

July 16, 2018

Occupational Health and Safety Changes: First Aid Training



A number of changes are currently taking place in the education and training environment. One of the changes that will have a rather big impact on First Aid Training activities is the amendment made to Department of Labour Notice R.1463 of 2017.

Various statutory regulations determine mandatory or compulsory employee training in the areas of First Aid, Fire-fighting and Occupational Health and Safety, etc. In this article, we will look specifically at the impact that this notice will have on First Aid Training.

In terms of this notice, all First Aid Training Providers must now be accredited by the Quality Assurance Body which has been delegated the quality assurance responsibilities for First Aid unit standards, namely the Health & Welfare SETA (HWSETA). According to the notice, training providers have until 21 August 2018 to comply with the new regulations or be deregistered.

The Quality Council for Trades & Occupations (QCTO) and HWSETA have indicated that the Occupational Part Qualifications / Skills Programme will now be the minimum level of training for any employee who wishes to act as the First Aider of an organisation. The First Aider Skills Programme (FASP), which was accepted by the HWSETA, comprises three unit standards.

Of importance is the fact that all three unit standards will have to be completed by a course attendant for a Certificate of Competency to be issued by the HWSETA.

Switching from single unit standards to a FASP will result in the following:

- **Entrance requirements:** The minimum entrance requirement is ABET Level 4 (a qualification comparable to Grade 9 or the old Standard 7). This effectively precludes anybody with an educational level lower than ABET 4.
- **Duration:** The duration of the course is at least two to three weeks. The course consists of classroom sessions as well as time spent at work compiling a Portfolio of Evidence (PoE). Upon receipt of the completed PoE, the final assessment, moderation, verification and endorsement by the HWSETA can take place. It could take three to four months to issue the Certificate.
- **Inspection of training venues:** All training venues must be inspected by the HWSETA before training can commence. This will result in a considerable delay in processing onsite training requests.
- **Workplace mentors:** Employees will have to appoint workplace mentors to ensure that employees receive the necessary assistance when completing the Workplace Learning Component of the FASP. This implies additional costs, time spent and resources being put in place in the workplace.

SERR Synergy has compiled a unique, *affordable training product whereby businesses can benefit* from skills development programmes and accredited training within their organisation.

About the author: Anita Seydel joined SERR Synergy in September 2014 and is currently the National Manager: Training and Development. She obtained her Honours in Public Administration at the University of South Africa (UNISA) and also holds six qualifications in the Education, Training and Development environment. She recently completed courses in Corporate Governance as well as Knowledge Management (UNISA).

©SERR Synergy, www.serr.co.za