



**COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT
NO. 2 OF 2025**

29 SEPTEMBER 2025

**UPGRADING OF THE QUALIFICATIONS OF THE
UNQUALIFIED GRADE R PRACTITIONERS
EMPLOYED IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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1. PURPOSE OF THIS AGREEMENT

- 1.1 The purpose of this Collective Agreement is to provide measures for the upgrading of the qualifications of South African Grade R practitioners who are appointed in public schools and who do not meet the minimum qualification requirements for appointment into educator posts.

2. SCOPE AND APPLICATION OF THIS AGREEMENT

- 2.1 The employer, as defined in the Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998 as amended;
- 2.2 All the unqualified Grade R Practitioners as defined in this agreement employed in public schools, whether such are members of trade unions parties to this agreement or not.
- 2.3 All trade unions admitted to the ELRC whether such trade union is a party to this agreement or not; The Trade Unions in the Education Sector; and
- 2.4 All trade unions not admitted to the ELRC that utilise the services of the ELRC in terms of the ELRC Constitution.

3. THE PARTIES TO THE COUNCIL NOTE AS FOLLOWS:

- 3.1 The Basic Education Laws Amendment (BELA) Act was promulgated into law on 14 January 2025. The Act provides for the compulsory introduction of Grade R as a reception grade in the Basic Education Sector.
- 3.2 The minimum qualification requirement for employment in Grade R teaching is a professional teaching qualification evaluated at Relative Education Qualification Value (REQV) 13, which must include a Diploma in Grade R Teaching or a Bachelor of Education in Foundation Phase (BEEd).
- 3.3 Primarily, Grade R practitioners are appointed temporarily on a contractual basis, and some do not have minimum requirements to be appointed to posts as educators.
- 3.4 The temporary appointment of the unqualified practitioners refers to the practitioners on REQV 10, 11 and 12 and whose qualifications are Grade 12.
- 3.5 This agreement addresses the defined category of Grade R Practitioners appointed in public schools who are professionally unqualified but eligible or meet the minimum requirements to be admitted into a professional

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teaching qualification. These Grade R Practitioners generally hold a qualification at NQF level 4 and 5).

4. THE PARTIES TO THE COUNCIL FURTHER NOTE THE FOLLOWING POLICY POSITIONS REGARDING THE APPOINTMENT OF EDUCATORS IN THE SCHOOLING SYSTEM/PUBLIC SCHOOLS

4.1 The policy on the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications (MRTEQ) sets the minimum qualifications for the appointment of Grade R teachers as a Diploma in Grade R Teaching and the Bachelor of Education in the Foundation Phase.

4.2 Paragraph B.3.2.1 of the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) provides for the minimum qualifications, statutory requirements and experience required for appointment in education as follows:

4.2.1 REQV 13 (A recognised three-year qualification, which includes a professional teacher education);

4.2.2 Registration with the South African Council of Educators (SACE); and

4.2.3 Basic Knowledge of the subject/programme/phases provided for in the professional qualification.

4.3 Section 1 of the South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No. 84 of 1996), '**basic education**' includes *Grade R* to Grade 12, as evidenced in the National Curriculum Statement.

4.4 Currently, higher education institutions offer two different routes with respect to Initial Teacher Education (ITE):

4.4.1 a Bachelor of Education (B Ed) degree or

4.4.2 a bachelor's degree that includes approved teaching subjects, capped with a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE).

5. THE PARTIES TO THE COUNCIL THEREFORE AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES OF GRADE R PRACTITIONERS FOR THE PURPOSES OF DIFFERENTIATION

5.1 Grade R Practitioners without NQF Level 4 who do not meet the minimum requirements to be admitted into a professional teaching qualification (All ages).

5.2 Grade R Practitioners who are currently studying and funded by the PEDs or are self-funded (No age restriction – up to age 65 years).

5.3 Grade R Practitioners who are at NQF Level 4 and 5 who are eligible to study or meet the requirements to be admitted into a professional teaching qualification and are below 60 years of age but are not willing to study.

5.4 Grade R Practitioners who are at NQF Level 4 and 5 who are eligible to study or meet the requirements to be admitted into a professional teaching qualification and are below 60 years of age and are willing to study.

5.5 Grade R practitioners **between the ages of 55 and 60 years, who are eligible to study or meet the minimum** requirements to be admitted into a professional teaching qualification, and are willing to study.

6. ACCEPTANCE AND EXCLUSION FROM TARGETED SUPPORT FOR THE PURPOSE OF UPGRADING THE QUALIFICATIONS:

6.1. Acceptance to the Upgrading Programme for funding purposes

6.1.1 The employer will provide funding to the following categories of Practitioners:

6.1.1.1 Grade R practitioners who are at NQF Level 4 and 5 who are not studying but are eligible or meet the minimum requirements to be admitted into a professional teaching qualification; and are aged below 60 years.

6.1.1.2 Grade R practitioners who are currently studying and self funded. This funding will apply to practitioners who are currently in their first to the third year of study.

6.2. Exclusion from the upgrading programme for funding purposes

6.2.1 Categories to be Excluded from the Upgrading Programme for the purposes of Funding:

6.2.1.1. Grade R Practitioners **without NQF Level 4 who do not meet the minimum requirements to be admitted into a professional teaching qualification (all ages).**

6.2.1.2. Grade R Practitioners **who are currently studying and funded by the PEDs (Up to age 60 years).**

6.2.1.3. Grade R Practitioners who are at **NQF Level 4 and 5 who are eligible to study or meet the requirements** to be admitted into a professional teaching qualification **and are below 55 years of age but are not willing to study.**

6.2.1.4. Grade R practitioners **between the ages of 60 and 65 years, who are eligible to study or meet the minimum** requirements to be admitted into a professional teaching qualification and are willing to study.

6.2.1.5. Grade R practitioners who are self-funded/ excluded from PED funding due to a breach of contract or terms and conditions of the employer's (PED and/ or any other funders) funding previously offered to him/her.

7. MEASURES REGARDING THE CONTINUOUS EMPLOYMENT OF CERTAIN EXCLUDED CATEGORIES

7.1. The employment contracts of the following categories of Grade R Practitioners will not be renewed once they have lapsed:

- 7.1.1. All Grade R practitioners who are not in possession of NQF Level 4 qualification.
- 7.1.2. Grade R Practitioners who are at **NQF Level 4 and 5 who are eligible to study or meet the requirements** to be admitted into a professional teaching qualification **and are below 55 years of age but are not willing to study.**

8. FUNDING AND CONDITIONS

- 8.1 The Employer shall make funding available for upgrading the qualifications of NQF Level 4 and NQF Level 5 Grade R practitioners including those that are already in the system and self funded.
- 8.2 Funding will commence with the first intake in 2026.
- 8.3 Practitioners will be afforded five (5) years to complete their studies.
- 8.4 The employer shall not pay for the repeated modules.
- 8.5 Grade R practitioners who are awarded a bursary should adhere to the conditions of the bursary.

9. PROCESS:

- 9.1 The Employer shall sign a Memorandum of Understanding with identified universities.
- 9.2 The Employer shall provide the numbers and the personal details of the identified potential students to universities for enrolment.
- 9.3 Parties to Council as determined by the General Secretary, shall from time to time track the progress of the performance of the students and report back to the Council.

10. ADOPTION AND DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION


This Agreement shall, in respect of parties and non-parties, come into effect on the date it is signed in Council.

11. DISPUTE RESOLUTION


Any dispute arising from the provisioning of this agreement shall be referred to the ELRC for resolution.

12. SIGNING OF THIS COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT


Thus, done and signed at Centurion on the 29 day of September 2025.

H. M. M. 

ON BEHALF OF THE EMPLOYER

DEPARTMENT	NAME	SIGNATURE
DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION	H.M.MWELI	

ON BEHALF OF THE EMPLOYEE PARTIES

TRADE UNION	NAME	SIGNATURE
SADTU	MUGWENA MALULEKE	
CTU-ATU	MABISA. M	