

DRAFT BURSARY POLICY IN RESPECT OF TARGETING THE ACQUISITION OF SCARCE SKILLS TO BOOST THE EMPLOYMENT PROFILE OF THE EMNAMBITHI/LADYSMITH MUNICIPALITY

1. DEFINITIONS

Scarce skills

The term 'scarce skill' refers to those occupations that are characterized by a scarcity of qualified and experienced people (current and anticipated). In other words, occupations in which numerical imbalances exist in employment because of a difference between the demand for and the supply of skills.

Critical skill

The term 'critical skill' refers to particular elements of an occupation, or the qualitative deficiencies that may exist or develop in the skills apparatus of the existing workforce.

A skills need may arise from the business environment and the labour market situation. The skills needs of the sector can be seen in terms of the need for new workers, the development of skills in critical skills areas, and the rectifying and prevention of the formation of skills gaps.

Skills gap

The municipality needs to ensure that the flow of new entrants into the labour market is sufficient to fill new employment opportunities as well as to replace workers who leave the labour market or the sector. A large enough flow of new entrants to the labour market will prevent the development of new areas of scarcity and the exacerbation of existing skills shortages.

National Scarce Skills List

Scarce skills as defined in the National Scarce Skills List, 2006, ASGISA aligned, Department of Labour.

Employment Equity

The population group (including race, gender and disability) composition of new entrants in the labour market is of critical importance to the attainment of transformation and equity objectives within the municipality and as envisaged by the Employment Equity Act, 1998.

Skills Development

Skills development as articulated in terms of the Integrated Human Resource Development Strategy of South Africa and the Skills Development Act, 1999.

Bursary

A form of financial assistance to learners and students to acquire scarce skills from institutions of higher learning.

2. PREAMBLE

This municipality, like other municipalities in the country, acknowledge that the lack of skills available within its communities, may prejudice or compromise the quality of service delivery to the people it purports to serve. Scarce skills in the field of Financial Management, Information Technology, Engineering and Town Planning will continue to hamper human resource development within the municipality unless mechanisms are put in place to address such challenges.

3. OBJECTIVES

The Emnambithi/Ladysmith Municipality is fully committed to improve the quality of life of all its residents, and to further fulfil the requirements of both the Employment Equity Act, 1998 and the Skills Development Act, 1999 in terms of its integrated human resource policy.

It is the objective of the municipality to embark on a programme that will afford historically disadvantaged individuals who are domicilized within the Emnambithi/Ladysmith municipal area an opportunity to pursue their education at tertiary level and advance themselves in areas as identified as priority areas by the municipality with the following in, mind:

- 3.1** To afford selected individuals the opportunity to serve the municipality by the acquisition of scarce skills as identified.
- 3.2** Provide opportunity to candidates who have the potential but who lack the financial resources to proceed to tertiary education.

- 3.3 Develop in disadvantaged communities with particular emphasis in building capacity and economic empowerment, and to enable them to compete favourably in the labour market.
- 3.4 Specifically address the shortage of skills that are scarce and yet in demand.
- 3.5 Build the capacity the municipality in terms of the employment equity and skills development.

4. SELECTION CRITERIA

The Council will sponsor a certain number of learners with the highest pass rate who are domiciled within the municipal area of jurisdiction from time to time.

To qualify for assistance, each learner must:

- 4.1 Have passed Grade 12 at a public, private or independent school.
- 4.2 Be selected in terms of the Employment Equity Act, 1998.
- 4.3 Be between the ages of 16 and 25.
- 4.4 Have no financial means with his/her intended studies. In this regard, parents or guardians of the applicants must furnish the Council with full information pertaining to their financial circumstances together with documentary proof.
- 4.5 Furnish Council with satisfactory proof of enrolment or acceptance for the course at a recognised institution.

5. CONDITIONS

The learner will enter into a contract of agreement with the Emnambithi/Ladysmith Municipality.

- 5.1 The learner will undertake:
 - 5.1.1 To register at a institution of higher learning as identified by the municipality in pursuit of the acquisition of scarce skills; the duration of academic study will be in accordance with the prescribed requirements of the institution.
 - 5.1.2 To furnish the municipality with official proof of examination results within two weeks after every semester, and after such results have been posted by the institution;

- 5.1.3** Not to change the course of study, or migrate from one module to another, without prior arrangement and approval of the municipality.
- 5.1.4** To complete the course of study within the stipulated period as indicated in the contract and as prescribed by the institution; in the event of repeating certain modules, the learner be given a second opportunity to do so, and failing which, the municipality is compelled to terminate the contract of study.
- 5.1.5** Not to substitute the institution in the contract of agreement without the consent of the municipality.
- 5.1.6** To attend all classes as prescribed by the institution for the duration of the study programme.
- 5.1.7** To notify the municipality about any failure to attend classes for more than five days.
- 5.1.8** To accept the grant of leave of absence in terms of the Conditions of Service of the municipality.
- 5.1.9** To serve the municipality for a minimum period of five years after the completion of the study programme.
- 5.2** The municipality will:
 - 5.2.1** Be responsible for the payment of admission fees, tuition and examination fees, boarding and lodging and study material as prescribed by the institution.
 - 5.2.2** Terminate the contract if the learner is expelled from the institution for reasons relating conduct or capacity, unsatisfactory progress in class and examination level, or has failed to meet the minimum requirements laid down the municipality.
 - 5.2.3** Provide the learner with the necessary experiential training as prescribed by the institution.
 - 5.2.4** Call upon the learner, who in its opinion, without justifications, fails to complete his/her studies/examinations set for the year in respect of which he/she received financial assistance, to repay the whole or part thereof.
 - 5.2.5** Not be obliged to employ the learner after the completion of his/her studies if there are no vacant positions, but he/she may apply for a relevant advertised post in the municipality.

6. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

- 6.1** The Council will be responsible for the payment of all fees for academic studies, boarding and lodging and study material as prescribed by the institution.
- 6.2** Financial assistance will be annually renewable, subject to satisfactory annual progress and behavioural reports until the learner completes the course of study.

7. SELECTION PANEL:

The Bursary Selection Panel will be made up of the Mayor, Head of the Mayoral Office or his delegate, Chairperson of the Support Services Portfolio Committee, and secretarial services will be provided by Governance and Transformation. The Selection Panel shall interview candidates from a short-listed schedule, and recommend to Council.

8. PROCESS OF ADVERTISEMENT:

Each year the municipality will advertise its intention to acquire scarce skills through the Bursary Policy, and provide the necessary conditions and terms for such applications. Notice for application forms would be advertised in the local newspapers, all municipal pay points, libraries and community halls as well as being available from the Department of Governance and Transformation.

9. AMENDMENTS TO THE POLICY:

The Council reserves the right to amend the policy from time to time as informed by the prevailing labour needs, skills gaps and other human capital needs of the municipality.

RECOMMENDATION BY THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – MEETING HELD ON 9 JULY 2008:

That the Executive Manager Governance and Transformation forward a copy electronically to all managers for scrutiny and submit comments and inputs to the Department Governance and Transformation.

FOR CONSIDERATION

R G REDDY
EXECUTIVE MANAGER: GOVERNANCE AND TRANSFORMATION

