



Learning skills for a brighter future

Atteridgeville's GetOn Centre aims to help community members empower themselves through diverse development training

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THE GETON Skills Development Centre in Atteridgeville, Pretoria, was established in 2004 with the aim of instilling fundamental skills within communities in need.

It came about when Jan Bijpost, a visiting businessman from the Netherlands, was shocked at the poor standard of living in some communities in South Africa. He felt compelled to make a contribution to the eradication of poverty and unemployment.

Bijpost met Isaac Skosana, a ward committee and community leader of Brazzaville – a rural settlement in Atteridgeville – and their meeting marked the beginning of an inspiring partnership aimed at empowering society through training.

“It is better to teach the community how to catch a fish instead of giving the fish to the community,” is the motto Skosana’s lives by.

“In this way, you are able to equip the community with the skills to fend for themselves rather than just giving out food,” he says.

The GetOn Foundation thrives on enabling ambitious students to take responsibility for their own futures by assisting them in becoming self-supportive and financially independent.

It also provides skills development opportunities to the people of Atteridgeville and surrounding areas.

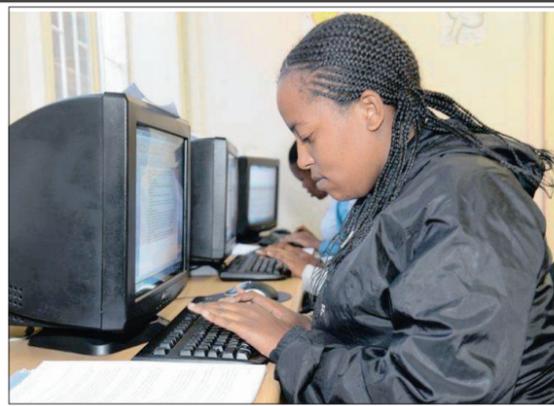
The GetOn Skills Development Centre, which started its work in 2006, provides training that is skills-specific and market related.

Training programmes include: Basic Computer Skills, Office Ad-



BAKE FOR PROFIT: Students in action at the GetOn Centre.

INSPIRATION: Students took part in the Youth Day Celebration event hosted at GetOn Foundation Centre where they expressed their feelings via arts and drama



HARD AT WORK: A woman learns basic computer skills at the GetOn Centre.



ministration, Point-of-Sale Computer Training, Bake for Profit, Life Skills, Basic Business Skills and Entrepreneurial mentorship (GED Programme).

The aim is to add technical skills and catering training to existing courses within the next year.

While focusing on skills-related training, they also aim to develop graduates economically, socially and emotionally.

It is the continuous mission of staff at the centre to influence and

contribute to poverty alleviation in the community. They believe this can only be done by empowering individuals with the skills and knowledge to provide for themselves and their families.

The foundation has established skills proficiency in about 363 unemployed people in the past year. About 68 percent of these trainees – all black South Africans, two thirds of which are women – have since become economically active and have been gainfully employed.

The GetOn Foundation has directly touched the lives of more than 1 500 students through its outcomes-based training since 2006, and indirectly affected the lives of more than 7 000 families headed by students.

Participants pay a small commitment fee, from R100 to R300, to attend the programmes, but there is no additional charge after that.

Recently, a partnership between ArcelorMittal SA and the GetOn

Foundation resulted in the centre being able to increase its numbers from 363 students in 2012/2013 to 450 for 2013/2014.

ArcelorMittal’s donation of premises and its financial contribution has directly influenced the ambition and enthusiasm of the students.

The goal of the partnership is to launch many more GetOn Centres in and around the targeted community, working together to eradicate unemployment and reduce poverty in South Africa.

Other organisations involved are:

- 1 GetOn Foundation Netherlands
- 2 TFG
- 3 Redcap Foundation – Jumpstart Project
- 4 Sunspray
- 5 Premier Foods
- 6 UCS Solutions

GetOn is registered with Sars (S18A) and is able to offer tax certificates for any donations, tools, equipment or furniture donated.

BEE points are also issued.

Students who want to enrol for courses should call 012 387 0652. They can also visit www.getonskillsdevelopment.co.za for more information and join the centre’s social media community on facebook: www.facebook.com/getonskills.

There will be open days and registration at the centre on Thursday and September 26.

Companies or individuals who wish to donate or find out how to get involved can e-mail manager@getonskillsdevelopment.com.

Make sure that qualification is accredited

STEVEN writes: I am about to register for a logistics and supply chain management diploma with a reputable private training provider. The diploma is not accredited by a Seta so it does not have any NQF level. Will this diploma help me to get a job?

Steven, first you need to be aware that there are two stages of accreditation.

The first, and possibly the most important, is that the institution is accredited itself. One problem which arises is that some institutions then use their institutional accreditation in their marketing campaigns.

All this kind of accreditation does is reflect that the institution exists and is stable. It does not reflect that the learning programmes have been scrutinised and accepted as mapping and conforming to qualification requirements registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and therefore the business stakeholder requirements.

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The second level of accreditation is where the institution’s learning programmes are themselves accredited.

Often the quality assurance body (ETQA) which accredits the institution ensures that where it

does not have scope for particular learning programmes, it has agreements with those ETQAs which do have such scope and can therefore sub-contract the accreditation and quality assurance of those particular learning programmes to those

other ETQAs.

What you have to be aware of is that employers will generally not accept and will actively discard applications for employment from candidates who have qualifications which are not properly accredited.

In this day and age it is morally criminal for providers to be accepting students into courses which have not been accredited and are not regularly quality controlled. In my opinion it is criminal for them to be taking money for a qualification they know is worthless.

One of the reasons that employers will avoid people with qualifications not properly accredited is that they are not able to claim from their Setas the money spent on those qualifications from their mandatory grant entitlement.

What needs to be understood is that qualifications consist of skills programmes which are the components of that whole qualification.

It may be that instead of registering you for a whole qualification, you have been registered for a bridging programme or a starter

programme composed of skills programmes which are themselves part of other appropriately registered and accredited qualifications.

If you are able to build up your national learner record database in such a way that you end up with a whole qualification after completing the requisite skills programme components, where you would need to go through a final integrated summary assessment, then this is a surer bet for you.

Your question to the provider would need to be whether the skills programmes are accredited and whether there is a process of completing the entire, accredited qualification eventually.

In summary, therefore, I would simply and strongly advise you not to register for a qualification which is not accredited.

You can verify whether the institution and the learning programme are registered and accredited through the South African Qualifications Authority at www.saqa.org.za.