Setting standards for Planners: the South African Council for Planners' Standards and Competencies Process

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1

Content

- *Introduction*
- *Competencies and Standards Project*
- *Competencies*
- *Practical Training*

Introduction

SACPLAN

Statutory Council established in terms of the Planning Profession Act, 2002 (Act 36 of 2002) (PPA) for the Planning Profession

SACPLAN

- *Section 6(3) of PPA provides for establishment of an Education and Training Committee.*

- *Committee must advise or assist the Council on all educational, training, skills development and related matters.*

Contextualising the Planning Profession in South African

- *Looking Back*
  - *Initiated during colonial years*
  - *Planning worked hand in hand with state to achieve overarching goal of spatially (economically and socially) segregated development and communities*
  - *Profession severely discredited*
  - *Planning identified as one of the priority areas of Joint Initiative for Priority Skills Acquisition (JIPSA)*

Contextualising the Planning Profession in South African Cont.

- *Looking Forward – Contextual factors regarding future role, function, importance*
  - *Level of economic inequality*
  - *Level of consumption of fossil fuels in high*
  - *Becoming a predominantly urban orientated society*
  - *Legacy of influx control and racial segregation have negative impact*
  - *Large parts of population live in place with low economic potential*

Competencies and Standards Project

Competencies and Standards Project

Background

- Ongoing transformation since 1994 and implications of need for planning to be "re-invented"

- Three stages
  - Status Quo and analysis
    - Sourcing of different research initiatives for extracting core issues
    - Determination of international experience in relation to competencies
  - Generation of Competencies with NQF levels
    - Preparation of clear competencies for different registration levels
    - Hierarchy of competencies
  - Credits and standards
   - Categories of registration; Job profiling; RPL; CPD; Exam

Project deliverables

- Guidelines for curriculum development.
- Guidelines for registration.
- Frameworks that will inform the Occupation Specific Dispensation (OSD) as well as the Organising Framework of Occupations (OFO)
- Identification and development of legislative amendments to the PPA (2002); Regulations and Rules.
- Development of Accreditation Criteria for planning programmes and schools.
- Development of a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) policy and procedure.
- Development of an Examination System(s) as part of the Registration Process.

Extent of Competency and Standards Project
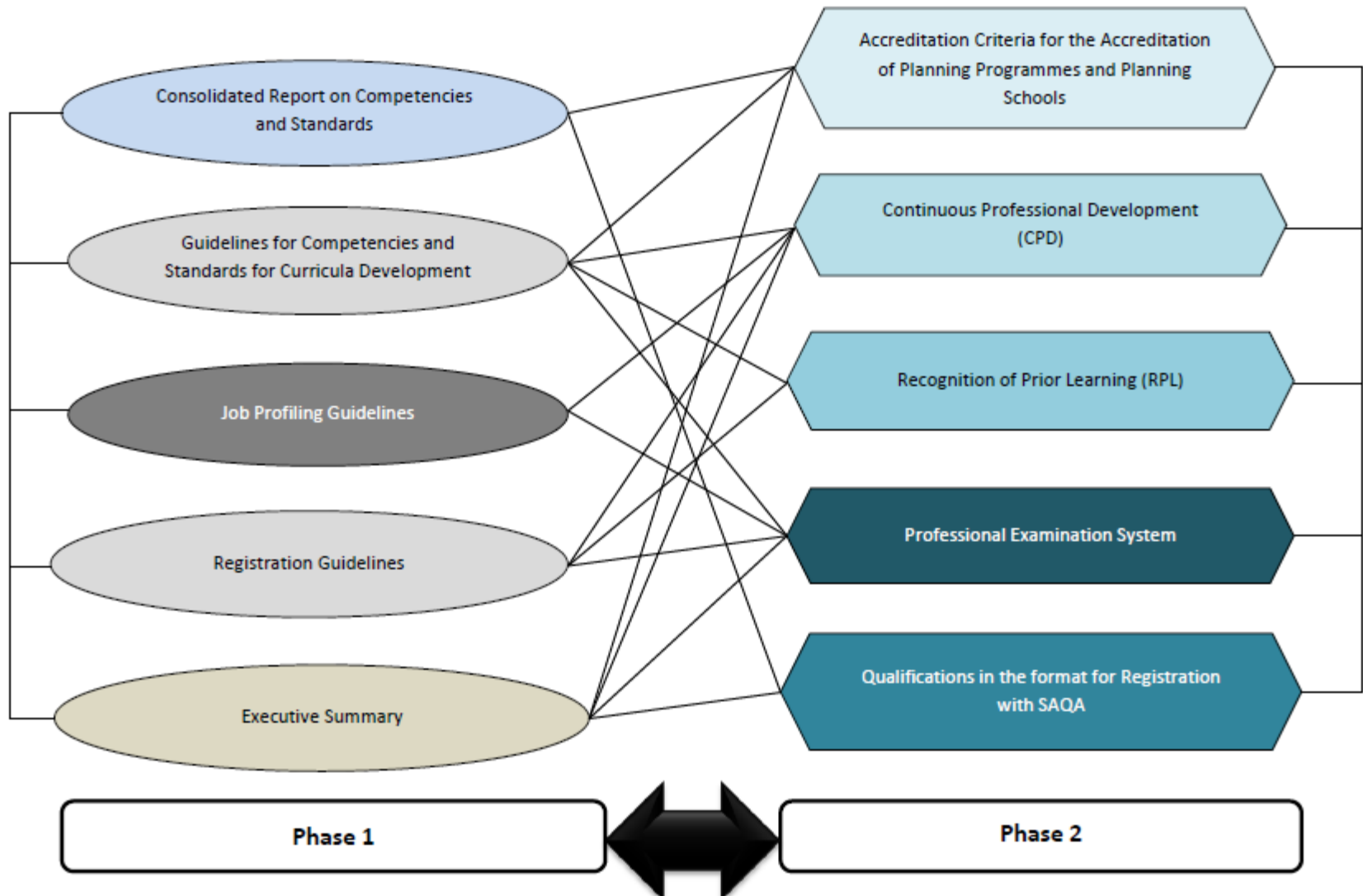
General observations related to competencies and standards

- Attempts in defining competencies in the past have been characterised by difficulties and problems.
- Recent work did not address the issue to define outcomes for each level of academic qualification and work experience.
- Attempts to date are not aligned to SAQA and NEQF requirements.
- Such attempts do not represent a clear or seamless interface between competencies, accreditation and registration.
- Lack of vision, description of the role of Planners and work description in terms of the profession's domain.

General observations related to competencies and standards Cont.

- Lack of reciprocal agreements with foreign institutes and professional bodies
- Absence of a benchmark professional examination as part of registration process
- Need for introduction of CPD centered on individual
- Formulation of competencies and standards must be viewed as a 'package' inclusive of: accreditation standards; academic requirements; practical work; registration routes; RPL; categories of professional registration; application of registration criteria; guidelines for international reciprocity; competencies and job profiling to support Planning Profession; clear vision of planning work and what planners do and identification of specific planning work.

Competencies

15

Competencies

- *Competencies are the amalgam of knowledge, skills and behaviours / attitudes deemed to be required by a planner on graduation and as applied in practice.*

- For the purpose of the planning profession in South Africa, three inter-related sets of competencies have been identified. These are:

  - ➢ Generic
  - ➢ Core
  - ➢ Functional

Generic, Core and Functional Competencies

- **Generic competencies:** the essential skills, attributes and behaviours which are considered important for all planners, regardless of their function or level. Generic competencies are the basic competencies that are common in all the built and natural environment disciplines.

- **Core competencies:** the set of specific knowledge, skills, abilities, or experience that a Planner must possess in order to successfully perform the work and activities that are central to professional planning practice. Distinguishes planning from the other built and natural environment and development professions with which planning interfaces.

- **Functional competencies:** the basic skills and behaviour that are needed to do a job successfully. Relate to "how to do" aspects of planning; focus strongly on techniques and methodologies.

Spread and levels of competency

- Three sets of competencies are mandatory for training and education of all categories of planners; expected to be covered in each curriculum at one level or another .
- Three (3) levels of competency proposed:
  - **Level 1** "*Awareness of and basic understanding of terminology and concepts; and ability to source further information and insights when required in the work environment*" (typical of NQF level 6 – Diploma level)
  - **Level 2** "Have a g*ood understanding of a field of knowledge, or an ability to apply a methodology*" (typical of NQF level 7 – Three year Bachelor Degree level);
  - **Level 3** "Be able to *apply or engage with the area of competency with increasing degree of mastery and sophistication*" (typical of NQF levels 8 and 9 – Honours or Masters Degree).

Competencies and Planning School programmes

- Planning Schools decide which level is appropriate for each competency for its programmes using a simple table; and how to allocate credits across all courses.

- Each institution will be able to develop its curriculum (modules) and should indicate to SACPLAN (during Accreditation) how the required minimum credits per level have been addressed between and within the different modules.

- Any accredited qualification must devote at least 65% of its credit points to courses delivering Core or Functional competencies as defined in the Guidelines.
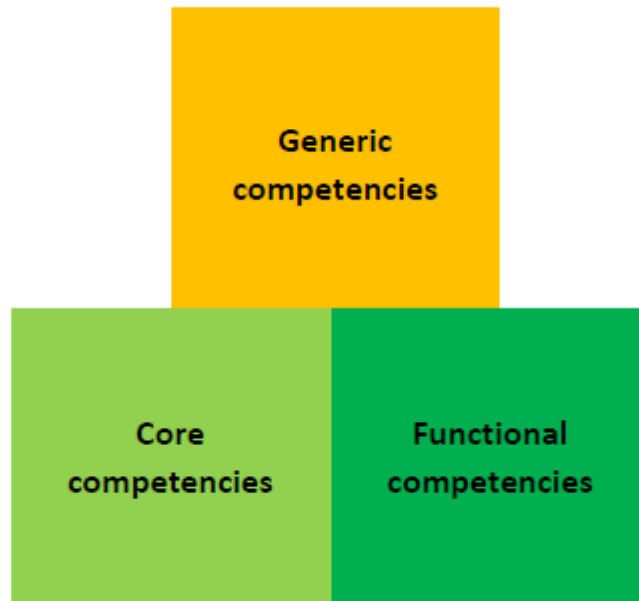
SACPLAN Classification Footprint for Competencies

Footprint of Generic Competencies

Critical thinking	Issue identification	Problem solving	Research and analysis	Innovation and creativity	Societal and political awareness	Strategic thinking
Interpersonal	Integrity and trust	Diversity and inclusiveness	Collaboration and consensus	Change management		
Communication	Listening	Written and oral communication and presentation	Information and knowledge	Information and technology	Societal and political awareness	Internal and external communication
Leadership and management	Vision and leadership	Responsiveness and influence	Team building	Climate of excellence	Managing resources and results	Project management
Professionalism	Continuous learning	Ethical standards	Professionalism			
Social responsibility	Legal responsibility	Community activism	Leaderships and participation			

Performance Outcomes for Generic Competencies

Footprint for Core Competencies

Settlement history and theory	Planning theory	Planning sustainable cities and regions	Urban planning and place making
Regional development and planning	Public policy institutional and legal frameworks	Environmental planning and management	Land use and infrastructure planning
Transport planning and systems	Land economics	Integrated development planning	Social theories related to planning and development

Research

Settlement history and theory	History of settlement	Planning history	Urban and rural development theory and processes	Informality		
Planning theory	Theory of planning	Land use theory	Urban planning theory	Rural planning theory	Spatial theory	Ecological and environmental theory
Planning sustainable cities and regions	Principles methods and practice for sustainable cities etc.	Concepts of sustainability, relevance and application in urban and regional planning	Local Agenda 21	Rural planning theory	Sustainability indicators and assessment	Principles, methods and practice for sustainable cities etc.
Urban planning and place making	Theories of urban structure	Theories and city design approaches	Theories of spatial change	Principles of layout design	Principles of land use management	
Regional development and planning	Regional development theory	Regional policy	Regional planning practice	Development planning	Regional development theory	
Public policy institutional and legal frameworks	Public policy	Governance and community participation	Planning law	Comparative planning systems	Professional practice	
Environmental planning and management	Natural systems	Environmental management and planning	Climate change	Sustainability	Natural systems	
Land use and infrastructure planning	Land use analysis and planning	Infrastructure planning				

Performance Outcomes Core Competencies (1)

Transport planning and systems	Theories, processes and methods of transportation	Interaction between transport, land use, environment and infrastructure	Sustainable transport	
Land economics	Economic development	Land economics	Access to land	Property development process
Integrated development planning	Integrated development planning processes (international and South African context)	South African IDP		
Social theories related to planning and development	Geographical aspects of planning	Sociological aspects of planning	Anthropological aspects of planning	
Research	Research methodology	Research reports and papers	Research methodology	

Performance Outcome for Core Competencies (2)

Footprint Functional Competencies

Survey and Analysis	Surveys	Analysis and synthesis	Mapping, GIS and computer aided design (CAD)	Technology planning		
Strategic assessment	Land use and tenure analysis	Socio economic and demographic analysis	Physical and environmental analysis	Infrastructure and public services analysis	Spatial analysis	Institutional and stakeholder analysis	Land use and tenure analysis
Local area planning	City-wide analysis and planning	Local area analysis	Local area planning				
Layout planning	Site analysis	Layout planning and site planning					
Plan administration, implementation and land use management	Land use management	Planning schemes	Development controls	Planning applications			
Participation and facilitation	Participation processes	Facilitation	Township development				
Plan making	Integrated development planning	Strategic planning (including Scenario planning)	Spatial planning	Dispute resolution	Negotiations		

Performance Outcomes of Functional Competencies

Practical Training

Practical Training

- The Act requires 24 months of practical training, which can only commence after the candidate has completed the necessary planning qualification. Exceptions to this are only permitted with Council approval. The purpose of this practical training:
  - To ensure that before registration, a person develops (or demonstrates) the ability and achieves competency in applying theoretical concepts and academic knowledge of the nature of professional responsibility, and
  - To obtain experience in practical planning and to gain knowledge of the nature of professional responsibility.
- Based on Core and Functional competencies, Council has identified 33 types of planning work. For purposes of practical training these are divided into four categories:
- A -   Survey and research
- B -   Plan formulation
- C -   Plan implementation and administration
- D -   Other types of planning work in related fields

Practical training:
Category A - Survey and Research

- Planning surveys and analysis

- Operational surveys

- Data collection, compilation, analysis and interpretation

- Development potential evaluation

- Planning research

- Academic work (further studies, teaching, publications)

Practical training:
Category B - Plan formulation

- Policy formulation
- Strategic spatial planning
- Spatial planning at different scales and in different contexts (see Figure 2 in Competency Guidelines)
  - National
  - Regional
  - Sub-regional
  - Urban
  - Rural
  - Local
- Layout plans, township plans, land development plans
- Land use planning
- Housing and informal settlement upgrading
- Rural development
- Integrated development planning

Practical training:
Category C - Plan implementation and administration

- Land use management
- Land use schemes
- Preparing, motivating and evaluating applications in terms of land use schemes
- Development control
- Consent use in terms of statutory requirements
- Administration and co-ordination of development applications
- Appeals
- Planning law
- Plan evaluation
- Management of development processes
- Site planning

Practical training:
Category D – Other planning work in related fields

- Facilitation, negotiation, mediation and arbitration
- Environmental management
- Urban design
- Transportation planning
- Infrastructure planning
- Property development and management
- Project management
- Corporate strategic planning
- Project development and business plans
- Other planning work

Use of Competencies and Standards Guidelines

- Educational institutions to design their curricula for planning qualifications;

- SACPLAN to accredit and monitor these qualifications;

- SACPLAN to monitor the qualifications and experience of Planning Educators on these degree/diploma programmes;

- Unregistered Planners to determine what additional credits or qualifications they need; and

- Employers for job profiling.

Thank you
Obrigado

Reinventing Planning,
Changing Lives

This presentation / paper is part of the South African Planning Education / SAPER project