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SOUTH AFRICAN QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

REGISTERED QUALIFICATION:

Occupational Certificate: Religious Associate Professional (Christian Religious Practitioner)

SAQA QUAL ID	QUALIFICATION TITLE			
101997	Occupational Certificate: Religious Associate Professional (Christian Religious Practitioner)			
ORIGINATOR				
Development Quality Partner - HWSETA (Social Work)				
PRIMARY OR DELEGATED QUALITY ASSURANCE FUNCTIONARY			NQF SUB-FRAMEWORK	
-			OQSF - Occupational Qualifications Sub-framework	
QUALIFICATION TYPE	FIELD		SUBFIELD	
Occupational Certificate	Field 07 - Human and Social Studies		Religious and Ethical Foundations of Society	
ABET BAND	MINIMUM CREDITS	PRE-2009 NQF LEVEL	NQF LEVEL	QUAL CLASS
Undefined	156	Not Applicable	NQF Level 02	Regular-ELOAC
REGISTRATION STATUS		SAQA DECISION NUMBER	REGISTRATION START DATE	REGISTRATION END DATE
Reregistered		EXCO 0425/24	2018-07-01	2025-12-30
LAST DATE FOR ENROLMENT		LAST DATE FOR ACHIEVEMENT		
2026-12-30		2029-12-30		

In all of the tables in this document, both the pre-2009 NQF Level and the NQF Level is shown. In the text (purpose statements, qualification rules, etc), any references to NQF Levels are to the pre-2009 levels unless specifically stated otherwise.

This qualification replaces:

Qual ID	Qualification Title	Pre-2009 NQF Level	NQF Level	Min Credits	Replacement Status
48891	National Certificate: Theology and Ministry	Level 2	NQF Level 02	120	Complete

PURPOSE AND RATIONALE OF THE QUALIFICATION

Purpose:

The purpose of this qualification is to prepare a learner to operate as a Christian Religious Practitioner.

A Christian Religious Practitioner facilitates the effective practice of ministry work within a specific congregation/faith community to encourage spiritual formation, to nurture fellowship and mutual care within the congregation/faith community, to help members developing a Christian lifestyle, to provide Christian leadership, to ensure organisational well-being, and to facilitate appropriate responses of the congregation/faith community to needs in the wider society.

A qualified learner will be able to:

- Share the gospel in a specific context and to a specific audience.

- Build caring relationships in the faith community and respond to the spiritual and physical needs of members.
- Provide spiritual leadership and develop leaders in a faith community.
- Arrange and oversee the day to day running of ministries and of the administrative and accountability processes of the faith community.
- Share the gospel in a specific context and to a specific audience.

Rationale:

Recent estimates indicate that there are about 186,000 Pastors (Ministers of Religion) in informal churches who do not have access to formal ministry training. The South African Council of Churches, through their Secretary General indicated a significant number of these Pastors, who are already in ministry have little or no training, and have difficulty in reading and writing. For this group, a qualification at Level 2 is required that addresses the basic elements of Christian Ministry. There is also a large group of these Pastors that have well developed reading and writing skills, for which a Level 5 is required. The Level 5 qualification is also required for people that want to join the Ministry fraternity. Such a qualification at Level 5 would not only address their training needs, but also provide access to Higher Qualifications.

A distinction between a Level 2 and 5 is necessary at different levels of complexity, whilst still addressing the essential elements of Christian Ministry.

Needs that the qualification will meet:

There are many religious ministers in rural areas, and often even in urban settings, with low literacy ability, yet they function as ministers and as leaders of their faith communities. A need to assist these leaders by means of a qualification that will provide them with the competencies to minister has been expressed for many years.

The Christian Religious Practitioner (Level 2) qualification aims at fulfilling this need. It will provide appropriate training to leaders who do not have the literacy ability to access any other qualification, without trivialising the competencies required to effectively function as Christian Religious Ministers.

The qualification focuses on all the aspects of Christian Ministry, but at a level that will make access possible for people with no or little schooling or literacy. Church representatives involved in the development of the qualification foresee that the qualification will ultimately be used as a baseline for preparing ministry leaders to be formally recognised as ministers or spiritual leaders in their churches.

Benefits for society:

With the introduction of the new qualification at Level 2, society will benefit from the assurance that large numbers of spiritual leaders who did not have a proper training opportunity in the past, will now have a common set of competencies, despite their numeracy and literacy level of competence.

Two aspects are important in this regard:

Firstly, there is a growing concern in South Africa about moral degeneration and the loss of positive values in our communities, with the concomitant loss of hope, increase in crime levels, degeneration of our social fibre, etc. As South Africans have been shown to be a religiously inclined population, and as the people adhering to the Christian faith form the vast majority in the country (about 80% of the population according to the latest census information), Christian ministers of religion can play a significant role in turning these negative tendencies around. Well-formed and trained religious leaders in the community are needed for this to transpire. The new qualification that aims at providing quality training with the appropriate content and focus, and that will be accessible to large numbers of presently untrained ministers of religion will make a huge contribution to the turning around of negative tendencies.

Secondly, there is a growing concern in our country about religious leaders, including leaders in the Christian tradition, whose conduct is unprofessional and detrimental to the community. This can, inter alia, be ascribed to a lack of proper training and inadequate training standards and professional oversight. Although this problem does occur in all spheres of the religious community, it is certainly also a serious issue in the informal church environment. Quality training, linked to the development of professional standards and a system of professional oversight will go a long way to protect communities against irresponsible persons who misuse their position as spiritual leaders in the community.

LEARNING ASSUMED TO BE IN PLACE AND RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

Recognition of Prior Learning:

RPL for access to the external integrated summative assessment: Accredited providers and approved workplaces must apply the internal assessment criteria specified in the related curriculum document to establish and confirm prior learning. Accredited providers and workplaces must confirm prior learning by issuing a statement of result or certifying a work experience record.

RPL for access to the qualification: Accredited providers and approved workplaces may recognise prior learning against the relevant access requirements.

Entry Requirements:

- No educational entry requirements.

RECOGNISE PREVIOUS LEARNING?

Y

QUALIFICATION RULES

This qualification is made up of the following compulsory Knowledge and Practical Skill Modules.

Knowledge Modules:

- 263601004-KM-01, Bible and Bible Interpretation, Level 2, 20 Credits.
- 263601004-KM-02, Basic Christian Concepts, Level 1, 15 Credits.
- 263601004-KM-03, Worship Services and Preaching, Level 1, 4 Credits.
- 263601004-KM-04, Basic Christian Pastoral Care, Level 3, 8 Credits.
- 263601004-KM-05, Church leadership, Administration and Accountability, Level 2, 7 Credits.
- 263601004-KM-06, The role of the church (Christianity) in the world, Level 1, 5 Credits.

Total number of Credits for Knowledge Modules: 59.

Practical Skill Modules:

- 263601004-PM-01, Share the gospel in a specific context and to a specific audience, Level 2, 13 Credits.
- 263601004-PM-02, Build caring relationships in the faith community and respond to the spiritual and physical needs of members, Level 1, 6 Credits.
- 263601004-PM-03, Apply Christian leadership and develop leaders in a faith community, Level 2, 6 Credits.
- 263601004-PM-04, Arrange and oversee the day to day running of ministries and of the administrative and accountability processes in the faith community, Level 2, 6 Credits.
- 263601004-PM-05, Help people in the faith community to share the gospel, support people in need and speak out for what is right and fair in the wider society, Level 1, 6 Credits.

Total number of Credits for Practical Skill Modules: 37.

This qualification also requires the following Work Experience Modules:

- 263601004-WM-01, Prepare and conduct worship services, Level 2, 12 Credits.
- 263601004-WM-02, Plan and conduct teachings, and develop ministry activities, to enhance the quality of fellowship and mutual care, Level 1, 12 Credits.
- 263601004-WM-03, Develop life skills and Christian living, Level 2, 12 Credits.
- 263601004-WM-04, Observe the leadership of a faith community on how they lead the community, Level 1, 12 Credits.
- 263601004-WM-05, Participate in an outreach or community development project in a community, Level 2, 12 Credits.

Total number of Credits for Work Experience Modules: 60.

EXIT LEVEL OUTCOMES

1. Share the gospel in a specific context and to a specific audience.
2. Build caring relationships in the faith community and respond to the spiritual and physical needs of members.
3. Provide spiritual leadership and develop leaders in a faith community.
4. Arrange and oversee the day to day running of ministries and the administrative and accountability processes of the faith community.
5. Help people in the faith community to share the gospel, support people in need and speak out for what is right and fair.

ASSOCIATED ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Associated Assessment Criteria for Exit Level Outcome 1:

- Demonstrate a general knowledge of how to prepare basic sermons by listing the steps of how to prepare a sermon that will address the spiritual needs of the faith community accurately according to the generally accepted practices of the denomination and aligned to the specific context of the audience.
- Description of how worship services should be prepared and conducted in a faith community is accurate according to the generally accepted professional practices and aligned to the specific context of the audience.
- Explanation of how the sacraments are administered in the learner's specific faith community is scripturally accurate and aligned to the specific practices of the faith community.
- Explanations of the spiritual significance of the various sacraments are appropriate and scripturally verifiable.
- List of activities that outlines a typical group meeting is accurate according to the accepted practices and indicates how these activities will focus on spiritual growth.

Associated Assessment Criteria for Exit Level Outcome 2:

- Discussion on how to determine the needs of members of a faith community is accurate according to the accepted Christian practices and the importance of responding in a sensitive manner is illustrated using relevant practical examples.
- Description of the ways a faith community could be assisted and guided to show loving care in times of need and crisis is relevant to the accepted Christian practices and scriptural guidelines.
- Description of ways to support individuals and groups who are in need of support and care is accurate according to the Christian interpretation of globally accepted welfare principles and indicate how such help will support social harmony and spiritual growth.
- Explanation of how and when people in need are to be referred for specialised help is accurate according to the legal and professional guidelines for the specific social and emotional situations.
- Discussion on ways that could be used to help people live a Christian life reflect a deep understanding of the scriptural guidelines and the contemporary challenges that people face in a modern and developing society.

Associated Assessment Criteria for Exit Level Outcome 3:

- Description of the nature and calling of the church is accurate and relevant in terms of the scriptures, the overall history of Christianity and the specific historical evolution of the specific denomination.
- Description of ways to seek God's will for a faith community is aligned to appropriate Christian world views and can be appropriately justified through practical examples from scripture.
- Description of the things to be done when problems have to be solved indicates a deep understanding of the Christian approach to problems and a full range of social, emotional, ethical and economic challenges faced by congregants in a contemporary society.
- Discussion on the steps to develop and implement a plan of action is accurate according to professional project planning principles and examples of action plans indicate an understanding of the practicalities of given situations, are feasible in terms of the available time and resources and are practically executable, relevant to ethical Christian practices and related legal requirements.
- Discussions on the value of practising Christian spiritual virtues as a church leader indicate a clear understanding of the accepted Christian virtues and provides relevant examples of the practice of these virtues from the scriptures and indicate how these virtues and principles apply within contemporary society.
- Discussions on the ways of making sure decisions and leadership practices are ethical demonstrates a practical understanding of the concepts and principles of ethics from a secular and Christian perspective.

Associated Assessment Criteria for Exit Level Outcome 4:

- Discussion of the steps in arranging and overseeing the day to day activities of a faith community is appropriate to the generally accepted practices associated with the effective running of a Christian faith organisation and aligned to the appropriate practices of the specific denomination.
- Description of administrative and financial processes and procedures required for the smooth running of a faith community is correct in terms of the generally accepted accounting practices and related audit requirements.
- Discussion of the principles of accountability in a faith community and why it is important indicates a deep understanding of the concept of accountability according to the Christian life view, examples from the scriptures and relevant Christian church history are used to illustrate and support the candidates understanding of the concepts and applications of accountability.

Associated Assessment Criteria for Exit Level Outcome 5:

- Descriptions of different ways of sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with the world are based on leading practice examples from the Christian scriptures and appropriate historical and contemporary events.
- Explanations of the characteristics of programmes that help people in the broader community who are in need demonstrate a practical understanding of the various contemporary models of community development as interpreted from a Christian world view.
- Discussions of different ways of helping people in the faith community to speak out on what is right and fair are based on relevant examples from Christian scriptures and history and use contemporary events of activism to illustrate the appropriate Christian response to these events.
- Discussions of the role spiritual leaders play in enhancing social cohesion and deal with biases such as religious differences, xenophobia, violence, people living with HIV/AIDS etc. is accurate according to the Christian world and life view and uses references to Christian scriptures to motivate and explain the characteristics of Christian leaders.

Integrated Assessment:

Integrated Formative Assessment:

The skills development provider will use the curriculum to guide them on the stipulated internal assessment criteria and weighting. They will also apply the scope of practical skills and applied knowledge as stipulated by the internal assessment criteria. This formative assessment leads to entrance into the integrated external summative assessment.

Integrated Summative Assessment:

An external integrated summative assessment, conducted through the relevant Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) Assessment Quality Partner is required for the issuing of this qualification. The external integrated summative assessment will focus on the Exit Level Outcomes and Associated Assessment Criteria.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARABILITY

Most countries have qualifications in the Higher Education Band. In addition, churches have seminaries that qualify their ministers to be ordained. No example could be found anywhere, except in Australia, of a formal accredited qualification at Level 2 or similar for Christian religious ministers. Faith Community leaders that function at this level are usually referred to as lay ministers, which implies little or no training.

Evangelism, missionary and other outreach organisations offer courses for people that want to pursue a calling in ministry, but these programmes are not accredited.

The following equivalent qualifications were found for a comparison with the qualification developed:

Australia:

Course accrediting body: The Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA).

Course Owner: Health and Community Services Workforce Council Inc.

Course Title: 10432NAT Certificate III in Christian Ministry and Theology.

Course Purpose:

The course is intended to provide participants with the following knowledge and skills to deepen their understanding of Christian theology and to perform limited functions associated with serving in a Christian church group or ministry context:

- Knowledge of theological sources.
- Understanding of theological information.
- Understanding of Christian practice.
- Skills to identify theological insights.
- Ability to communicate theology effectively.

Core Units Covered:

- Identify how Christian Scripture, life and practice are understood today.
- Identify theological data.
- Identify a range of information within a theological theme or issue.
- Identify new theological insights.
- Identify theological knowledge in relation to the Christian way of life.
- Communicate theology in everyday language.

Elective Units Covered:

- Support community resources.
- Work within specific communities.
- Communicate appropriately with clients and colleagues.
- Deliver and monitor service to clients.
- Support the activities of existing groups.
- Participate in networks.
- Work effectively with young people.

The certificate registered in Australia is compatible with the Occupational Certificate: Christian Religious Practitioner, there are significant overlaps. It furthermore caters for providing a start to a learning path for people that do not meet the entry requirements of Higher Qualifications. The qualification is also allowing for denominational unique theological nuances and it covers a large chunk of the skills as set out in the Occupational Certificate.

USA:

Course accrediting body: Not formally accredited.

Course Owner: U.S Alliance (<https://www.cmalliance.org>).

Course Title: Ministerial Study Program (MSP).

Course Purpose:

The emphasis of this course is on growing in Christ-like character and developing practical ministry skills. Candidates for the program must be approved by the local congregation and recommended by their respective district superintendent. The student will study under the supervision of a coach appointed by the district. MSP fulfils the academic requirements of The Christian and Missionary Alliance for licensing and ordination or consecration.

Course Content:

Year One:

- 101 Church Ministry I: Priestly, Prophetic, and Sacramental.
- 102 Inductive Bible Study.

- 103 New Testament Survey.
- 104 Old Testament Survey.
- 105 Disciple making.

Year Two:

- 201 Church Ministry II: Outreach and Care.
- 202 Introduction to Theology.
- 203 Alliance Values and Beliefs.
- 204 Alliance Polity and Missions.
- 205 Romans.
- 206 Expository Preaching.

Year Three:

- 301 Church Ministry III: Management, Administration and Stewardship.
- 302 The Life of Christ.
- 303 Raising Leaders for the Harvest.
- 304 Introduction to Missions.
- 305 Ministry Leadership.

Though the course outlined above is not accredited, it serves to equip ministers to work in 67 countries across the world. The Christian Religious Practitioner Occupational Qualification content overlaps with this qualification, it even uses similar terminology as titles to the various modules. Admittedly, The Alliances course has a stronger mission focus than the Christian Religious Practitioner Occupational Qualification and is much longer.

Conclusion:

The Occupational Qualification: Christian Religious Practitioner compares favourably with the international qualifications reviewed.

ARTICULATION OPTIONS

No horizontal articulation is currently possible due to a lack of available or related qualifications.

Vertical articulation is possible to:

- Occupational Certificate: Health Promotion Officer: SAQA ID 94597, Level 3, 163 Credits.
- National Certificate: Development Practice: SAQA ID 49600, Level 3, 120 Credits.

MODERATION OPTIONS

N/A

CRITERIA FOR THE REGISTRATION OF ASSESSORS

N/A

NOTES

Qualifying for external assessment:

To qualify for an external assessment, learners must provide proof of completion of all required modules by means of statements of results and work experience.

This is a Level 2 qualification and completion of the FLC is not required.

Additional legal or physical entry requirements:

None.

Criteria for the accreditation of providers:

Accreditation of providers will be done against the criteria as reflected in the relevant curriculum on the QCTO website.

The curriculum title and code is: 263601004: Christian Religious Practitioner.

This qualification encompasses the following trades as recorded on the NLRD:

- This is not a trade.

Part Qualifications:

None.

LEARNING PROGRAMMES RECORDED AGAINST THIS QUALIFICATION:

When qualifications are replaced, some (but not all) of their learning programmes are moved to the replacement qualifications. If a learning programme appears to be missing from here, please check the replaced qualification.

NONE

PROVIDERS CURRENTLY ACCREDITED TO OFFER THIS QUALIFICATION:

This information shows the current accreditations (i.e. those not past their accreditation end dates), and is the most complete record available to SAQA as of today. Some Primary or Delegated Quality Assurance Functionaries have a lag in their recording systems for provider accreditation, in turn leading to a lag in notifying SAQA of all the providers that they have accredited to offer qualifications and unit standards, as well as any extensions to accreditation end dates. The relevant Primary or Delegated Quality Assurance Functionary should be notified if a record appears to be missing from here.

NONE

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