

The CEO
SAQA

KHA RI GUDE MODERATION BY SAQA: SOME CONCERNS FOR ATTENTION AFTER THE APRIL WORKSHOP

The process of producing, finalising and approving the report on the moderation of the Kha Ri Gude is inevitably slow. This means that the Director General for Basic Education may only receive the report in July or August, and may well only act on it later.

On the other hand, the Kha Ri Gude programme, when properly functioning, should start at the very latest in **June (and preferably earlier)**. Major planning and preparatory action is already underway.

The effect of this problem of timing is that key recommendations from the SAQA verification process for the 2013 cohort cannot be acted on in the following year (2014), and may well fall away in effect.

To save our valuable work from being mainly of symbolic value, we would like to ask you to communicate to the DG some concerns from the SAQA verification work of the 2013 cohort.

The concerns

1. By far the most serious concern relates to the delay in starting the Kha Ri Gude programmes in 2013. (The delay is attributed especially to **inexplicable procrastination** in the tender process for the logistics provider.) The delay impacts severely on our quality assurance work in at least two ways:
 - 1.1. There can be little doubt that the shortened period, and the fact that tuition may end up running very problematically over Christmas and the New Year, put pressure on the whole system, and especially the voluntary educators, to rush instruction and assessment. Apart from the obvious impact on quality in a programme that our site visits show is generally regarded as too short, there is a heightened likelihood of falsification of portfolios in this situation.
 - 1.2. There was a very direct and unfortunate impact of the lateness on our ability to run a reliable site visit programme. Confusion around timing meant that a process already reduced by budgetary considerations was further compromised. In the last resort the sampling process became somewhat less rigorous because identified sites were unavailable (because of the late start). There were far too many situations where we could not link site visit learner tasks to portfolios from the same site.
2. Our second area of concern relates to repeated recommendations made previously that have not been acted on:
 - 2.2. We requested in our reports for 2011, 2012, and 2013 that the Learner Assessment Portfolios be revised. One cannot have an assessment instrument that has retained identical questions for six years. This revision/refreshment is hardly a difficult process in most cases easily made by changing a few details.

Without these changes the assessment becomes suspect through its utter predictability. Yet no attempt has been made to implement this recommendation.

- 2.3. We also requested that the way the assessment scores are entered (currently for many of the assessment activities the marker has to transpose a raw score into a score on a scale according to certain criteria) be relooked at. [We suspected that some of the lack of correlation between these LAP scores and out site visit assessment instrument scores can be explained by problems with this scaling process by relatively unskilled markers.].
 - 2.4. We further requested that specific educator training and support be targeted at lessening the incidences of unsatisfactory marking or the likelihood of the presentation of portfolios that are not authentic.
 - 2.5. There are some details of the portfolios which should have been corrected several years ago, notably a major misprint whereby the results for two exercises appear on the wrong pages.
3. At a higher level, we indicated a concern that, though the Kha Ri Gude model of delivery was being mooted for post-school and community education in general (as shown in Ministerial Committee Task Team reports that were used in the drafting of the White Paper on Post-School Education and Training. We are impressed with the model and its potential for wider use, but also believe that the insights we have after six years of SAQA verification engagement could contribute to a more effective adoption of the model. It would be a tragedy if the operation of Kha Ri Gude become dysfunctional at the very moment when it could be used to contribute more broadly to adult and community education and training.