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Investing in Skills Development in the Water Sector

About Us

South Africa has world-class water regulation that must be implemented in a situation where there are shortages of specific critical skills as well as declining institutional capacity across the entire water value chain

There is a need for more occupational education and training programmes **to prepare and/or upskill** water practitioners /technicians as well as recent graduates **for the world of work / practice** in the water services / water resources and related engineering sectors.

Water Business College (WBC) (<https://www.waterbusinesscollege.co.za/>) aims to contribute to the development of skills and capacity in the water sector (i.e. through occupational qualifications and various short-term skills training programmes).

Water Business College (WBC) was the first the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) accredited Skills Development Provider (QCTO Accreditation Number: QCTOSDP01200724-2088) to offer the following occupational qualifications at NQF Levels 4 and 8:

- Occupational Certificate: Water Reticulation Practitioner (NQF Level 04)
- Occupational Certificate: Water Infrastructure Manager (NQF Level 08)

WBC is preparing to renew the QCTO Accreditation.

WBC embarked on various pilot programmes (during the Covid period) to support the eventual implementation of the occupational qualifications. In addition, the QCTO occupational qualifications are only recently being phased into public sector staff training programmes.

Pilot Training Programmes

WBC conducted a pilot training programme for the Water Reticulation Practitioner (NQF 04) qualification during 2022-2023 and plans to launch a similar pilot programme for the post-graduate Water Infrastructure Manager (NQF 08) qualification. The pilot programme was launched to address (and refine) potential operational, logistical and administrative challenges (including financial challenges for learners) that may arise with the roll-out of the entry-level Water Reticulation Practitioner Qualification. Our academic approach integrates blended learning strategies, combining online theory sessions with in-person practical sessions to optimize the learning experience.

- WBC enrolled a small number of **learners** for the pilot programme. The learners were employed full-time in both the public and private sectors and were located in different provinces.
- **Online lectures** were scheduled every Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 17h00 to 19h00.
- **Assignments** were issued and completed on a weekly basis.

- All **lectures/online contact sessions** were recorded, and all learning materials were available to the learners.
- Full **examinations** were conducted in-person (and at the at the same time) in three provinces (Gauteng, Western Cape and Free State).
- The **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)** process is integrated into the application process.

Laboratory (A Prototype Water Reticulation System)

WBC built a laboratory for practicals (i.e., a prototype water reticulation system) to simulate (for training purposes) the water reticulation processes / systems of water service providers (i.e. municipalities) and private industry (eg. mines, industrial plants, etc). This facility enabled learners to gain hands-on experience in installing, operating, and maintaining water supply systems - a crucial aspect of skills development in the water sector. The laboratory facility has been disassembled and will be implemented in regions where there is sufficient demand for our programmes. Please see a video of our practical site by accessing the following YouTube link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RndYlr6L7Q> . Such '**fit-for-purpose**' **practical centres** can be development in various regions throughout South Africa.

DIY Online Courses

WBC offers (and is developing) industry-based DIY courses. The methodology for the DIY courses is to involve learners in applied self-learning programmes on relevant topics preparing learners for the work environment. These courses are accessible 24/7 via our website / LMS, catering to a diverse audience - from senior students to younger practitioners.

Short Courses for Industry

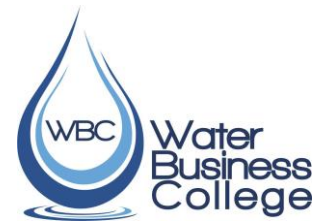
Our short courses (previously CPD-accredited) on water resource management, presented by industry specialists, provide valuable professional development opportunities. WBC will re-submit (annually) the short courses for CPD accredited by the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) and the South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions (SACNASP). These courses offer industry professionals essential skills and knowledge.

Learner Management System (LMS)

The fully online, bespoke LMS can host learning materials for the above diverse training programmes, ensuring easy access (24/7) and a personalised learning environment for registered learners. This technology supports our flexible Non-Contractual – Modular, 'Pay as You Learn' system, enhancing affordability and convenience.

Diverse Target Audiences

- Water Reticulation Practitioner (NQF Level 04) - The major target groups for this entry-level occupational qualification are technical staff seeking to formalise their knowledge and years of experience (i.e. upskilling and/or re-skilling programmes) as well as scholars / young persons' looking for opportunities to access the critical water sector.
- The DIY courses – The target audiences include senior and post-graduate students as well as younger / less experienced practitioners in the water and related engineering, environmental and science sectors.
- The short courses - Professional development opportunities for the water industry (CPD accreditation in process).
- Foundation Programme – Designed to support technical staff to gain access / entry to occupational qualifications. Courses on basic mathematics, chemistry, etc. can be accessed by scholars (Grade 10) for revision purposes.



Partnerships and Future Growth

WBC is actively seeking partnerships with governmental and non-governmental institutions as well as private sector companies to implement these programmes for the water sector. We aim to address critical skills shortages and contribute to capacity programmes within the water sector through the launching of new occupational qualifications and through the development of both short courses and DIY courses. WBC seeks partnerships with industry specialists to develop and support the implementation of occupational learning programmes.

The **Benefits of Training for the Industry** results in:

- Business incorporate training into their business models to cultivate a workforce that is competent with the critical skills to attain company goals / objectives.
- Re-skilling and up-skilling programmes enhance the knowledge and skills base of employees and offers staff the opportunity to formalise their practical 'know-how' and experience.
- Corporate training programmes increase job satisfaction, enhance employee performance and productivity, and reduce staff turn-over.

Invest in the Future of Water Skills with WBC

By partnering with and investing in Water Business College, you support the growth of a skilled workforce equipped to tackle the challenges of the water sector.

WBC is already partnering with experienced water resources and water services specialists.

Contact Rian directly at rtitus@waterbusinesscollege.co.za or at 084 522 3363 for additional

Please also visit our website at waterbusinesscollege.co.za.

Yours faithfully

Dr. Rian Titus

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Water Reticulation System - Training



Director: Dr. Rian Titus

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In GOD I trust

Water is a 24/7 operation affecting everyone'