



MINING QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

Mining Qualifications Authority – Skilling Mining Lecturers



Charmaine Bilankulu, Assistant Lecturer in the Mining Department at the University of Pretoria

The Mining Qualifications Authority (MQA) supports the development of lecturers employed in mining, mine survey and geology departments of universities. The lecturers come from previously disadvantaged backgrounds and hold qualifications in areas they are lecturing in.

Charmaine Bilankulu is one of the beneficiaries of the MQA lecturer support initiative.

Q. Where are you working and what is your occupation?

A. I am currently a 4th year student and assistant lecturer in the Mining Department at the University of Pretoria.

Q. How long have you been working at the University?

A. I have been working in the Mining Department for 11 months.

Q. What subjects did you study to qualify as an Assistant Lecturer?

A. I studied maths and science in high school and completed a Bachelor's Degree in Mining Engineering at the University of Pretoria. I am currently completing my honours course.

Q. Briefly describe your occupation

A. I assist lecturers with marking class tests, tutorials, supervising tutorial classes and assisting students during their tutorials. I update marks, arrange class excursions, ensure students have the necessary study materials and assist them with their queries.

Q. What encouraged you to apply for an MQA bursary?

A. The MQA runs a programme in partnership with the University to assist postgraduate mining engineering students (previous 4th year students) to study further. I applied and was awarded a MQA bursary in order to enhance my career.

Q. Describe a typical day at work

A. I arrive at work at 08H00, attend to my e-mails for new requests and work from the lecturer. I mark papers for approximately 3 hours or supervise a tutorial class for the same duration. I then spend approximately 3 hours with my own school studies completing assignments. I normally go home at 16H00.

Q. How far would you want to pursue your mining career?

A. I want to study further until I complete the Mine Managers' Certificate. I also want to be professionally accredited with the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA).

Q. Would you encourage other young women to pursue mining as a career?

A. Yes. They need to ensure they have adequate knowledge about the job, its pros and cons in order to make an informed decision. For those who are people oriented and technically minded the mining industry offers an exciting career.

Q. Is there anything else you would like to add?

A. Knowing yourself and having good emotional intelligence is critical. I have learned that to be a good mining engineer, you need self-confidence, self-awareness, good communication skills and the ability to work effectively in interdisciplinary groups.

For more information please contact the Mining Qualifications Authority on www.mqa.org.za or 011 547 2600.