THE SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL
for the
QUANTITY SURVEYING PROFESSION
Established in terms of the Quantity Surveying Profession Act 2000 (Act 49 of 2000)

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS
MODULES POLICY

JANUARY 2013
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ABBREVIATIONS

APC - Assessment of Professional Competence
EFT - Electronic Fund Transfer
FRICS - Fellow of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors
MRICS - Member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors
NQF - National Qualifications Framework
PrQS - Professional Quantity Surveyor
PSM - Professional Skills Module/s
SACQSP - South African Council for the Quantity Surveying Profession
SAQA - South African Qualifications Authority
SGB - Standards Generation Body

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The SACQSP currently publishes on its website, ‘registration routes’ for Candidate Quantity Surveyors who wish to register as PrQS. This structure requires candidates from differing educational / professional backgrounds to attain such status through a combination of work place experience; supplementary training; and an ‘Assessment of Professional Competence (APC) interview’, The guideline presented here describes the procedural arrangements, and requirements to be met by candidates that require supplementary training.

The Professional Skills Modules have been purpose-written for the SACQSP and based on unit standards developed by the SGB for Quantity Surveying and registered with the SAQA. It must however be stressed that these PSM’s do not substitute any formal tertiary education.

There are 18 Professional Skills Modules (PSM) that will be individually assessed. Candidates, (unless specific written exemption is granted) will be required to complete all 18 modules and will be issued certificates of competency for each module passed.

2.0 PURPOSE OF THE PROFESSIONAL SKILLS MODULES

Until the end of 2012 all candidates with qualifications lower than 480 credits were required to pass SACQSP Part I and Part II examinations in order to advance to an APC interview. The examinations were always set by an examiner from one of the academic institutions offering SACQSP-accredited 480 credit qualifications. Due to the vast amount of material that had to be prepared for each of the examinations Parts I and II, and only one examination being set on several topics, the failure rate through the years has been unacceptably high.

The purpose of the PSM’s is to establish a minimum threshold assessment of quantity surveying knowledge in terms of learning-based outcomes to bridge the knowledge gap between a 360 credit (NQF level 7) qualification and a functional 480 credit (NQF level 8) qualification.

The general objective with the modules is an emphasis on understanding rather than memorising and to develop the candidate’s skill to apply the principles in a practical way. A problem-driven approach to learning is followed. Candidate-centred and co-operative learning is encouraged in order to optimally develop the skills outlined in the study component.

3.0 LEARNING ASSUMED TO BE IN PLACE

3.1 NQF level 7 (360 credits) or equivalent
   o Bachelors of Technology in Quantity Surveying
   o Bachelors of Science in Quantity Surveying
   o A non-accredited or foreign Bachelor’s degree in Quantity Surveying.

3.2 Although 360 credits (NQF Level 7) is the minimum level for learning assumed to be in place, it may be recommended that the candidate acquire the skills of various other modules as a foundation prior to undertaking more advanced
modules, which will be detailed on the schedule of PSM’s as set out in section 10 below. Typically, these would comprise the ‘Fundamental’ and ‘Core’ unit standard modules. Examples of ‘Fundamental’ unit standards are Statistical analysis of financial and economic data; mathematical systems for commercial applications; micro economics; macro economics; financial accounting; management accounting; and principles of management theory and practice. ‘Core’ unit standards typically comprise quantity surveying-related knowledge e.g., interpretation of construction drawings and specifications.

3.3 Candidates who have written and passed examination Part I or Part 2 will be exempt from the examination for the PSM’s as indicated in Section 11 Transition Period.

4.0 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND FEEDBACK

4.1 The minimum pass mark for a module is 50%.

4.2 Exam entrance will be determined by the submission and evaluation of an assignment.

4.3 The final assessment will be a written examination undertaken in a designated examination venue. The examination will be a maximum of 180 minute (3 hours) hand written paper.

4.4 No supplementary assessment is granted.

4.5 The results for the assignment entrance marks will be communicated to candidates within 4 weeks from the date that the on-line assignment was undertaken. The results of the final assessment will be inputted into the candidate’s personal profile on the SACQSP website within 1 week after announcement of the final results

5.0 LEARNING ACTIVITIES

5.1 The relevant study material is only available through the office of the SACQSP

5.2 Three(3) modules will be delivered on a 12-week semester cycle (depending on its SAQA credit value) and will be up-loaded on the dedicated PSM webpage of the SACQSP’s website. In the first year of launch, 9 PSM’s will be up-loaded, thereafter all 18 PSM’s will be up-loaded on an annual 10-month cycle [Excluding December and January]. The order of the modules is detailed per a schedule published annually. On payment of the enrolment fee, each module can be electronically downloaded off the Council’s website – no paper copies are available. The files are in PDF format and range in size from 40 to 70 A4 pages. Candidates will automatically be enrolled on the dedicated module forum page where they are free to post questions and comments pertaining to the subject matter. A subject specialist will periodically monitor the study forum to answer/steer candidates as necessary.

5.3 Candidates have the choice of mastering the content of the PSM’s solely through self-study and the on-line discussion forum established, or they may enrol and attend external courses offered by SACQSP accredited tertiary institutions. The tertiary institutions will not be examining the modules, but may host the examination session
with examinations provided by the SACQSP. The costs incurred to enrol and attend the external workshops are over-and-above the enrolment and examination fees charged by the Council.

5.4 The dates for the examinations and submission of assignments will be published on the SACQSP’s website.

5.5 Candidates may enrol on-line to write Professional Skills Modules at any time during their ‘in- training’ period.

6.0 THE EXAMINATION
Well in advance of the event, candidates will be informed of the specific venues of the examinations. These details will be published on the SACQSP website. In principle, they will be the last Thursday and Friday of every module semester commencing March of a year, i.e.
- Commence March – examinations end-May
- Commence June – examination end-August
- Commence September – examinations end-November.

6.1 Final Assessment Examinations will be scheduled over 2 examination days and will each comprise two (2) 3-hour exam sessions.
- Thursday
  - Session 1 - 08h00 to 11h00
  - Session 2 - 12h00 to 15h00
- Friday
  - Session 1 - 08h00 to 11h00

Maximum of 9 examinations in the first year, then 18 examinations per year thereafter.

6.2 All written examinations are written under strict examination conditions and supervised by a minimum of 2 invigilators. Any dishonesty will result in disqualification and disciplinary action by Council.

6.3 At the Registrar’s discretion, examinations are written in centres where an adequate number of Candidates/Applicants reside. Currently the following examination venues are established;
- Midrand
- Durban
- Cape Town
- East London
- Port Elizabeth
- Bloemfontein

6.4 Whilst every attempt is made to accommodate overseas candidates, this can only be considered where suitable venues and invigilators are available in a specific location. Examinations conducted overseas are scheduled at the same time and under the same conditions as local examinations. It is the responsibility of the candidate to source the venue and an independent invigilator (to the satisfaction of Council).
7.0 MODULE COSTS

Selected Modules to be undertaken by candidates are charge for individually. There are 2 stages of enrolment and billing; i.e. (a) enrolment and assignment and (b) examination.

(a) Initial enrolment - Candidates enrol for each module on-line via the SACQSP website. Payment can be done on-line via credit card or debit card, alternatively, payment can be made via EFT or direct deposit and once the accounts department has accepted the proof of payment, an unique booking number will be issued on-line. The unique number is your ticket to download the PDF learning material, access to the community forum, and the assignment portal. The initial enrolment fee includes the cost of submission and the assessment of the assignment.

(b) Examination – Only after being notified by the SACQSP that the electronically submitted assignment is acceptable as examination entrance, will a candidate be permitted to enrol for the module examination. In the same manner as before, candidates enrol for each module examination on-line via the SACQSP website. Payment can be done on-line via credit card or debit card, alternatively, payment can be made via EFT or direct deposit and once the accounts department has accepted the proof of payment, an unique examination number will be issued on-line. The examination booking sheet needs to be presented on the day of the examination and at the scheduled time as proof of payment and is used as your unique identifier on the examination script. No candidate will be permitted to write the examination without having such a booking sheet on their person.

The enrolment cost and the examination booking fee are as determined annually by the SACQSP and published on the SACQSP website. Candidates who fail the examination will have to wait until that module is repeated in the next year’s semester of Professional Skills Modules, and enrol afresh.

8.0 THE EXAMINERS

8.1 Each year the Council will appoint a module specialist examiner and a moderator. The examiner and moderator shall both be academics drawn from the staff of tertiary institutions offering SACQSP-accredited Honours programmes at NQF Level 8. The examiner and moderator will be drawn from different academic institutions.

8.2 The Moderator is required to review the examination papers and provide the examiner with comments or proposed revisions. The final, approved examination paper will be signed by both parties and submitted to the Registrar. The candidates’ scripts shall be marked by the examiner and a minimum 25% sample shall be reviewed by the moderator. The examiner shall prepare a confidential report containing the model answers to the set examination and the examiner’s findings following the marking of the examinations, which will be submitted to the Registrar. On the completion of the examination process the candidates’ final marks and Certificates of Professional Skill competency for each module will be lodged in the candidates’ personal profile on the SACQSP website.

8.3 The decision of the examiners / moderators is final and binding, and the SACQSP will not enter into any correspondence on the outcome of an examination.
9.0 SCOPE OF EXAMINATIONS

The scope of subject matter covered by the examinations is limited to the material covered in the Professional Skills Modules as set out in Table 1. The Timetable of Professional Skills Module delivery is detailed in Table 2.

TABLE 1: Descriptions of Professional Skills Modules

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DESCRIPTIONS OF PROFESSIONAL SKILLS MODULES</th>
<th>NQF LEARNING IN PLACE</th>
<th>UNIT STANDARD CREDIT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Undertake advanced descriptive quantification</td>
<td>7 (360)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Manage production processes of price determination documents (bills of quantities, etc.) for Built Environment projects</td>
<td>7 (360)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Provide advice on contract documents and price determination methods (procurement strategies) for Built Environment projects</td>
<td>7 (360)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Manage price determination processes (tender procedures) for Built Environment projects</td>
<td>6 (240)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Resolve claims and apply close-out processes on Built Environment Projects</td>
<td>7 (360)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Compile a project cost information database for Built Environment projects</td>
<td>6 (240)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Undertake financial feasibility studies for Built Environment projects</td>
<td>7 (360)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Understand the basic principles of property law and property valuation in South Africa</td>
<td>6 (240)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Strategic planning of Built Environment projects</td>
<td>7 (360)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Implement project service quality assurance on Built Environment projects</td>
<td>7 (360)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Undertake whole life appraisals of Built Environment projects</td>
<td>7 (360)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Understand Value Management processes on Built Environment projects</td>
<td>7 (360)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Manage risk on Built Environment projects</td>
<td>7 (360)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Understand professional practice management procedures in a quantity surveying enterprise</td>
<td>7 (360)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Understand the basic principles of Construction Law in the Built Environment</td>
<td>7 (360)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Dispute resolution in the South African Construction Industry</td>
<td>7 (360)</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>17. Demonstrate an understanding of Professional ethics</td>
<td>7 (360)</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. Research Methodology</td>
<td>7 (360)</td>
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TABLE 2: Timetable of Professional Skills Module Delivery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Commencement Date</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>01-Mar</td>
<td>12-weeks</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3 /10</td>
<td>3 /10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>01-Jun</td>
<td>12-weeks</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4 / 11</td>
<td>4 / 11</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>6 / 13</td>
<td>6 / 13</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>01-Sep</td>
<td>16-weeks</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8 / 14</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18 / 16</td>
<td>18 / 16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10.0 MINIMUM REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

The SACQSP prescribes that the minimum requirements for registration for a candidate is that all 18 Professional Skills Modules (unless formally exempted) require to be undertaken. Should a candidate not pass a module, the candidate will be required to repeat the module/s entirely as it reoccurs on the timetable in Table 2 above. The study material is continuously being updated, and candidates are advised to download the latest study material should they be required to repeat the module.

11.0 TRANSITION PERIOD (Candidates registered before 31 December 2012)

The regulations pertaining to registration has changed with effect 1st January 2013. Candidates registered before this date fall under the previous Council Examination requirement. However, the Council Examinations Part I and 2 were phased out with effect from 16th September 2012 as per the notice published in the Government Gazette in 2009. Eligible candidates will be required to undertake the modules listed below in lieu of the outstanding Council Examination Part I or Part 2

Council Examination Part I Modules - 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 17 and 18

Council Examination Part 2 Modules - 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18

The exemption to undertake and pass the above PSM’s for candidates falling under the previous regulations is valid until the end-November 2014. Candidates, who fail to achieve a pass in all the above aligned PSM’s within the set time period, will be required to undertake all 18 PSM’s per the 2013 Registration regulations.
12.0 REFERENCE MATERIAL

Candidates are referred to the relevant reference material as indicated in each of the foregoing PSM’s. It should be recognised that the texts indicated are for guidance purposes only. Candidates should extend their studies well beyond these limited reference sources and are advised to consult with senior members of the construction / property industry - particularly those who have undertaken advanced studies of the subjects indicated.

Candidates should specifically access material in textbooks, peer-reviewed academic journals, on-line and conference proceedings, as well as guides, manuals and legislation relating to the Built Environment. These are normally available for study purposes in the libraries of tertiary institutions throughout South Africa or on the internet.

13.0 ROUTES TO REGISTRATION

The historical twelve routes to registration for candidates with quantity surveying qualifications and ten routes to registration for candidates with construction management qualifications all lapsed on 31 December 2012. The routes to registration applicable from 1 January 2013 are detailed in the SACQSP Registration Policy. For a comprehensive understanding of the requirements for the duration of the in-training period and entry into the APC interview, kindly refer to this document.