



## Terms of Reference

# CONTRACTING OF SERVICE PROVIDER FOR RPL INTERNATIONAL BENCHMARKING RESEARCH PROJECT



## **1. Brief background**

- 1.1 The QCTO is the custodian of the Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework (OQSF), and the qualifications thereon. As part of its mandate as a Quality Council, the QCTO is required to have a policy in place, as well as be an enabling mechanism, for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in the Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework (OQSF). As of March 2020, 97% of RPL in South Africa recorded on the National Learner Records Database had been for qualifications on the OQSF (Bolton et al., 2020). While this suggests that RPL is happening in the sector, there is no clear conceptualisation of what RPL means for the occupational sector (referred to as Vocational Education and Training (VET) internationally).
- 1.2 The aim of this research project is to strengthen the conceptualisation of RPL for the occupational sector by examining current international trends and practices for RPL in Vocational Education and Training (VET).
- 1.3 By conducting research into international trends and practices for RPL in VET, it will enable QCTO to develop a clearer understanding of how RPL is being implemented in the sector internationally, as well as to identify possible shifts in the international RPL landscape that could impact the implementation of RPL in South Africa. Furthermore, by understanding the international perspectives, it supports the development of a possible conceptualisation of RPL for occupational qualifications as well as providing insights on how implementation can be done more effectively and provides a benchmark to measure local implementation against.
- 1.4 The International Benchmarking of RPL in VET project will require a desktop analysis of documents from a minimum of three international contexts, such as the European Union as well as from individual countries with strong RPL systems for VET.

## **2. Technical specifications**

- 2.1 The service provider must ensure that the lead staff member assigned to this project is in possession of a minimum of Masters Degree in Education, with a demonstrated track record of working with and publishing in the field of Recognition of Prior Learning, including exposure to Occupational/Vocational Education and Training.



- 2.2 The project involves:
  - 2.2.1 A review of current literature on RPL, particularly in VET/occupational contexts;
  - 2.2.2 A desktop comparative benchmarking study of trends and practices for VET in RPL across a minimum of 3 comparable international contexts to be determined in consultation with the working group for the project;
  - 2.2.3 A final report to be delivered to the QCTO in an agreed upon format; and
  - 2.2.4 Professional proofreading and editing of the final report before final submission.

### **3. Work schedule**

- 3.1 The service provider will report to the Deputy Director: Research & Analysis as the project manager, as well provide regular reports to the designated working group.
- 3.2 The service provider will consult with the project manager regarding the analysis and format of the final report.
- 3.3 The project timeline will be agreed upon between the project manager and the service provider, once appointed.

### **4. Pricing Schedule**

- a) Agreement Term: up to 9 Months
- b) Payment Frequency: Tranche payments as follows – 10% upon delivery of the project plan/inception report, 30% upon delivery of a full draft report, and 60% upon approval of the final, edited report.

Technical queries via email to:

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