#### **DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

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# DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

CALL FOR PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE DRAFT POLICY FRAMEWORK ON ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT OF STUDENT ADMISSIONS AT TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET) COLLEGES

I, Grace Naledi Mandisa Pandor, Minister of Higher Education and Training, in terms of Chapter 6A, section 41A(b) read sections 41B and 41C(m) of the Continuing Education and Training Act, 2006, hereby invite public comments on the *draft Policy Framework on Administration and Management of Student Admissions at Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges.* 

The draft policy framework aims to provide guidance on the student admissions requirements and development of college admissions policies by college councils. The draft policy framework is available on the Department website at www.dhet.gov.za.

All interested persons and organisations are invited to comment on the *draft Policy* Framework on Administration and Management of Student Admissions at Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges in writing and to direct their comments to:

The Director-General, Private Bag X 174, Pretoria, 0001 for attention: Ms NNS Khumalo, Deputy Director: Student Development and Support, email: <a href="mailto:Khumalo.nn@dhet.gov.za">Khumalo.nn@dhet.gov.za</a> or fax: 086 298 9881.

Kindly provide the name, address, telephone number, fax number and email address of the commenting person or organisation when submitting comments.

The comments on the draft policy should reach the Department within 30 calendar days from the date of publication of this notice.

Mrs GNM Pandor, MP



Policy framework on Administration and Management of Student admissions at Technical and Vocational Education and Training Colleges.

BRANCH: TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET)

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# Contents

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	3
INTRODUCTION	4
BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT	6
OBJECTIVES OF THIS POLICY	6
APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY	7
RATIONALE	7
LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK	8
DETERMINATION OF CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION TO TVET COLLEGES	9
ADMINISTRATION OF ADMISSIONS	
MINIMUM ENTRY REQUIREMENTS	
ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR NC (V) STUDENTS	
ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR REPORT 191 STUDENTS	
ADDITIONAL ENTRY REQUIREMENTS	14
DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR ADMISSION	
SELECTION AND PLACEMENT TESTS	15
ADMISSION OF RETURNING STUDENTS	
ACADEMIC EXCLUSION AND DEREGISTRATION	16
ADMISSION OF NON - CITIZENS	17
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES	
APPEAL PROCEDURES	
REGISTRATION PERIODS: NCV	18
REGISTRATION PERIODS: REPORT 191	18
STUDENT REGISTRATION REGISTER	19
MONITORING AND EVALUATION	20

# LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABET /AET Adult Education and Training

CET Act Continuity Education and Training Act (16 of 2006)

DBE Department of Basic Education

DHET Department of Higher Education and Training

FET Act Further Education and Training Amendment Act (No.3 of

2012)

ICT Information and Communication Technology

NC (V) National Certificate (Vocational)

NEA Department's National Examinations and Assessment

NSFAS National Student Financial Aid Scheme

NATED/REPORT 191 National Accredited Technical Education

NDP National Development Plan

NQF National Qualification Framework
PACE PACE Career Centre Programme
PSET Post-School Education and Training

RPL Recognition of Prior Learning

SAQA South African Qualification Authority

SSS Student Support Services

SETA Sector Education and Training Authority

TVET Technical and Vocational Education and Training

WP-PSET White Paper for Post -School Education and Training

#### INTRODUCTION

- The admission policies of Technical Vocational and Training Colleges are underpinned and guided by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act no 108 of 1996).
- This admission policy framework is to make provision for all ministerial programmes offered in TVET Colleges.
- The TVET College system needs to respond to the country's need to redress past
  imbalances and inequalities by transforming education and training in order to improve the
  livelihoods of individuals and contribute to the economy and broader society.
- 4. This policy framework seeks to provide a balance between the provision of access in TVET Colleges with the aim of redressing the imbalances of the past and ensuring rigorous success of students. This will ensure that we recruitment of capable students who have a keen interest in vocational and technical education.
- 5. The TVET college system has expanded access thus experiencing exponential growth in student enrolment. This expansion was confronted by challenges of limited infrastructure to accommodate the number of students and increased the competitiveness of access in the college system. The Department is shifting its focus from access to quality which is critical towards positioning TVET colleges as institutions of first choice.
- Proper career guidance is important to direct our students to relevant programmes and to provide training in areas that are required for the country's economic growth.
- 7. The White Paper for Post –School Education and Training (WP-PSET),2013, envisages a post-school education and training system that is committed to achieving the following objectives:
  - 7.1 Education and Social Justice;
  - 7.2 A single coordinated system;
  - 7.3 Expanding access, improving quality and increasing diversity;

- 7.4 Education and work; and
- 7.5 Responsiveness
- 8. The TVET College sector is required to provide opportunities across a wide range of qualifications that are fit for purpose and are responsive to the changing requirements of work and social context, designed for student demands and can articulate appropriately to meaningful opportunities in employment and further study.
- 9. The Department of Higher Education and Training, hereinafter referred to as the Department, has developed this policy framework to guide TVET Colleges to administer the management of student admissions and ensure consistency in achieving the values of equity, access and redress. TVET Colleges must therefore commit themselves to provide adequate conditions and opportunities for effective learning.
- 10. The Department recognises that the Continuing Education and Training Act, 2006 (Act No. 16 of 2006), entrusts the role of developing college admission policies to the Council. This policy framework therefore is developed for Technical and Vocational Education and Training Colleges Council to adopt or adapt it when they develop their own policies.
- 11. Due to the diversity of programme offerings in the sector, differentiated admission criteria are required to respond to the different qualification objectives. These, amongst others, will include providing opportunities for the advancement of participation in programmes that require critical and scarce skills, which will lead to filling the gap for occupations in high demand, and qualifications that are designed to absorb large numbers of learners as valuable human resource capital for the country.
- 12. Should the Department of Basic Education (DBE) comprehensively roll out the three stream model, learners with Grade 9 will only be accepted into programmes leading to a trade or occupation where the learner meets the admission criteria.

#### BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 13. The White Paper on Post School Education and Training ushered in changes for Further Education and Training (FET) Colleges by renaming them as TVET Colleges. The name change signified the specific focus of Colleges as providing mid-level programmes that have direct articulation to the world of work, which includes formal employment, self-employment and other forms of work.
- 14. Historically TVET colleges catered to the specific needs of unemployed youth and adults, who required theoretical knowledge to support their workplace experience and practical knowledge, and to lead to some sort of tangible certification as evidence of their acquired knowledge and competencies.
- 15. The DHET TVET College Bursary Scheme has been a key mechanism to provide access and contributed to the growth and expansion of the TVET college sector. The rapid expansion of the TVET college sector has resulted in the system being unable to accommodate future growth without material contribution to infrastructure development.
- 16. The post school education and training system is required to accommodate huge student numbers despite its limited capacity to absorb these numbers. The consequence is that significant numbers of young people remain excluded from accessing post-school opportunities. Alternative forms of post school education, such as open learning, are critical to responding to the demands of access for young people.

# **OBJECTIVES OF THIS POLICY**

17. The object of this policy framework is to provide a base for all Technical and Vocational Education and Training College Councils to develop the student admission policies of the college.

### APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY

 This policy framework applies to all TVET Colleges declared or established by the Minister in terms of the Continuing Education and Training Act, 2006 (Act No. 16 of 2006).

#### RATIONALE

- TVET Colleges have been established to expand access and to provide opportunities to young people who want to access post-school education and training (PSET).
- 20. The purpose of the Continuing Education and Training Act, 2006 (Act No. 16 of 2006) section 2 (1) is to:
  - (a) to enable students to acquire -
    - the necessary knowledge;
    - II. practical skills; and
    - III. applied vocational and occupational competence; and
    - (b) provide students with the necessary attributes required for
      - I. employment;
      - II. entry to a particular vocation, occupation or trade; or
      - III. entry into a higher education institution
- 21. Public TVET Colleges have been strategically positioned to become the institutions of choice to school leavers and out of school youth. The state is mandated to ensure its youth and communities have access to education and training that will deal with socio economic factors faced by communities and the country as a whole.
- 22. In order to increase access and position the TVET sector as the institution of choice, it is critical for prospective students intending to enrol in this sector to meet the academic expectations and programme entry requirements. Attaining these requirements will enable prospective students to enter the post school education and training system which will need to accommodate huge student numbers despite its limited capacity to absorb these numbers. The consequence is that significant numbers of young people remain excluded

from accessing post- school opportunities. Alternative forms of post –school education, such as open learning, are critical to responding to the demands of access for young people. Students have a greater chance to be successful and to fully participate in the labour market.

23. In the future, the Department will increase opportunities for students in the TVET sector by increasing admissions into National Qualification Framework (NQF) Level 5 and NQF Level 6 qualifications, which aligns to the mandate given both in the NDP and the White Paper on PSET.

### LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 24. In terms of section 29(1) (b) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act No. 108 of 1996), everyone has the right to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible.
- 25. Section 17 of the Continuing Education and Training Act,2006 (Act No.16 of 2006) outlines the requirements for an admission policy of public colleges as follows:
  - Subject to applicable policy, the Council of a public college determines the admission policy of the college, after consulting with the academic board and with the approval of the Minister:
  - The admission policy of a public college may not unfairly discriminate in any way and must provide appropriate measures for the redress of past inequalities;
  - 3. The Council may, subject to applicable policy, the approval of the Director-General and after consultation with the academic board must adopt the college admission policy.
    - a) Determine admission requirements in respect of particular continuing education and training qualifications or part –qualifications;
    - Determine the number of students who may be admitted for a particular continuing education and training qualifications or part qualification and the manner of their selection;

- Determine the minimum requirements for readmission to study at the public college in question; and
- d) Refuse the readmission of a student who fails to satisfy the minimum requirements for readmission.
- 4. The Council of the College must take the necessary steps within its available resources to ensure that the college is accessible to disabled students;
- 26 The White paper 6 on Special Needs Education, 2001 provides for an inclusive education framework which guides the transformation of practices related to barriers in teaching and learning. The White Paper also emphasised the need for a holistic approach to addressing disabilities, which includes, specialized technology, assistive devices, reasonable accommodation, practices for students and staff with disabilities.
- 27 The White paper on Post School Education and Training, 2013, called for a strategic policy framework to guide the improvement of access to and success in post-school education and training for people with disabilities and this includes private institutions. The framework should include accurate definitions of multiple types of disabilities that exist in society and the differentiated response required by the post-school system. As a response to this call, the Department drafted a disability policy for the post-school education and training system.

# DETERMINATION OF CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION TO TVET COLLEGES

- 28 The College Council determines the requirements for admission into the College in line with the policies and regulations promulgated by the Department of Higher Education and Training, and include:
  - 28.1 Determining the entrance requirements in respect of all qualifications, including developing a points systems or additional criteria that is clearly articulated in terms of performance requirements;
  - 28.2 Determining the minimum and maximum duration of study pertaining to a particular qualification;

- 28.3 Determining the number of students to be admitted for a particular qualification and the manner of their selection;
- 28.4 Determining the minimum requirements for conditions relating to re-admission;
- 28.5 Determining the standards and conditions under which students may be refused re-admission to the college;
- 28.6 Determining the conditions for de-registration;
- 28.7 Determining the medium of instruction; and
- 28.8 Determining all policies and processes that lead to proper selection and placement of students, bearing in mind that such policies and processes must be underpinned by the principle of ensuring student success.
- 29 This policy framework will provide further guidance and ensure consistency with regards to administration of students' admission processes in TVET Colleges, as it relates to:
  - 29.1 Scheduling and implementation of the registration process;
  - 29.2 Guiding processes for the cancellation of registered students;
  - 29.3 Admission of students with disabilities;
  - 29.4 Admission requirements for international students; and
  - 29.5 Timeous dissemination of information relating to registration periods for all programmes, and all semesters and trimesters.
- 30 Students' admission into a TVET College shall be subject to the students' acceptance of the rules and academic regulations of that particular institution. Acceptance of admission at the college shall be taken to constitute acceptance of all published policies and regulations. The student will attest to such by signing a contractual agreement to this effect.
- 31 The college should consider implementing a mechanism of conditional acceptance offers, which will be confirmed upon final examination results. This will assist in planning for college enrolments and alleviate the pressure of backlogs during registration.
- Whilst it is good to have an admissions policy, it is equally important to put systems in place to ensure improved student performance and achievement. The college is therefore expected to adhere to the Department's TVET College Student Attendance and Punctuality Policy that will assist to monitor attendance of the students once admitted.

- 33 The TVET College must, through its prospectus, indicate when and how the college will conduct and orientate students in the academic programmes, irrespective of the nature of the programme enrolled for.
- 34 The Council should develop a *College Student Code of Conduct* which every student must sign upon receipt during registration (as stated in paragraph 32).

#### ADMINISTRATION OF ADMISSIONS

- 35 A person may register as a student in a TVET College, only if he or she satisfies the legal requirements for admission to study at the college and satisfies any other requirements for admission that may be determined by the College Council and laid down in the College student Code of Conduct.
- To be eligible for admission to a programme in a TVET College, the applicant must be a South African citizen or have a valid study permit, if the applicant is a foreign national.
- 37 TVET Colleges should give preference to students who:
  - 37.1 Are South African citizens;
  - 37.2 Residing within the catchment area where the college is located unless the college does not offer the programme required by the prospective student;
  - 37.3 Have a good academic record;
  - 37.4 Have a history of good attendance in terms of returning students;
  - 37.5 Are able to provide proof of provisional funding status;
  - 37.6 Are above a specified age;
  - 37.7 Have not violated the code of conduct;
  - 37.8 Satisfy any other requirements which the college deems necessary.
- 38 Colleges should commence with their application process for a new academic year, in June of the preceding year. This will alleviate the pressure and backlogs that colleges find themselves in and will also allow ample time for prospective students to apply.

- 39 The college should have a closing date for all National Certificate Vocational NC (V) applications, which should preferably be the end of October of the preceding year.
- 40 The closing dates for all Report 191 student applications should preferably be administered six months prior to commencement of studies.
- Colleges are reminded that any fee in addition to the tuition fee, whether it is called an application fee, registration fee or admission fee is NOT permitted. However, colleges may expect a portion of the tuition fee upfront at the point of admission from students who are paying their own fees.
- 42 Students who have been offered admission, have applied for, and successfully met the financial criteria for NSFAS tuition funding will be admitted and registered. Students who do not qualify for NSFAS will be obligated to pay the fees, either receiving funding from a sponsor, their family or other means.
- 43 If a college decides to implement conditional offers to students, the college should develop conditions to such offers, such as meeting a specific level of performance. Furthermore, the college must have efficient systems in place to track these conditions, and where necessary, be able to effectively revoke the placement.
- 44 Colleges should provide additional support and accommodate students with disabilities through guidelines for admission of students with disabilities. This will include reference to designated offices to cater and assist students with disabilities.
- The Management and Academic Board must guide the development of a suitable admission process and the provision of services for prospective students, which are inclusive, fair and transparent.

# MINIMUM ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

- 46 This section of the policy framework provides guidance on the minimum entry requirements for prospective students who intend to study in any of the TVET Colleges.
- The prospective student must be in possession of the relevant minimum entry requirements for the National Certificate (Vocational) and Report 191 programmes as stipulated in the relevant policies. Students with grade 12 must not be admitted into NC (V) level 2.
- 48 A college should provide a balance between access and success by recognising prospective students from disadvantaged groups and ensuring quality by selecting students that demonstrate good academic capabilities.
- A student who wishes to enrol for the National Certificate (Vocational) or a Report 191 N1 certificate should have a Grade 9; AET Level 4 and application of RPL or equivalent NQF Level 1 qualification as a minimum.
- The duration of enrolment from N1- N3 is three trimesters and N4-N6 per semester respectively.
- A student may be funded for a maximum of two years at the same NQF Level in a nationally approved qualification unless a motivation by the college is made by means of a special request to the DHET for an extension for funding. As stipulated in the Continuing Education and Training Act (16/2006): The national Norms and Standards for funding Technical and Vocational Education and Training Colleges.
- 52 A college should develop additional entrance requirements for students intending to enrol in specialised programmes, such as engineering studies.

# ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR NC (V) STUDENTS

Minimum entrance requirements are aligned to the NCV programme. Students who have passed an NQF level 1 qualification i.e. Grade 9; AET Level 4 and application of RPL. Entry requirements should be guided and aligned to the NC (V) policy.

### ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR REPORT 191 STUDENTS

- Minimum entrance requirements are aligned to the REPORT 191 programme requirements. Students who have passed Grade 12/NC (V) Level 4 may be admitted into N4 Business/ Engineering Studies, subject to any other programme/faculty requirements.
- Minimum entrance requirements for N1 Engineering studies are a NQF Level 1 qualification, i.e. Grade 9; AET Level 4 and the use of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) to determine equivalence to NQF Level 1.

# ADDITIONAL ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

- 56 The Academic Board may determine additional requirements with the approval of the College Council. In addition, colleges may need to develop a point system or additional entry requirements for entry into qualifications.
- 57 The point system should weigh language, mathematics and science high on any qualification where these subjects serve as a pre-requisite. Subjects such as Accounting, Drawing, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) may also feature in the points system for certain programmes. Colleges must ensure the point system or additional criteria are not too high or used as a tool to further exclude prospective students from colleges.

# DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR ADMISSION

- All documents will become the property of the college. If documents are not in English as the medium of communication, they must be accompanied by a certified translation in English. The required documents are as follows:
- 59 Identity document or passport for foreign students with study permit;
- All documents will become the property of the college. If documents are not in English as the medium of communication, they must be accompanied by a certified translation in English. The required documents are as follows:

- 61 Identity document or passport for foreign students with study permit;
  - 61.1Academic records:
    - (1) Grade 9 certificate; or
    - (2) Adult Education and Training (AET) Level 4 which is equivalent to the National Qualification Framework (NQF) Level 1 certificate; or
    - (3) N1; and
    - (4) a N2 certificate for N3 or N3 for N4 for entry into Report 191 engineering studies or
    - (5) Grade 12/NCV Level 4 for entry into N4 Report 191 Business/Utility studies;
    - (6) Recognition of Prior Learning RPL; or
    - (7) Previous student academic record for returning students; or
    - (8) Foreign students: South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) approved foreign qualification and
  - 61.2 Proof of medical insurance or cover;
  - 61.3 Selection and Placement test results:
  - 61.4 Proof of provisional funding status from NSFAS (Students should note that NSFAS; or
  - 61.5 Provisional funding from repeating students and non NSFAS applicants;
  - 61.6 Completed registration form;
  - 61.7 Proof of residence, contact details of next of kin or responsible persons; and
  - 61.8 Parents' or guardian's or next of kin ID document.

### SELECTION AND PLACEMENT TESTS

- As part of the recruitment and selection process of prospective students, the college should administer a selection and placement test, and interviews where necessary, as this would assist in the correct placement of students into relevant programmes.
- Placement tests and procedures are compulsory for prospective students, to enable them to be placed in an appropriate programme. This will allow the student to enrol in a programme for which they have the necessary capabilities, and will also enable the college to identify those learners requiring additional support.

No student should be accepted or admitted into a college without undergoing the placement test process. The selection and placement test is used to identify students who may require onward referral or learning and academic support:

#### ADMISSION OF RETURNING STUDENTS

- 65 For a student to be admitted in the next level in the NC (V) and REPORT 191 qualifications, he or she must comply with the promotion requirements of the previous level, as guided by the Department's National Examinations and Assessment (NEA) progression policy. Progression requirements for other programmes and qualifications must be obtained either from the qualification policy, or must be determined by the college and approved as such by the Academic Board.
- 66 If a student has failed the level of study he /she may enrol again, but the college must provide compulsory academic support programmes to assist the learner to succeed. The learner must sign a letter of commitment to attend the academic support programmes.
- 67 Enrolled students who have moved from another college must provide a transfer letter which includes reasons, incidents and financial obligations of previous College to the new College, upon registration.
- 68 It is then the responsibility of the new college to communicate with the student's previous college for more information.

# ACADEMIC EXCLUSION AND DEREGISTRATION

A student can be denied admission where there is evidence of poor academic performance and attendance record. If a student has failed twice and more in his/her field of study, after compulsory academic support interventions. The student should sign a letter of commitment to attend the academic support intervention programmes until he\she has met the required results to move to the next level of study.

- A prospective student is denied registration if he /she had been expelled from another college as part of a disciplinary sanction or examination sanction from the department.
- A student is deregistered due to death; disciplinary and examination sanctions or student deregisters himself or herself. The student must provide valid reasons for cancellation or deregistration and the college policy must stipulate the percentage of programme cost the student remains liable for on cancellation or deregistration.

### ADMISSION OF NON - CITIZENS

- Persons classified as aliens must, when applying for admission, show evidence that they have applied with the requirements of the Department of Home Affairs to legalise their stay in the country in terms of the Aliens Control Act,1991 (Act No.96 of 1991), as amended in section 2 of the Aliens Control Amendment Act,1995(Act No.76 of 1995).
- A student who entered the country as a refugee or immigrant must provide proof of their academic record, approved by the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) if it is a foreign qualification.
- 74 The student must pass the placement test and receive an acceptance letter from the college which will stipulate which programme the student can register and the duration thereof.
- 75 The student must then present a study permit when applying for admission to the college which stipulates the duration of study.
- The student is considered conditionally registered in the event where the student is unable to produce the study permit within 3 months of registration in the NC (V) and REPORT 191 Business Studies. In respect of REPORT 191 Engineering Studies the permit should be submitted in the first month of the trimester.
- 77 If student does not produce required documents, registration will be terminated. The study permit should be valid for the required duration of study in a chosen programme.

### STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The college should admit students with disabilities and must provide the necessary support, as far as practically possible to make teaching and learning accessible to the student. The student is encouraged to apply for concession for examinations during enrolment.

#### APPEAL PROCEDURES

Any student or parent /guardian of the student who has been refused admission to the College may appeal against the decision through the academic board, which should make recommendations to the College Council.

#### REGISTRATION PERIODS: NCV

80 College registrations should begin in the first week of reopening in a new academic year and close in the second week of January of every year. The second week makes provision if the college is not fully enrolled, and to provide for late registrations in special cases. The start of classes must ensure maximum utilisation of teaching and learning time.

### **REGISTRATION PERIODS: REPORT 191**

- College registrations should also open for REPORT 191 programmes in the first week of reopening, and close in the second week of January of every year, and applications to be encouraged in the prior year of study for new students. The second week makes provision if the college is not fully enrolled and to allow for special cases of late registration.
- 82 REPORT 191 registrations for engineering studies can also take place before the start of the trimester in April, and May for trimester 2, and August and September for trimester3. Registration for business studies must take place before commencement of semester 2 in July.
- 83 The REPORT 191 programmes may be offered on a part time basis during the afternoon and evenings. The study periods are: first trimester -January till March; second trimester:

May till July and third trimester: September till November. Business Studies duration is three semesters N4, N5 and N6. The study periods are: first Semester: January – June and second semester: July – November.

#### STUDENT REGISTRATION REGISTER

- 84 The Principal and Deputy Principal: Registrar must keep a register of student admissions in the registration system of the College, which must be valid, reliable and accessible at all times.
- The College Council must determine and document how the registration records of the TVET College will be kept. The format of the data capture tool must include information relating to biographical and demographic information of the student such as surname and full names, date of birth, age, identity number/passport number, disability, qualification details, names of students next of kin, their addresses and the address and contact details for the time of study. Colleges must ensure authenticity of registration documents and use the code of conduct or legal processes in the event of receiving fraudulent documents from a student.
- 86 Entries in the registration system will be verified against each student's information, such as an identity document or passport, of which a copy must be placed on record either in hard or soft copy.
- 87 Officials from the National and Regional offices must be able to access the electronic registration system and the register, as and when the need arises.

### MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- 88 For this policy framework to be effective it will be supported by set of monitoring and evaluation instruments indicated below:
  - 88.1 Registration monitoring tool;
  - 88.2 Annual surveys;
  - 88.3 Annual reports;
  - 88.4 Quarterly enrolment Monitoring tools;
  - 88.5 SSS Plan monitoring tool;
  - 88.6 Functionality Assessment Tools;
  - 88.7 Annual monitoring tool;
  - 88.8 Technical and Vocational Education and Training Information Management System (TVETMIS);
  - 88.9 Any other instruments as may be required from time to time.

### SHORT TITLE

This policy framework shall be called *Policy framework on Administration and Management of Student admissions at Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges.*