



SAIW and SAIW Certification

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Having just completed the analysis of our 2021 Student Survey, I am thrilled to report that student satisfaction with the services the SAIW offers continues to improve, for our Welding Technology, NDT and Practical Welding courses.

Based on responses from 736 of our students, we are seeing very good improvement in overall customer satisfaction. In the 2021 survey, we reached the global benchmark of 69% of our students being 'Very Satisfied'. If this is combined with the 'Somewhat Satisfied' response, then 93% of students are either 'Very' or 'Somewhat Satisfied', which is 5% better than the global SurveyMonkey® benchmark.

Our overall Net Promoter Score (NPS) of 54.6 has also risen to above the global benchmark of 47%. This metric statistically compares the percentage of promoters minus the percentage of detractors, and to be above the Global benchmark is very reassuring. Also pleasing is the opinion of students about the quality of our lectures, which is now up at 4.44 on a 5 point scale. The analysis of the comments reflects this more strongly, with 100% of the comments about SAIW lecturers being positive.

We have also just completed a comprehensive marketing plan to help us to identify ways of making the SAIW a more accessible and affordable Institute for its members and to grow the client base. We have identified several new offers in this regard.

For our flagship ISO 3834 Certification scheme, as a conversion strategy, we will continue to offer free SAIW membership services to ISO 3834 clients, including: discounts on our world-class training courses, SAIW consulting and testing services from our SANAS-accredited technical laboratory; a free one-day introductory webinar/seminar to guide fabricators on their journey to certification; the use of SAIW facilities; and, for corporate clients, exclusive access to our Welders' Database.

SAIW Welding Technology courses have now all been modularised to improve flexibility, accessibility and affordability. MobiCred is available for those wanting to establish a payment plan for 'Learn Now, Pay Later' financing; and more courses are being offered as hybrids, giving customers the option of attending virtually and/or in person.

The International Welding Specialist (IWS) and IWS Bridging courses will now be offered after hours – online from 6:00 to 8:00 pm from Monday to Thursday and as hybrids on Saturdays – to improve affordability and accessibility for out-of-towners and working customers. We have also made the pricing for this course more affordable and we are offering a further 50% discount for those who register for an IWS course after having completed an International Welding Practitioner (IWP) course.

Every student on one of our International Welder programmes will be eligible for a free Robotic Welding course and each subsequent week of training on the same welding process will be discounted by 5% compared to the previous week.

In Emalahleni, I have recently had meetings at the Highveld Industrial Park on the old Highveld Steel and Vanadium site, which remains ideal for heavy industrial use. As well as hosting 80-odd SMMEs and MMEs, the facility has a fully functional, SETA-accredited training centre that can accommodate 2 000 artisans from electricians and instrumentation technicians to boilermakers, fitters and turners.

Included is a fully equipped 20-bay welding school that is currently unused. We have been invited to consider running a satellite SAIW training centre from the facility, which would involve very little capital outlay. This would bring the SAIW to the people living in the East Rand, which would make access to our high quality IIW and QCTO welder training programmes far easier for them.

We would love to hear from companies in and around Emalahleni that are interested.

John Tarboton