

# Northlink College celebrates the opening of its Centre of Specialisation Trade Test Centre

By Thozamile Thomas Mumuwu, issued by Northlink College

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Northlink College becomes the first accredited Trade Test Centre for Fitter and Turner Tradesmen. As part of protocol and norm, other TVET colleges such as college of Cape Town, False Bay College, and Tshwane South TVET College were all in attendance to act as assessors and moderators for the trade test, to ensure the objectivity of the results. Northlink College is the first college in South Africa to offer this Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) apprenticeship and enrolled the first group of 32 apprentices in 2019.



Front row, left to right: Mr Mark Cornelisse – Northlink College Wingfield campus manager; Mr Xolelo Brian Phike – CEO of Northlink College; Mr Eugene Vermaak – SEIFSA. Back row, left to right: Mr Petrus Khumalo – assessor Tshwane South TVET College; Mr Joseph September – Northlink College CoS facilitator; Mr Russel Cloete – Northlink College, HOD occupational delivery; Mr Francois Pienaar – CoS Manager Tshwane South TVET College; Mr Mario Loubser – assessor College of Cape Town; Mr Henri Mafoumba – Northlink College project manager; Mr Ronald Marais – Northlink College CoS facilitator

The launch of this centre is again improving the student's chances to enter the labour market with enhanced vocational capacities in order to promote career development and help individual students to secure sustainable and well-paying jobs. This once again brings to light the focus and the interconnectedness of Northlink TVET college to employment.

## Three-year journey to the Northlink Test centre launch

After three years of hard work, the first cohort of college students started with their trade test in fitter and turner vocation at Northlink's Wingfield campus. Wingfield campus is one of the college's three campuses hosting centres of specialisation. Other campuses include Belhar campus which focuses on electrical trade and Belville campus focusing on the boilermaking trade. Wingfield campus is however the first within Northlink college campuses and in South Africa to be certified by the QCTO as a trade test centre. Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) is a body that approves the assessment centres to conduct the integrated summative assessments, in line with the Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act 97 of 1998), and Northlink College has paved a way for other colleges to open trade fitter and turner trade test centres. Northlink college remains a leading college within the South African TVET space, with an unwavering concentration on artisan development.



When the Covid-19 pandemic presented new challenges to the traditional model of teaching and learning, new methods had to be adopted. The stringent initial hard lockdown required that learning be taken to virtual platforms, this meant that students needed to be agile and adapt to the prevailing situation and it was an amazing feat that all students pulled through this tough time to reach this milestone, said Mr Henry Mafoumba the (CoS) project manager. He added that the success of the college to pull through these hard times can be attributed to the strong relationships with its various stakeholders and the extra effort and dedication displayed by the facilitators to monitor and check that students are on track, on campus as well as at their respective employer's when required and also ensuring that they adhere to all Covid-19 protocols.

### Proud to be the first advocates in South Africa

Northlink College CEO Mr Xolelo Brian Phike expressed his profound enthusiasm about the opening of the trade centre and was happy that Northlink has become a proud advocate and pioneer in the TVET sector. He thanked all those who invested time and resources in supporting all efforts in seeing to it that the launch of the test centre was a success. He also wished well the first generation of trade test students who will be embarking on their trade test journey at Wingfield campus in March 2022. The trade test will continue throughout March until all 32 students have concluded their trade test.

The introduction of this test centre is an advancement of the college's objective of working towards focusing on trades to ready the students for the workplace. This includes constructing and maintaining strategic projects requiring high-quality and skilled South African artisans. This objective also serves to contribute to the realisation of government goals to create jobs and alleviate poverty.

The college prides itself in being the first in developing this new trade test model, that will be rolled out to other colleges in South Africa.

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