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MEDIA RELEASE



ArcelorMittal University South Africa building steel sector skills

Johannesburg, 02 November 2022: ArcelorMittal University South Africa is responsible for skills development at all ArcelorMittal South Africa operations. Based on the skills needs of the business, the University produces qualified and fit-for-purpose artisans, production employees, technicians, and engineers.

“As a company that relies heavily on technology and the technical expertise of our workforce to remain globally competitive, it is a great advantage to have the ArcelorMittal South Africa University which ensures an appropriately trained skills pipeline,” says Kobus Verster, ArcelorMittal South Africa’s Chief Executive Officer.

The company’s skills development strategy, needs and performance are reviewed and adjusted regularly in line with an internal training and skills development policy and the country’s Skills Development Act.

The ArcelorMittal University South Africa, which is accredited by the MERSETA, performs a skills audit and training needs analysis each year to highlight the skills gaps, and this in turn is supported by a workforce analysis to identify the long-term skills pipeline and succession planning needs. The results of these assessments inform a comprehensive workplace skills development plan.

On average, ArcelorMittal South Africa requires about 80 skilled artisans each year, but the pipeline intake is about 250 apprentices per year, which ensures an invaluable flow of skills into the broader South African steel and manufacturing industries.

“ArcelorMittal South Africa is represented in the various workgroups that are implementing the Steel Master Plan, which allows us to understand the identified skills deficiencies within the broader steel sector and we will actively collaborate with stakeholders to provide support in the area of skills development, both upstream and downstream of our business,” adds Verster.

Uncertainty and the need for sustainable cost management resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic led to a more conservative approach to training and development for 2021 (albeit at higher levels than 2020). This view was adjusted during the 2021 year as a more positive business outlook began to emerge. Particularly, the focus on succession planning was enhanced and the pace of rebuilding the skills pipelines was accelerated.

The R68 million set aside for skills development in the company’s 2022 budget includes the following:

- Bursaries allocated for 40 engineering students at university and 31 own employees furthering their studies
- Internship programme linked to professional registration status to prepare candidates for employment
- 40 candidate engineers on a 24-month ECSA-registered programme
- 20 candidate technicians on an 18-month ECSA-registered programme

- Graduates-in-training in non-technical disciplines, such as finance, commercial, IT and HR
- 30 learner technicians from Vaal University of Technology placed at ArcelorMittal South Africa to get the relevant practical experience needed for technical diploma
- 150 learner artisans at the Engineering Academy (which is fully QCTO accredited) and placed in the different plants for practical work experience on a three-year apprenticeship programme from which they will qualify with a National Trade Certificate if they pass their trade tests
- 250 production learners on a registered 18-month learning programme that will result in exit level certification
- 30 candidates on a registered administration learnership to support the business
- Corporate social responsibility: 80 disabled learners on a one-year registered learnership programme placed at different call centres for practical work experience.

“Over and above the company’s renewed investment in skills development as a sustainability imperative, the entire pipeline programme is strictly aligned with our transformational goals, with a specific emphasis on progressing gender diversity, a particular challenge for companies in the manufacturing and heavy industrial sectors,” concludes Verster.

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