

Accounting graduate programme fuels South Africa's entrepreneurial ecosystem and empowers young graduate accountants

Issued by [SAICA](#)

20 Apr 2021

By the end of 2020, approximately 3.1 million (29,8%) out of 10,3 million young people aged 15-24 years were unemployed in South Africa, summing to an alarming 63.2% youth unemployment rate, according to Statistics South Africa (Q4:2020). This statistic is still on the rise and thus it is imperative that we can find solutions and job opportunities to guide and place unemployed youth and graduates.



Saica Enterprise Development (Saica ED)* implemented an accounting graduate training programme for 48 unemployed accounting graduates, this programme formed an integral part of the Khulisa iBiznis Programme, which was supported by JP Morgan in support of 196 small township businesses in and around Gauteng in 2020. These graduates were placed at eight small to medium practices (SMPs) to gain work experience but in addition also got the opportunity to gain insightful and practical training experience by offering accounting support to the small businesses on the Khulisa iBiznis programme.

At its core, Saica ED aims to grow South Africa's entrepreneurial ecosystem through advancing the sustainable growth of small Black businesses, which in turn will create employment opportunities. This graduate programme thus serves as both

an employment opportunity for young graduates as well as a powerful tool to empower these graduates with working experience as they offer accounting services to SMMEs. After the programme is complete these accounting graduates are eligible for the Accounting Technician AT(SA) membership, which is a designation of Saica.



EDUCATION

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Finbiz2030 SDG 4 task team, SAICA 12 Mar 2021



One of the accounting graduates based in Cosmo City, Johannesburg, Kamogelo Mahlaela says: “Before this programme, I was unemployed and did not have the skills that I currently have, I did not have the confidence to take on certain challenges and believe that I could triumph. The training programme has helped me to tackle that weakness and build strong character.”

She also adds: “I am grateful for being part of this programme as it has provided me with the platform to utilise my skills. I am captivated and inspired by the way in which this programme is contributing to the structural changes in education through addressing knowledge gaps and providing opportunities to increase employment prospects for young people.”

Added Luyolo Ngqongwa from Licksman Accounting Services: “Kamogelo worked very well at Licksman Accounting Services and she was exposed to a number of accounting and audit clients within a small space of time. She worked well within the audit team environment and she was able to blend very well with other audit clerks. The company gave her a permanent three-year audit clerk position due to her commitment, professional conduct and her technical competency.”

Together with SMPs, these accounting graduates were able to assist ailing SMMEs on the Khulisa iBiznis Programme to apply for relief funding measures available during the duration of lockdown in 2020.



ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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We look at another graduate's journey on the training programme this year, Mosa Morukhu from Kempton Park, Johannesburg. After obtaining his qualification, he was faced with the reality of being unemployed. He came across this training programme opportunity via the internet and was so proud to be accepted.

“During this programme, I learnt a lot about the professional world and how vital it is to always be ready to learn something new. With the support of the programme, I was not only able to get employed at a good accounting firm but also gained valuable experience and improved my skills and abilities,” comments Mosa.

“These ambitious graduates were merely seeking for someone to take a chance on them and I am so proud to see the number of graduates who took this opportunity with open arms and are now part of our workforce in South Africa. It is a real privilege to have worked with, developed and made a difference in the lives of these young south Africans, and our future leaders,” said Jameel Khan, head of projects at Saica ED.

We are so excited to see the fruitful next steps of all these accounting graduates. The graduates would have written their Test of Professional Competence at the end of March 2021. Furthermore, we are proud to say that 75% of these graduates have successfully found full-time employment post the programme.

EDUCATION

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SAICA 24 Feb 2021



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