

Role of non-statutory professional bodies in developing and quality assuring occupational qualifications

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"Due to civil disturbances in Bangalore, India, there is limited IT Services staff available in our Bangalore help desk location to provide telephone support. Our help desk locations in Ottawa and Dublin are providing extended services to alleviate this situation, but you may experience extended delays when contacting IT Services via phone."

IT department – US based company



“The world is now flat.”

The world is flat: A brief history of the 21st Century

Friedman, Thomas

- **National boundaries no longer relevant in global economy**
- **People & companies compete for jobs and market share on equal footing anywhere in the world.**

Recent World Bank report:

- **Comparative advantages less from natural resources or cheap labour**
- **Increasingly from technical innovation & competitive use of knowledge**
- **India**

India pointers

- **-10 yrs: few resources or infrastructure**
- **People of quality in quantity – degrees – “rotted on the docks” – Friedman**
- **Now frontline of 21stC “knowledge economy”**
- **Created enabling environment through cutting restrictions**
- **Decentralisation**
- **Business-friendly laws**
- **Investment**

Cameroon today - like India –10 yrs

- **The Entrepreneur – v1 no 3 Jan 2006**
- **Universities - 1000s of “pen pushers” p.a.**
- **Few graduates - higher order skills & competencies**
- **Proliferation of schools, colleges & spending**
- **Graduates produce what they are taught**
- **No new things**
- **Millions of qualified illiterates**
- **Graduates - failures as regards life and skills**

“A Master’s degree holder moves with little or no creativity. Thousands of Cameroonians only wait for opportunities to work where others have worked. Few are involved in the creation of new things. The outdated education they received then gives birth to confusion.”

Professional Bodies

- **Non-statutory?**
- **Not established by an Act – unlike medical practitioners, engineers, attorneys - Councils**
- **However - roles of professional members defined by indirect law or organisation requirement – ie JSE listing requirements or FSB rules and regulations**

India

- **Example of where a professional body is *non-statutory* elsewhere in world**
- **India – statutory requirement for ALL company secretaries to be a paid-up member of ICSI**
- **Over 60 000 members (Chartered Secretaries 46 000 globally)**
- **WTO – implications for trading partners**
- ***South Africa calling India conference***

“Professional...?”

- **Membership - admission requirements**
- **Academic – knowledge proficiency**
- **Examinations – National Qualifications plus an area of specialisation (Board Examination)**
- **Experience – work-place competency**
- **Integrity – checks and peer review**
- **Adherence to a code of ethics and conduct**
- **Disciplinary process underpins this**
- **Continuing Professional Development**
- **Renewal of annual Membership contract – annual subscriptions**

**Integrity without knowledge is
weak and of little use;**

**Knowledge without integrity is
downright dangerous.**

Samuel Johnson



Historical perspective

- **Earliest associations of grouped activities**
- **Closed shops to protect opportunities**
- **Specialisation of functions**
 - **Stone flake chippers**
 - **Iron smelters**
 - **Weavers and dyers**
 - **Bakers**
 - **Iron Smiths**
 - **Auditors**
 - **Accountants**

Re-definition - CEPs

- **Benefits of networking and sharing**
- **Development and maintenance of minimum industry standards**
- **Communities of Expert Practitioners (CEP)**
- **Very close similarities in definitions and concepts**

CHARTER

**ELIZABETH THE SECOND by the Grace
of God of the UK of Great Britain and ... of
Our other Realms and Territories Queen,
Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of
the Faith: To all to whom these Presents
shall come, Greeting!**

**WHEREAS His Majesty King Edward the
7th in the year of our Lord 1902 by Royal
Charter dated 4 November in the 2nd year
of His Reign constituted a Body Corporate
and Politic by the name of "X Y Z"
(hereinafter referred to as "the Institute")
with perpetual succession and a Common
Seal**

The object for which the Institute is established and incorporated is the promotion and advancement of the efficient administration of commerce, industry and public affairs by the continued development of the study and practice of Secretaryship and administration of companies and other bodies...

International situation

- **Many oldest (current) professional bodies - origins in the UK (previous Commonwealth, going back to 1800s) – governed by Royal Charter**
- **Most active - examples:**
 - **Accountants**
 - **Auditors**
 - **Bankers**
 - **Insurance**
 - **HR**
 - **Governance Professionals (Company Secretaries, Risk Managers, Compliance Officers)**

International context

- **Professional bodies catering for Accountants:**
- **Chartered Accountant bodies**
- **Certified Public Accountants**
- **Management Accountants**
- **Bookkeepers and technicians**
- **Similar modus operandi in UK, Hong Kong, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Malaysia, Singapore – Africa north of SADC, India, Sri Lanka, Mauritius and Pakistan**

Professional Qualifications

- **Professional bodies - internationally - protective of “their” qualifying schemes**
- **Entry level courses usually generic**
- **Higher levels characterised by knowledge, information & competencies that are very specific to the industry**
- **Larger professions (eg CAs) - able to influence the University offerings to meet their needs – see the few accredited SA University BComs that are accepted for the CA graduate requirement**

Smaller Professional Bodies

- **More specialised**
- **Niche orientation in some cases**
- **Public offerings are too general (generic)**
- **Higher levels require additional knowledge and competency requirements**
- **Mix and match – where higher levels constitute the specific professional body requirement – as it has determined from its industry**
- **University degree plus board examination**

The missing & problem bits

- **Information critical to that occupation**
- **Research based – theoretical, generic**
- **Dated**
- **Not directly connected to the workplace**
- **Monolithic & inflexible, servicing a critically dynamic occupational environment**

Professional Body Qualifying Schemes

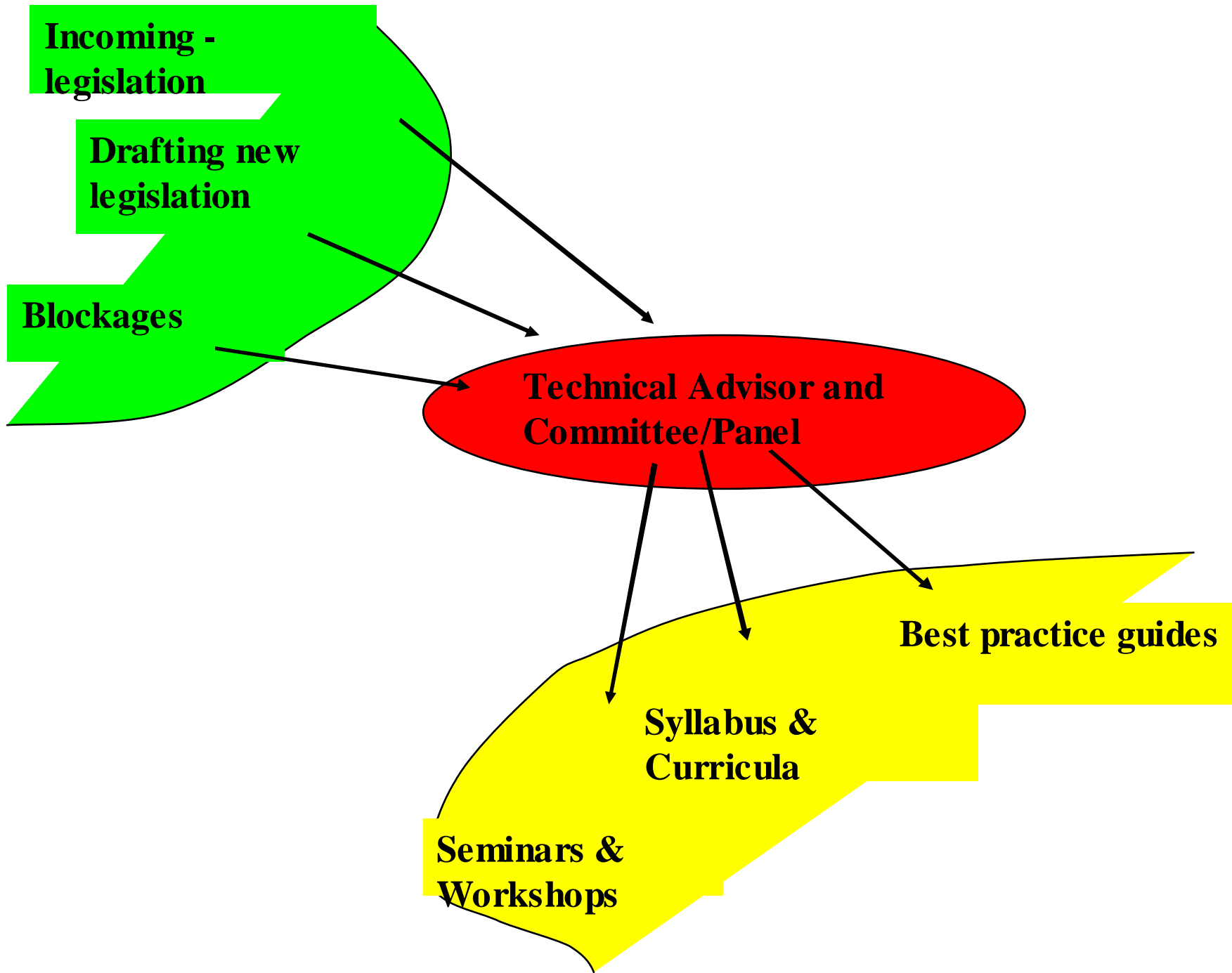
- **Common, usable subject areas in the entry levels – NQF 5 (previous notations)**
 - **Communication**
 - **Information Technology**
 - **Accounting 1 and 2**
 - **Management Principles**
 - **Economics**
 - **Commercial or Business Law**

Higher levels

- **Qualification content more directly linked to occupation requirements**
- **Determined by workplace practitioners – not academics**
- **Regularly updated via structures set up to scan the operating environment, including latest legislation**
- **Such a structure – Technical Advisory Committee & Panel**

Technical Committee

- **Chaired by industry expert - practitioner**
- **Salaried position – highly paid**
- **Sets up networking committee structure**
- **Processes new developments – comments on draft legislation - proactive**
- **Research and development**
- **Helps develop new legislation and enabling laws – sits on relevant committees (ie King)**
- **Outcomes: made accessible to practitioners – seminars, workshops, curriculum development, best practice guides**



Technical and new information

- **Brought speedily & efficiently into use by practitioners – in the workplace**
- **Critical role of CPD**
- **Vital feedback role of professional structures that feed back requirements to practitioners and into syllabus and curricula**
- **See handout – Red Flag Law; Technical Newsletter; Flow diagram – Technical Com**

Complementary

- **Activities of professional bodies complement the formal academic world**
- **The QA structures should & could embrace the work of the professional bodies and there should be an interweaving of the generic academic, formal “national qualifications” with the work-related, industry specific professional qualifying schemes**

Quality Assurance

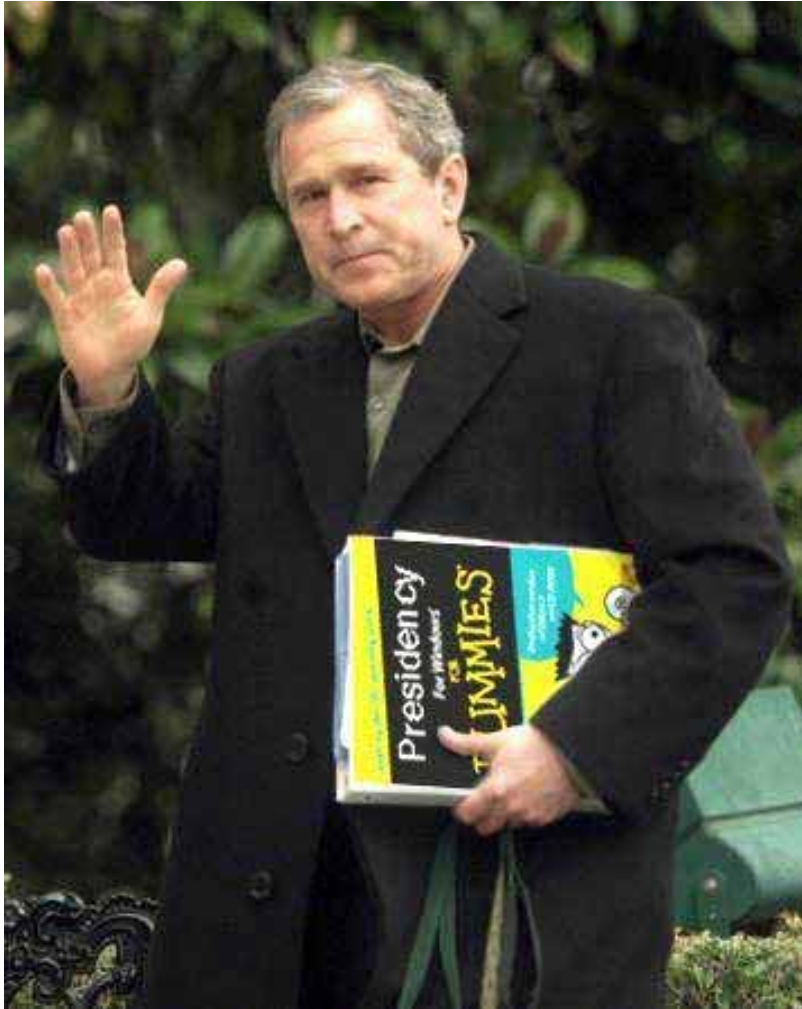
- **Our experience until recently has been increasing marginalisation and isolation**
- **Seen to be in competition with the universities – rather than complementary and developmental at the coal face**
- **QA – most professional bodies have never queried the current QA structures as set up by SAQA – the ETQA structures, SGBs, etc – have in fact embraced them and tried to work with them**

Quality Assurance 2

- **Many qualifications on the NQF - generated by professional bodies – likewise learnerships**
- **A significant role is the accreditation of providers and workplace learning environments – for offerings servicing that profession**
- **In some instances this works with great success (ie the FASSET model and environment)**

Quality Assurance 3

- **Central problem - regulations re the split of tuition provision and the final examination of professional qualifying schemes**
- **Weakening of the role and functionality of professional bodies - contributed to their ambivalent status on the NQF**
- **Welcome the SAQA research investigation and the latest developments concerning the quality council for trade and occupations**



“One of the great things about books is sometimes there are some fantastic pictures.”

*George W Bush, US News & World Report,
3 January 2000*