

## The New Education Dispensation

The new outcomes based educational framework for estate agents is contained in the Regulations Relating to the Standard of Training of Estate Agents which was published in the Government Gazette on 4 June 2008 and came into operation on 15 July 2008.

All new estate agents entering the estate agency profession for the first time as from 15 July 2008 must serve a compulsory one-year internship period working under the active supervision and control of a principal state agent, or of a full status estate agent, who must have at least three years practical experience. A mentor-protégé relationship will thus be created. The intern estate agent must also keep a logbook (also referred to as a 'Portfolio of Evidence') reflecting the various estate agency functions and activities that have been undertaken and performed during the course of the internship period.

The intern estate agent is required to complete the Further Education and Training Certificate: Real Estate, a qualification that is intended to enhance the provision of entry-level service within the property and real estate professions and to provide the broad knowledge, skills and values needed in the property and real estate environment. The intern estate agent may be certificated against the Qualification after undergoing training through an accredited education provider or by way of the Recognition of Prior Learning route.

It is expected that, after having served as an intern estate agent for a continuous period of 12 months, the newcomer will attain the same degree of knowledge, skills and practical ability as estate agents who have already been active in the profession for quite some time. The new educational dispensation is carefully designed to ensure that the theoretical knowledge acquired in the classroom and the practical experience gained in the workplace complement one another to provide a head start to success by introducing newcomers as painlessly as possible to the exciting new career that awaits them.

New entrants wishing to act as principal estate agents must be certificated against the National Certificate: Real Estate. This qualification not only adds value to the understanding of the property and real estate sector by principal estate agency practitioners but also enhances their appreciation of the practical functionalities occurring within the workplace. The qualification is also intended to build on the skills that have been gained in the Level 4 qualification and will, essentially, consolidate the broad knowledge, skills and values required in the property and real estate profession. The new entrant may, similarly, be certificated against the qualification after undergoing training through an accredited education provider or by way of the Recognition of Prior Learning route.

The completion of the Further Education and Training Certificate: Real Estate or the National Certificate: Real Estate, as the case may be, constitutes a precondition for admission by the professional estate agent to the Professional Designation Examination ("PDE") which is a practical and integrated test of knowledge for estate agents that will be conducted by the Estate Agency Affairs Board. The PDE is the final test of the estate agent's ability practically to implement and apply the learning that has been achieved and successful candidates will be awarded a certificate of professional recognition by the Board.

A continuing professional development programme will also be implemented in accordance with current best practice requirements in most world-wide real estate regulatory jurisdictions. One of the major intentions of the Board in introducing outcomes based education for estate agents was to raise societal perceptions of estate agents to professional status. It is increasingly accepted that members of a profession should maintain their professional standing through continuing professional education and development.