

Report of the Further Education and Training Steering Committee

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Recommendations to the Minister of Higher Education and Training

10 October 2010

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I. Purpose

This report contains the recommendations of the Further Education and Training (FET) Steering Committee to the Minister of Higher Education and Training. It is closely based on the work of three of the five Task Teams established to manage the work streams endorsed at the FET Round Table held on 9 April 2010. From May 2010 to the time of writing, the Task Teams were responsible for:

- (1) Models of autonomy and legal/policy actions required in the FET college sector
- (2) The programmes and qualifications mix (PQM) to be offered in the sector
- (3) Planning and funding for 2011 and beyond
- (4) Examinations
- (5) Planning support for colleges for 2011 with regard to staffing and learner recruitment

This report is based on the work of Task Teams 1-3, as the work of Task Team 4 has a very specific focus on improvements in the management and administration of examinations and assessment in the FET college sector. These improvements are already being taken forward by the DHET in consultation with Provincial Education Departments and college principals. Task Team 5 will submit a report after the post-Summit phase (September – October 2010) in which the team will provide support to colleges in their operational planning for the 2011 academic year.

Each Task Team comprised core and resource members, many of whom were nominated by the stakeholder organisations that constitute the FET Steering Committee, including the DHET itself.

At the FET Summit the analyses and recommendations of Task Teams 1-3 were broadly accepted, as they have been by the FET Summit Steering Committee, now renamed the FET Steering Committee. This report presents the summative views of the FET Steering Committee on:

- The broad context of the public FET college sector (Section II)
- The context at the college level (Section III)
- Discussion of principles (Section IV)
- Recommendations (Section V)

II. The Broad Context

Policy and Legislation: the Broad Context

Current policy and legislation regarding the FET College sector is rooted in the education-training divide that preceded the establishment of the Department of Higher Education and Training in 2009. Articulation between colleges and higher education is weak, and indeed articulation among all relevant institutions is generally weak, including schools, FET colleges, technical high schools and agricultural colleges. Development of the colleges across the nine provinces has been uneven. While the Colleges Act of 2006 envisaged a broad role for colleges, the almost exclusive focus on the NCV in the National Plan of 2008 and the 2009

funding norms has helped to address the needs of one part of the colleges' target audience but has directed the colleges away from the desired goals of differentiation and diversity. Colleges have become increasingly de-linked from the worlds of skills development and occupational training, and a cul-de-sac for learners hoping to progress into higher education. As a result, it will be important to counter the view that colleges (and vocational and occupational learning generally) are options for weaker learners, and to ensure that they become in the future institutions of excellence and institutions of choice.

New development opportunities have arisen with the establishment of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) – in particular, opportunities:

- To repair the fundamental divide between education and training, between FET and HE and between national and provincial competences
- To generate greater synergy between provider institutions and the institutions responsible for facilitating the translation of skills demand into supply (SETAs)
- For colleges to align their programmes and priorities with the needs of industry with the support of the SETAs in line with the draft NSDS-3
- To steer the college system in the direction of much greater access to workplace-based learning, noting that 10% of skills levy funds will be allocated to such opportunities and that all levels of government and parastatals can play an important role in this regard

Programmes: the Broad Context

FET is broadly defined in terms of programmes at levels 2-4 on the NQF and is located “at the intersection of General and Higher Education and the world of work” (White Paper 4) and in terms of the law the colleges are intended “*To enable students to acquire knowledge, practical skills, and applied vocational and occupational competence, in order to enter employment; a vocation, occupation or trade; or higher education.*”

The contribution of the colleges to national development priorities must be understood within the context of the broader institutional landscape, which includes public adult learning centres, high schools, technical high schools, NGOs and private providers of FET.

We must also consider current processes under way, in particular the National Skills Development Strategy III, the proposed revised SETA landscape, the Collaboration for Occupational Skills Excellence (COSE) project as well as the revised quality assurance environment.

While the focus must remain on the core vocational and occupational training role and identity of colleges, national plans for the college sector must also find ways to address the enormous social challenge of providing opportunities for young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEET), noting:

- the need to find systemic ways of increasing the scale of provisioning of programmes that support income generation and access to sustainable livelihoods in

a systematic manner, including workplace exposure for NEET youth to ensure that they access experiential learning

- the broader institutional landscape that is required to address this challenge
- the need to consider the kinds of programmes that will be needed for different target audiences, and the development and application of RPL mechanisms in line with the draft NSDS-3
- the relative costs of the different types of programmes
- the need to build on the existing strengths and capabilities of each college and to extend the relationships with stakeholders and the partnerships they may already have
- the need to balance the dual imperatives of quality and growth in a manner that places the learner at the centre
- the important role that the National Skills Fund can play, operating within an increasingly developmental paradigm, to provide skills for youth and adults not in employment, education or training, particularly in areas of scarce skills as identified in the Sector Skills Plans of the relevant SETAs

Planning and Funding: the Broad Context

Colleges are public institutions that are widely distributed across the country, and have the potential to reach a substantial number of vulnerable youth and young adults. It is important therefore that their offerings are able to respond to local needs (in the various communities in which they are located) as well as regional and national needs.

Prior to 2010, colleges were placed in a precarious situation by delays and sometimes cuts in provincial funding; as a result of the shift of the funding function from PEDs to the DHET, funding is still channelled through provinces but there is no longer leeway for provinces to change the grant allocation to the college.

Colleges are now required to plan their enrolments, for the purpose of the government subsidy, on the basis of the programme budget allocations they receive from the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) rather than on the basis of the number of staff they have or the number of students they can 'fit' into the college.

Colleges are permitted to offer occupational and other programmes in the form of "fee for service income"; however, the full cost of offering these programmes is not always recovered and the amount of funding received through these programmes is not clearly documented.

The current funding framework for public FET colleges reflects the historical divide between education and training. However, this document has been developed by the FET Steering Committee in a context in which a new post-school education and training system (PSETS) is being developed, and the future funding dispensation must reflect the opportunities that now exist to create an integrated and well articulated PSETS. Future funding must systematically ensure vastly increased access for young people and adults – employed and

unemployed, and in rural and urban areas without prejudice – to vocational and occupational education and training.

III. The Context at the College Level

The College Context: Employment Policies and Practices

The employment provisions of the 2006 FET Colleges Act have had a destabilising effect upon the colleges and there have been unintended consequences. These include a loss of some qualified and experienced staff, unsatisfactory salaries and conditions of employment for many council employees, and tensions surrounding the reporting lines and accountability of college principals and deputy principals.

While not a direct consequence of the Act, college staff who remain on the provincial payroll have seen their remuneration and benefits fall behind those of their peers in the school system.

Contributing factors include the parlous financial position of many colleges, exacerbated by the introduction of the NCV and of the 2009 funding norms and standards.

Some colleges have been insufficiently innovative and enterprising in attracting alternative sources of income; however, college management structures are under-developed and under-staffed in many instances, with large numbers of vacancies and individuals in acting positions, sometimes for years at a time.

While the employment policies and practices of college councils and college management appear in some instances to be short-sighted, the state, on the other hand, has by and large abrogated its responsibilities towards staff who are, after all, employed in public institutions.

The result of all this is in many instances an erosion of trust between college staff and government, and between staff and college councils and management.

The College Context: Programmes, Planning and Funding

There is a range of challenges that are of critical and immediate concern in relation to how colleges are able to plan and manage funding. The list below is preliminary and emerges from interactions that Task Team 3 has had with various stakeholders in the college subsector.

Financial Issues

1. Budget shortfalls because of over-enrolment and financial risk in some colleges because of too few NCV students
2. Bad debt not provided for or well managed

3. NSFAS delays, sometimes because of poor quality information from colleges and flawed marketing and enrolment planning
4. Poor throughput creates blockages in the system, with students carrying too many subjects
5. Unit costs are less than real programme costs in some cases
6. The funding transfer process has been resolved in principle but not in practice
7. Poor analysis underpins enrolment planning
8. Weak management capacity, especially in financial management and planning (NB poor procurement practices)
9. Weak capacity to generate additional (non-exchequer) revenue
10. Extremely late publication of examination results, late influx of students and local political pressure, especially to admit NCV students, affect planning negatively

Staffing Issues

11. Staff who left the colleges had to be replaced, creating a financial burden
12. Inadequate treatment of staff (because of differing conditions of service) and poor communication affect morale and relationships
13. Staff competence is variable, staff development is weak
14. Many managers are in acting positions

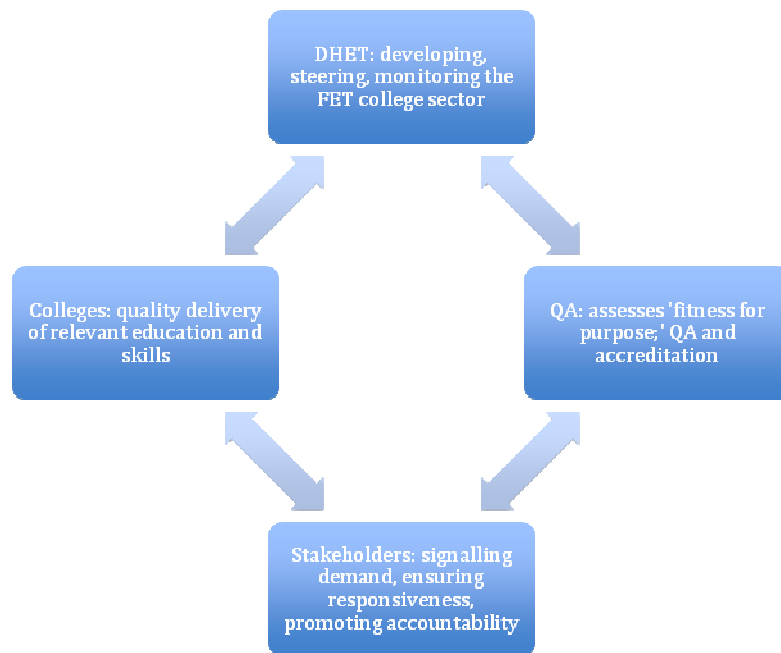
Teaching and Learning

15. Poor throughput creates blockages in the system, with students carrying too many subjects
16. Poor student support/placement/selection (need for informed and up-to-date career advice including areas of scarce skills in the various sectors) and lack of remedial action

IV. Discussion of Principles

The Role of the State and the DHET

The role of the state and the DHET, supported by stakeholders, will be to develop and oversee the public FET college system as an extension of the developmental state. The various roles of the DHET, the colleges, the quality assurers and stakeholders are depicted in the diagram below:



The role of DHET should be interrogated and developed on the basis of two fundamental propositions:

- that colleges are public institutions, and a vital component of the post-school education and training system in meeting the country's developmental, economic and social needs; and
- that colleges must be empowered through policy and legislation, and appropriately staffed and resourced, to respond effectively and with appropriate operational policies and procedures to job opportunities, the demands of the labour market and the needs of employers, as well as to the needs of communities and the public policy imperatives of government.

Differentiated Powers and Functions in the College Subsystem

Since public FET colleges are an extension of the developmental state, a key challenge is to define the distribution of powers and functions across different levels of the system, ensuring that:

- Colleges are instrumental in the process of democratic change, and accountable to broader society
- A balance is found between the management discretion that a college requires in order to deliver relevant programmes in a flexible and responsive manner, and the role of the state in planning and overseeing the development and the performance of the public FET college system
- Colleges address the needs of disadvantaged groups or communities, and also redress market failure with respect to the provision of critical or priority skills
- The college system becomes highly responsive to the needs of employers and the demands of the labour market, with particular emphasis on developing scarce skills

- Colleges receive appropriate levels of support and development assistance to effectively develop and implement their PQMs, using the best colleges as the benchmark in this regard
- Colleges demonstrate that they have the capacity to carry out the functions that are assigned to them
- Key stakeholders play an important practical role in policy and governance through structured dialogue and consultation at the system level and the institutional level (articulating labour market and social demand and ensuring the responsiveness of the colleges)

Principles Related to the Programmes and Qualifications Mix

‘Differentiation’ among colleges is a key principle in addressing the above challenges. Differentiation (which is in fact is a reflection of current realities within the sector) is taken to mean that each college will be distinguished by its individual Programmes and Qualifications Mix (PQM), which may differ from other colleges in terms of the range and level of programmes offered, and the numbers enrolled, driven by a long-term national development plan for the college system in response to various factors including:

- the geographical location of the college;
- the local labour market;
- the communities served by the college;
- linkages with higher education;
- regional, provincial and national growth and development plans and HRD strategies;
- the capacity of the college to offer particular programmes, as determined by the relevant Quality Council or other quality assurer; and
- historical inequalities.

A PQM approach is the appropriate vehicle for the approval and funding of college programmes. This approach suggests that approval of each college’s PQM will be based on two related but distinct processes: approval by the appropriate quality council of the programmes each college proposes to offer and approval by DHET of the overall PQM for each college, based on college performance data and the objectives of a broad national plan for the college sector.

The implementation of an effective and efficient PQM-based process depends on a number of key factors, not all of which are currently in place. These include:

- Appropriate planning, financial and administrative capacity in the colleges
- Properly constituted, strong, effective and informed college councils
- Appropriate planning, financial and administrative capacity in DHET
- Effective and informed industry and stakeholder representation and engagement at the system level as well as at the institutional level
- Clarity regarding the programmes to be offered by colleges, and as to the specific quality assurance bodies that the various programme offerings will be subject to

- The capacity of the quality assurance bodies themselves, noting, for instance, that the HEQC currently has no experience of or systems for quality assuring the colleges, and that the QCTO is still at an embryonic stage of development

The introduction of a PQM-based mechanism is therefore a medium-term, *developmental* objective. Clear, simple and transparent interim arrangements have been developed by the DHET for the approval of college plans and programme offerings, and these arrangements need to be refined in close consultation with stakeholders.

More ambitious system objectives arising from the long-term national plan for post-school provision (which will, for example, include expanded access, the improvement of quality, and the establishment of new institutions or types of institutions) will require dedicated development funding, over and above programmes-based funding determined via the PQM.

Flagship Programmes

There should be a number of core vocational and occupational education and training programmes from which FET colleges will determine their PQM. These programmes are proposed as the ‘flagship’ programmes for the FET colleges and it is suggested that these should assist to establish a clear identity for the colleges.

It is proposed that this ‘college identity’ should have the following elements:

- The colleges’ flagship programmes should be substantive and result in a qualification.
- The flagship programmes should be general vocational programmes and occupational programmes, noting the recommendations of Task Team 2 regarding the need for a clear RPL, selection and assessment process (and for student support services to be integrated into all levels of college life), foundational learning programmes, and an ‘employability’ or ‘work readiness’ component in flagship programmes.
- New funding norms and standards should support and drive all components of FET college flagship programmes.
- The colleges’ flagship programmes should have a clear relationship to workplace opportunities and enhance employability (work readiness training and placement support will be necessary, and close attention will need to be paid to scarce skills and PIVOTAL programmes – programmes envisaged in the draft NSDS-3 which provide opportunities for workplace training to combine with academic learning that leads to a qualification).
- The flagship programmes offered by the FET colleges should articulate with other programmes (ensuring both horizontal and vertical progression).

The criteria for determining the qualification-directed PQM per college need to be discussed in detail in the post-Summit phase, using the draft criteria developed by Task Team 2 as a starting point, noting that:

- Institutional diversity (not all colleges will provide the same PQM) will mean that where learners wish to access a programme that is not available in their locality the possibility of a supplement to the bursary needs to be considered.
- A consequence of differentiation will be that individual colleges may develop areas of specialised expertise.
- The ability of colleges to assist learners to locate opportunities for practical learning and work experience as well as for final assessment will be crucial, and must be funded.
- FET colleges with the capacity to do so should be encouraged to play an important role in the delivery of other programmes, such as programmes that support sustainable livelihoods in the communities that surround colleges campuses; colleges that do not have the necessary capacity will be encouraged to partner with other providers in this regard (in particular accredited, well-established industry training centres with a good track record of successful training), and funding must be allocated in a systematic and consistent manner to ensure that sustainable livelihoods programmes are able to grow to the required scale.
- In the definition, review and development of the flagship programmes institutions such as SETAs and the Quality Councils will be vital partners.

In the development and implementation of college PQMs, close attention will need to be paid to:

- Seamless articulation between adult education and vocational and occupational education, which may require legislation straddling the entire post-school education and training system
- Vastly increased capacity to develop and implement RPL policies and mechanisms in line with the draft NSDS-3

Principles Related to Planning and Funding

Noting the range of challenges in the college sector, Task Team 3 has proposed four principles which guide recommendations for FET college interventions prior to and during 2011.

- a) Based on the extent of the problem analysis outlined above there is an urgent need to support certain colleges to plan and prepare more effectively for 2011, and receive ongoing support into the first quarter of 2011 to avoid a recurrence of the crisis in which they currently find themselves. The DHET should devise criteria against which the risk status of colleges can be analysed, based on financial and operational indicators, and assign targeted support for those colleges that are currently in the highest risk category. This support may require additional financial as well as technical support to avoid the repercussions of the current financial crisis in these colleges.
- b) There is an urgent need to stabilise the FET college subsystem in 2011 in order to lay the foundation for sustainable growth. The challenges outlined represent significant risks to growth and if colleges are to grow in a sustainable manner it is necessary to dedicate 2011 to interventions that can meaningfully address some of these destabilising factors and prevent them from recurring.

- c) Considering the weak capacity in many colleges to adhere to acceptable planning and management practices, there is a need to prioritise standards and capacity for effective planning and financial and human resource management.
- d) Before plans for 2012 can be fully developed, there is a need to address key knowledge gaps that impact on the DHET's capacity to clearly plan for and support sustainable growth in the college subsystem. These gaps include:
- Comprehensive data on lecturer competencies and knowledge
 - Comprehensive data on the actual financial status of colleges beyond what is provided in the Annual Financial Statements
 - Comprehensive data on infrastructure to determine the capacity of the subsystem to grow
 - Comprehensive mapping of student needs and assessment of student support approaches
 - Comprehensive data on employer demand for vocational and occupational programmes

V. Recommendations

Detailed recommendations regarding policy and legislation, and programmes and funding, are motivated and discussed in some depth in the reports of Task Teams 1 – 3, and have been summarised in the discussion above.

Taken together, the core recommendations of the Task Teams point to an integrated and coherent vision and developmental path for the public FET colleges sub-system. Recognising the current realities in the sector, including the need to bring stability to the colleges, the reports also recognise the important role that colleges can and must play as part of the wider system of post-school education and training, in responding to the demand for skills, enhancing employability, and expanding access.

Flowing from this, the recommendations outline a strong guiding and developmental role for the Department of Higher Education in building an expanded and differentiated FET college sub-sector. At the same time, the recommendations propose a distribution of roles and functions across the system which, together with a flexible and responsive programmes-based planning mechanism, a mixed mode of funding, and a stable but flexible staffing model, will afford college councils and management the necessary authority and discretion to deliver effectively on their mandate, and to encourage initiative and innovation.

The core recommendations of the FET Steering Committee, closely based on the recommendations of the FET Summit Task Teams¹, are summarised below.

¹ More detailed recommendations are to be found in the FET Summit Task Team reports; only the main proposals are elaborated on here.

i. Differentiation

The FET Steering Committee recommends the development of a differentiated sub-system of public FET colleges. Differentiation is taken to mean a distinctive role and identity for the colleges sub-sector within the broader post-school education and training landscape, and is aimed at promoting flexible and responsive education and skills provision, and expanded access, within the different social and economic environments served by the colleges and their constituent campuses.

ii. Distribution of functions and responsibilities

It is recommended that policy and legislation is developed which ensures a balanced distribution of functions and responsibilities across the colleges sub-system. The DHET will play a central role in a stakeholder-driven approach to developing, steering and monitoring the college system to ensure that it articulates effectively with general and higher education and meets national social and economic demands. In particular, the DHET will assist in developing robust relationships between the colleges, the SETAs, HE institutions and employers, with a special focus on work-integrated learning. At the college level, college councils and management must have the authority and discretion they require to deliver on their mandate, and to encourage initiative and innovation. The role of the Quality Councils, and of stakeholders, should be clearly defined in such a way as to ensure quality and support the development of a responsive and accountable college sector.

iii. Programmes

It is recommended that the core role and identity of public FET colleges is founded on the provision of substantive vocational education and occupational programmes which lead to a qualification, provide horizontal and vertical mobility, and demonstrate a clear link to employment and employability. Based on a clear understanding of this core identity and primary role, the development of an expanded and differentiated colleges system should however also be aimed at broadening and expanding access and encouraging colleges to respond in flexible and innovative ways to the income generation needs of individuals and communities.

The development and delivery of college programmes will be guided by the development priorities of the state, and the DHET must build its capacity to ensure that the quality of programme offerings grows as the college system expands. In order to expand enrolments in FET programmes, colleges must use their resources efficiently and in a manner that ensures their offerings are accessible to youth and adults who may need to attend programmes in the evening and on weekends.

All programmes offered at public FET colleges must be developed with close attention to the need for:

- Robust and comprehensive policies and mechanisms for the recognition of prior learning (RPL) and accelerated programmes based on the application of RPL
- Strong student placement and support systems to ensure that students make the right study and career choices and are given appropriate support to succeed in their chosen programme
- Vastly expanded access to workplace-based experiential learning, drawing on existing SETA grant and funding mechanisms (including Institutions of Sectoral and Occupational Excellence which have been set up and/or funded by the various SETAs in terms of the targets set in their annual SLA with the Department) as envisaged in the draft NSDS-3, and creating opportunities for such learning at all levels of government and in parastatals
- Much stronger links between colleges, employers and employers' organizations – including but not limited to employers in industry
- Vastly improved seamless articulation between programmes offered in general education and programmes offered in the post-school education and training system, with the ultimate goal of a fully articulated system
- Well researched accessible programmes, including short courses and skills programmes, that enhance the employability of those not in employment, education or training and support income generation in this segment of the population

iv. PQM-based planning

It is recommended that planning for the colleges sub-system should be based on the development of an individual Programmes and Qualifications Mix (PQM) for each college. PQM-based planning should support the development of individual colleges to better serve their communities and learners, while encouraging the development of a differentiated college sub-system which meets the needs of disadvantaged groups and communities as well as the demand for skills and innovation. The PQMs of colleges, as proposed by the college councils and approved by DHET, should serve as the basis for the development of comprehensive as well as specialist and niche institutions and centres of excellence.

The major component of the PQM for each college will be its qualification-directed flagship programmes, which will establish a clear identity for the college sector and for the individual colleges. These programmes will be general vocational and occupational programmes, with foundational learning and 'employability' or 'work readiness' components as well as clear links to the workplace. College flagship programmes will articulate with other programmes, ensuring both horizontal and vertical progression.

An ancillary mission of the colleges will be to offer programmes which respond to pressing social needs and support income generation at the local and regional levels. This aspect of the colleges' mission will also necessarily be differentiated, varying according to the capacity that exists or can be developed in particular colleges and campuses, and according to the nature of local and regional needs and opportunities.

Approval criteria for the colleges' PQMs will ensure: that the weighting of the PQM respects the core role and purpose of the colleges as providers of qualification-directed vocational and occupational education and training; that the realities on the ground – both external (related to the local economy and local social and economic conditions) and internal (related to the capacity of colleges and of particular campuses) – are taken into account; and that the imperative of increased access – in particular increased access for the many millions of youth and others who are not in employment, education or training – is addressed.

v. Funding

The current funding streams for public FET colleges reflect the historical divide between education and training. It is therefore recommended that a comprehensive, integrated funding framework is developed that will provide for sustainable growth and improved quality in delivery. Funding will be based on the PQMs of colleges and their core role in the provision of vocational and occupational education and training, as well as their contribution to greatly expanding access and opportunity. The need to expand NSFAS must be taken into account in this regard. Funding for colleges will include formula funding of vocational and occupational programmes through the exchequer, SETA funding for occupational and skills programmes, funding through the various funding windows of the National Skills Fund, including PIVOTAL grants, and other sources of fee-for-service income. It should be noted that non-Exchequer funding for colleges is not guaranteed, and that colleges will have to meet the standards and satisfy the quality requirements of SETAs and the NSF and other funders, in order to secure funding. In turn, this will require that colleges become more accountable, that they develop the necessary skills and capabilities, and that they monitor and manage college performance and delivery more effectively.

While limited (CPIX-related) growth is expected in Exchequer funding, the DHET will make every effort to ensure that Conditional Grant funds for the colleges' flagship programmes are complemented by SETA funding, and that NSF funds are made available in particular for programmes that directly address increased access and the income generation needs of youth and others not in employment, education or training.

vi. Staffing

To ensure stability and continuity in the delivery of the core flagship programmes, it is recommended that the state should be the employer of all permanent staff in the colleges sub-system. It is also recommended that colleges should retain the authority to employ staff on contract, to appoint all permanent and contract staff, and to manage the performance of all staff. Parity in conditions of service among all staff – whether employed by the state or by the colleges – must be established and maintained, based on qualifications, skills levels and relevant work experience.

The expansion of the college system must be accompanied by increased quality in programme offerings and increased throughput rates among students. The staff of the colleges are the single most important factor in achieving this. Current and future lecturing staff and support staff must benefit from a vastly improved human resource management and development (HRMD) framework that ensures that employment in colleges offers an attractive career path that is commensurate with the qualifications, skills levels and relevant work experience of all staff. The framework must address the need to develop strong industry linkages and exchange opportunities for college staff with local companies.

A new HRMD dispensation that enables colleges to attract and retain appropriately skilled staff, and enables staff themselves to keep abreast of new developments in their discipline and in pedagogical practices, must be negotiated in the appropriate forum. This will include fair labour practices for all lecturing staff and support staff, whether they are contracted or permanently employed.

vii. Monitoring and evaluation

It is recommended that detailed attention be given by the DHET to the development and implementation of a robust research, monitoring and evaluation system to guide the developmental and support work of the DHET, to ensure that there is an effective feedback loop to inform policy, planning and funding, and to support much greater accountability for quality improvement in the college system.

viii. Organisational development and change management

Public FET colleges must become responsive, high-quality institutions, as has been envisaged since the production of Education White Paper 4. However, in the forthcoming phase of necessary change, intensive support in the form of coordinated and targeted organisational development and change management will be provided to the colleges, where possible in partnership with employers, to enable them to successfully occupy a critical space in the post-school education and training (PSET) landscape and play a key role in addressing the acute middle-level skills crisis. This intensive support will be required at all levels – for colleges themselves, for provincial education departments (which continue to be the key government structures in the complex transition from provincial to national) and for the DHET. The support will help to bridge the divide that preceded the establishment of the DHET as the single department responsible for education and training in the FET and HE sectors, and will help to capitalise on the significant opportunities that now arise to build a coherent PSET system.