

THE FIBRE PROCESSING & MANUFACTURING (FP&M) SETA

Introduction

“SETA” stands for Sector Education and Training Authority. SETAs are organisations established to facilitate skills development in specific economic sectors by ensuring access to skills development opportunities to those individuals employed in those sectors, or those wanting to be employed in those specific sectors. There are at present 21 SETAs operational in South Africa.

The Fibre Processing and Manufacturing (FP&M) SETA was established by the Minister of Higher Education and Training on 1 April 2011 after government took a decision to cluster sectors in order to strengthen value-chain linkages between related industries. The FP&M SETA mandate is:

- to provide skills development services to the clothing, footwear, forestry, furniture, general goods, leather, packaging, printing, publishing, pulp and paper, textiles and wood products sectors;
- to implement the objectives of the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS III); and
- to ensure that people obtain the critical or scarce skills that are needed to build the capacity of the sector to become economically sustainable and globally competitive.

The intention of NSDS III is to -

- increase access to training and skills development opportunities;
- transform inequities linked to class, race, gender, age and disability;
- address the challenges of skills shortages and mismatches;
- improve productivity in the economy; and
- increase the focus on skills development linked to rural development

The value added by SETAs is their understanding of labour market issues in their respective industrial and economic sectors. SETAs must “create interventions and shape solutions that address skills needs within their sectors”.

Central to the objectives of the NSDS III is improved placement of both students and graduates, especially from the FET colleges and universities of technology. There is no value in training people if they are not given the opportunity to apply the skills they have learnt in the workplace.

But skills development is not just for young people starting their first jobs - the skills of people already in jobs must also be enhanced. NSDS III also encourages the training of employed workers in order to improve overall productivity and to address skills imbalances within the workforce and the labour market.

What is our vision and mission?

Our **vision** is to provide the FP&M sector with a quality post-schooling education and training system that will produce a highly skilled and motivated workforce, enhancing productivity and competitiveness of the sector leading to sector growth and sustainable employment opportunities for all.

According to its **mission statement**, the FP&M SETA will:

- identify skills priorities and needs based on collaborative input from all key stakeholder groups within the FP&M sector;
- develop quality occupationally-directed learning programmes;
- implement an integrated skills development qualifications framework to promote skills acquisition, career planning and access to the world of work; and
- provide opportunities for all, including the latent demands of SMMEs and the unemployed, in satisfying the national skills development needs.

What is the structure of the FP&M SETA Board?

The strategic leadership of the SETA is the responsibility of the FP&M SETA Board which comprises equal labour and employer representation and is representative of all sectors. The Board is chaired by an independent chairperson who was appointed by the Minister of Higher Education and Training. A further two ministerial appointees have been selected to serve on the FP&M SETA Board.

What is the scope of coverage of the FP&M SETA?

The FP&M SETA serves the following fibre processing and manufacturing sectors:

Sector	Nature of operations
Clothing	Manufacture of products such as mens-, ladies- and childrenswear, underwear, sportswear, outerwear and millinery items such as hats and caps.
Footwear	Manufacture of footwear (from leather or other products)
Forestry	Cultivation, development and management of forests and the processing of lumber into timber for use in e.g. construction or as components in wood products / furniture.
Furniture	The manufacture of furniture from wood or other materials such as steel, concrete, cane or plastic. Also include upholstery, curtaining and furnishing of ships.
General Goods	Manufacture of general goods and handbags (including luggage/travel goods, belts and saddlery items) from leather or other products.
Leather	Tanning and dressing of leather (processing of a variety of hides and skins).
Packaging	Manufacture of paper and paperboard (also corrugated); containers of paper and paperboard; and manufacturing of metal containers such as cans and tins.
Printing	Printing of newspapers and magazines, books, labels and other related materials. Graphic design, manufacture and display of signs, advertising displays and other graphic media products.
Publishing	Publishing of books, company brochures, musical books and many other publications including the publishing of newspapers, journals and periodicals and the publishing of recorded media and other publishing activities.
Pulp and Paper,	Production of pulp for use in paper mills for the manufacture of a diverse range of papers including paperboard, business paper, tissue paper, and paper used in the printing of books, newspapers and magazines and the recycling of paper.
Textiles	Manufacture of textile products through various processes, for example, the spinning of yarn from natural or man-made fibres, the weaving/knitting of fabrics from spun yarn, the dyeing and printing of fabrics, the manufacture of textile floor coverings (carpets), the manufacture of flock and felt products and the manufacture of industrial (performance) textiles.
Wood Products	Manufacture of panels and boards, builder's carpentry and joinery, pallets and bulk bins, Other articles of wood, cork, straw and plaiting materials, including woodcarving and woodturning.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE FP&M SECTOR

Learning opportunities geared towards careers in the FP&M sector lie primarily in the FET and HET education bands. Individuals who meet the entry requirements may register for one of the many FET and HET qualifications that focus on **scarce** skills within the sector. Many public and private learning institutions and workplace training provider institutions also provide skills programmes and short courses addressing the **critical** skills and specializations within specific organisations.

What are scarce and critical skills?

Scarce skills refer to an insufficient number of qualified and experienced people in specific occupations and scarce skills shortages are usually addressed by the provision of full (occupational) qualifications offered at HETs or FETs and include programmes such as diploma- and certificate programmes, vocational qualifications, apprenticeships and learnerships.

Critical skills refer to the skills gaps within organisations which limit the organisation's effectiveness and efficiency, thereby hindering business growth. Critical skills are addressed through short courses, skills programmes, workshops, seminars and in-house training.

What careers are in demand in the FP&M sector?

Technology and the market environment in the FP&M sector are continuously changing. Therefore, building a career within the sector will increasingly depend on acquiring the scarce skills that are in demand within the sector, as well as a dedication to continuous learning.

Scarce skills (or occupations in demand) in the FP&M Sector are found across a range of occupational categories:

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY	OCCUPATION (SPECIALISATION)
<i>Managers</i>	Human resources, training and education, logistics, production and quality management;
<i>Professionals</i>	Work study officers, designers (including fashion and graphic designers), industrial engineers, forest scientists and sales and marketing specialists;
<i>Technicians and trades workers</i>	Technologists and technicians (specializing in different disciplines), fitters and turners, printers, carpenters, upholsterers, patternmakers and mechanics;
<i>Community and personal service workers</i>	Fire fighters (forestry);
<i>Clerical and administrative workers</i>	Cost clerks, production co-ordinators and environmental practices inspectors;
<i>Machinery operators and drivers</i>	Clothing machinists, paper and pulp operators and mobile plant operators;
<i>Elementary workers</i>	Sawmill or timber yard workers, harvesters and printing table workers.

(A complete list of scarce skills is available from our website: www.fpmseta.org.za)

There is a growing demand for technically skilled and creative people in the sector, especially within the professional and technician categories. This is indicative of the technically progressive and globally competitive environment in which the sector operates.

The market is increasingly demanding new cost effective production processes to meet the global need for cost effective consumer goods. At the same time, there is a need for innovative and unique products to create and sustain niche markets.

The future success of the FP&M sector will depend on its capacity to master advanced technology domains, to innovate and to meet the needs of customers in terms of quality, price and delivery.

LEARNERSHIP IMPLEMENTATION IN THE FP&M SECTOR

What is accreditation?

The National Skills Development Strategy encourages training provider institutions to develop appropriate human and physical resources to deliver training that will lead to the achievement of relevant qualifications, producing graduates that are work-ready and capable to enter the labour market. For this reason, public and private learning institutions and workplace training provider institutions have to be audited to determine the organisation's capacity to provide NQF aligned credit bearing programmes, resulting in a formally recognized qualification.

Accreditation is the certification process whereby an ETQA formally acknowledges that an organisation or person has met set criteria and has the capacity to provide learning programmes leading to qualifications or part qualifications at agreed national standards. The ETQA will continuously monitor the provision by providers to ensure compliance.

In the FP&M sector, many workplace training provider institutions have been accredited to deliver training programmes including learnerships and apprenticeships leading to national qualifications thereby empowering enterprises to train their employees at their own time and on their own premises.

What are learnerships?

Learnerships are work-based education and training programmes where learners will receive workplace (practical) and theoretical training that has minimum quality learning standards and is directly linked to the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). Learnerships are demand-led and cover technical and non-technical occupations. A person who successfully completes a learnership will have a qualification that signifies occupational competence and is recognised throughout all sectors of the economy.

Why were learnerships introduced?

- To fast track the development of current employees and provide them with the opportunity to acquire a formal qualification.
- To serve as an entry point for school leavers, graduates or unemployed people into the workplace and to give them the opportunity to acquire a qualification.

How do learnerships work in practice?

Employers recruit learners for learnerships either from within their organisations i.e. already employed people or from outside the organisation i.e. unemployed learners. Unemployed learners are employed by an employer for the duration of the learnership with the objective to achieve specific workplace learning outcomes.

Successful candidates sign a Learnership Agreement with the employer and an accredited training provider, before training commences. The Learnership Agreement spells out the duties and obligations of the parties. In most cases the lead training

provider will offer the theoretical part of the programme and the employer will provide the practical (workplace) component of the learnership programme. A workplace mentor / coach is appointed to guide the learner through the workplace learning component and an assessor is appointed to assess the learner for applied competence. In some instances, the employer (workplace training provider) may be able to offer both elements of the learnership.

The same working conditions that apply to employees of the organisation will also apply to learners including health and safety regulations and working hours. Due to the nature of the sector, shift work is often required.

For the duration of the learnership, unemployed learners receive training allowances as prescribed by Sectoral Determination No 5: Learnerships. Employed learners remain on the terms and conditions of their Employment Contract.

What is the SETA's role in learnerships?

The FP&M SETA's role is to quality assure the provision of learning through the accreditation of providers and to monitor the provision of the learnership programmes. On completion of the learnership programmes, the SETA will verify the assessments and moderations conducted and if satisfied with the outcome, will certify learners as competent against a nationally recognized qualification. The SETA therefore ensures skills development meets nationally agreed goals and acceptable standards. It is the quality assurance authority that drives learnerships and is responsible for delivery of new qualifications.

What are the benefits of participating in learnerships?

For learners –

- Provides a recognized qualification which can be obtained in the workplace (while earning some income);
- Recognizes and formalizes current employee's experience and knowledge gained through many years of experience;
- Provides a route to employment or self-employment; and
- Provides a learner with practical, on-the-job experience and relevant theoretical knowledge.

For employers –

- Well-established pool of appropriately skilled employees (existing employees and new entrants);
- Increased turnover because of productive and highly skilled workers;
- Successful recruitment, as the employer will be able to retain performing new entrants;
- Highly motivated, creative and innovative workforce, because of increased levels of skills and participation in the success of the company; and
- Opportunity to apply for discretionary grant funding and benefit from tax incentives.

What is an apprenticeship?

An Apprenticeship is a non-unit standard based registered qualification, which is governed by sections (13) and (28) of the Manpower Training Act (No 56 of 1981). An apprenticeship comprises the integration of workplace and institutional learning and culminates in a national qualification. Apprenticeship programmes are longer in duration than learnerships (2-3 years) and require the successful completion of a national trade test in order to qualify as an artisan.

How to get involved in a learnership or apprenticeship?

- Unemployed learners or work seekers must register at the nearest Labour Centre of the Department of Labour (ID and CV required).
- Employers eligible to take on external learners, can contact the Department of Labour, who will nominate learners registered on their database, based on the selection criteria of the Learnership/Apprenticeship
- Potential learners should also scan daily newspapers for opportunities to apply.

Note: it is the employers that recruit learners and not the SETA.

FP&M SETA CONTACT DETAILS

Telephone Numbers:	Braamfontein, JHB Rivonia, JHB Cape Town Durban	011-712 0600 011-234 2311 021-447 3373 031-702 4482	Postal Address:	PO Box 31276 Braamfontein, 2017
			E-mail Address:	info@fpmseta.org.za
			Website Address:	www.fpmseta.org.za