
LEARNERSHIPS EXPLAINED – FAQ'S

Chartered Secretaries Southern Africa is pleased to announce that a learnership has been registered for the Board Level Programme (NQF7).

What is a learnership? A Learnership is a vocational education and training programme to facilitate the linkage between structured learning and work experience in order to obtain a registered qualification. It combines theory and workplace practice into a qualification that is registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

A Learnership usually constitutes 120+ credits or 1200+ "notional" hours of learning, which is equivalent to a one-year full-time college or university course.

How do I get on a learnership? Please note that FASSET learnerships are only available to previously disadvantaged individuals (Black, Coloured and Indian or disabled individuals) who are South African citizens.

If you are currently employed, and there is a learnership that you believe would benefit you in your occupation, you can approach your training committee in your company or your manager/supervisor /HR department to ask them if they would consider running that learnership at your workplace.

If you are unemployed, there are training service providers who do train people on learnerships. They may help you find an employer where you will gain the workplace experience.

The Institute occasionally receives requests from employers regarding people to train. These companies' details will be placed on the learnership page on the website and you will have to contact the company directly in this regard. The Institute cannot facilitate this.

How does a learnership in South Africa work? Companies form a relationship with an accredited tuition provider, and the trainer either comes to the workplace (if there are enough learners), or the learners attend a training programme run by the training provider. The company can also provide the training itself.

Do I get paid while I'm on the learnership? If you're employed when you start your learnership, then your employer will pay your normal salary and should provide you with the time to attend training.

And if I'm unemployed? If you were unemployed when you started, then the employer will give you an employment contract for the period of your learnership. You will be paid a stipend – this will not be equivalent to a full time salary but should at least cover your transport and meals. There's no guarantee at the end of the learnership that the company will employ you. However, if you are one of the top students in the learnership, it's highly likely that the employer may want to take you on as a full-time employee.

What are the entry requirements?

1. Academic requirement: For the Board Learnership, you must have completed CIS Programme 3, or you must have a B. Comm. or LLB from an accredited Tertiary institution.

2. Employment: You need to contact an Accredited Workplace Provider (AWP) close to where you are with regards to employment as a trainee company secretary. The Institute is not able to place you with an employer. The AWP will register you on a Chartered Secretaries Southern Africa Learnership, usually after a trial period. You are expected to sign and forward a Learnership Agreement and all other Learnership application documents through to Chartered Secretaries Southern Africa, for further registration with FASSET.

What's the likelihood of my finding employment with another employer? When the government set up the skills development structures and NQF, one of the principles was portability. The idea being that you can take your qualification with you – it's portable. And because the NQF provides the level, other employers can tell immediately what level of qualification you have. And sometimes, qualifications can be moved across industries.

How do I benefit and what are the advantages for me, of learnerships? Because a learnership provides you with a qualification that is directly related to the work you are doing, you gain a better understanding of the theory behind what you are doing (the why of your occupation), which will improve your personal performance, and give you the opportunity to study further, or be promoted.