

Is there a need for an occupational qualification of Municipal Councillors and other elected officials in the PSET system?



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2 December 2021

What is the “Mischief”?



- The Bureau for Economic Research (BER) has published a new research note on the state of South Africa’s municipalities, focusing on why so many towns and cities fail to deliver basic service delivery.
- While no two municipalities are the same, the BER noted that many cross-cutting problems inhibit basic service delivery.
- “Local economic development and better municipal service delivery are vital if South Africa wants to broaden economic participation and reverse its unemployment trend,” it said.
- “To achieve these objectives, it is necessary to strengthen municipal finances and investment, with **merit-based appointments and good municipal governance** as a prerequisite.”

(BUSINESSTECH, 24 October 2021)

8 reasons why South Africa's municipalities are completely broken

1. Lack of Skills
 2. Migration
 3. A lack of spending
 4. Supply Chain Management
 5. Municipal Audits
 6. Revenue Management
 7. Irregular. Fruitless and unauthorised expenditure
 8. Repairs and Maintenance
- Registered Occupational Qualifications
and Trades

Plethora of
Generic
Qualifications
exist

1. A lack of skills

- The shortage of skills, both in terms of **capacity and competency**, in municipalities is often raised as one of the main reasons for the poor performance of local government, the BER said.
- “Across all local municipalities and metros, 16.4% of positions were vacant in 2019 – 1.5 percentage points more than was the case in 2018.
- At the level of Section 56 managers, one in every four positions was vacant across metros and ICMs, and one in every five positions was vacant in other local municipalities.

VACANCY rate can to some extent account for Capacity but not for Competence

The Conundrum – Political Lens vs Administrative lens

Occupational Qualifications,
Part qualifications, Skills
Programmes ??

Municipal
Councillors and
other **elected**
officials

merit-based
appointments and
good municipal
governance

Merit does necessarily
depend on qualification

Occupation vs Elected Official ??

Eligibility for training: Before or After Election and what
are the attendant expectations ??

QCTO Perspective – Challenges

- NQF is a relational construct. In the context of OQSF an Occupation, Trade or Profession.
- Need for sufficient evidence that such qualification(s), part qualification(s) or Skills Programme(s) is needed.
- Outcomes of such qualification(s), part qualification(s) or Skills Programme(s) must be determined.
- In terms of the OQSF Learners will have to pass an External Integrated Summative Assessment (EISA) to be awarded the qualification, Part qualification or Skills Programme (even if attained through RPL)
- Will have to consider the “ring-fencing” of such a qualification, part qualification or skills programme i.e. Training can only be undertaken by the National School of Government.

Scenarios

Political Lens

- Definitely unexplored territory. Will require much research.
- Very Complicated but not impossible
- Qualifications not an optimal indicator for Public Office
- Multi-disciplinary (finance, ethics, people management, communication etc.) Must be fit for purpose.

Administrative Lens

- Possible as a Generic Occupational Qualification covering the Broad spectrum on Functioning of Municipalities and Roles and Responsibilities of elected officials or
- A matrix package of Skills Programmes.

Scenarios

Learning not for credit

- Formal qualifications not always ideal.
- Recognition of informal and non-formal learning.
- Experiential and on the job training.
- Training/ Programmes for Continuous Professional Development

Summary

- QCTO does not see a Qualification for Municipal Councillors and other elected officials as an Occupational Qualification.
- QCTO willing to consider a Generic Qualification related to Municipal Management. May include a matrix of generic and specific skills programmes.
- Short term initiatives to improve good governance must include learning not for credit, equivalent experience, informal and non-formal training.

Thank You

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