
PRIORITISING THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Graduation Ceremony of Newly Qualified Teachers

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A total of 890 teacher graduands will be awarded a Diploma in Grade R Teaching qualification in KwaZulu- Natal, Eastern Cape, Free State and Gauteng during the month of November. By presenting this qualification, SANTS is effectively elevating the quality of teaching in Grade R classes, specifically in the vast rural parts of these provinces where the greatest need exist for quality Early Childhood Development (ECD) programmes.

ECD has been recognised as critical for establishing the foundation of academic success, particularly for young children from disadvantage backgrounds associated with limited access to quality ECD programmes. The early years are crucial for the acquisition of concepts, skills and attitudes that lay the foundation for lifelong learning. These include the acquisition of language, perceptual-motor skills required for learning to read and write, basic numeracy concepts and skills, problem solving skills and keenness for learning.

Government has also begun to address the quality of teachers and Initial Teacher Education programmes by implementing the policy on The Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications (MRTEQ) in 2011. This specific document explicitly stipulates that the minimum qualification for a qualified professional Grade R Teacher in South Africa is either a Diploma in Grade R Teaching or a Bachelor of Education in the Foundation Phase Teaching qualification.

The SANTS Diploma in Grade R Teaching programme has been approved and recognised by the Department of Higher Education and Training for employment in education, accredited by the Council on Higher Education, and is registered with the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA). Graduands will be qualified and recognised teachers who will be able to teach Grade R learners in formal schooling. Beyond the Diploma in Grade R Teaching, candidates who are successful are able to further upgrade to qualify for the B Ed Foundation Phase Teaching programme.

Professor Jean Baxen, SANTS' Executive Academic Director, emphasize that teaching is not merely about knowing the content. Rather, it is about knowing how to take the content and reproduce it in a way that produces optimal learning outcomes for all children irrespective of race, class, gender, cultural heritage, and sexual orientation. Teachers have to balance living life to the fullest, while at the same time being role models in schools, classes, and communities. Teachers also don't know everything and will continue to learn throughout their careers. Prof Baxen adds that South Africa needs resilient, flexible, adaptive, and passionate

teachers who are prepared to navigate contextual realities to produce learning that offers children hope and possibility.

With this student cohort drawn from predominantly demographically marginalised communities in South Africa, this qualification addresses the skills, access, equity, the quality of education and needs of South Africa, especially in early childhood education.

Should you have any additional questions please do not hesitate to get in contact.



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