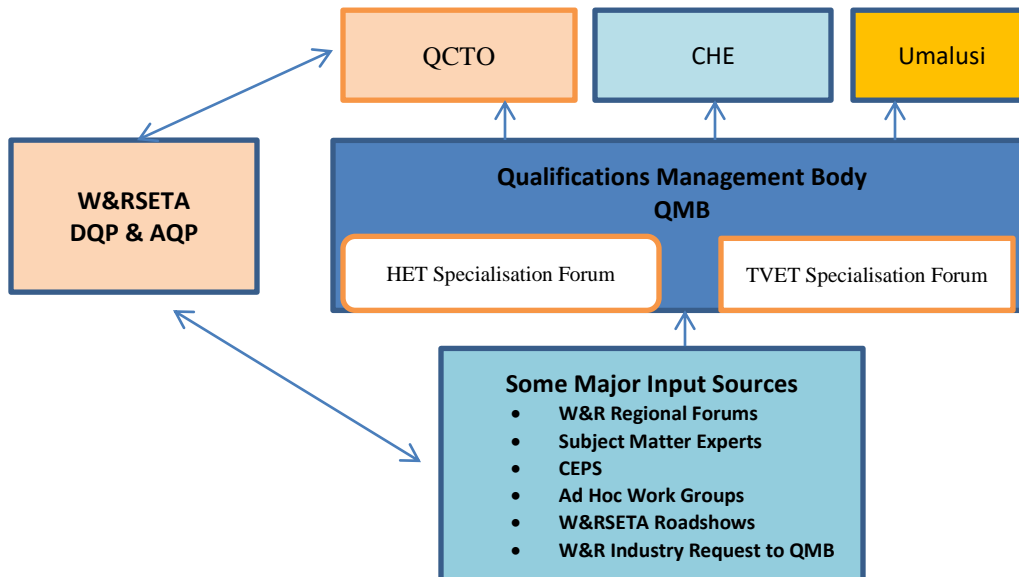
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┌──────────┐   ┌──────────┐   ┌──────────┐
│   QCTO   │   │   CHE    │   │  Umalusi │
└──────────┘   └──────────┘   └──────────┘

┌───────────┐   ┌─────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ W&RSETA   │   │      Qualifications Management Body          │
│ DQP & AQP │   │                  QMB                        │
│           │   │  ┌────────────────────┐ ┌─────────────────┐ │
│           │   │  │ HET Specialisation │ │ TVET Specialisation │
│           │   │  │      Forum         │ │     Forum        │ │
└───────────┘   └─────────────────────────────────────────────┘

                ┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
                │      Some Major Input Sources        │
                │   • W&R Regional Forums              │
                │   • Subject Matter Experts           │
                │   • CEPS                             │
                │   • Ad Hoc Work Groups               │
                │   • W&RSETA Roadshows                │
                │   • W&R Industry Request to QMB      │
                └─────────────────────────────────────┘
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Figure 3: QMB Structure

4.4   Membership of the QMB

- All members or their replacement on the body must be formally nominated by their constituencies and their names submitted to the QMB for approval.

- All members should either have relevant sector knowledge and experience or an education and training background in the Wholesale and Retail Sector.

- Should a member leave a sector category he/she represents, then the sector category he/she represents will be asked to nominate a replacement to ensure that the various sub-sectors with the Wholesale and Retail industry are adequately represented.

- Where needed, the QMB may request that the W&RSETA provide assistance in contacting stakeholders from the relevant sector category to assist in facilitating a fair and inclusive nomination process.

- The TVET and HET Forums must nominate 2 members from the TVET Forum and 2 members from the HET Forum to sit on the QMB.
- The body reserves the right to accept nominations to ensure that there is effective representation from the various sector categories.
- A quorum of 50+1% of the membership is needed before decisions taken at QMB meetings are binding.
- All decisions taken by the body must be carried by a majority of persons present at the meeting.
- Other stakeholders may be invited to meetings from time to time when needed but do not have voting rights.
- Membership of the QMB may not exceed 20. This excludes SETA employees.
- Annually, the body will evaluate membership ensuring that all major sectors of the Wholesale and Retail industry are represented on the QMB.
- All members must agree and sign a Code of Conduct.

4.5 HET and TVET Specialisation Forums

The mission and function of the HET and TVET QMB forums are to:

- Ensure relevant qualifications for occupations from Level 2 to 5 with the support and input from stakeholders.
- Ensure qualifications which are integrated and compatible to allow for progression, articulation, mobility and recognition across formal and vocational learning in the Wholesale and Retail sector.

Their function is to:

- Provide W&RSETA with accurate and relevant information for research and skills development initiatives as required.
- Advise and give input into various aspects of qualifications, skills development and research in the Wholesale and Retail sector on the Higher Education and Training as well as Technical Vocational Education and Training levels.

4.5.1 HET QMB

The HET QMB is responsible for:

- Identifying qualification and training programmes that needs to be developed and updated through consultation with all role players.

- Give input and advice into the development of all CHE and QCTO qualifications related to Wholesale and Retail occupation to ensure standardization of the contents of qualifications to service the retailers nationally.

- To provide input into any research needs, topics and special projects of the W&RSETA, Retail Chairs and Retail industry as requested.

- To liaise with statutory qualification structures such as the CHE, QCTO, SAQA, etc regarding QCTO qualifications when requested by the SETA.

- To keep up to date with legislation governing CHE and QTCO qualifications.

- To keep up to date with legislation affecting the Wholesale and Retail Sector and to see where new and changing legislation impacts on existing qualifications and the need for new qualifications.

- To provide input to the W&RSETA with the Sector Skills Plan and identify scarce and critical skills.

- To provide input into any qualification and training related policy, practice and research as required by W&RSETA.

- Members are encouraged to attend Regional Forum meetings where input from the QMB can be provided and relevant feedback obtained from these regional stakeholder forums.

4.5.2 TVET QMB

The TVET QMB will be responsible for:

- Identifying qualification and training programmes that needs to be developed and updated through consultation with all role players.

- Giving input and advice into the development of all TVET and QCTO qualifications related to Wholesale and Retail occupations to ensure standardization of the contents of qualifications to service the retailers nationally.

- Providing inputs into research needs, topics and special projects of the W&RSETA, Retail Chairs and Retail industry as requested.
- To liaise with statutory qualification structures such as the DHET, SAQA, etc regarding QCTO qualifications when requested by the SETA.
- To keep up to date with legislation governing DHET and QTCO qualifications.
- To keep up to date with legislation affecting the Wholesale and Retail Sector and to see where new and changing legislation impacts on existing qualifications and the need for new qualifications.
- To provide input to the W&RSETA with the Sector Skills Plan and identify scarce and critical skills.
- To provide input into any qualification and training related policy, practice and research as required by W&RSETA.
- Members are encouraged to attend Regional Forum meetings where input from the QMB can be provided and relevant feedback obtained from these regional stakeholder forums.

4.6   QMB Progress to Date

The QMB currently consist of 20 members. According to minutes dated 01 August 2014, the QMB is an extension to the W&RSETA which was established with an intention:

- To be a sounding board for any research done that would inform qualifications
- To develop qualification
- To give inputs in term of Skills Development issues, anything related to qualification development and to inform the process of qualifications development

In addition to managing qualifications, the QMB should provide confirmation of developed qualifications.

As indicated in the QMB minutes, the QMB policy was only adopted at the meeting held on 02 October 2015 subject to Governance Board and Main Board approval. The approved policy was sent to TVET and HET forums. Also, nomination of the new chair and deputy was noted and interested members were advised that they need to register to be considered. In addition, the meeting highlighted that ten (10)

qualifications were developed and submitted to QCTO on 28 September 2015. The qualifications include:

OFO Code	Qualification
432102	Dispatching and Receiving Clerk
524501	Service Station Attendant – Forecourt Attendant
523101	Checkout Operator
332301	Retail Buyer
522201	Retail Supervisor
833402	Store Person
142103	Retail Manager General (Retail Chain Store Manager)
343203	Visual Merchandiser
522301	Sales Assistant (Retail Sales Advisor)
411102	Back Office Process Consultant

Table 1: Qualifications developed

The QMB Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson were nominated at the meeting of held on 06 November 2015 for 2016 – 2018. At this meeting it was discussed that a follow up (feedback and registration) on the 10 qualifications submitted to QCTO needs to be done.

Representatives from QCTO attended the QMB meeting held on 06 May 2016 and gave update and recommendations on the 10 qualifications that were submitted.

4.7   Conclusion

Skills revolution is the main issue in the country and W&RSETA is leading on this front. Also, the SETA is the only one with a QMB. The QMB is a body of experts and its responsibility is to ensure that qualifications are developed. The body also provide inputs on qualifications, skills plan and research that impact qualifications. It keep abreast with the all the legislation pertaining qualifications in the country. Therefore, there is a need to assess its impact in order to improve.

5   SECTION FIVE: RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1   Introduction

This section presents the main findings of the survey through data collected from personal (face to face) questionnaires, online (email) questionnaires and focus group sessions.

In an attempt to cover the entire population of the target audience, Dedosa developed and used three data collection methodologies, consisting of personal (face to face) questionnaires, online (email) questionnaires and focus group sessions that were done through provincial visits.

The following stakeholder groupings were included in the survey:

- QMB members;
- HET QMB members;
- TVET QMB members;
- Employers (large and SMME);
- Training providers and facilitators; and
- Learners (from Cape Peninsula University of Technology).

5.2   Personal (Face to Face) Questionnaires

Because of the small number of the target population all participants were given questionnaires. As a result, a total of twenty one (21) questionnaires were administered one on one during the provincial visits held in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), Gauteng (GP) and Western Cape (WC). Out of the twenty one (21) questionnaires, six (6) were from KZN, ten (10) were from GP and five (5) were from WC. The twenty one (21) responses from personal questionnaires will then be used as a basis of this analysis.

Number of respondents per province

KZN 6
GP 10
WC 5

Legend: KZN, GP, WC
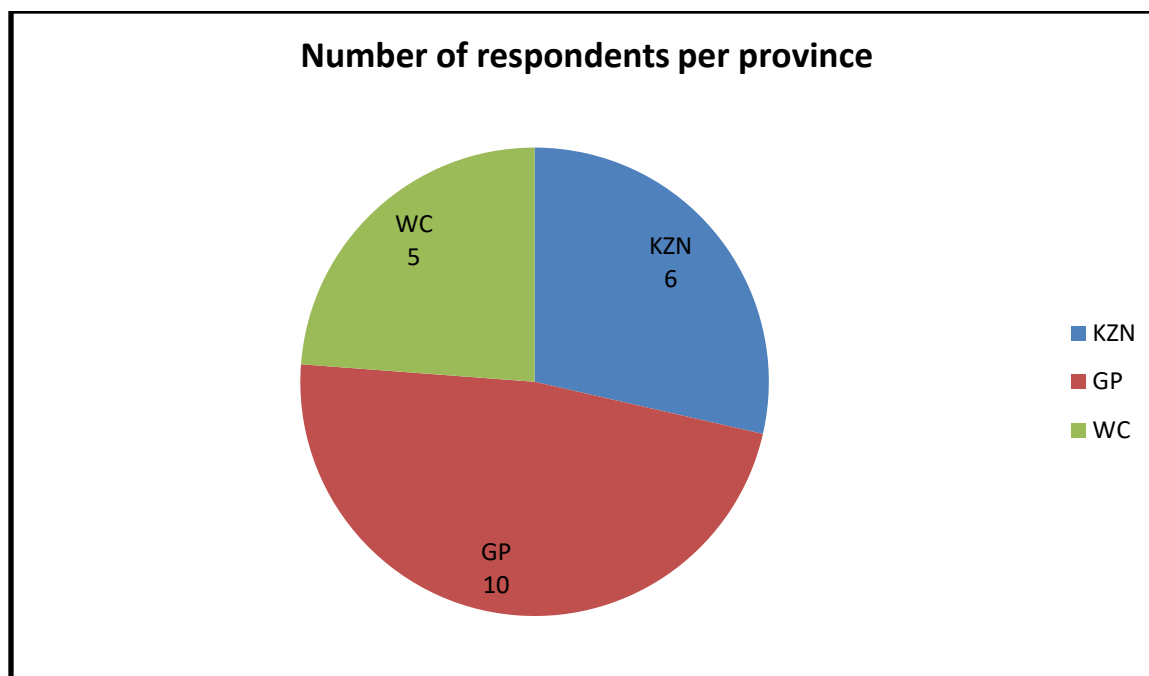
Figure 4: Respondents for personal (face to face) interviews per province

5.2.1 Findings from Personal (Face to Face) Questionnaires

This section summarises the respondents of participants from the personal (face to face) interviews conducted with the participants from KZN, GP and WC provinces. It begins with a summary of the views of the participants on how the QMB has improved the relevance of qualifications development in the sector and then summarises views in which the QMB has contributed to achieving quality related impacts. The section then reports on the extent to which the QMB has contributed to achieving impacts in promoting learner uptake, progression, mobility, articulation and recognition across formal occupational learning. Finally, the section summarises how the QMB has achieved its objectives and aspects for future enhancement.

5.2.1.1 Impact of QMB in Improving the Relevance of Qualifications Development

The survey revealed a high level of agreement among stakeholders that the QMB has made qualifications development easier to explain and understand. The majority of the respondents Strongly Agreed/Agreed that the QMB has facilitated the development of qualifications relevant to the sector. Most respondents also Strongly Agreed/Agreed that the QMB has made it easier to evaluate

qualifications for the sector therefore improving skills matching (see table below). Furthermore, respondents indicated that the road shows made this possible, including involvement of QMB members at various forums in the different regions. However, some participants stated that even though the QMB has tackled the challenge to develop qualifications relevant to the sector the QCTO has not made this easy. Additionally, qualifications are limited to OFO codes and do not make provision for other skills needed in "smaller" bite size manner.

Stakeholder views on the contribution of the QMB in improving the relevance of qualifications development					
	Percent of Responses				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The QMB has made qualification development easier to explain and understand	26%	51%	12%	9%	2%
The QMB has made the skills and competence of qualifications more relevant	20%	61%	11%	6%	2%
The QMB has made it easier to develop qualifications relevant for the sector	37%	43%	8%	11%	2%
The QMB has made it easier to evaluate qualifications for the sector	28%	48%	16%	8%	0%

Table 2: QMB in improving the relevance of qualifications development

5.2.1.2 Stakeholder Views on Quality Related Impacts

Participants had conflicting views on the contribution of the QMB to achieve quality related impacts. Some of the participants Strongly Agreed/Agreed that qualifications developed are compatible for the sector and that they are trusted within the sector. Other participants raised concerns about the quality of developed qualifications. They were of the view that the QMB has had a great success with "old" qualifications and have tried their best to develop qualifications within the limitations of the QCTO rules. As a result qualifications developed are good for apprenticeship type jobs but not for the industry. They also indicated that the "old" qualifications worked for the wholesale and retail sector whereas the "new" QCTO qualifications are not compatible for the following reasons:

- They are cumbersome
- They have too many notional hours
- They are not easy to access
- They are not easy to complete (as there are too many hoops to jump through)
- There is lack of funding
- The do not work with BBBEE targets

Stakeholder views on quality related impacts on developed qualifications					
	Percent of Responses				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Qualifications developed are compatible for the sector (learners, employers, etc.)	26%	22%	4%	20%	28%
Qualifications developed meet consistent quality standards wherever they are provided	22%	18%	6%	24%	30%
Qualifications developed are highly integrated and trusted within thin the sector	18%	30%	12%	16%	24%
Overall, the QMB has enhanced the development of quality qualifications within the sector	20%	26%	16%	18%	20%

Table 3: Stakeholder views on quality related impacts

5.2.1.3 Impact to Promoting Learner Uptake, Progression, Mobility, Articulation and Recognition across Formal Occupational Learning

A central vision for the QMB is to ensure qualifications which are integrated and compatible to allow for progression, articulation, mobility and recognition across formal and vocational learning in the wholesale and retail sector. The findings of the stakeholder survey (see table below) indicated conflicting views with most participants indicating very strong support/agreement that the QMB:

- facilitated improved access to education and training
- improved progression
- improved articulation
- improved mobility

- made it easier to value and recognise learning and qualifications achieved outside of the formal/public education and training system.

These participants were of the view that the QMB has done very well to work together with HET and TVET and to ensure that there is progression between qualifications. However, engagement with stakeholders in the QMB TVET members highlighted the view that the QMB has made the ideal of progression theoretical, but that it did not work in practice. In particular, a number of respondents indicated that the progression practice lacked transparency and arrangements with particular institutions still predominate.

They pointed out that even though road shows have been implemented they were limited by the constraints and poor clarity provided by QTCO for occupational qualifications. For instance, why are FLC certificates needed for learners who have passed matric Maths and English? Also, participants indicated that historical qualifications were industry or sector absorbed but QTCO is yet to be tested. Participants also indicated that the uptake of old qualifications and successful completion speaks to this. Furthermore, they stated that with the qualifications already developed, they sense that aspects of lifelong learning are yet to be viewed.

A more general issue raised by a large number of stakeholders in this study was the perceived excessive importance in the education system, and society generally, placed on a university education compared to other forms of education and training such as Further Education or Apprenticeships.

Stakeholder views on the impact of the QMB on lifelong learning, progression and recognition across formal occupational learning					
	Percent of Responses				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The NFQ has facilitated improved access to education and training courses	25%	38%	2%	17%	18%
The QMB has improved progression between qualifications achieved in school, in further and higher education and training	24%	26%	12%	20%	18%
The QMB has made it easier to value and recognise learning and qualifications achieved outside of the formal/public education and training system	22%	26%	10%	18%	24%
The QMB has contributed to improved sectors performance in the area of skills development	18%	32%	11%	15%	24%

Table 4: Stakeholder views on learner uptake, progression, mobility, articulation and recognition across formal occupational learning

In terms of recognising prior learning and qualifications, participants felt that this is a thing of the past "only with old qualifications". The new occupational qualifications undermine these years of work. The old qualifications achieved the intentions and people who left school to work and care for their families could finally have their work experience count outside the formal and/or public education system. However, the new system forces them back into this system which may work in some sectors but not in the wholesale and retail sector.

Respondents expressed general agreement that the QMB has improved the practice of qualifications development. This has resulted in improved articulation and mobility, thereby resulting in a positive contribution towards the scarce and critical skills in the sector. There was a lower level of disagreement that the QMB has facilitated workforce planning and development. Not many even stated training on occupational qualification, but this is not the fault of the QMB. The QCTO pitched at higher level. The lower levels yet to be developed, e.g. Retail Store Manager is level 6 but no level 3, 2 and 1.

5.2.1.4 Governance and Future Priorities of the QMB

The survey research also sought the views of stakeholders in relation to QMB governance and future priorities. The outcome of the stakeholder engagement process indicated that the QMB, when it was established brought coherence and structure to qualifications development. Furthermore, the establishment of the QMB has improved the dialogue between the world of qualifications and the world of work and that vocational qualifications signal relevant skills and competencies required for particular occupations.

However, interviewees from Gauteng pointed to a perceived lack of depth of understanding regarding the QMB function. Finally, awareness and use of the QMB among these participants was reported as being ubiquitous.

Also, a small number of participants indicated that the relationship between QMB and QCTO needs to be enhanced as they felt that the input of QMB in QCTO agenda is not recognised. This is besides the fact that the QCTO is a standing item in the agenda of the QMB.

5.2.1.5 Potential Areas/Aspects for Further Enhancement

Overall, this impact assessment has found a generally high level of support for the QMB and a positive assessment of the QMB's contribution under a number of headings. The review has also identified aspects/areas where further enhancements could be made to the effectiveness of the QMB in developing qualifications. A summary of selected potential areas for further enhancement is presented below. The areas highlighted are not exhaustive and are not presented as recommendations, but have been informed by the survey research and engagement with stakeholder groups and are presented as suggestions for consideration.

Summary of potential areas/aspects for further enhancement
o   Consider initiatives to further improve awareness of the QMB among stakeholders.
o   Ensure clarity and simplicity of communication.
o   Ensure strong SMME engagement.
o   Re-visit the function of the QMB for lower level qualifications.

Table 5: Summary of potential areas/aspects for further enhancement

5.3   Online (Email) Questionnaires

Eighteen (18) questionnaires were sent by email to QMB members in Limpopo (LP), Eastern Cape (EC), Northern Cape (NC), North West (NW), Free State (FS) and Mpumalanga (MP). The members were given two weeks to respond to the questionnaire but only two (2) responses were received. Various reasons could be highlighted from this poor response, ranging from lack of interest in participating in the survey and that some members were too busy with other more important tasks including receiving lots of emails which could simply lead to deletion of the questionnaires without even reading them. This is one of the disadvantages of online (email) questionnaire.
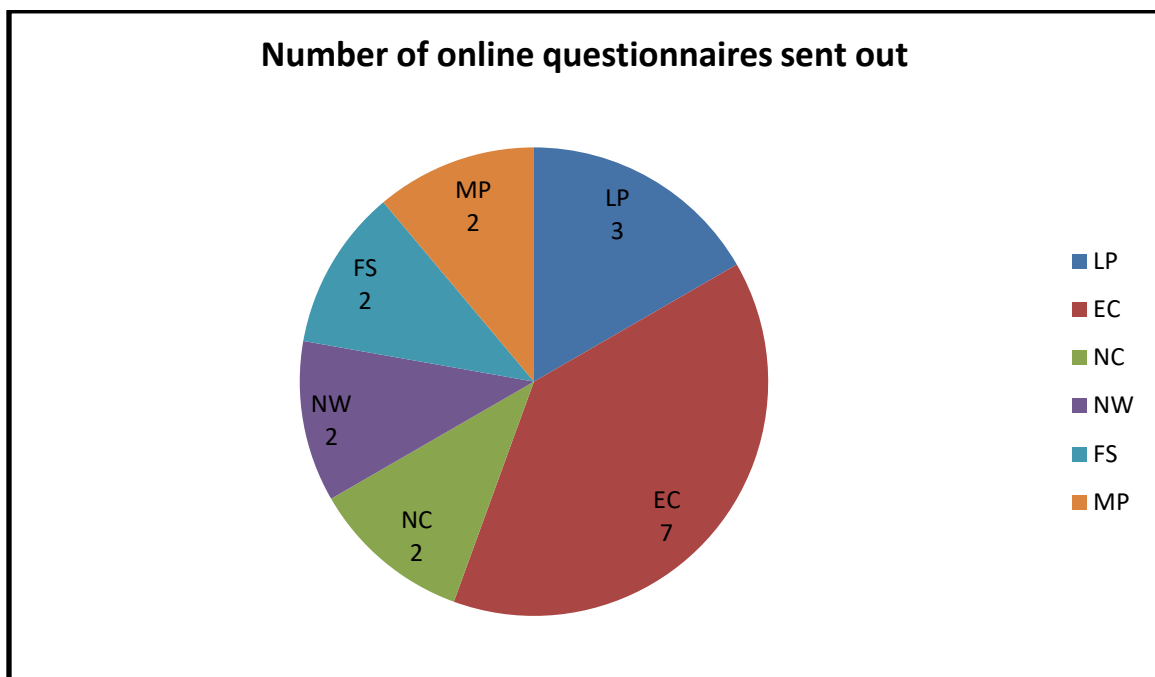

Figure 5: Number of online questionnaires

5.3.1 Findings for Online (Email) Questionnaires

The team attempted to contact the participants, but for reasons mentioned above, they failed to get the responses. The two (2) responses from online (email) questionnaires will then be used as a basis of this analysis.

5.3.1.1 Impact of QMB in Improving the Relevance of Qualifications Development

The survey revealed a high level of agreement among stakeholders that the QMB has made qualifications development easier to explain and understand. Both the respondents Agreed that the QMB has facilitated the development of qualifications relevant to the sector and Agreed that the QMB has made it easier to evaluate qualifications for the sector therefore improving skills matching (see table below). However, they stated that in general the industry is struggling to focus on where qualifications are needed most. They indicated that developed qualifications are not catering for black (disadvantaged) individuals such as General Dealers. Also there is no consented effort to generate new black owners. Instead the qualifications developed favours large retailers, such as Spar. The respondents then suggested that more emphasis should be placed on addressing the demographics of the country.

5.3.1.2 Stakeholder Views on Quality Related Impacts

The views expressed by both respondents were generally supportive of the role that the QMB has contributed in achieving quality related impacts. In particular, a view was expressed that the qualifications developed are compatible for the sector (learners, employers, etc). However, they indicated that black people are not catered for.

5.3.1.3 Impact to Promoting Learner Uptake, Progression, Mobility, Articulation and Recognition across Formal Occupational Learning

Both respondents indicated that the establishment of the QMB has contributed to improved learner uptake, progression, mobility, articulation recognition across formal occupational learning. However, there is still room for improvement. This is because the training programmes still compromise other people and therefore do not address everybody's needs. They also stated that the industry culture favours white culture and the qualifications work more for urban areas such as Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town. Therefore, the QMB need to put more emphasis in developing qualifications that works for everyone including traditional and/or cultural values as learners and employers are not at the same level. Currently, the developed qualifications are not practical for everyone and this needs to be addressed. In essence, the qualifications developed are a one size fits all approach and not specific to the different scenarios.

5.3.1.4 Governance and Future Priorities of the QMB

In terms of achieving its objectives, the respondents' views were split into two with one agreeing that the QMB has achieved its objectives and has made some inroads. Also, the respondent indicated that more effort has been put on developing training programmes to help learners to practically implement the qualifications at their work places. However, the other respondent highlighted that there is still a gap in that QMB only take care of the issues of the employer. This responded further argued that there is no level of involvement or engagement of workers. Finally, the respondent stressed that the QMB is supposed to extend qualifications to TVET but they do not have knowledge if teachers can handle the developed qualifications.

5.3.1.5 Potential Areas/Aspects for Further Enhancement

Finally, both respondents indicated that the QMB needs to make sure that training programmes developed cater for individual employers in order to address cultural differences.

The diagram below summarises responses from the online (email) questionnaires based on the two respondents:
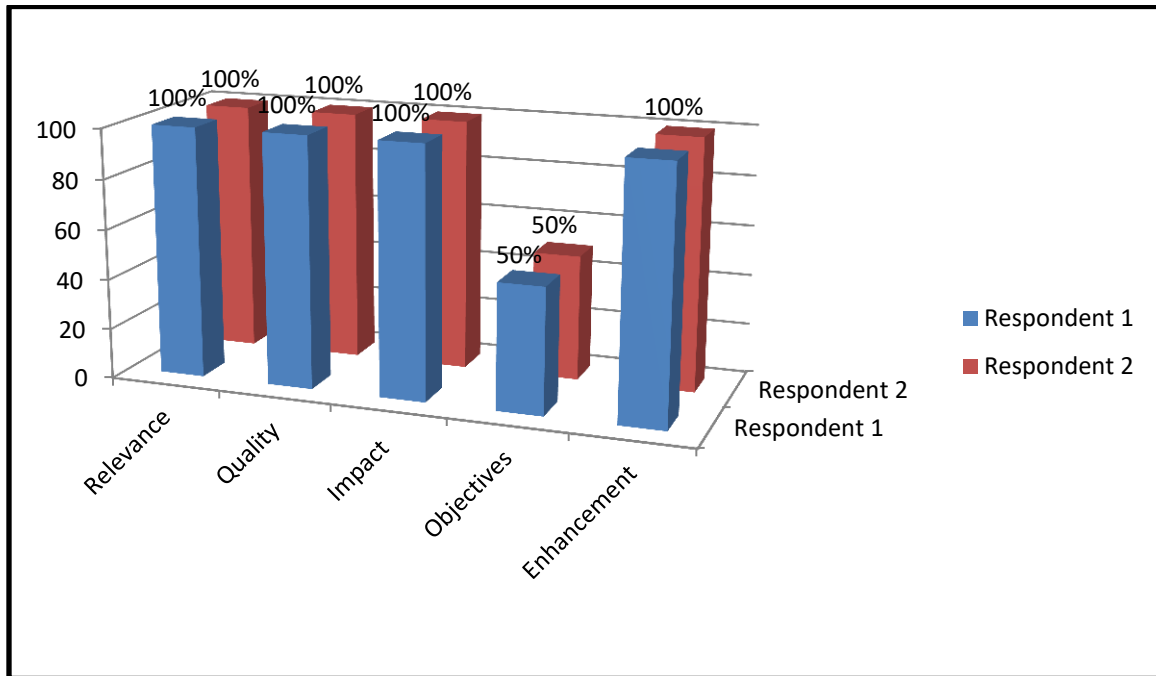

Figure 6: Findings for online (email) questionnaires

5.4   Focus Group Sessions

Dedosa conducted three (3) focus groups sessions with stakeholders in KZN, GP and WC. An additional focus group session was held with students from Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) who are currently doing the Retail Store Manager (RSM) qualification.

The focus group sessions consisted of a total of thirty seven (37) participants. Of the thirty seven (37) participants, six (6) were from KZN, ten (10) were from GP, five (5) were from the WC and sixteen (16) were from CPUT. Clear rules of engagement were discussed with the group to ensure everyone freely participated without fear of prejudice, exposure or exclusion. All views were allowed, and participation by all present was emphasised to ensure that more views were solicited. The researchers ensured that individuals were prompted to give their opinions and views during the focus group sessions.
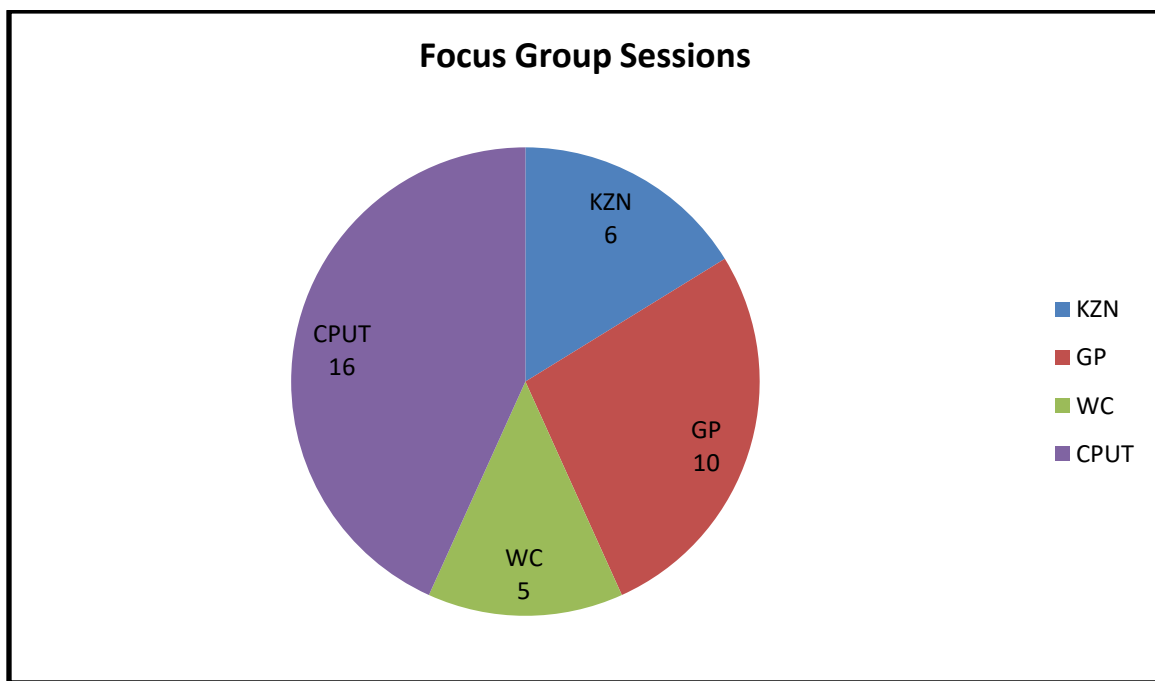

Figure 7: Focus group sessions

5.4.1 Findings from Focus Group Sessions in the three Provinces

There were seven (7) questions addressed in the focus group sessions in the three provinces (KZN, GP and WC). Responses to the questions have been summarised as follows:

5.4.1.1 Question 1

Q1 – Please indicate your views on how well informed you feel about the QMB and if it has achieved its objectives?

Most participants indicated that they were well informed about the QMB. However, they indicated that the QMB is effective in terms of historical qualifications. In terms of the new qualifications, the QCTO wants the QMB to reinvent the wheel. They then suggested that that in order to address this challenge, the QMB members should nominate one member of the QMB to explain and clarify issues to the QCTO when a new qualification is developed. They indicated that the fact that when the evaluation process of developed qualifications happens, the QCTO do not have a representative from QMB. That is why this needs to be sorted out in order to speed up the approval process of submitted qualifications.

The participants also, suggested that QMB should enhance their interaction with the QCTO as the relationship is hampered by lack of facilitation. They then suggested that the QMB needs a process facilitator to represent the body in the QCTO. They also stated that a W&RSETA strategic person needs to get involved in the QMB meetings to ensure that decisions are taken at the meetings.

However, the level of awareness among participants in the GP was very low. In particular, awareness among SMMEs was said to be poor and even among larger enterprises it was said to be far from uniform.

5.4.1.2 Question 2

Q2 – Please indicate your views on the contribution of the QMB in improving the relevance of qualifications development in the sector?

In terms of the contribution of the QMB in improving the relevance of qualifications development in the sector, most participants indicated that the QMB has improved relevance of qualifications developed. They pointed out that the QMB has revolutionised retail education and skills development in the sector.

They also pointed out that QMB is a success story for the sector. This is because for the first time the QMB allowed the introduction of TVET business on retail education and skills development. Therefore, the QMB helps in one way or the other in developing qualifications relevant for the sector.

A few respondents, particularly from GP indicated that they have little knowledge about the W&RSETA and that they have no idea on how the QMB is of assistance to them.

5.4.1.3 Question 3

Q3 – Do you think the QMB has contributed to achieving learner uptake, progression, articulation, mobility and recognition across formal and vocational learning in the sector? Why do you think so?

Most participants stated that articulation has been addressed. For instance, the Durban University of Technology (DUT) has recognized TVET qualifications. They pointed out that the pass rate has increased and there was over subscription. Respondents also indicated that the QMB has enhanced 100% job progression for those involved. All the students have progressed and the pass rate is phenomenal from every college.

With respect to the progression and mobility, participants indicated that QMB has opened the doors of the employment. In addition, most participants stated that the QMB has ensured that recognition of prior learning is fully implemented.

A small number of participants reported that articulation has been a problem, most people know very little about SETA what it can do for them.

5.4.1.4 Question 4

Q4 – Can you share your observations in relation to the successes or failures of the QMB based on your understanding of the QMB?

According to most participants, the QMB is a success story for the sector. This is because for the first time the QMB allowed the introduction of TVET business on retail education and skills development. The QMB had made the development of qualification easy and has simplified things from SETA for SMME.

Other participants stressed that the QMB has strengthened stakeholder engagement in the sector. In that sense, they were of the opinion that the QMB has achieved collaboration. Other participants highlighted that the advantage of the QMB is that all stakeholders sit in one table and discuss issues that affect the sector. Therefore, the establishment of the QMB made it possible to co-exist, share best practices and discuss critical skills needed by the sector. This is because formal and informal businesses and skills developers are represented in the QMB thereby making the development of qualifications easy. Most participants were of the opinion that the establishment of the QMB ensures that there is now a platform to share the qualifications developed as the QMB members share good practices and challenges. Furthermore, participants pointed out that because of its membership structure, the QMB provides an interface where various with different challenges share problems and solutions.

Some participants were of the opinion that the QMB has generated enthusiasm amongst students enrolled in the programme. It further indicated that the QMB has ensured that the learning needs of the functionally illiterate are catered for. In addition, participants stated that the QMB has helped lectures and students to think outside the box due the practical nature of the training (e.g. taking students to the real world/shops to learn). Participants also indicated that QMB has ensured the allocation of credits by DUT knowledge of retail fundamentals based on QMB learning programmes. Furthermore, participants indicated that the QMB designed a programme to give lecturers training so that they can teach it to match students demand. However, there is limited funding to sponsor training and limited capacity. Thereby resulting to this being a "sandwiched programme"

Other participants highlighted that the QMB has developed quite a few qualifications (10 qualifications), however the QCTO has come up with policies, changes, process and only one qualification has been implemented (i.e. the Retail Store Manager). Few participants also pointed out that the W&RSETA challenges were impacting on the QMB process (e.g. the frequent changing of critical members of the executive management. Other participants indicated that they were not aware what the QMB is and when it was formed.

5.4.1.5 Question 5

Q5 – What do you think should be changed/ improved/ added to make the QMB more effective?

Some participants expressed concerns about poor communication. They also pointed out lack of decision making powers by representatives of the institutions concerned, e.g. W&RSETA. They then proposed that SETA management must attend the QMB meetings to cut out bureaucracy and so that issues can be solved.

Participants also highlighted the need to reconsider the meeting logistics of QMB. This is because there is a serious stress incurred by QMB members to attend meetings because of the need to cut costs. Participants proposed that the meetings should be held in OR Tambo instead of rushing to and from SETA office in Centurion.

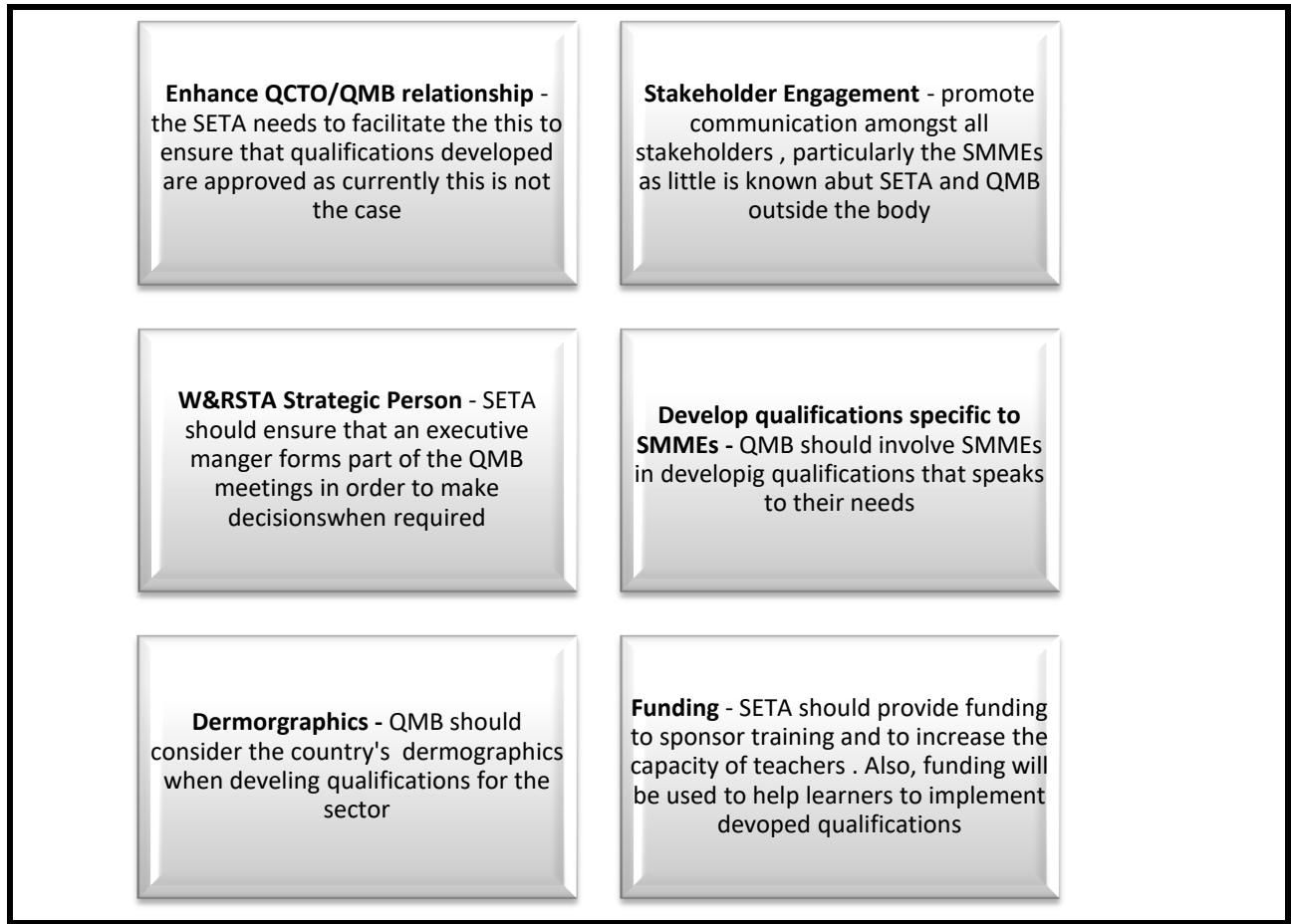In order to make the QMB more effective, the participants suggested the following changes:

Figure 5: Suggested changes

The boxes in the figure read:

Enhance QCTO/QMB relationship - the SETA needs to facilitate the this to ensure that qualifications developed are approved as currently this is not the case

Stakeholder Engagement - promote communication amongst all stakeholders , particularly the SMMEs as little is known abut SETA and QMB outside the body

W&RSTA Strategic Person - SETA should ensure that an executive manger forms part of the QMB meetings in order to make decisionswhen required

Develop qualifications specific to SMMEs - QMB should involve SMMEs in developig qualifications that speaks to their needs

Dermorgraphics - QMB should consider the country's dermographics when develing qualifications for the sector

Funding - SETA should provide funding to sponsor training and to increase the capacity of teachers . Also, funding will be used to help learners to implement devoped qualifications

5.4.1.6 Question 6

Q6 – Do you have any views on the effectiveness of how the QMB was established and implemented and are there any additional suggestions you have concerning future policy priorities for the QMB?

All participants were of the view that the QMB policy is fine; however the implementation process is a problem. Other participants indicated that looking at unemployment rate they find themselves conflicted because part of them gets excited that what we are part of this success however this might affect SETA.

5.4.1.7 Question 7

Q7 – What are your recommendations in order to strengthen and improve the functions of the QMB?

Most participants indicated that since QCTO has come on board, the QMB function is limited. In terms of qualifications development, implementation and stakeholder engagements there are now many more hoops to jump through in order to approve developed qualifications. This therefore affects articulation and does not work for QMB members.

5.4.2 Summary of Findings from Focus Group Sessions with CPUT Students

Leaners from CPUT participated in a half an hour session. All learners indicated that they were currently working in the retail sector. They pointed out that they enrolled in the programme through nominations and selections from their respective Human Resources. Others indicated that, they heard about the programme through QMB.

When asked what they think this qualification will do for them and why they needed it, all students stated that they needed the qualification to:
- o   Improving skills
- o   Better career opportunities
- o   Personal growth and development
- o   Better vision
- o   Acquire knowledge
- o   Networking
- o   Keep up with trends in the landscape of the retail sector
- o   Salary (career) advancement
- o   Enhancing their chances of starting their own businesses

The students indicated that the Retail Store Manager content is relevant for them. They also stated the qualification has brought about a lot of progression within the sector. This is because they are able to relate theory and practical and the qualification gives them a combination of the present, the past and the future. Additionally, it has allowed them to learn about how everyone is connected.

Finally, the students pointed out that CPUT is the first institution to implement this qualification. Therefore, this will allow them to be ahead and secure their future in retail.

5.5   General Concerns Raised by Respondents

The following concerns were raised during the study. Although these were unrelated to the study, the concerns were noted for the W&RSETA's consideration.

QMB meeting logistics
- SETA should reconsider holding QMB meetings in OR Tambo instead of Centurion as this creates a lot of stress amongst QMB members

SETA challenges
- SETA challenges are impacting on the QMB process (i.e. the frequent changing of critical members of the Executive Mangement)

Meeting attendance
- SETA management must attend the QMB meetings in order to cut our beurocracy and resolve issues in the meeting

Facilitator
- SETA should consider appointing a facilitor that would sit in the QCTO meetings to clarify QMB issues

Figure 6: General concerns raised by respondents

5.6 Challenges

A number of challenges were encountered throughout the process of conducting of this study. The challenges are summarised in the table below:

Institutional	Technical
➢ **Low number of respondents in most provinces**	➢ Inadequate documentation to use in the study
Operational	**General**
➢ **Lack of assistance in securing meeting venues in the provinces** ➢ **Late payment of funds to implement the project**	➢ Using focus group to vent out issues regarding SETA, e.g. SMME support and engagement

Table 6: Challenges faced

5.7 Project Risks

The risks in the table below were predicted and highlighted at the beginning of the study. Critical to point out is that these were experienced during the implementation of the study. Although the risk highlighted in green, was projected as low, it emerged as a high risk.

Risk Priority	Potential Impact	Type of Risk	Likelihood of Occurrence	Mitigation Plan	Responsibility for Mitigation	Timeline for Mitigation Action
Failure to coordinate provincial visits on time for the focus group meetings	High	Implementation Risk	High	W&RSETA to allocate a specific person to work closely with the research team to coordinate this. This will ensure that the planned focus groups are carried out as planned, thus adherence to the set time lines.	W&RSETA	As and when required

Lack of adequate funds to conduct provincial visits in time in order to allow proper analysis thereafter	High	Financial Implementation	High	W&RSETA to make payments in time	W&RSETA	During Data Collection Phase (January to February 2018)
Lack of access to beneficiary/ partners and stakeholders	Medium	Implementation	Medium	W&RSETA to introduce the researcher and communicate the intentions of the study to all partners/ stakeholders and beneficiaries.	W&RSETA	As and when required
Unwillingness to participate by respondents	Low	Implementation	Low	Research team to use various data collection methods to solicit data from targeted respondents	Dedosa Consulting	During data collection phase

Table 7: Project risks

5.8 Conclusion

The study was intended to assess the impact of the QMB and the functions thereof in line with the SLA with the QCTO and the DHET. The ultimate aim of the research was to assess the impact of the QMB with respect to contribution towards the scarce and critical skills of the wholesale and retail sector and to contribute into the professionalization of the sector.

Although participants raised different views on the impact of the QMB and on whether the awards have achieved the intended objectives, it must be noted that most participants were of the view that the QMB has achieved the intended objectives. Overall, the findings of the research indicate that the QMB has been very positively received among learners, employers and other stakeholders.

However, while acknowledging the achievements of the QMB to date, the stakeholder engagement interviews also indicated a diverse range of views of how the QMB should evolve in the future. As such, this report should be viewed as the start rather than the end of a process of consultation, review and, where necessary, reform, to ensure that the QMB is well positioned to meet the future needs of the wholesale and retail sector.

SECTION 6: CONCLUDING REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Concluding remarks

This report sets out the views of stakeholders on the impact of the QMB on the achievement of its objectives as stipulated in the QMB Policy. The strong view of a broad array of stakeholders engaged by Dedosa in completing this report was that the QMB has brought coherence and structure to the development of qualifications in the sector and has made it easier to develop qualifications relevant for the sector. One of the most important impacts of the introduction of the QMB was providing a platform for stakeholder engagement within the sector and improving the dialogue between the world of qualifications and the world of work thereby ensuring that qualifications developed are highly integrated and trusted within the sector.

The views expressed in the stakeholder interviews were generally supportive of the role that the QMB has had on the quality of developed qualifications. While there was also strong agreement that these standards are consistently high, the level of support was lower, indicating that issues regarding consistency may require continued attention. One of the key purposes of the QMB is to ensure qualifications which are integrated and compatible to allow for progression, articulation, mobility and recognition across formal and vocational learning in the Wholesale and Retail sector. The effectiveness of the QMB in promoting mobility and progression between qualifications achieved in school, in further and higher education and training was considered high.

The survey indicated that stakeholders believed that the NFQ has made it easier for qualifications to be understood and valued. The study revealed that there was a high level of agreement that the QMB has improved the matching of learners with employment opportunities. The respondents strongly agreed that the QMB has a made a positive contribution with respect to contribution towards scarce and critical skills of the sector and thereby the professionalization of the sector.

The level of awareness of the QMB was very high among most stakeholders, though the level of awareness among SMMEs was modest to low. The awareness and function of the QMB in the SMME was said to be ubiquitous.

6.2 Recommendations

From the document and literature review process, recommendations for consideration have been formulated. The recommendations relate to improvements in the availability of data for research purposes. This assessment highlighted the important role that the QMB is seen to have had in the development qualifications. However, limited availability of information on the QMB shows that continued effort is needed to develop the QMB further to address existing challenges and to ensure that it remains relevant in the sector and national context.

- **Review of website development**

Very little information or academic work on the subject matter was available. Also, the QMB was established in recent years therefore, there was not much information on which to base and/or benchmark the impact assessment against. The internal communications within the W&RSETA should consider reviewing the availability of documents on the website.

- **Increased communication**

The SETA would benefit from a dedicated data manager tasked with ensuring an effective website development process in order to update relevant documents. This is because the limited availability of documents on the W&RSETA website limits the understanding of the SETA as a whole and posed a limitation in the research study. The availability of a data manager could also review the current processes for collecting and holding research studies.

- **Compilation of relevant documents**

Also, the W&RSETA is ultimately the DQP and AQP is still in the process of compiling a comprehensive system of relevant documents, and thus some of these are noted as being in draft form. There are certain policies which have been developed and published, but these are not always supported by procedure and more importantly templates, even draft, for guideline purposes.

- **Continue to Develop and Implement the QMB as a responsive and adaptable mechanism for qualifications and skills policy**

The continued development and implementation of the QMB should remain a high priority for the W&RSETA.

- Consider Initiatives to Further Improve Awareness of the QMB

The research found that the levels of awareness and use of the QMB among people outside the sector is relatively low. It was therefore suggested that W&RSETA ensure clarity and simplicity of communication and establish data to investigate progression.

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Annexure 1: Survey Questionnaire

Background Information

1. In what capacity are you responding? Please select all that apply.

☐ Qualification Management Body (QMB) Member

☐ W&RSETA Qualifications Quality Assurance (QQA) Unit Employee

☐ W&RSETA employee (Qualifications Research and Development Unit)

☐ W&RSETA Regional Manager

☐ W&RSETA Employee (Internal Communications)

☐ Department of Higher Education (DHET) Representative

☐ Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Representative

☐ Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) Representative

☐ Employer or Employer Representative Body

☐ Other (please specify)

Views on QMB Impact

2. Please indicate your views below on the contribution of the QMB in improving the relevance of qualifications in the sector (please select one option per row below):

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The QMB has made qualification development easier to explain and understand	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The QMB has made the skills and competence of qualifications more relevant	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The QMB has made it easier to develop qualifications relevant for the sector	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The QMB has made it easier to evaluate qualifications for the sector	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

3. Please indicate your view in relation to the extent to which the establishment of the QMB has contributed to achieving the following quality-related impacts (please select one option per row below):

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Qualifications developed are compatible for the sector (learners, employers, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Qualifications developed meet consistent quality standards wherever they are provided	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Qualifications developed are highly integrated and trusted within thin the sector	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Overall, the QMB has enhanced the development of quality qualifications within the sector	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

4. Please indicate below your views in relation to the extent to which the establishment of the QMB has contributed to achieving the following impacts in relation to lifelong learning, progression, articulation, mobility and recognition across formal and vocational learning in the sector (please select one option per row below):

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The QMB has facilitated improved access to education and training courses	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The QMB has improved progression between qualifications achieved in school, in further and higher education and training	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The QMB has made it easier for qualifications to be understood, compared and valued	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The QMB has made it easier to value and recognise learning and qualifications achieved outside of the formal/public education and training system	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The QMB has contributed to improved sectors performance in the area of skills development	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

5. Please indicate below your views in relation to the extent to which the establishment of the QMB has contributed to achieving the following employability-related impacts (please select one option per row below):

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The QMB has improved the dialogue between the world of qualifications and the world of work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Vocational Qualifications developed signal relevant skills and competencies required for particular occupations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The QMB has facilitated better matching between skills and job vacancies	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The QMB has facilitated monitoring and reporting of skills and qualifications output in the sector	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The QMB has facilitated workplace planning and development	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

6. Based on your familiarity of wholesale and retail sector, please indicate below your views in relation to the extent to which the establishment of the QMB to-date has contributed to achieving the following impacts in relation to uptake, learner progression, articulation, mobility and recognition as a result of qualifications developed (please select one option per row below):

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The QMB has improved the practice of qualifications development	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The QMB has improved uptake and learner progression across formal occupational learning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The QMB has improved articulation of developed qualifications (to be understood, compared and valued)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The QMB has improved mobility and recognition across formal occupational learning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The QMB has made a positive contribution with respect to contribution towards the scarce and critical skills of the sector	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The QMB has contributed into the professionalization of the sector	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Views on the Establishment, Partnerships and Governance of the QMB

7. Please indicate your views on how well informed you feel about the QMB and how effectively the QMB has been established and promoted and achieved its objectives (please selection one option for each of the aspects/rows below):

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am sufficiently informed about the QMB	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have been appropriately involved in QMB policy development and implementation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The QMB is consistent with other national policy instrument in the area of qualifications and skills development (e.g. National Skills Development Strategy, Sector Skills Plan, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The benefits/value of the QMB are effectively promoted to stakeholders	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The availability of QMB Policy is appropriate to my needs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am sufficiently informed of the participation sub-committees on the QMB process relating to qualifications developments (e.g. HET and TVET Specialisation Forums)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Views on Future Policy Priorities for the QMB

8. Please indicate the level of priority you would attach to each of the following QMB functions for the future development (please select one option for each row below):

	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority
Communication Function – making qualifications and the qualifications system easier to understand	☐	☐	☐
Quality Assurance Function – ensuring that qualifications are more reliable and valid	☐	☐	☐
Regulatory Function – using the QMB to control access to the market for qualifications in the sector	☐	☐	☐
Progression Function – using the QMB to address obstacles to the mobility of qualifications within and between the education and training system in the sector	☐	☐	☐
Recognition Function – supporting the recognition of sector qualifications	☐	☐	☐
Design Function – supporting deeper implementation of the learning outcomes approach in qualifications	☐	☐	☐

Additional Feedback

9. We would also welcome any additional observations you may have in relation to the successes or failures based on your understanding with the QMB, any views on the effectiveness of how the QMB was established and implemented and any additional suggestions you may have concerning future policy priorities for the QMB:

Annexure 2: Focus Group Questions

1. Please indicate your views on the contribution of the QMB in improving the relevance of qualifications development in the sector.

2. In your opinion, do you think the establishment of the QMB has contributed to achieving quality-related impacts in the development of qualifications for the sector?

3. Do you think the QMB has contributed to achieving learner uptake, progression, articulation, mobility and recognition across formal and vocational learning in the sector? Why do you think so?

4. Do you think the QMB has contributed to achieving employability-related impacts for the sector?

5. Based on your familiarity with the wholesale and retail sector, do you think that the QMB has contributed to achieving the following impacts as a result of qualifications developed in the sector to date?

- Learner uptake
- Progression
- Articulation
- Mobility and
- Recognition

6. Please indicate your views on how well informed you feel about the QMB and if it has achieved its objectives?

7. What are your recommendations in order to strengthen and improve the functions of the QMB?

8. What do you think should be changed/ improved/ added to make the QMB more effective?

9. Do you have any views on the effectiveness of how the QMB was established and implemented and are there any additional suggestions have concerning future policy priorities for the QMB?