
GOVERNMENT NOTICE

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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**NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY ACT, 1996 (ACT NO. 27 OF 1996) AND
THE FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING COLLEGES ACT, 2006 (ACT
NO. 16 OF 2006**

**APPROVAL FOR THE DOCUMENT: NATIONAL PLAN FOR FURTHER
EDUCATION AND TRAINING COLLEGES IN SOUTH AFRICA**

I, Grace Naledi Mandisa Pandor, Minister of Education, after consultation with the Council of Education Ministers, hereby, in terms of *Sections 3(4)(l) and 7* of the *National Education Policy Act, 1996 (Act No. 27 of 1996)*, read with *section 43(1) of the Further Education and Training Colleges Act, 2006 (Act No. 16 of 2006)* approve the *National Plan for Further Education and Training (FET) Colleges* as national education policy.



GNM PANDOR, MP

MINISTER OF EDUCATION

DATE: 8-12-2008



education

Department of Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**NATIONAL PLAN FOR FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING COLLEGES
IN
SOUTH AFRICA**

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ASGISA	Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
DoE	Department of Education
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
FET	Further Education and Training
FTE	Full-time equivalent
HEQF	Higher Education Qualifications Framework
HEQC	Higher Education Quality Committee
HRD-SA	Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa
IPE-VE	Initial Professional Education in Vocation Education
JIPSA	Joint Initiative for Priority Skills Acquisition
LAN	Local Area Network
MEC	Member of the Executive Council
MIS	Management Information Systems
NBI	National Business Initiative
NC(V)	National Certificate (Vocational)
NCFE	National Committee on Further Education
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSDS	National Skills Development Strategy
NSF	National Skills Fund
NSFAS	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
OQF	Occupational Qualifications Framework
PDE	Provincial Department of Education
PFMA	Public Finance Management Act
QC	Quality Council
QCTO	Quality Council for Trades and Occupations
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SETAs	Sector Education and Training Authorities
SMS	Senior Management Service
WAN	Wide Area Network

FOREWORD

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

In 1995, South Africa began overhauling the education and training system inherited from the apartheid government. At that time the vocational and technical component of the system consisted of 152 technical colleges located in various education departments. The 152 technical colleges were governed, managed and funded in different ways. In addition, they served different population groups and their location was determined by apartheid planning. Although there was evidence of some quality provision, college programme offerings were of poor quality and viewed to be unresponsive to the needs of the economy. The challenge was therefore to transform the existing racially-divided technical colleges into a coherent system that would address the vocational education and training needs of the 21st Century.

The first step in the transformation of vocational education was the establishment in 1995 of a single National Qualifications Framework (NQF), which aimed to promote the integration of the education and training systems under the auspices of the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA).

This step was followed by the appointment of the National Committee on Further Education (NCFE) in September 1996. The brief of the NCFE was to 'investigate the problems relating to FET and to make recommendations for its transformation.' The report of the NCFE was published in August 1997 as *A Framework for the Transformation of FET in South Africa*. This framework formed the basis for the publication, in quick succession, of a Green Paper for FET, a White Paper for FET and the Further Education and Training Act, 1998 (Act No 98 of 1998).

The FET Act of 1998 guided and governed the development of the Further Education and Training Colleges in the period 1998 to 2006. It 'set out a broad and long-term national framework for the transformation of curricula, learning and teaching, qualifications, funding, quality assurance and new institutional arrangements.' It was to the last of these imperatives, namely new institutional arrangements, that the Department of Education first turned its attention.

In 2000, a National Landscape Task Team was established to 'develop an overall national strategy for the re-organisation of the sector, building on proposals presented by the Provincial Departments of Education and based on agreed criteria and nationally agreed goals and objectives'. The recommendations of the Task Team were published in July 2001 as *A New Institutional Landscape for Public Further Education and Training Colleges*. This document recommended the establishment of 50 public FET colleges from the 152 technical colleges. The recommendations included how many sites should be established per province and which sites should make up each of these colleges. Further, the document recommended that these colleges would be declared public colleges with new names and established councils. This was the responsibility of the various provincial MECs.

The period 2002 to 2006 saw the consolidation of the merger process through the training and development of college councils, the appointment of principals at each of the 50 colleges and the development of common administration and management systems across the various sites of the 50 colleges.

In addition, attention was paid to planning for the transformation of the college qualifications, teaching and learning, as well as funding. Much of this preparatory work consisted of research aimed at gaining a better understanding of the sector. Of particular importance are the quantitative studies undertaken, which provide data for the years 1998, 2000 and 2002. These studies provide data on student enrolment, full-time equivalents (FTEs), programme offerings, lecturing staff and funding.

Additional research was undertaken in the areas of governance and partnerships. In addition, considerable research work was undertaken to develop a re-capitalisation plan for the colleges and to develop funding models for the new vocational colleges.

All this preparation culminated in the announcement in April 2005 of an allocation of R1,9 billion for the re-capitalisation of public FET colleges over the period 2006/7 to 2008/9. R50 million was provided for planning for the re-capitalisation of the 50 colleges. This planning included:

- labour market studies to determine the priority skills needs of the country
- the development of a qualification and curriculum policy framework for programmes to be offered at FET colleges
- the development of curricula for priority skills programmes to be offered in the place of the N1 – N6 programmes
- a detailed infrastructure audit of all 236 state-owned sites
- a technology infrastructure audit and pilot project
- an audit of programmes offered at FET colleges and students enrolled on these courses in 2002, 2003 and 2004
- 50 college strategic plans.

All the above were used to determine the allocation of R1.9 billion for the re-capitalisation of colleges. In December 2005, the 50 colleges' re-capitalisation plans were approved and in April 2006 the first payments were made to colleges. These funds were allocated to support the delivery of priority skills programmes from 2007. In particular, funds were allocated for infrastructure development, procurement of equipment, development of administrative systems, staff development, as well as curriculum development.

In March 2006, the qualification and curriculum policy framework for the Department of Education programmes was gazetted. The National Certificate (Vocational) at Levels 2, 3 and 4 sets out the minimum requirements for the attainment of the national vocational certificates.

In July 2006 after a lengthy process of consultation with government, industry, professional bodies, SAQA and Umalusi, the subject and assessment guidelines for the initial 11 priority

programmes were finalized. The draft norms and standards for funding of these programmes were published in 2005.

In 2007, the Department of Education initiated a process of developing a framework for lecturer development. This is viewed as the final piece of the policy requirements for the transformation of the FET college sector.

Developments in the public and private FET college sectors necessitated the drafting of the new *Further Education and Training Colleges Act, 2006* to support the vision of a modern, vibrant FET college system that builds a foundation for lifelong learning and is responsive to the needs of the 21st century. Besides the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996* and the *National Education Policy Act, 1996*, the FET College Act, 2006 is the main legal framework underpinning this FET Plan.

In addition, various government initiatives and developments aimed at improving skills development have had a direct bearing on the FET public colleges and this Plan. The most important of these is the Skills Development Act, 1998, which replaced the Manpower Act of 1951. The Skills Development Act introduced learnerships and effectively signalled the expansion and modernization of vocational education. This was to have a profound effect on the FET colleges. In 2001, government developed an Integrated Human Resource Development Strategy entitled *A Nation at Work for a Better Life for All*. The Strategy sought to improve the co-ordination of skills delivery. In 2008 a new Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa (HRDS-SA) was developed. This is a revision of the Strategy developed in 2001. Further, in 2001, the Minister of Labour launched the Skills Development Strategy (2001 – 2005) which focused on the demand side of skills provision. This was followed by the National Skills Development Strategy II (2005 to 2010). These strategies set out the skills development priorities for South Africa and they have significantly influenced the programmes offered by colleges.

In 2005, the South African government announced the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa (ASGISA). The lack of intermediate and high level skills was identified as a constraint to accelerated and shared growth. In order to promote skills development and unblock obstacles to such development, the Joint Initiative for Priority Skills Acquisition (JIPSA) was established.

Research has shown that one of the factors that contribute to low participation rate in FET college programmes is students' inability to pay college fees. In order to ensure that the student's inability to pay college fees does not constitute a barrier to learning opportunities in FET colleges, in 2006 Government announced an allocation of R600-m for bursaries over three years (2007-2009). The bursary scheme is administered by the National Student Financial Aid Scheme on behalf of the Department of Education.

In view of the Government's investment in FET Colleges, the Ministry of Education is of the view that the return on such investment can only be realised if there is a coherent plan of action which charts the vision, mission, goals and strategies to guide and support FET colleges in the execution of their mandate. Against this background this Plan seeks to:

- Signal the Government's intent to massify youth and adult participation in FET college programmes to **1 million by 2014** and to outline the means to reach this target.
- Provide a framework for the implementation of the **strategic policy goals** envisaged in White Paper IV: *A Framework for the Transformation of Further Education and Training, 1998*.
- Provide a framework which, while fully acknowledging the policy intents of White Paper 4, recognizes that the FET colleges system has a **unique role and identity** that is different from that of the school and the university systems.
- Create a mechanism for **collective support and implementation** of the FET governance framework under the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996*, White Paper 4 and the *Further Education and Training Colleges Act, 2006*.
- Concretize how the FET Colleges should respond to the Government's priorities that target economic growth, reduction of unemployment and poverty alleviation, as expressed in the Government Programme of Action and/or Apex Priorities.
- Develop a policy framework that is aligned to the new funding framework, which seeks to support the achievement of the student enrolment target of 1 million students by 2014.
- Create a means of re-focusing FET colleges on their mandate to avoid any drift from their core business

A SUMMARY OF THE TRANSFORMATION OF FET COLLEGES IN SOUTH AFRICA

Date	Transformation Landmark
1995	National South African Education and Training system established
1995	South African Qualifications Authority Act
September 1996	National Committee on Further Education (NCFE) established
August 1997	Report of the NCFE published as <i>A Framework for the Transformation of FET in South Africa</i>
April 1998	Green Paper on FET <i>Preparing for the 21st Century through education, training and work</i>
August 1998	White Paper on FET <i>A programme for the transformation of FET</i>
November 1998	Further Education and Training Act, 1998
November 1998	Skills Development Act, 1998
July 2001	<i>A New Institutional Landscape for Public Further Education and Training Colleges</i>
2001	National Skills Development Strategy 2001 – 2005
April 2003	50 Public FET colleges declared in provincial gazettes with Councils
August 2004	Draft Re-capitalisation Plan
March 2005	Announcement of R1,9 billion for FET College Re-capitalisation
2005	National Skills Development Strategy 2006 – 2010
2005	Launch of the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative South Africa
2005	Joint Initiative for Priority Skills Acquisition
March 2006	Qualifications policy framework for FET programmes gazetted – National Certificate (Vocational)
July 2006	Curriculum for the initial 11 FET priority programmes published
December 2006	Promulgation of the FET Colleges Act
December 2006	Announcement of the FET College Bursary Scheme

CHAPTER 2

CHALLENGES AND VISION FOR FET COLLEGES

The background and historical developments outlined in Chapter 1 indicate that until 2005 the FET college sector was beset by a variety of challenges and constraints, from which it had to emerge if it was to play a meaningful role in serving the country's needs. These challenges included:

- Poor co-ordination of the FET College sector
- Poor public perception and lack of sector identity
- Poor student access and low student participation rates in vocational programmes
- Poor quality programmes and qualifications
- Low graduation and throughput rates arising out of high failure rates and low retention rates
- Low technical and cognitive skills of graduates
- Lack of relevance and responsiveness to the needs of the economy
- Dearth of managerial skills and capacity
- Low funding of the FET college sector
- Absence of an effective management information system to inform decision-making
- Lack of understanding of vocational education
- Shortage of suitably qualified lecturers to drive vocational education

While some of these challenges continue to afflict the college sector, Government has initiated a number of interventions to address some of the challenges. Interventions which must be acknowledged include the following:

- a) The promulgation of the FET Colleges Act, 2006, to give the sector a unique identity and the flexibility it requires to respond to the skills development imperatives;
- b) Development and introduction of the National Certificate (Vocational): A qualification at Levels 2, 3 and 4 of the NQF, which aims to solve the problem of poor quality programmes, lack of relevance to the needs of the economy, as well as low technical and cognitive skills of the FET college graduates;
- c) The FET College Sector Recapitalisation Conditional Grant, which addressed low funding, particularly for infrastructural development to support the offering of modern vocational programmes; and
- d) The introduction of the DoE FET college bursary scheme to address the problem of access and limited participation in FET college programmes due to poverty.

All these interventions took place without a coherent plan that set out the overall framework within which colleges had to undergo transformation. This plan aims at providing such a framework.

White Paper 4 envisions a modern vibrant post-school FET college sector that will constitute a national, co-ordinated FET system. However, in 1998, when White Paper 4 was adopted as national policy, White Paper 4 does not distinguish between FET schools and FET colleges. It has, therefore, become imperative to craft a new strategic vision for the FET college sector taking into account the national policy goals of White Paper 4 and the new national socio-economic imperatives. The Ministry of Education envisions:

A modern and vibrant national, co-ordinated FET college system that builds a foundation for further learning and is responsive to the needs of the 21st century

The characteristic features of such a FET College system are:

- A specific identity and legislative sphere of operation.
- Responsiveness to the needs of society and the demands of the economic sectors.
- Specialised niche or comprehensive institutions of excellence.
- Accessibility to economically active youth and adults outside of the school system, who wish to improve their skills, gain access to better jobs or to progress to higher education.
- Provision and progressive expansion of access through relevant and diverse open learning, high quality programmes at multiple sites of learning supported by appropriate infrastructure, equipment and ICT platforms.
- Relevant partnerships with and support from commerce and industry for the benefit of the students.
- Programme based funding.

In order to achieve the vision stated above, the Department of Education must, in keeping with its mission, provide strategic leadership in:

- Developing a framework for co-coordinating and supporting the provision of high quality vocational programmes.
- Developing and implementing programmes aimed at increasing access to FET Colleges and improving retention and throughput rates.
- Ensuring quality provision of vocational qualifications by private FET colleges.
- Developing and maintaining policies, systems and procedures to support efficient management and governance of FET colleges.
- Developing and maintaining qualifications, programmes and curricula to ensure quality teaching and learning in FET colleges.
- Co-coordinating lecturer training and development to ensure quality provision of vocational programmes.
- Supporting the expansion and use of ICT to improve the quality of provision, broaden access, improve quality and efficiency of governance and management.

This statement of vision serves as the basis for the national policy goals that the FET college sector must pursue. Implied within this vision are steering mechanisms that the Department will use to drive the national FET college agenda. Based on White Paper 4 and the current national priorities, the plan sets out the following six national goals:

- Creating a national, co-ordinated FET system with its unique identity
- Broadening access, participation and improving achievement
- Entrenching quality and excellence
- Encouraging diversity
- Promoting institutional autonomy, responsiveness and relevance
- Monitoring systemic and institutional performance and fostering public accountability

The Plan further details how the following instruments are to be used as steering mechanisms to achieve the above policy goals:

- Mix of programme offerings
- Qualification and curriculum development
- Planning
- Student recruitment and selection
- National assessment and examinations
- Funding
- Management and governance
- Reshaping the institutional landscape
- Capacity and infrastructural development
- Quality assurance
- Creation of a viable interface between further education, higher education and employment
- Regulation of private provision of vocational education at Levels 2 to 4 of the NQF.

In this document, for each of the above-listed national goals, the current context is presented and analysed. Thereafter, the strategies that Government will use to respond to the problems arising from the context are presented in detail.

While the national policy goals are presented in a discrete section-by-section manner in the Plan, they are in reality not mutually exclusive. It should be noted that the common threads that hold the Plan together are increased youth access, retention, success and throughput rates, as well as improved quality provision. All the steering mechanisms and strategies, which Government has committed itself to employ, are directed at achieving this purpose.

The time-frames within which each measurable output must be achieved shall be incorporated into the Strategic Plans of the Department of Education and the Provincial Departments of Education, as well as operational plans of the responsible Programmes in each Department. The strategic planning processes must take into account that the target year is the 2014/2015 financial year.

CHAPTER 3

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND SCOPE OF PROVISION

Before setting out the framework for the implementation of the national policy goals, it is necessary to anchor the framework within the particular vision and definition of vocational education and training (VET) adopted in South Africa.

3.1 Definition of vocational education and training

One of the challenges identified in the previous Chapter is the development of a common understanding of vocational education and training in the South African college system. In this Plan, vocational education and training is viewed as referring to those aspects of the educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences, the acquisition of practical skills, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life. This view is consistent with the definition of VET provided by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). In short, the distinctive features of vocational education and training (VET) are:

- General education, particularly at the level of initial vocational education;
- A means of preparing for occupational fields and a basis for effective participation in the world of work;
- A foundation for further learning and a preparation for responsible citizenship;
- An instrument for promoting environmentally-sound sustainable development;
- A means of increasing employment opportunities for the graduates and poverty alleviation.

The view expressed above is also consistent with the *Dakar Framework for Action: EFA Goal 3*, which states that VET is a means of ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes.

This conceptualization of VET is adopted for this Plan because it is clear from international¹ experience that employers are not looking for individuals who have narrow occupational skills, but people, who are able to communicate, solve problems, calculate and effectively participate in teamwork. It is increasingly understood that the key role of vocational education institutions is to support long-term employability and skills development rather than short-term training for a specific occupation or trade. This speaks to the need for initial vocational education to focus on general vocational programmes which support the development of vocational skills with a breadth of knowledge and a strong general education foundation. Linked to this is the role of vocational education and training institutions in supporting knowledge development within occupational programmes, that is, the theoretical learning components of the learnership and apprentice programmes.

¹ Cf. Skills Development in India: The Vocational Education and Training System

Finally, while the international experience² does not focus on the development of citizenship, some case studies do highlight the role that initial vocational education plays in the development of core values. In South Africa as an emerging democracy, it is critical that the initial vocational education and training provided by FET colleges supports students to participate actively in all aspects of life.

3.2 Initial and continuing vocational education and training

Further, it is important to make a distinction between initial vocational education and training (IVET) and continuing vocational education and training (CVET). Internationally³, IVET refers to VET that is offered through the formal school or college system to prepare students for higher education programmes, entrepreneurship or employment. The curricula for IVET are broadly specified in order to lay the foundations for further learning or for several related occupations. On the other hand, CVET refers to vocational programmes that are offered to the youth and adults to enhance their knowledge and skills closely related to the workplace and the job functions of CVET participants. In South Africa, the example of IVET is the NC (V) qualification and the higher education qualifications offered at universities and universities of technology. On the other hand, the apprenticeship system, internship system, the learnerships and short courses are examples of CVET or occupational training. Based on this understanding, FET colleges offer both IVET and CVET, subject to Government policies and guidelines.

3.3 Nature and scope of vocational education and training provision

This notion of VET has implications for the provision of VET in South Africa. First, it means that, without creating a new institutional form, FET colleges can broaden their scope of provision to include both formal IVET and non-formal CVET. In terms of proportion, at least between 70% to 80% of each college's student enrolment capacity should be dedicated to the Ministerially approved FET qualifications (IVET). Between 20% and 30% of each college's student headcount enrolment capacity should be dedicated to CVET, which in the South African context may focus on flexible offerings for adult students, formal adult education and training programmes, public-private partnerships, higher education programmes, occupational programmes, as well as many other community development projects which each college can identify in order to respond to the needs of the community that it serves.

² Cf. UNIVOC Report.

³ Swiss, Danish, German and Swedish VET systems

CHAPTER 4

CREATING A NATIONAL CO-ORDINATED FET COLLEGE SYSTEM WITH A UNIQUE IDENTITY

In White Paper 4 the Ministry of Education envisaged the establishment of a national co-ordinated further education and training system which promotes co-operative governance and provides for programme-based vocational and occupational training. The creation of a national co-ordinated FET college system aims at eliminating racial divisions created by apartheid's social engineering, as well as integrating the merged colleges into single institutional cultures. National co-ordination also aims at increasing effectiveness and efficiency of the system.

4.1 Context

The merger process of 2001 created new multi-campus colleges with the intention of reducing duplication and improving the quality, range and responsiveness of provision. In 1998 the majority of technical colleges had fewer than 500 students. In 2006 less than 4% had fewer than 1000 students.

In 2005, the FET college sector had a fixed asset value in excess of R4.3bn. It was, however, clear that substantial investment was needed to rehabilitate buildings and sites. It further became apparent that the proliferation of sites had not been managed in a way that ensures the full and effective utilization of infrastructure and available resources.

On a more positive note, the spatial spread of the colleges across the rural and urban environments is relatively good. FET colleges have a presence in all but one of the Presidential Rural Development nodes and the urban renewal areas.

It is clear that the uncoordinated expansion of the sector cannot continue. Changes to the landscape must be steered so as to ensure the maximum impact of public investment on the skills development needs of all the country's regions. At the heart of any attempt to give effect to the socio-political and redress aspirations of the emerging democratic South Africa, must be the consolidation and development of an extensive national coordinated FET system for intermediate to high level skills delivery. A public funded diversified FET college system for skills delivery to out-of school-youth and adults has been created for this purpose. Students at these colleges will access high quality vocational programmes, occupational programmes, skills programmes, enterprise development programmes, entrepreneurship and job creation programmes linked to spatial development initiatives.

Given the low funding baseline of 3% of provincial education budget for FET colleges versus the potential skills needs of 30 million economically active people in SA, priorities must be set for student access into the FET colleges. The largest and growing pool of potential students is the unemployed, out-of-school youth, who are 17 to 24 years of age, and who exit the school system with less than a NQF Level 4 qualification.

At the core of the vision for a new FET system is the concept of a national coordinated FET college system which offers qualifications that are registered at Levels 2 to 5 of the NQF. Such qualifications must comply with the *General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Framework*, the *Occupational Qualifications Framework*, as well as the *Higher Education Qualifications Framework*, depending on the Level and the NQF sub-framework of the qualification.

This has implications for the roles of the different spheres of government with respect to planning, implementation and monitoring of the FET college sector. These roles are spelled out in White Paper 4, which indicates that the National Department of Education has responsibility for the development of policy, norms and standards. However, it is noted that this does not preclude the National Department of Education from playing a proactive role in steering the system. It is argued that this can be achieved through:

- a) the development of a national curriculum
- b) staff development framework
- c) targeting in terms of programmes and students
- d) funding and
- e) ensuring that there is adequate information to inform policy implementation.

Within this framework the Provincial Departments of Education would then take responsibility for:

- a) determining the size of the college sector within the Province,
- b) locating the priorities for programmes and students within a Provincial context,
- c) funding the FET college sector, as well as
- d) managing and administering the system.

Further, this Plan takes into account the role of FET colleges, as spelt out in White Paper 4 and the FET Colleges Act, 2006, which includes determining relevant programme offerings, and formation of partnerships, as well as institutional and staff development and internal quality assurance systems.

4.2 Strategies

4.2.1 Establishment of a central co-ordinating structure

The roles of different government departments in the FET college sector point to the need for a strong national structure that is coordinated by the Minister of Education. International experience⁴ points to the need for a central point of coordination, which primarily lies within the Department of Education which is able to take the views of other relevant Ministries such as Labour, Trade and Industry, Agriculture and Public Enterprises into account, as well as the views of high level industry players. However, in order to give due regard to the Constitution, and the FET Colleges Act the roles of the MECs for Education and provincial Heads of Department of Education must be delineated. In South Africa, section 10(3) of the

⁴ Similar to OPET, in Switzerland

National Education Policy Act, 1996 gives HEDCOM the authority to establish a subcommittee to assist or support HEDCOM in the performance of its functions. The name of the structure established by HEDCOM for this purpose is the Inter-Provincial Committee for FET Colleges.

The Inter-Provincial Committee for FET Colleges will function as a HEDCOM subcommittee made up of senior officials of the National Department of Education and senior officials representing each Provincial Department of Education. This committee must meet once per quarter and the National Department of Education shall provide the secretariat to that effect. The overall co-ordination of the activities of this subcommittee shall be the responsibility of the National Department of Education.

The main functions of this structure shall entail the following:

- Co-ordination, supervision and support for policy development and implementation
- Ensuring a national system with nationally agreed upon objectives and priorities
- Strategic planning for the sector
- Monitoring and continual reviewing of the college curriculum at set intervals, in consultation with other relevant government Departments and industry
- Ensuring close interaction with various industry sectors, occupational/trade organisations to enhance college efficiency
- Monitoring and evaluating the performance of the sector based on pre-set performance indicators
- Determining the funding needs for the college system and appraising HEDCOM in this regard
- Advising HEDCOM on all matters affecting the FET college system

Due to its co-ordinating role and its advisory function to HEDCOM, the Inter-Provincial Committee for FET Colleges must consult with the following stakeholders as frequently as the need may arise:

- College Principals
- College Councils
- National Board for Further Education and Training
- Organised Business
- SETA Forum

The need for meetings will be determined by this committee or at the request of any one of the stakeholders listed above.

4.2.2 Defining the FET college sector identity

One of the challenges of the FET college sector is poor public perception of the programmes offered. One of the means of dealing with this challenge is to define and communicate in policy terms the FET college sector's new identity. This identity must be defined in terms of:

- The new vocational programme offerings
- The calibre of students to be recruited through selection for appropriate placement and support
- The quality of staff
- The quality and type of management and governance

In other words, the fostering of a new identity of the sector depends largely on the effective implementation of the FET Colleges Act of 2006, which enables the State to shape the sector through the above. Each one of these is briefly described below:

a) Vocational programme offerings

In order to change the poor public perception of FET colleges as from 2007, FET colleges started offering high quality NC (V) programmes which are to gradually replace the old NATED Report 191 (N) programmes. Subject to approval by the Minister, FET colleges should also offer higher education programmes at Level 5 and 6 of the NQF under the authority of a higher education institution.

As indicated earlier, at least between 70% and 80% of each public college's student headcount enrolment capacity must focus on programmes that are listed in the register of programmes approved by the Minister of Education. These programmes must ensure vertical and horizontal articulation, cohesion and educational value with practical relevance. In order to realise these ideals, these qualifications must have a high level of centralized quality assurance and external assessment systems. All such programmes will be quality assured and certificated by Umalusi.

In line with the intention to broaden the scope of FET college programme offerings, between 20% and 30% of the public FET college system's student headcount enrolment capacity should cater for CVET, which shall include adult education programmes, occupational programmes funded by SETAs, community development projects, as well as projects funded on public-private partnership basis. Through both IVET and CVET, colleges will be able to cater for the needs of the youth, adults, industry, and the community that they serve.

b) The calibre of students

The majority of students at FET colleges must be in the age group 17 – 24. These students will enrol at FET colleges, not because they are failures of other parts of the education system, but because they have made an informed decision to make FET colleges preferred institutions and institutions of first choice. Employed and unemployed adults, who wish to improve their skills, gain access to better jobs or progress to higher education will also be accommodated by the flexible offering of vocational programmes. With regard to targeting, colleges are to focus on the following groups:

- Unemployed Matriculants
- Unemployed youth with Grades 11, 10 and 9
- Grade 9 learners who have the intellectual maturity to succeed in the NC(V) programmes

- Adults who (i) are employed but need specific skills related to their job performance (ii) wish to enrol in the NC (V) programmes (iii) wish to enrol for an AET qualification (iv) wish to do an entrepreneurship development programme.

In 2006, the student headcount enrolment at public FET colleges was approximately 400 000 students. The plan for the public FET colleges is to gradually increase this number at the rate of between 43-46% annually so that it is doubled to over 1 million by 2014. This number takes into account the anticipated growth in private FET colleges in the next ten years.

c) The quality of staff

In pursuit of flexibility and responsiveness, the FET Colleges Act, 2006 makes it the responsibility of public FET colleges to employ the lecturers and support staff. The terms and conditions of service are set out in this Act. In order to ensure that the appropriate calibre of lecturers is developed and recruited, the Department must develop a national lecturer development framework, which spells out the knowledge, skills and qualifications required to teach at a public FET college. However, the qualification requirement should not limit college council's flexibility for *ad hoc* appointment, as the college may need. The employment of lecturers is subject to laws relating to employment in South Africa.

At private FET colleges, it is the responsibility of the Boards of Directors to employ the staff pursuant to the Companies Act, 1973 and the Labour Relations Act.

d) The quality of the management

Pursuant to the FET Colleges Act, 2006, the principals of FET colleges are part of the Senior Management Services of the Provincial Departments of Education. Their terms and conditions of employment are set out in the FET Colleges Act, 2006, read in conjunction with the Public Service Act, 1994 and the Public Service Regulations, 2001. In addition to principals, vice-principals, as key members of the management team of each college, must be appointed as public servants by Provincial Departments of Education.

The Boards of Directors of private colleges will employ the management teams of these institutions. The management of the day-to-day operations of a private FET college is the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer of the college, appointed in accordance with the Companies Act, subject to the Labour Relations Act, 1995. The appointment of staff is the responsibility of the CEO and the management team, on behalf of the board of directors or shareholders, depending on the size of the private college.

e) The quality of governance

The role of college councils or boards of directors is to establish and maintain practices of good corporate governance in order to enhance the quality, standing and perceptions of both public and private FET colleges. The public FET colleges are governed by college councils, whose composition, roles and responsibilities are set out in the FET Colleges Act, 2006.

Similarly, in order to ensure quality governance at private FET colleges, all private FET colleges are required to be juristic business entities established under the Companies Act, 1973 (Act No. 61 of 1973). To ensure compliance, the Department must monitor the governance structures of private FET colleges to ensure that they continue to execute their responsibilities in accordance with the FET Colleges Act, 2006, read in conjunction with the prescripts of the Companies Act.

4.2.3 Prioritising and targeting programmes and students

In order to apply the concept of a national co-ordinated FET college system, the Inter-Provincial Committee for FET Colleges must determine FET college programme offerings, both with regard to which vocational programmes should be prioritised and the number of students to be enrolled per programme. The Inter-Provincial Committee for FET Colleges must also support colleges to decide, based on national and provincial priorities across government departments, which occupational programmes FET colleges should offer. This prioritisation should be based on national priorities emerging from key economic strategies such as the *Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa* and *Provincial Growth and Development Strategies*. The Inter-Provincial Committee for FET Colleges, with the authority of HEDCOM, must create an enabling environment to support FET colleges to offer these programmes so that skills development can take place in relation to future needs and in areas where there is economic growth.

The Inter-Provincial Committee for FET Colleges must study the needs of students with disabilities and advise HEDCOM on how such needs can be prioritised with respect to infrastructural development and funding of colleges to adequately support such students.

4.2.4 Reshaping the FET college institutional landscape

International experience does not point to a clear methodology that guides the determination of the size and shape of the VET sector. However, research evidence suggests that such decisions are either political determinations or are strongly influenced by industry (in countries where industry has strong sector or trade chambers) and their role is prescribed in law. There is also evidence that indicates that where the college sector has high status and is seen as vibrant, there are large public colleges which are adequately resourced to ensure that the bulk of vocational education and training is offered by public institutions.

In order to resource public FET colleges adequately, there is a need for a set of national norms and guidelines which should indicate the resources that a college should have to operate optimally in terms of infrastructure and equipment for different fields of vocational education and training. These norms and standards should be approved by HEDCOM and determined as policy by the Minister of Education, in consultation with the Council of Education Ministers. Where a province wishes to open a new college, the MEC must be satisfied that the existing colleges are all adequately resourced in accordance with the norms, and that there is adequate funding to enable the new college to operate in accordance with the national guidelines.

Further, provinces will develop multi-campus colleges with campuses that specialise in particular fields of learning, as well as resource-based learning sites that enable students to access vocational education and training in their locales with the possibility of attending the relevant campus for the practical component of the programme.

A significant issue for the provision of FET skills is the spatial movement of the economically active section of the population. With the lifting of restrictions on migration, urbanization has become a major factor in the population expansion in the KwaZulu Natal, Western Cape and Gauteng provinces. Eastern Cape, Northern Cape and Limpopo have experienced consistent losses due to migration. Any consideration of expansion of FET programme delivery over the 10 year period must take into account the inflow and migration of the potential student population, particularly in the 17-24 age range, within and between provinces. This applies to the area of infrastructural development, but also to the range and types of programmes which are offered at the various urban and rural sites to support overall skills development.

4.3 Measurable outputs

This Chapter explores how the goal of a national co-ordinated FET college system can be achieved. The Chapter presents the current context and concomitant challenges of poor co-ordination of the FET college sector. To deal with the challenges identified, a number of strategies are to be used to realise the goal of a national co-ordinated FET college system. The following measurable outputs will serve as indicators of success towards achieving this goal:

- Improved public perception of the FET sector
- Quality programme offerings
- Improved quality of students and staff
- Efficient management and governance
- Effective co-ordination and leadership by the Inter-Provincial Committee for FET Colleges
- A register of priority skills programmes that address socio-economic needs
- Norms and standards for college resourcing

CHAPTER 5

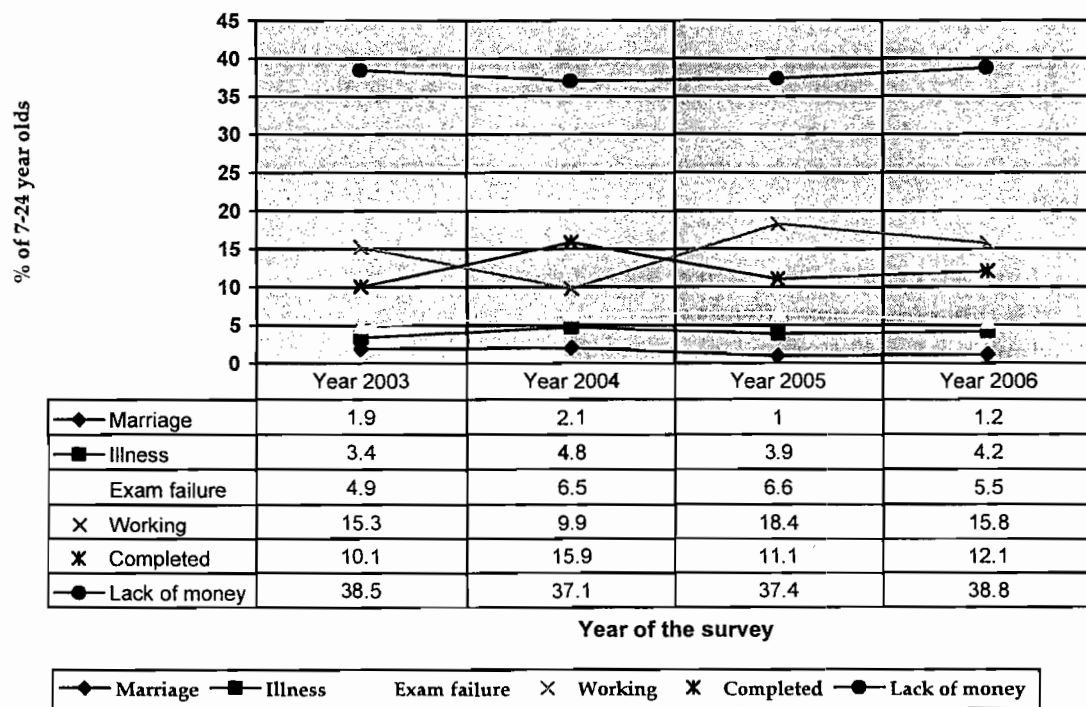
BROADENING ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION AND IMPROVING ACHIEVEMENT

5.1 Context

A major challenge in any modern education and training system is to promote life long learning and the delivery of programmes must be flexible to promote access and achievement for a diverse range of students.

In Chapter 2, poor access and low participation rates were cited as two of the challenges facing the FET college sector. One factor inhibiting access to vocational education and training in South Africa is the financial position of the majority of the identified potential student population, as indicated in Fig. 1 below.

Fig. 1: Reasons for not attending an education institution among the 7-24 year olds



(Statistics South Africa's General Household Survey, 2006)

It is evident from Fig. 1 that lack of money to finance the education of the 7-24 year-olds remains the strongest impediment to access to education and training. Of the 7-24 year-olds who were not attending any education institution during the survey, 38% cited the lack of money to access education as the reason.

In recent years surveys of student enrolments and data from the examination section of the Department of Education have provided fairly accurate overview of student enrolments. The first comprehensive survey of students, *Quantitative Overview of South African Technical Colleges* was undertaken by Lesley Powell and Graham Hall in 2000 and reported on the data for the 1998 academic year. The second study undertaken by the NBI, viz. *Quantitative Overview of the Further Education and Training College Sector April* was published in 2002 and reported on college data for the 2000 academic year. The third study, viz. *Quantitative Overview of the Further Education and Training College Sector April, 2004* reported on college data for the 2002 academic year. Finally, in 2005 the Department of Education commissioned a study of enrolments per programme for 2002, 2003 and 2004. Although a number of problems were encountered with the collection of data in all these studies, the surveys and the DoE data on the NATED programmes show that there has been a rapid increase in enrolments at the FET colleges in the last 20 years.

Figure 2: Student headcount enrolment at FET colleges between 1987 and 2007

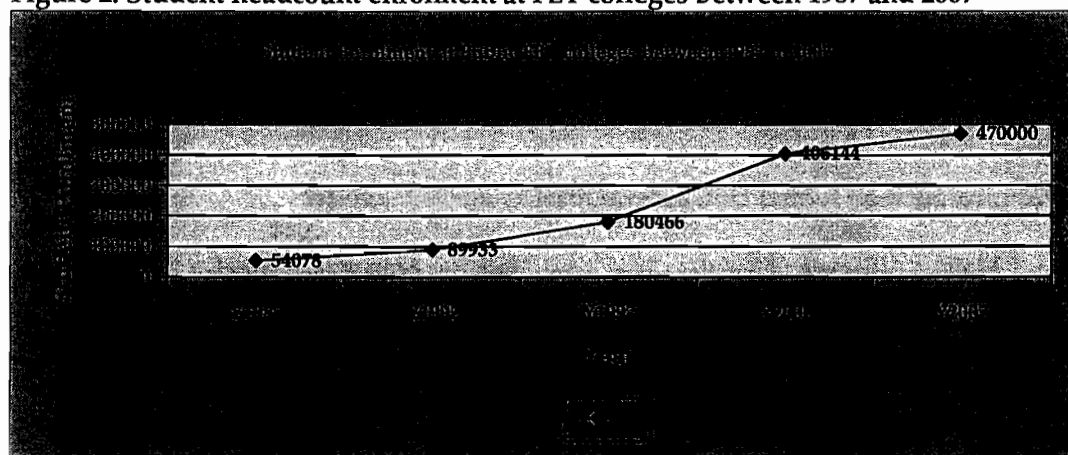


Fig. 2 above shows that the student headcount trebled between 1987 and 1997 and re-trebled again between 1997 and 2007. The 2007 enrolment figures take into account 100 000 students enrolled for FET qualifications in the private FET college sector.

Further, there is evidence in these surveys that expansion has taken place in the non-DoE programmes. In 2004, the number of enrolments in the Non-DoE programmes was just over 55 621 which was 18% of the total college enrolment (317 832). Tables 1 and 2 provide information on enrolment by programme in 2004.

Table 1: Enrolment in public FET colleges in 2004 by programme

Course	Business	Engineering	Educare	Utility	Art/Music	General	Total
NIC/NSC	20160	9065	935	1233	446	1313	33152
N1-N3	13575	131113	196	1455	518	4262	151119
N4-N6	73521	53816	789	3996	716	723	133561
Learnership	312	895	184	237	19	2635	4282
Skills	0	0	0	159	0	129	288
Other	1348	1924	0	888	0	796	4956
Nonformal	1931	2090	33	712	675	4342	9783
Unspecified	5946	12137	1344	3169	1355	12361	36312
Total	116793	211040	3481	11849	3729	26561	373453

The summary of findings by age and gender for 2003 and 2004 is found in Table 2 below. The Table shows that the number of students enrolled on formal DoE programmes increased from 298 000 in 2003 to 317 800 in 2004, an increase of 19 800 students or 6.6% growth. The number of females increased by 9 000 and the number of males by 10 800.

Table 2: Enrolment on formal DoE programmes by age and gender

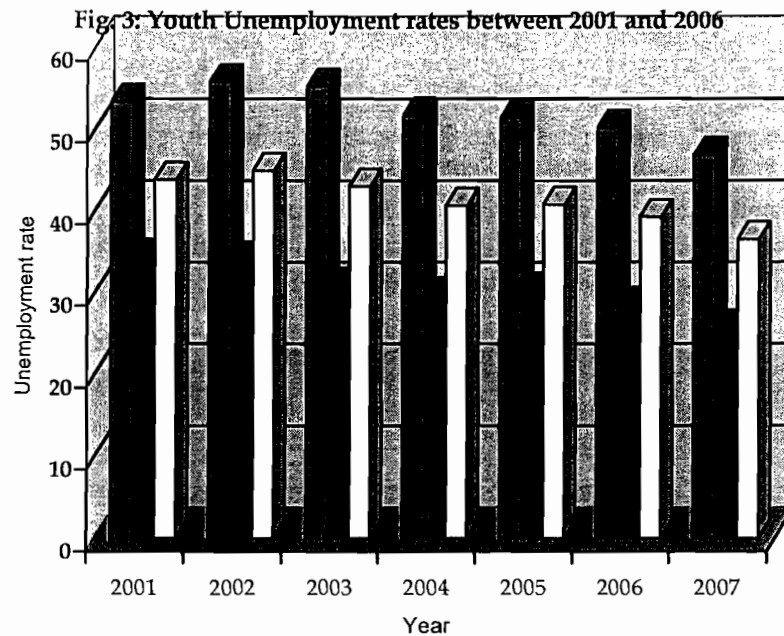
	2003				2004			
	Male	Female	Total	%	Male	Female	Total	%
< 15	1 331	989	2 320	1	1 357	648	2 005	1
15 – 19	34 631	23 183	57 814	19	42 172	28 324	70 496	22
20 – 24	97 024	61 018	158 042	53	103 764	66 646	170 410	54
25 – 29	29 050	17 812	46 862	16	27 028	16 454	43 482	14
30 – 34	9 685	4 787	14 472	5	9 257	5 030	14 287	4
35 – 40	6 792	2 824	9 616	3	6 319	2 903	9 222	3
41+	6 049	2 861	8 910	3	5 944	2 637	8 581	3
Total	184 562	113 474	298 036	100	195 320	122 512	317 832	100

Table 2 also provides the numbers of students by age group in 2003 and 2004 and shows that the greatest growth in the period was in the 15 – 19 year age group where there was a 22% growth in student numbers.

Despite the rapid increase in student enrolments at FET colleges over the last 20 years, a number of local and international indicators and studies suggest that there is need to further increase student enrolments in FET colleges in South Africa.

The first local indicator of the need to increase enrolment in the new NC (V) programmes is the youth unemployment rate, as shown in Fig. 3 below⁵.

⁵ Adapted from the *Labour Force Survey, September 2007*, published by Statistics South Africa



	Sep-01	Sep-02	Sep-03	Sep-04	Sep-05	Sep-06	Sep-07
■ 15-24 yrs	53.4	55.9	55.3	51.7	51.4	50.2	46.9
■ 25-34 yrs	34.4	34.1	30.9	29.7	30.3	28.5	25.7
□ Average	43.9	45	43.1	40.7	40.85	39.35	36.6

Notwithstanding the rapid growth in student enrolment in FET colleges, it is evident from the statistics in Figure 3 that from 2001 to 2006, the youth unemployment rate among the 15-24 year olds has consistently been above 50%. As indicated in section 4.1.2.2, it is on account of the high unemployment rate among the youth that the majority of students to be recruited to FET colleges should be from this age group.

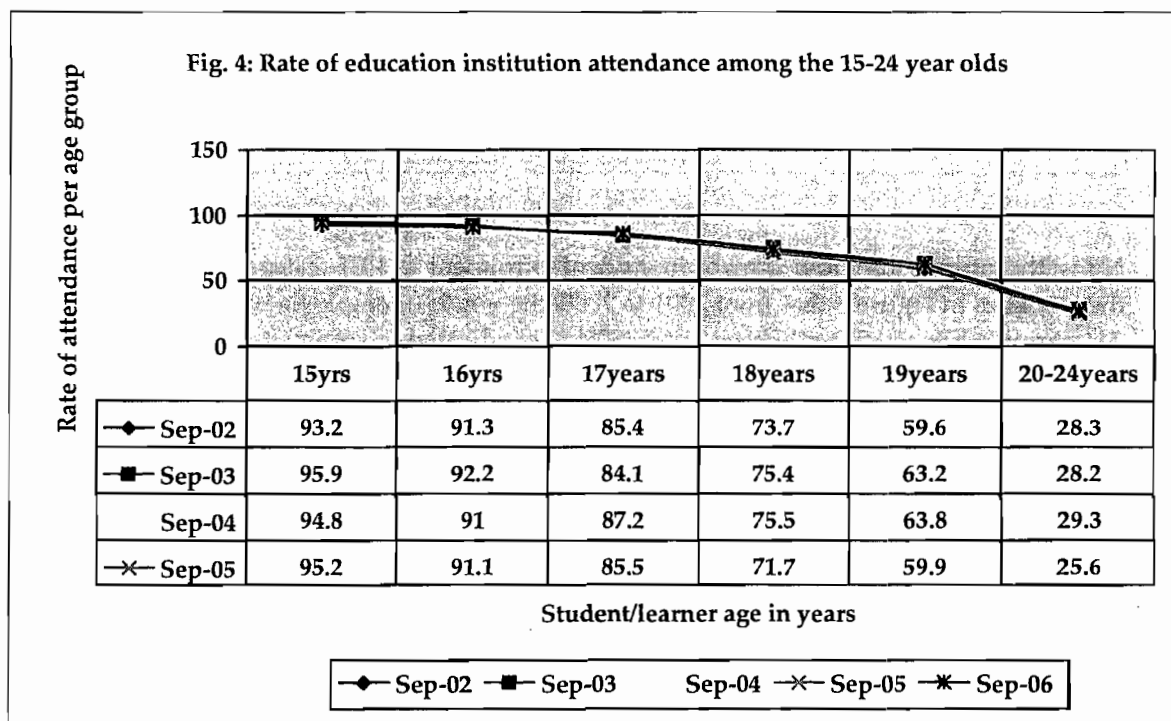
The second indication that there should be massive increase in enrolment at FET colleges is the international comparison on *Gross Participation Rates* and *Net Participation Rates* in vocational education and training. The *Gross Participation Rate* is the ratio of the total headcount of students to the population while the *Net Participation Rate* is the ratio of the total headcounts of a defined age cohort. International comparative studies suggest that 4% of the total population of developed countries is enrolled in vocational programmes. Based on the 2007 population estimates in South Africa, 4% would translate into 1, 94 million students or five times the current public college student headcount enrolment. In 2000, a Department of Education publication on FET colleges showed a *Net Participation Rate* of 2, 7% in the 16 – 29 age cohort. This is just above half of the ideal net participation rate of 4% (720 000) of the 18 million young people as defined in the *Youth Commission Act, 1996*.

Thirdly, comparative studies indicate that most developed countries have 'pyramid shaped' education and training systems. In other words the schooling system is the largest sector, followed by the vocational college sector (further education and training) and then the higher education sector. However, as shown in Table 3 below, South Africa manifests an unhealthy "hour-glass" shaped education system. In this system, the schooling subsystem accounts for about 12 million children, the vocational education sector (public FET colleges) accounts for 370 000 students, and a 100 000 students in the private FET colleges. The higher education system accounts for just under 800 000 students. Although the countries used in the comparison are quite different to South Africa, have much longer traditions of mass education and different economies, there is clearly a need to expand the FET college sector.

Table 3: Enrolment at public and private institutions

Institution	Public	Private	Total
Schools	11 455 000	290 000	11 745 000
FET colleges	370 000	100 000	470 000
HEIs	740 000	50 000 ⁶	790 000
Total	12 565 000	440 000	13 005 000

Local studies also support the expansion of the FET college sector. Enrolment at education institutions drops rapidly after age sixteen, as shown in Fig. 4 below.



(Adapted from *General Household Survey, 2006* published by Statistics South Africa)

⁶ An estimated figure

Fig.4 above shows that in 2006, while 91% of the 16 year olds reported attendance at an education institution, the percentage of the 17 year olds was 86%, 18 year olds was 74%, 19 year olds was 63% and the 20-24 year olds was 27. Collectively, the data suggests that there is considerable room for increasing enrolment in the FET college system and that the primary focus of FET colleges should be the following target groups:

- a) Unemployed Matriculants
- b) Unemployed young people with Grades 11, 10 and 9.
- c) Adults seeking to acquire specialist skills for meaningful economic participation.

5.2 Strategies

5.2.1 Capacity and infrastructural development

Against the above background, the goal for public and private FET colleges in South Africa is to *offer high quality 21st century vocational programmes to 1 million students by 2014*. To achieve this goal, public and private colleges need to be equipped to offer programmes that prepare students for employment, higher education and entrepreneurship. This means determining the programmes that are required by the economy and ensuring that the infrastructure, equipment, administrative systems, management, governance, staff, funding and quality assurance structures and processes are in place to support the delivery of these programmes.

In April 2005 government announced an allocation of R1.9 billion for the recapitalisation of FET colleges over the period 2006/2007 to 2008/2009. The focus of the FET college recapitalisation grant was to improve the delivery of vocational education programmes in order to respond to the skills needs of both the employed and unemployed youth, as well as adults. This would be achieved by encouraging colleges to align their programmes and qualifications to the needs of society and the labour market. Recapitalisation of FET colleges was the response to the challenges that were identified in the human resource development strategy referred to in Chapter 2, which included the need to:

- increase employment and self-employment
- develop the skills of the youth
- improve the education system
- improve the functioning of the labour market.

The following strategic areas were the focus of the FET College Sector Recapitalisation Conditional Grant:

- Re-skilling staff to offer responsive programmes
- Upgrading physical infrastructure to offer vocational programmes
- Providing suitable equipment to support programme delivery
- Providing support for the development of modern vocational programmes
- Establishing student support services units
- Establishing connectivity of 50 FET Colleges to improve communications, information management and curriculum delivery.

- Buying or building of new classrooms, laboratories, offices etc.

Because of the expected increase of student enrolment to 1 000 000 by 2014, there is a need for Government to provide funding for colleges to continue investing in capital expansion. In this regard, National Treasury agreed to incorporate FET College Sector Recapitalisation Conditional Grant allocations of the final year of the Grant into the provincial equitable shares with effect from the 2009/2010 financial year. Without this kind of capital investment, colleges cannot respond adequately to the human resource development needs of the country.

5.2.2 Student enrolment planning for public FET colleges

As indicated above, the Department of Education plans to expand student enrolment in FET colleges to over 1 million students by 2014. The expansion will be systematic and careful in 2007 and 2008 and will progressively expand, as shown in the Table below:

Table 4: Proposed gradual expansion of student enrolment in the public FET college sector

Province	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
EC	12,000	19,200	27,600	39,600	56,800	81,500
FS	5,000	7,900	11,400	16,300	23,400	33,600
GT	26,600	41,500	60,750	89,000	130,300	191,000
KZN	20,700	32,850	47,200	67,600	97,100	139,300
LP	16,500	25,850	37,100	53,200	76,400	109,600
MP	9,500	14,900	21,900	32,100	46,900	68,800
NC	3,900	6,100	8,800	12,600	18,100	25,900
NW	6,900	9,800	14,400	21,100	30,900	45,300
WC	11,900	18,400	26,900	39,500	57,800	85,000
National	120,000	177,000	256,000	371,000	538,000	800, 000

The student enrolment targets reflected in Table 4 above are based on the following assumptions:

- Student enrolment projections reflect the Recapitalisation Grant investment per province and per college;
- The student enrolment growth of between 43% and 46% is maintained;
- The throughput rate is improved to between 60% and 80%;

- d) Provinces make funding available to support student enrolment growth;
- e) The infrastructure is used efficiently;
- f) Provinces continue to recapitalise colleges for infrastructure expansion.

Pursuant to the FET Colleges Act, 2006, the college academic board must, subject to approval by the college council, determine programmes to be offered by a college and the projected number of students to be enrolled in each programme for the following academic year. The college programmes and projected student enrolment must be approved by the Provincial Department of Education and be submitted to the National Department of Education for final consolidation. The Department will present these enrolment targets at the meeting of the Inter-Provincial Committee for FET Colleges for finalisation and referral to HEDCOM for approval. The Inter-Provincial Committee for FET Colleges will also evaluate the provincial projections to determine whether the programmes chosen are in line with national priorities and Provincial Growth and Development Strategies.

5.2.3 Funding as a driver of access, quality, equity and redress

The FET college sector was established from technical colleges that were funded either as state aided or state colleges. At present the sector receives less than 3.4% of provincial education budget which totals R1.347bn (2004). The spread of this across the provinces varies from 0.8% to 3.6%.

Income from other sources for colleges includes student fees, rentals, donations, as well as services rendered. Income from other sources has increased every year for the last five years. For example, there was a 150% increase in other income between 2000 and 2002. These figures do not include the funding for the expansion of learnerships and other skills programmes, as these only began in 2003.

The overall picture is that of a system which has begun to maximize its resource utilization and has begun to diversify its income sources. However, it is clear that there are a number of challenges which require urgent attention. Firstly, the differences in incomes, expenditure, per capita and student fees are quite large across the different provinces. These costs are based on the NATED Report 191 programmes which do not have a predominance of practical or work-based elements which should be prominent within the college system. Secondly, there are limited allocations for capital investment and no significant provision for the additional costs linked to fulfilling the expanded mandate of the FET colleges. Thirdly, attention needs to be given to containing student fees and at the same time provide financial relief for deserving students.

5.2.3.1 Implementation of the new national funding norms for FET colleges

The current state expenditure for FET colleges constitutes less than 3% of provincial budgets. By comparison, internationally FET colleges are funded at between 8-12% of education expenditure. The funding of FET colleges is currently calculated according to FTEs. As indicated earlier, this calculation varies from province to province. In order to remedy the situation, the FET Colleges Act, 2006 empowers the Minister of Education to determine minimum norms and standards for the funding of public colleges after consultation with the

Council of Education Ministers and the Minister of Finance. To this effect, a draft policy document called the *National Funding Norms for Public FET College* was published by the Minister of Education for public comment in 2005. This policy has been consulted with the Minister of Finance. It is expected that the Minister will determine this as policy during the course of 2008, after concurrence by the Minister of Finance.

The *National Funding Norms and Standards for FET Colleges* are to serve as a new funding framework for college programmes listed in the register of programmes approved by the Minister of Education. The new funding framework will apply to the NC (V) programmes and will be phased in over three to five years. The funding framework is anchored on White Paper 4 in so far as it links the services to be rendered with planning, funding and reporting. It allows for a shift towards training that focuses on alleviating skills shortages and unemployment. Another feature of the new funding framework is that it directs funding to education and training that is not adequately funded by the private sector. It takes into account (a) type of programmes offered, (b) FTE students, (c) cost of delivery, (d) need for capital infrastructure maintenance, (e) the college's ability to use resources efficiently, as well as (f) outputs and quality of education and training delivery.

The funding framework underpins the principles of access, redress, equity and representativity. In this regard the funding formula focuses on the historically disadvantaged by requiring colleges to incorporate in their plans race, gender and special needs. According to the funding framework, (a) the State will subsidise 80% of the programme costs (b) College fees will be 20% of the programme costs (c) fees will be capped at levels that are consistent with public funding and the cost of delivery of the service, (d) an FET College bursary scheme enables colleges, within available bursary allocation, to award bursaries to deserving students who cannot pay all or part of the college fees.

5.2.3.2 Mobilising earmarked funding sources for national priorities

While funding is a Provincial competence, it is proposed that there should be funding that specifically supports national priorities. This means that where particular programmes are prioritised nationally, funding should be available to enable FET colleges to offer these programmes and build requisite infrastructure and staff capacity.

Further, there should be additional monies available to support the identified target groups including fee subsidies for young people that could not otherwise access high quality vocational education, as well as particular grants to support increased access, for example enabling individuals with disabilities to successfully complete their programmes.

The above suggests the need for the Department of Education to use some form of conditional grant as proposed in the White Paper, as this is seen as critical to steering the system. This should be in addition to the requirement that Provinces report on how they are meeting the national norms regarding (a) levels of participation (b) resources required at FET colleges to support the effective provision of certain programmes, (c) particular target groups, as well as (d) the requisite personnel.

5.2.4 DoE FET college bursary scheme

In order to ensure that an inability to pay college fees does not constitute a barrier to academically capable students, in 2006 Government introduced the DoE FET college bursary scheme that must be maintained by the Department of Education. The maintenance includes a means test designed to gauge the financial needs of public FET college students, as well as the necessary tools required to implement the means test.

The Department of Education will further formulate rules and guidelines regarding the **allocation** of bursaries to colleges, as well the **awarding** of such bursaries. The means test and accompanying rules and guidelines must be based on best practice and research findings, and be aimed at providing public FET colleges with a system within which responsiveness to student needs and programme costs can be managed. The Department of Education's requirements and guidelines shall be sufficiently detailed and binding to establish a transparent system and to enforce key policy imperatives.

5.2.5 Student recruitment

In order for each college to achieve the student enrolment target that is consistent with the national target of 1 million students by 2014, it is the responsibility of each college to put in place and budget for a robust college marketing strategy. Whereas the role of the Department of Education and the provincial Departments of Education is to use any public platform at their disposal to market colleges, colleges are individual brands offering a variety of services. As such, they cannot be marketed as a collective. To attract students each college must market itself as a distinct and unique brand that offers a particular set of products and services.

As part of their marketing strategies, colleges should clearly communicate the following to their target audience:

- Location of the college and its campuses
- Which programmes the college offers at which campus
- Financial assistance and student support available at the college
- In what field the college excels
- The college linkages with the world of work

The media to be used to market the college should be decided upon by the college taking into account, among others, available budget, target audience, the desired geographical reach, etc.

5.2.6 Expansion and use of information and communications technology

One of the Government's Apex Priorities is the speeding up of ICT interventions to provide cost-effective ICT platforms. This entails increasing the usage of broadband and other ICT by addressing infrastructure development, cost, and other issues related to access to ICT.

Using the Recapitalisation Conditional Grant, the Department took a decision of equip all 50 colleges with modern information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure. This involved, among others, the installation of LAN and WAN to enable students, teachers and management to have access to e-mail and the internet. The Department of Education and Provincial Departments of Education in partnership with the Department of Communication must continue to support colleges to build suitable connectivity infrastructure and to create access to quality vocational education through quality e-learning and distance education.

5.2.7 Student support services

In South Africa, the largest pool of unemployed youth is in the age range of 15-25. Some of the youth in this age group do not have an NQF Level 4 qualification. Should some of this youth choose to enrol at colleges, colleges will require a substantial investment in training and support services to enable these students to succeed.

Another key issue affecting retention and success is the challenge of the impact on students of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. FET college initiatives in this regard are in their infancy, with only 4% of colleges having dedicated staff to provide HIV/AIDS advisory and counselling services.

Therefore, any attempts at increasing student enrolments must be matched with appropriate access and support systems which effectively increase the access of the marginalized and students at risk. Academic achievement should be a matter of priority.

In order to assist these students the Department, in collaboration with the Provincial Departments of Education, will establish Student Support Services units in every college campus where NC (V) programmes are offered. The focus of Student Support Services must be on academic development and support, career guidance, financial aid, as well as health and wellness.

The rationale for establishing Student Support Service units at every campus is to ensure that the planned mass access to vocational education ultimately translates to mass success and progress to higher education, employment or entrepreneurship.

5.2.8 Creating a viable interface between further education and higher education

The provision of higher education programmes by FET colleges was originally envisaged in White Paper 4, which states that:

We (the Ministry of Education) will therefore adopt clear and consistent policies regarding articulation and transfer between HE and FET in order to ensure learner progression. Equally, bearing in mind the human resources development needs of the country, the funding and governance implications of such provision, we will develop a flexible but clear and consistent policy for the provision of FET and HE programmes by HE and FET institutions.

Accordingly, the Ministry of Education published a *National Plan for Higher Education* and a funding formula for the provision of higher education programmes.

The *National Plan for Further Education and Training Colleges* and the *National Funding Norms for Public FET Colleges* are means of establishing a viable interface between FET colleges and higher education institutions. The position espoused in this Plan is anchored on the FET Colleges Act, 2006. According to this Act, subject to approval by the Minister of Education, FET colleges may offer higher education programmes, particularly at Levels 5 and 6 of the NQF under the authority of a higher education institution. Such co-operation and partnership aim to ensure quality of provision, facilitate student articulation to higher education qualifications, skills transfer among lecturers in a particular subject or field, the sharing of facilities, as well as co-branding which has the potential to enhance the image of the FET college sector.

Where there is no higher education institution in the locality, an FET college may offer regionally relevant higher education programmes under the authority of a higher education institution of its choice to ensure student access to higher education.

The higher education programmes offered at an FET college remain the responsibility and the intellectual property of the higher education institution concerned and must be funded through the higher education formula funding.

In the context of the *Joint Policy Statement* by the Ministers of Education and Labour, as well as the *National Qualifications Framework Bill, 2008*, FET Colleges may apply to the Minister to offer either vocational HE programmes accredited by the HEQC in terms of the HEQF or occupational HE programmes accredited by the QCTO in terms of the OQF. In either case, an HE programme should be offered under the authority of a higher education institution.

The offering of higher education programmes by FET colleges is only permissible between a public higher education institution and a registered higher education institution, or between a public higher education institution and a public FET college or a registered private FET college. According to the *Higher Education Act, 1997*, a private education institution that offers tuition on behalf of a higher education institution is not required to register with the

Department of Education. Accordingly, a private FET college that offers higher education programmes on behalf of a registered private higher education institution or a public higher education institution is not required to register with the Department to offer higher education programmes. In order to ensure quality of provision, an FET college must be accredited to offer higher education programmes by the relevant Quality Council.

The fostering of co-operation and partnership between public higher education institutions and public FET colleges may not always involve the offering of higher education programmes by an FET college. To ensure efficient use of resources, such partnership and co-operation may be limited to the sharing of equipment and facilities such as computer laboratories, lecture rooms, science laboratories, etc.

5.2.9 Complementing the National Skills Development Strategy

One of the means of broadening access of youth and adults to FET colleges is to efficiently use colleges as sites for the achievement of the targets of the *National Skills Development Strategy, 2005-2010*, as envisaged in the preamble of the FET Colleges Act, 2006. Launching this strategy in 2005, the Minister of Labour argued that "The next five years will require that we strengthen our working relations with public and private institutions at FET and HE levels".

5.2.9.1 *Institutes of Sectoral and Occupational Excellence*

FET Colleges should continue to form partnerships with the SETAs to serve as delivery sites of the theory part of occupational programmes. For this purpose, many FET colleges are already recognized as Institutes of Sectoral and Occupational Excellence (ISOES), as required in terms of the NSDS II.

5.2.9.2 *Providing requisite support to the Artisan Development Strategy*

According to the JIPSA 2006 report, South Africa is experiencing a severe shortage of artisans. JIPSA further argues that while the country produces 5 000 artisans a year, there is a need to increase this output to 12 500 per year, as indicated in the Fig. 5 below

Fig. 5 Required increase in the number of artisans

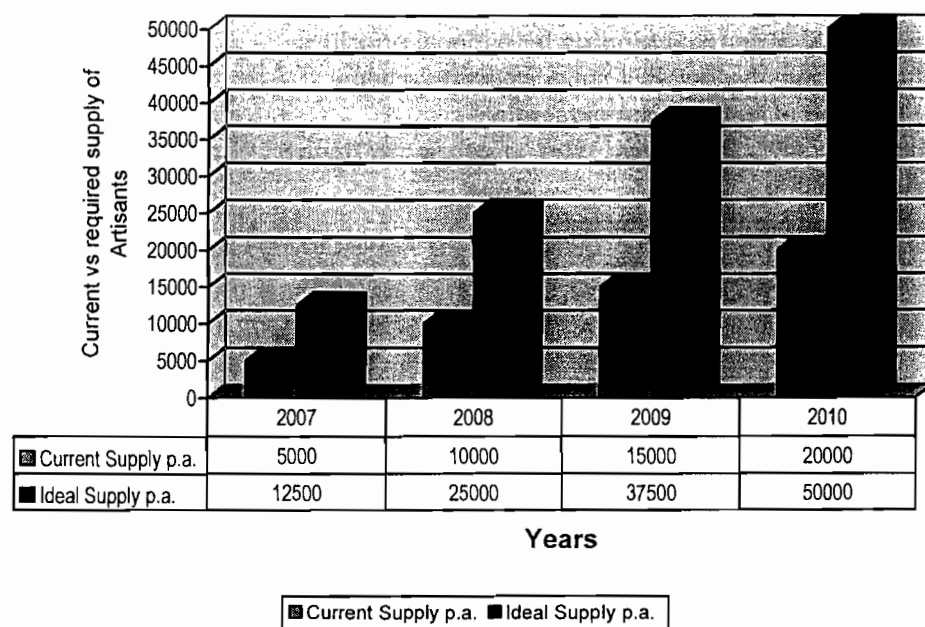


Fig. 5 indicates that between 2007 and 2010, South Africa needs to have produced 50 000 artisans at the rate of 12 500 per annum. To support the process of artisan development, FET Colleges need to seek accreditation by the relevant SETAs to operate as trade test centres for the 16 priority trades that JIPSA has identified. Further discussions need also focus on the requirements for qualifying as an artisan in different trades, requisite training of staff expertise, college physical capacity for artisan training in different trades, and funding of colleges to support their involvement in the artisan development initiatives.

In order to further support the initiative, the Inter-Provincial Committee for FET Colleges should engage with other government departments such as the Departments of Public Works, Communication, Public Enterprises, as well as Trade and Industry. The discussions must extend to the National Skills Authority, the private sector and state-owned enterprises.

5.3 Measurable outputs

This Chapter focuses on how the goal of broadening access and participation and improving achievement can be achieved. The Chapter further presents the current context and challenges that militate against student access, participation and student achievement. To deal with the challenges identified, a number of strategies are to be used to realise student access, participation and student achievement. The following measurable outputs will serve as indicators of success towards achieving this goal:

- Availability of adequate infrastructure and equipment to support the delivery of vocational programmes
- A million students in the sector by 2014
- An average student pass rate of between 60% and 80%
- Expansion and use of ICT in all FET colleges
- Implementation of the funding norms and standards for public FET colleges
- Availability of earmarked funding for national priorities
- Implementation of a DoE FET college bursary scheme
- Establishment of student support services
- Number of FET graduates who progress to higher education, employment or entrepreneurship
- Increase in the number of artisans

CHAPTER 6

ENTRENCHING QUALITY AND EXCELLENCE

6.1 Context

The mandate of public FET colleges is to equip students to acquire the necessary knowledge, practical skills and applied vocational and occupational competence for employment in particular sectors of the economy. FET Colleges must further provide students with the necessary attributes required for employment, entry into a particular vocation, occupation or trade, as well as prepare students for entry into higher education. In this regard, international experience points to vocational education playing a role in the provision of vocational programmes that meet the needs of intermediate and higher level skills for the economy. The core is seen as being at Levels 2 – 5 on the NQF with a clear progression into higher education, particularly within a vocational stream. This is seen as critical in terms of enabling vocational institutions to play a role in supporting higher level skills development, as well as in terms of the status of vocational education.

The planned increase in students intake in the FET college sector in South Africa must be accompanied by improved retention, throughput and work placement rates of the students in order to realise the return on public investment. The national throughput rate, defined as the percentage of students who enrol and pass their subject examinations on the NATED Report 191 programmes stands at a national average of 51%. This is well below that of the school system at Grade 12. It has also been reported that placement of full time NATED FET programme graduates in jobs remains low with the majority of college graduates being unemployed. Progression into learnerships and other programmes is still underdeveloped as an alternative skills development route in FET colleges.

To confront the challenge of poor quality programmes, low graduation and throughput rates, the following strategies are to be implemented:

6.2 Strategies

6.2.1 *Qualifications, programmes and curriculum development*

The design of programmes in which a wide range of skills requirements can be catered for is central to transforming FET colleges into institutions of the 21st century. While a good qualification design may contribute towards the delivery of quality learning, it must be strongly augmented by a range of other actions such as quality assurance, rigorous assessment regimes and quality lecturers, facilities, equipment and technology.

In the South African context the shift in the labour market over the last three decades has shown an increasing need for skilled workers within broad occupations. This need has two elements, namely critical skills and scarce skills. Whereas the former needs to be dealt with in the qualification design, the latter tend to follow the various economic sectors' growth and technological changes and are thus by and large time-bound.

The emerging trend in TVET internationally has been to move towards a broad vocational curriculum which has adequate provision for the development of high level cognitive skills, allows for movements to a range of vocations or vocational fields and/or the movement into higher education. These qualifications are tightly bound to the regulatory measures of a qualifications framework and a rigorous quality assurance system. This qualification design also tends to have a large component of education related outcomes which deal with both the communicative and the socialization needs of students.

The relevance of the FET college sector to the National Human Resource Development Strategy (NHRDS) and its success is dependent on the responsiveness of its programme offerings. In this regard, the development of the curriculum to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student population becomes important.

While a qualifications framework can spell out the outcomes of the system, this is not sufficient. Qualifications are enablers rather than drivers of quality. A crucial success factor is the development of national curricula. Informed by international experience and the needs of the South African economy, the Department of Education has an obligation to support the development of quality curricula, learning materials and other resources that take advantage of new technologies.

In order to ensure that the curriculum remains responsive to the needs of different economic sectors, the Inter-Provincial Committee for FET Colleges must with the approval of HEDCOM and the Minister of Education commission reviews of the curriculum at specific intervals based on substantive evidence from the other government departments, relevant industry sectors, occupational councils, the higher education sector and other statutory bodies with an interest in vocational education.

6.2.2 Driving quality through centralised assessment, examinations and quality assurance systems

The key to ensuring the credibility and integrity of a qualification lies in the design of its assessment and certification. The credibility and integrity of a qualification can be achieved through a centrally-driven assessment and certification system.

In this approach, provision in the National Certificate (Vocational) is made for a combination of internal and external assessments. The exact nature of these assessments and the conditions under which they occur must be set through a consultative process ensuring the active involvement of the various role-players from commerce and industry. These inputs may be sector or vocation-specific in nature. Further the moderation and oversight of the assessment processes by relevant experts is critical for ensuring the equity and quality of outcomes of students across the system.

A centralized systemic and institutional monitoring and evaluation system must oversee the assessment system. Institutional monitoring and diagnosis resulting in remediation measures ensure the best returns on investment in vocational education and training.

The Department of Education will maintain and support a single nationally-based examination and assessment system to provide a credible and reliable system which would ensure the quality of summative assessments of all students.

In setting up a national assessment system a national consensus must be established on the measures to assess the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes which best serve the social and economic skills needs of the country.

Consideration must be given to the following principles when designing the national assessment system:

- The actual outcomes, skills, knowledge, values and attitudes must be agreed and set within the qualification design and its consultative processes and the requirements of the National Qualifications Framework.
- A common quality assurance system for both the public and private sectors of FET provision
- A common assessment framework as a means of indicating the measure of quality must be set for each vocational and fundamental component to ensure consistency across various programmes. In this regard, a combination of external examinations and internal assessment will be implemented.
- Credibility and reliability must be established and maintained in all systems and processes by means of transparent and rigorously controlled assessment procedures.

Towards this end, the single national examination and assessment system shall include the following:

- A nationally co-ordinated assessment system
- A national data base specifically for FET colleges
- A nationally driven system for moderation and standardization of assessments.
- Linkage to a single quality assurance system

Quality assurance in FET colleges should focus on four key areas, *viz.* (a) monitoring and reporting on the adequacy and suitability of qualifications and standards, (b) the quality assurance of assessments, (c) the quality promotion of vocational institutions systemically and individually, and (d) to a certain extent, the certification of student achievements.

In South Africa there is a diverse range of education and training provision with high levels of inequality in both the public and private sectors. While acknowledging these challenges, it is crucial to make a concerted effort to bring about a single quality assurance framework for the vocational education and training system in the FET level. It is only in this way that coherent and effective delivery of skills against the HRDS-SA in both the public and private sectors can be ensured.

In addressing the challenges of the South African VET system, the following principles must support the design of a quality assurance system:

- A single common system for all vocational education and training provision

- A system that focuses on the key areas of teaching and learning, management and governance, and learner achievements
- A developmental approach which balances the need for student access and the challenges of the system to tool up for high-level skill programmes
- The integrity, credibility and reliability of systems and procedures.
- Best practice and remedial actions
- Participation and transparency

The Department of Education shall ensure that, in structural terms, a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities is made between the quality assurance body, the Department, the Provincial Departments of Education and the FET colleges.

All vocational education and training programmes offered at public FET colleges shall be quality-assured by Umalusi or an assessment body delegated to perform such a function. The Department of Education shall take the responsibility for setting examinations for each of the formal vocational subjects offered as part of the vocational qualifications. These will be externally examined and moderated by Umalusi.

All occupational and trade programmes shall be quality-assured by the QCTO or a statutory body delegated to perform such a function. Vocational and occupational qualifications offered by FET colleges at level 5 and above shall be quality assured by the HEQC and QCTO respectively. However, the integrity of the assessment systems is the responsibility of the higher education institution in partnership with which a qualification is offered.

All private FET colleges offering full qualifications must register with the Department of Education and be accredited by Umalusi to offer full qualifications. Private FET institutions that offer short skills programmes must provide students and the public with the steps taken to quality assure their programmes.

Both public and private FET colleges are required to develop mechanisms for quality assuring provision, which includes monitoring students (enrolment, throughput, success rate and work placement rate) as well as ensuring a feedback loop from students, industry and the community.

Further, colleges need to secure partnerships with higher education institutions to support quality assurance in the college and facilitate greater levels of progression from the college to a higher education programme.

6.2.3 Driving quality through lecturer training, development and support

Over the last five years, the staff profile at FET colleges indicates a relatively young workforce which has improved its equity profile, formal qualifications and assessor skills. Despite these gains, the majority of lecturing staff need to improve and update their academic-vocational knowledge and experience. The effective delivery of quality programmes for a modern and responsive FET college system requires qualified and competent staff in a clearly defined legislative environment which ensures the development and maximum utilization of staff within a publicly accountable framework.

There is little chance of improving the quality of educational provision unless the curriculum development process is linked to a national strategy of training college lecturers and ensuring that there is a coherent framework of lecturer development.

The *National Professional Lecturer Development Framework* spells out initial professional education in vocation education (IPE-VE) and continuing professional development (CPD) of lecturers. With respect to IPE-VE, the framework outlines, *inter alia*, the vocational pedagogy required for college lecturer development, general prerequisites for all college lecturers to practise in the FET College sector, qualification requirements, as well as modes of provision. With regard to the CPD, the framework outlines the rationale for continuing professional development, as well as qualification pathways for CPD.

6.2.4 Regulating private provision

White Paper 4 serves as a guide for regulating the private FET college sector, as it states that:

The Ministry recognises that private provision plays an important role in expanding access to FET, in particular through responding to labour market opportunities and learner demand.The key challenge in expanding the role of private institutions is to create an environment that neither suffocates educationally sound and sustainable private institutions with state over-regulation, nor allows a plethora of poor quality, unsustainable 'fly-by-night' operators into the FET market.

One of the means of ensuring quality provision by private institutions is to regulate them through registration and monitoring processes. Through the registration process which started in 2005, the fundamental aim is to protect the students and the public by licensing only private education institutions that:

- offer qualifications that are registered on the NQF
- have the capacity, resources and expertise to offer quality education and training
- have programmes that comply with the FET quality assurance requirements and criteria
- adhere to ethical business practices.

By regulating private institutions that offer FET qualifications, government wishes to ensure that, while it protects students and the public, it also creates an environment that protects legitimate private institutions. By 2010 all private education institutions offering FET qualification must have been registered. To rid the system of illegal operators, the Department has already started the process of mobilising law-enforcement agencies, such as the South African Police Services, the Office of the Consumer Protector, the Legal Aid Board, as well as the National Prosecuting Authority, which will start supporting the Department with effect from 2009.

6.3 Measurable outputs

The focus of this Chapter is on how to entrench quality and excellence in the FET college sector. The Chapter further outlines the current context and presents a number of strategies

that are to be used to achieve this goal. The following measurable outputs will serve as indicators of success towards achieving this goal:

- Development and implementation of the *National Professional Lecturer Development Framework*
- Availability of suitably qualified FET college lecturers
- High quality FET qualifications, programmes and supporting curriculum
- High quality centralised assessment, national examination and quality assurance systems
- All private education institutions that offer FET qualifications are regulated

CHAPTER 7

PROMOTING INSTITUTIONAL AUTONOMY, RESPONSIVENESS AND RELEVANCE

7.1 Context

It is often argued that the youth unemployment problem is a result of the of the skills of the youth and the demands of the labour market. In other words, the skills that the youth acquire from the VET system do not match the needs of the employers.

However, given the responsibility of the Department of Education to provide education of good quality, it is crucial to adopt a more comprehensive view of responsiveness and relevance. In this respect, the responsiveness and relevance of the FET college sector should be viewed against the fundamental role of the sector to enable students to acquire the necessary knowledge, practical skills and applied vocational and occupational competence for employment. The sector's role is also to provide students with the necessary attributes required for employment, entry to a particular vocation, occupation or trade or entry into higher education.

In its Synthesis Report titled *SESD II Mid-Term Impact Assessment (2007)*, the HSRC defines responsiveness and relevance as "employability of students enhanced through greater responsiveness of colleges to the needs of learners, their communities and the labour market by establishing good relationships with business, local communities, state bodies". It also entails the development, provision and evaluation of learnership programmes, programmes for the development of SMMEs and short courses/skills programmes.

Responsiveness, according to the HSRC, further entails the extent to which students acquire the foundational, technological, social and technical competence for employability, as well as the extent to which students are being employed and the tracking thereof by colleges.

The FET Colleges Act, 2006 determines that the role of FET colleges is to provide 'programme-based further education and training' which 'respond(s) better to the human resources, economic and development needs of the Republic'. The FET colleges are also expected to 'respond to the needs of the labour market and of the communities they serve and to complement the National Skills Development Strategy in co-operation with the Department of Labour'. It is against this background that the responsiveness and relevance of college programmes should be evaluated.

7.2 Strategies

A key means of encouraging institutional responsiveness and flexibility, and of promoting creative and necessary changes and innovations is to allow FET colleges greater autonomy in determining their missions, governance and management of their affairs.

The process of turning the FET colleges into effective and responsive institutions requires strategic partnerships. Formally established partnerships with private and public sector partners are essential to maintaining the relevance and responsiveness of programmes offered by colleges, and must therefore be underpinned by a distinct purpose and clear objectives. The context within which partnerships are forged creates the expectation of mutual benefit for all parties involved, and for this reason outcomes must be measurable either quantitatively or qualitatively, or even through a combination of both. For colleges, improving the quality of delivery of education and training, as their core business, must remain paramount.

Provincially and institutionally-driven partnerships are considered essential to addressing provincial and regional economic needs. Colleges, therefore, need to seek strategic partnerships that support and promote their aspirations to become centres of excellence in their respective regions and provinces.

Although these strategic partnerships have been developed over the last five years, few of them have made any meaningful contribution to curriculum and staff development. Furthermore, only a small percentage of the existing partnerships involve student placement in companies. Overall, the number and quality of partnerships within the sector varies greatly from college to college. This area requires urgent attention by college councils and management to ensure that the colleges benefit from the range of resources available from the various entities to fulfil their mandate.

While the role of the Department of Education and Provincial Departments of Education is determining programme priorities, FET colleges will take the responsibility for forming partnerships with industry and communities in their area. FET colleges will ascertain which partners will deliver learnerships and apprenticeships which require them to provide the institutional learning component. Further, colleges need to work directly with local industry to determine which skills programmes they can offer in relation to short-term needs in their area. Colleges also need to work directly with industry to secure placements for students as part of on-course support and exit strategy for college graduates, as provided for in the Student Support Services Framework.

7.3 Measurable output

The promotion of institutional autonomy, responsiveness and relevance is discussed in detail in this Chapter. The Chapter further outlines the current context and strategies that are to be used to achieve this goal. The following measurable outputs will serve as indicators of success towards achieving this goal:

- Quality partnerships between industry and FET colleges
- FET college students get placement for practical work place experience
- FET college graduates get job placement at the end of the programme
- Industry inputs into curriculum improvement and update
- Placement of lecturers to gain real work place exposure

CHAPTER 8

ENCOURAGING DIVERSITY

8.1 Context

There are 50 public FET colleges. All these colleges have more than one site of delivery. There is no plan to increase the number of colleges. However, the number of sites may increase in areas of market-determined need, subject to compliance with the Norms and Standards for Resourcing Colleges. The important determining factor is to establish modern, vibrant institutions that provide high quality vocational education and training at levels 2 – 5 on the NQF. A R1.9 billion FET College Sector Recapitalisation Conditional Grant has contributed significantly to the necessary infrastructure, equipment including IT, and administrative systems to offer high quality modern vocational programmes.

Colleges will be encouraged to develop themselves into niche institutions with specialist excellence in specific fields or disciplines. This will increase quality of provision and improve cost-effectiveness.

8.2 Strategies

8.2.1 Diversification of institutional and campus types

As indicated in the statement of the vision for the FET college system, the development of specialised niche and comprehensive institutions of excellence is encouraged. To this end, the Provinces will work with the FET colleges to determine which institutions should be offering particular programmes and how they should be supported to enable them to offer quality programmes. Further, the possibilities of establishing Centres of Excellence should be explored. Ways that would allow students across a Province to benefit from such Centres should also be explored.

The MEC for Education has the authority to determine the location and number of the colleges and campuses. The MEC will make these decisions by determining the number of potential students within the Province with a view to achieving a target of a net participation rate of 4% of the 17 – 34 years olds. The resources available should be considered to ensure that the college is able to operate according to the national guidelines and programme requirements. This allows Provinces to determine whether a college should be established (where all aspects of the guideline can be met including access to the relevant infrastructure, capacity of staff, and support services for students), or that a college may open a dedicated campus if required in a particular area. In this way, there is a possibility of certain campuses becoming centres of excellence focusing on vocational field, such as ICT, Engineering or Hospitality and Tourism.

As a means of overcoming the diverse environments of FET colleges, e-resource-based learning institutions should be explored as a way of enabling larger numbers of students to access vocational education and training programmes. This may take the form of a multi campus model with residential facilities.

8.2.2 Diversification of programme offerings

The annual planning exercise will determine which programmes should be prioritised based on medium to long term economic priorities. However, the Inter-Provincial Committee for FET Colleges will determine whether it is appropriate for a college or a college campus to offer certain programmes. For example, some Provinces may not offer maritime related programmes as they have no related industry in the Province. Further, Provinces may prioritise additional programmes based on specific economic priorities in the Province, for example there may be a need to prioritise agricultural programmes based on the rural development strategy.

Over and above the core offerings, FET colleges must offer other types of programmes such as adult education programmes and skills programmes. These should be determined by the college based on industry and community needs within their locale and the Inter-Provincial Committee for FET Colleges should monitor the proportion of these programme offerings to NC (V) programmes so that they do not divert from the colleges' core function.

8.2.3 Public and private FET colleges

If the classroom and workshop capacity at public FET colleges is efficiently utilised, public FET colleges can, subject available funding, accommodate more than a 1 million students per annum. However, in instances where students cannot be admitted at a public FET college, the existence of registered private FET colleges provides a viable, credible quality-assured alternative. In this regard, the existence of private FET colleges enables the public to exercise their choice with respect to FET colleges.

As outlined in the White Paper in White Paper IV, there is a need for the provision of vocational education to accommodate both public and private provision. This recognises that private provision can support quality provision in the sector, and encourage greater levels of responsiveness and cost effectiveness. However, while the role of private institutions is recognised and should be supported, evidence from other countries points to the need for the majority of provision to take place through public education institutions. These institutions should be large enough to create economies of scale and to ensure that the requisite infrastructure and resources required by the curriculum, as well as the requisite support services are in place.

8.2.4 Diversification by mode of provision

In South Africa, many adults have not acquired the vocational skills to access or to achieve upward mobility in the labour market. FET Colleges should make provision for these adult students. One of the ways of enabling adult and employed students to access vocational education is to diversify the modes of vocational education delivery. In this regard, the Inter-Provincial Committee for FET Colleges must, in consultation with Umalusi, provide HEDCOM with advice on how the distance mode of provision can be put in place in colleges.

8.3 Measurable outputs

This Chapter explores how diversification in the FET college system can be achieved. To this end, the Chapter presents the current context and concomitant factors that militate against diversification. To counter these factors, a number of strategies will be used to achieve a diversified FET college system. The following measurable outputs will serve as indicators of success towards achieving this goal:

- Diversity of institutional and campus types
- Centres of Excellence are established in each province
- Diversity of programme offerings
- Strong public and private FET college systems
- Different modes of programme delivery
- Criteria for distance education provision by FET colleges

CHAPTER 9

MONITORING SYSTEMIC AND INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE AND FOSTERING PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY

9.1 Context

This Plan sets out the strategies to achieve the following national policy goals :

- Creating a national co-ordinated FET system with a unique identity
- Broadening access, participation and improving achievement
- Entrenching quality and excellence
- Encouraging diversity
- Promoting institutional autonomy, responsiveness and relevance

Underpinning the pursuit of the above policy goals is the pursuit of national outcomes, viz. the reduction of unemployment, reduction of poverty and improvement of the quality of peoples' lives. These are the ultimate outcomes by which the FET system must visibly impact on the society that it serves. The FET College system's ability to deliver on the above should be monitored, evaluated and measured by the extent to which it delivers on the following measurable outputs listed in the Plan:

- Creating a central co-ordinating structure to ensure effectiveness and efficiency by
 - Defining the image of the FET college sector through the quality of programme offerings, students, staff, governance, and management
 - Targeting and prioritising programme offerings to respond to community, regional and national needs
 - Reshaping the institutional landscape for greater quality and access
- Broadening student access and participation and improving quality and student achievement through:
 - Capacity and infrastructural development
 - Enrolment planning
 - Funding
 - Student recruitment
 - Student Financial Aid Scheme
 - Student Support Services
- Entrenching quality and excellence through
 - Qualification and curriculum development
 - Centralised examination and quality assurance systems
 - Lecturer training, development and support

- Promoting institutional autonomy to ensure responsiveness, flexibility and relevance through:
 - Forging quality partnerships with industry and commerce
 - Placement of students for practical work place experience
 - Job placement at the end of the programme
 - Industry inputs into curriculum improvement and update
 - Placement of lecturers to gain real work place exposure

- Diversification through:
 - Institutional and campus types
 - Promoting the creation of niche and comprehensive institutions of excellence
 - Diversification of the modes of delivery
 - Criteria for distance education delivery

These national objectives are not to be pursued for their own sake, but they are linked to systemic and institutional deliverable objectives against which the performance of the system and individual institutions can be measured. To achieve this, each institution must ensure that there is an increase in:

- The numbers of students that access vocational education and training
- the retention rate of students in vocational programmes
- the success/pass rate per programme
- the number of women in the scarce skills programmes
- the national throughput rates to counter the shortage of skills
- the number of students who progress to higher education
- in the number of graduates who get job placements

For the system to function optimally it must be able to reflect on and take stock of its successes and failures in order to consolidate its strengths and improve on its weaknesses. It is for this reason that performance on these objectives at systemic and institutional levels must be monitored and evaluated.

9.2 Strategies

9.2.1 Establishment of management information systems

The implementation of the college mergers has been accompanied by challenges related to the substantive integration of college business systems and processes. In a recent audit of programmes at the FET colleges, it was found that very few colleges had taken steps to integrate their administrative, management, IT and communication system. The challenge is, therefore, to establish administration systems, information technology infrastructure and Management Information Systems (MIS) to ensure the full merger of all functions at the various sites and align their delivery towards the new FET college mission and mandate.

For this purpose the Department will establish in all colleges a Business Management Information System that will enable colleges to monitor and account for all their administrative business processes, which include:

- Student administration
 - administration of students biographical and enrolment information
 - student finance
 - academic records (assessments, examination results etc.)
 - attendance data
- Academic administration
 - programmes and qualifications
 - examination enrolment
 - examination administration
- Financial administration
 - budget management
 - procurement
 - expenditure records
 - accounting package
- Human Resource management and development
 - payroll management
 - personnel records
 - personnel utilization information
- Asset management
 - stock registers
 - stock control
 - physical infrastructure

9.2.2 Establishment of the further education and training management information system

In view of the targets set in this Plan, the need for a sophisticated Further Education and Training Management Information System (FETMIS) is urgent and is a priority of the Plan for 2009 to 2010. To this effect, the Department will develop data capturing norms and standards which should guide data-capturing and data analysis to support national, provincial and institutional decision-making.

This will ensure that there is adequate information captured pertaining to the students in terms of enrolment (race, gender, age and disability where applicable), throughput, success rates as well as information pertaining to the opportunities that students access after completing programmes. This is seen as a critical indicator of whether the programmes that are prioritised are consistent with the needs in the economy.

Further, there should be information about the quality of provision in a manner that is consistent with the international examples provided. This information should be made publicly available and should indicate the rating that the institution has received against agreed upon criteria.

9.3 Measurable outputs

This Plan sets out the strategies to achieve five national policy goals, viz. (a) creating a national co-ordinated FET system with a unique identity, (b) broadening access, participation and improving achievement, (c) entrenching quality and excellence, (d) encouraging diversity, and (e) promoting institutional autonomy, responsiveness and relevance. To be able to determine whether these goals are achieved the FET College system must have a strong monitoring and evaluation capacity. The evidence of such capacity is the establishment of:

- The management information systems in all colleges
- The further education information management system
- The culture of research and tracer studies