

What is a Learnership?

A learnership is a structured learning process for gaining theoretical knowledge and practical skills in the workplace leading to a qualification registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). Learners participating in a learnership have to attend classes at a college or training centre to complete classroom-based learning, and they also have to complete on-the-job training in a workplace under the guidance of a mentor. The workplace experience must be relevant to the qualification.

Learnerships are directly related to an occupation or field of work, for example, electrical engineering, hairdressing or project management.

During the learnership, learners will be required to complete assignments, tasks and practical tests and projects. They will be formally assessed in the classroom and a Portfolio of Evidence will be mentored in the workplace. A learner's progress will also be moderated internally and/or externally by a moderator.

If all these assignments are completed successfully, they will be awarded an NQF-registered qualification, that is recognised nationally. They will receive a certificate stating the qualification and the area of skill development.

Learnerships are managed by Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs). They were introduced by government to help skill learners and to prepare them for the workplace.

A learnership requires that a learner enter into a fixed term employment contract with the company whilst studying towards a qualification registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), which is in line with the learnership (the cost of the qualification falls to the Company). Once the qualification is completed, the learnership will also end.

How do learnerships work?

A Learnership consists of Unit Standards, Training Interventions, Programmes and a Qualification.

- **Unit Standards:** A collection of knowledge, skills and attributes in which a candidate must prove competence (in a structured assessment) to acquire **credits** on the NQF.
- **Training Interventions:** Specific goals or activities to be performed by the learner during the training process e.g. Theoretical Classroom Training and provide a Portfolio of Evidence Document.
- **Programmes:** A grouping of unit standards will form a occupationally based learning programme.
- **Qualification:** A group of programmes and unit standards that have been clustered together to make up a registered qualification. There are 3 types of qualifications on the NQF: certificates (120cr), diplomas (240cr) and degree (360cr). The number of credits needed to graduate varies from learnership to learnership.

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