

**GUIDELINES TO ENSURE MARKET-DRIVEN FURTHER
EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMMES IN THE FREE
STATE**

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

| | |
|-----------|---|
| ABET: | Adult Basic Education and Training |
| CHE: | Council for Higher Education |
| DoE: | Department of Education |
| DoL: | Department of Labour |
| ESDP: | Entrepreneurial Skills Development programme |
| ETQAs: | Education and Training Quality Authorities |
| EMIS: | Education Management and Information System |
| ETDP: | Education Training Development Practices |
| FET: | Further Education and Training |
| FETQA: | Further Education Training Quality Authority |
| GAAP: | General Accepted Accounting Practices |
| GENFETQA: | General and Further Education Quality Authority |
| GET: | General Education and Training |
| HE: | Higher Education |
| IQMS: | Institutional Quality Management system |
| ISO: | International Standards organization |
| ITB: | Industrial Training Board |
| NCFE: | National Committee on Further Education |
| NBI: | National Business Initiative |
| NBFET: | National Board for Further Education and Training |
| NQF: | National Qualifications Framework |
| NSB: | National Standard Body |
| OBE: | Outcomes-based Education |
| RDP: | Redevelopment Programme |
| RPL: | Recognition of Prior Learning |
| SAQA: | South African Qualifications Authority |
| SETA: | Sectoral Education and Training Authority |
| TAFE: | Technical Australian Further Education |
| TVET: | Technical and Vocational Education and Training |

UNCTAD: United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

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ORIENTATION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

World-wide, governments and independent organisations have established various non-traditional forms of post secondary education, often founded to educate people who are beyond the age or grade level of the public school system and who are not served by typical higher education institutions such as universities. Post-apartheid South Africa is also struggling with the question of how to restructure its institutions of post-school education to nurture an equitable society as well as to contribute to its economic and technological growth and development (To the Mark 1999:1).

It is agreed that a well-developed intermediate education and training sector, which lies between the general and the higher education sectors, will certainly make a contribution to the envisioned economic growth of the country. The reason for this is that this sector is situated at the intersection of a wide range of government policies, which are critical to the new information-based economy. Policies for the further education and training (FET) sector include macro-economic, industrial, labour market and human resource development. Obviously government co-ordination across these sectors is important for the success and the establishment of an FET policy framework that will promote the development of the human capacities, knowledge and skills of all South African citizens and especially of those who did not have access to education in the past.

The current reality is that South Africa's human capital is totally underdeveloped. As a result, and due to a range of divergent factors, there is a need to change the current FET system (NCFE RSA. DoE 1997a). According to the Green Paper on Further Education and Training (RSA. DoE 1997b:11) one of the most socially devastating factors impacting on the inadequate South African FET sector was the collapse of the youth labour market. It has been estimated that by the year 2005 there will be at least 250 000

students with matriculation exemption and a further 500 000 with an FET Certificate. This Paper maintains that “if efficiency and pass rates improve in the intervening years, the numbers could expand to over 800 000 school leavers with an FET certificate, most probably without a job. Half the estimated 4 million unemployed are young people under the age of 30 with at least nine years schooling.” In addition to this, the approximately 15 million adults in South Africa who lack basic skills make this picture even gloomier. This information demonstrates the need for a national effort to correct the distortions of the past, meet the needs of all South Africans, and lay the foundations for a successful society and economy in the globally competitive conditions of the 21st century.

The current FET sector does not contribute sufficiently towards social and economic development in South Africa. Flint (1998:1), in the report of the British Council in South Africa, identified the following key problems in the FET sector:

- A lack of coherence and overall vision and strategy.
- Widely uneven funding.
- Widely divergent standards and quality.
- Separate education and training tracks.
- Few second chance opportunities.
- Weak linkages with industry.
- The legacies of apartheid.
- Authoritarian and disabling management cultures.
- Poor moral and low professional esteem in many institutions.
- The distortions in the labour market.
- Irrelevant programmes.

In an attempt to give rigour to the inspired transformation in the South African FET sector, and to address above mentioned problems, a variety of policy documents and acts (e.g. the South African Qualifications Act 58 of 1995; the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998; the Further Education and Training Act 98 of 1998 and the Skills Development Levies Act 9 of 1999) were passed. These papers called upon the FET sector to dislodge itself from the economies of the past and to contribute towards the reconstruction,

development and transformation of South Africa. The underlying assumptions of these policies are, amongst others, to establish a needs-driven, market-related, lifelong learning FET system which will assist the country in providing many more employable qualified learners to the world of work. These policies envisage that this system should forge synergistic linkages between education and training on the one hand and the economic sector, on the other. In other words, the aims of the integration of FET and communities throughout South Africa are to create direct links amongst people living in communities throughout South Africa; provide a forum to promote policies which integrate education, training and economic development with the emphasis on small enterprises in communities across South Africa; to establish a curriculum that supports economic development; and to foster links between the public and private sectors, community role-players and the world of work.

It is from the last assumption that the research problem of this study is derived - as one of the weaknesses of the current system is that there seems to be a gap in how the FET sector trains learners for the world of work. Hoppers (2000) and Flint (1998) are of the opinion that programmes offered by the FET sector currently suffer from problems such as that they are not properly contextualised and delinked from work experience and do not address specified economic activities. In addition they maintain that the skills training and basic education needs are divorced from each other and remain separate activities whilst current programmes train for unemployment, since they fail to provide for full employment.

It is especially the last issue mentioned above, namely irrelevant programmes, that the research would like to address. It is argued that relevant and needs-driven programmes can make a difference to the employability and self-employment prospects of millions of out-of-work South Africans. Needs-driven programmes, however, are only possible if institutions have the relevant management processes in place to identify, on a continuous basis, the needs of the communities and world of work.

1.2 RESEARCH ISSUES AND AIMS

Stemming from the above the main research aim was to develop a framework for FET institutions that could assist them to become needs-driven institutions. A special focus of the research was to help FET institutions to determine education and training needs in their region by getting the inputs of the most important regional role-players. The secondary aims of the research addressed the following research questions:

- What are the definition, mission, vision, goals and expectations for the FET sector nationally, provincially and regionally? These issues are addressed in Chapter 3.
- What are the training demands in the FET sector nationally and particularly in the Free State? The specific training needs for South Africa and the Free State are highlighted in Chapters 2 and 3.
- What is meant by a needs-driven FET sector and how can it be achieved in this sector? Chapters 2, 3 and 4 provides an overall picture of what is meant by a needs-driven FET sector.
- Do institutions have the management capacity to become needs-driven institutions? The realities and needs pertaining to the capacity of management is dealt with in Chapter 4.
- What can be done to ensure that the responses and inputs of all stakeholders and relevant structures (community, provincial or national role-players) are available to ensure the realisation of needs-driven programmes for this sector? Chapter 2 gives an overview with regard to this aspect in the FET sector.

1.3 DETAILS OF PRELIMINARY STUDY

Extensive reading on the research problem has been undertaken, with especial focus on the transformation of the FET sector. The researcher has first hand experienced of the research topic as she has been working almost twenty years in the sector and is currently

employed as a senior manager within this sector. A thorough literature review, including a policy analysis, on the demands of the world of work and employment studies has also been done to inform the perspective of the researcher.

1.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research utilises both qualitative and quantitative research techniques. As implied in paragraph 1.3, a thorough literature study was done on the key issues addressed in this study (e.g. FET policies and legislations, relevant research reports, international FET/vocational training systems to provide international and global perspectives). Other aspects that are discussed in the literature review relate to the questions that should be asked to assess the quality of programmes and to determine how an institution can establish whether its programme are in line with what the market, students and communities want.

A questionnaire with both closed and open-ended questions was designed to gather information related to the research issues from all FET institutions in the Free State (there are currently four merged FET institutions from 12 previous technical colleges). Feedback was also obtained from learners who completed their studies approximately a years ago as well as from their employers where possible, to establish whether they were employed and how long it took them to find employment, and also from FET institutional managers in the region.

The purpose of this study is not to provide quantitative and statistics on the employability of students graduating from the FET sector, but rather to provide qualitative perspectives on the FET sector and to recreate for the shared beliefs, practices, artifacts, folk knowledge, and behaviours of the stakeholders involved in this sector. Thus the data provided in this study are, so to speak, the constructions offered by or in the sources as data analysis leads to a reconstruction of what we already know (see Chapter 5).

1.5 CLARIFICATION OF TERMINOLOGY

In this dissertation a variety of concepts are used. As concepts and specific terminology are normally used within a particular context, it is imperative to provide working definitions for those that are repeatedly used.

1.5.1 Further education and training (FET)

According to the Green Paper on Further Education and Training (RSA DoE 1998:3) the FET sector consists of all learning and training programmes from the National Qualifications Framework Levels two to four, or the equivalent of Grades 10 to 12 in the school system. This is the band within the National Qualifications Framework which follows directly after General Education and Training and precedes Higher Education.

1.5.2 Technical and vocational education and training (TVET)

To ensure both the human and occupational aspects of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), two major dimensions should always guide the design of the relevant schemes and systems: education and work. The educational dimension caters for individual needs and human aspects, while the work or economic dimension caters for societal needs and labour market requirements.

1.5.3 Needs-driven programmes

In this dissertation it is argued that needs-driven programmes must address the social, technical and economic demands of the country in leading to the alleviation of poverty,

unemployment and crime. Training should be aimed towards the economic growth demands (labour demands) and self-employment with a great emphasis on building entrepreneurial capacity.

1.5.4 Skills programmes

Skills programmes are defined by the Education Training and Development Practices Sectoral Education and Training Authority (ETDP SETA) as programmes with “shorter, non-contractual routes to learning with the intention to improve skills at the workplace. When completed, it will constitute one credit (10 notional hours) towards a qualification registered on the NQF (National Qualifications Framework). These programmes must be meaningful, promote career path development and must have the potential to built up to a full qualification offered by accredited providers.”

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

The research could play a vital role in assisting FET institutions in the Free State to implement needs-driven FET programmes. Needs-driven programmes can make a difference in alleviating poverty, unemployment, illiteracy and even crime in the province on the long term. The reality is that institutions know that they should be doing it but do not know how to do it, as this sector does not have sufficient management capacity to drive such an initiative. It could also respond to the Minister of Education’s appeal for regional cooperation.

1.7 DEMARCATION OF THE FIELD OF STUDY

It is impossible for a study of this nature to research all aspects of such a phenomenon or discipline. It is therefore necessary to demarcate this study and to place it within a wider discipline context.

1.7.1 Part-disciplines of education

The focus of the research project comprises various areas of education. These areas and their importance constitute the following point of discussion.

1.7.1.1 Further education and training

Further education and training forms part of the discipline of education in the sense that it focuses on the adult learner. This sector's main goals are to promote lifelong learning and to provide vocational training. Its mission is to foster intermediate to high level skills, to lay the foundation for higher education, to facilitate the transition from school to work and develop well-educated, autonomous citizens (RSA DoE 1998a:3,5). In FET it is especially young adults who seek vocational education to prepare them for the world of work. The focus is thus on skills development.

1.7.1.2 Management of Education

Effective management in both the public and private sectors is becoming increasingly important. Adesina (1990:7) states that the concern about effective and efficient management in all spheres of education has been the result of fear or failure and the disillusionment about competence in the public service. Management, therefore, can be defined as the organisation and mobilisation of all human and material resources in a particular system for the achievement of identified objectives in the system (Adesina 1990:7).

Further education and training is no exception. In the past there were deeply held convictions about the management of further education institutions from funding agencies such as the state. Management in this sector is very important for the effective and efficient functioning of the sector as a whole and as individual institutions. For effective management, Meek and Goedegebuure (1989:83) identify management tools

such as strategic planning, quality assessment arrangements and performance indicators. In this study, where a framework will be developed to ensure that FET institutions are needs-driven institutions and managed as such, these tools seem to be most applicable.

1.8 LAYOUT OF THE DISSERTATION

In order to conduct this study and to develop a framework that will assist the management of FET institutions to offer needs-driven programmes, the following plan of action was followed:

Chapter 2 provides a detailed description of the role an FET system should play in the social and economic needs of a country. A special focus of this chapter is the perceived role of FET in developing countries and in South Africa in particular. The purpose of this chapter is to propose the “ideal” FET system and to describe what it should achieve. Attention is paid to programmes and curriculum issues and imperatives for change.

In **Chapter 3** a critical reflection is done on the current status of the South African FET system. It starts with an overview of the essential issues, problems and challenges this system faces and describes the leading national policies that are paving the way for the system’s transformation. A special focus of this chapter is the exploration of the inadequacy of existing programmes offered currently by this system.

Chapter 4 describes quality processes and models that could be used to ensure that the programmes offered in this sector are based on the needs of the community, whether on national or provincial level. **Chapter 5** provides a theoretical background on the qualitative research processes and methods.

Chapter 6 gives a thorough description and analysis of the research that has been conducted to investigate the training and response of employers as well as the experiences and opinions of Free State FET institutional executive management pertaining to the readiness and position of the Free State, in comparison with the

expectations of the FET sector as a whole in South Africa. In conclusion **Chapter 7** provides a condensed summary of the main findings of both the literature review and the empirical investigation.

1.9 CONCLUSION

It is clear from the orientation, motivation and background of the study that a strong emphasis on the transformation of the FET sector runs through the study. To transform a sector such as this, which has never before in South Africa enjoyed so much emphasis and attention, all stakeholders involved need a clear vision and goal toward which everybody can work. In Chapter 3 the researcher attempts to highlight the ideal of the FET sector for South Africa according to the needs of this country.

THE ROLE OF FURTHER EDUCATION IN ADDRESSING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPERATIVES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

South Africa's further education institutions are faced with a dual imperative: they are expected to become globally competitive and to deliver quality and responsive programmes. In the same time, they experience increasing demands from government and local communities to become responsive to the social, economical and political needs of mostly under-developed domestic communities. While the imperatives for transformation in further education derive in large measure from South Africa's apartheid history, they also form part of a global quest for change (Perold 1998:28-29). Obviously, this is even more the case in developing countries where the nature of society's social, economic and educational needs are extensive.

As already implied in Chapter 1, the FET sector in South Africa is accused of not being relevant to social needs and imperatives and that the programmes offered are out-dated – often designed and developed without consultation with all the relevant stakeholders. The world of work, government, student bodies and local communities are not consulted often enough for informed choices to be made.

The aim of this chapter is to provide important perspectives on the expected role that further education must play in the transformation of South African and particularly within the Free State region. It is argued that if this sector is not responsive to the national and regional imperatives of society, South Africa will not see a difference in the quality of life of its citizens. The chapter commences by explaining the need for a concerted national attempt for the development of human resources. It is expected from further education and training to play a decisive role in this regard. It is furthermore argued in

this chapter that without a shared regional commitment and approach followed by the sector it would be tedious to make headway in this regard.

2.2 THE NEED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

First of all it is important to gain perspectives on the government's overall human resource strategy as it has definite implications for further education programmes on national and provincial levels.

After the inauguration of the new South African government in 1994 various policy initiatives were put on the table to express the government's interest in transforming the country and in developing South Africa's human resources. This commitment of the government is reflected in a number of policies and related initiatives which are discussed in Chapter 3. According to the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), published by the African National Congress in 1994 (ANC 1994), the South African economy is in a deep-seated structural crisis that urges fundamental reconstruction. The overarching goal of the reconstruction and development plan is to create a strong, dynamic and balanced economy, which will eliminate the poverty, low wages and the extreme inequalities in wages and wealth generated by the apartheid system, meet basic needs, and thus ensure that every South African has a decent living standard and economic security. Development plans should also create productive employment opportunities at a living wage for all South Africans, and develop a prosperous and balanced regional economy in Southern Africa based on the principles of equity and mutual benefit (ANC 1994:79).

In order to address the skills training and development in South Africa, the government passed various laws. These laws are the South African Qualifications Act (RSA DoE 1995), the Skills Development Act (RSA Department of Labour 1998) and the Skills Development Levies Act (RSA. DoL 1999). These acts also aim to bring education and business more closely and productively together. Through these interactions, education and training providers, and particularly further education institutions, have to adapt their

learning programmes to be more in line with the needs of business and industry. The idea is to plan ahead and advise learners about labour market needs and the career opportunities offered by different learning programmes (*NBI Quick Brief* 2000:1).

The purpose of the rather intense human resource development strategy that was published early in 2001, was to provide a plan to ensure that people are equipped to participate fully in society, to be able to find or create work, and to benefit fairly from it (RSA. DoL. National Skills Development strategy, 2001:5). It is important here to clarify the concept of 'work'. This is not a narrow understanding of work, and must be understood as being the full range of activities that underpin human dignity by achieving self-sufficiency, freedom from hunger and poverty, self-expression and full citizenship. Nationhood and productive citizenship are inter-dependent, and it is in this sense that we speak of a nation at work for a better life (RSA. DoL. National Skills Development Strategy, 2001:5).

As part of this strategy, various strategic objectives were formulated that are supposed to be attained by the year 2005/6. The following relate to FET:

- Learning in areas of scarce skills at further education and training levels, especially in the fields of science, technology and engineering.
- Participation of adults in FET programmes.
- Enrolments in further education institutions to raise with active recruitment strategies for local students as well as bursary assistance.
- The distribution of learners across further education institutions and between further and higher education.
- Placement of further education graduates in employment or in self-employment.
- An increased employer participation in lifelong learning.

According to most policy documents, insufficient attention is paid to the pressing local, regional and national needs of South African society and to the problems and challenges of the broader African context. There exists an urge for the reconstruction of domestic,

social and economic relations to eradicate and redress the inequitable patterns of ownership, wealth and social and economic practices that were shaped by segregation and apartheid. As already known, segregation and apartheid have created a sophisticated urban core economy with a relatively well-developed technological infrastructure and an increasingly highly educated skilled labour force. In contrast to this a peripheral rural and informal urban economy exists in which the majority of the population, previously denied access to education and training and restricted to unskilled labour, contrive to make a living. Against this backdrop, further education must provide education and training to develop the skills and innovations necessary for national development and successful participation in the global economy (RSA DoE 1997:3-4).

In developed countries it seems much easier for further education to be responsive to a far more homogeneous society where most of the population has received good schooling and large proportions of society are enrolled for higher/post school education and training. The realities and complexities of developing countries such as South Africa differ immensely. One would therefore not deny that in trying to address all the needs, regions will have to work in a more innovative and participative mode to ensure progress.

2.3 THE ROLE OF REGIONALISM IN THE PROVISION OF FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The concept of regionalism is not easy to define, but can be generally regarded as an expression of autonomy and appreciation of local tastes and traditions and a discovery of local identity and pride (Yoder 1998:197). Pearson (2000:59) specifies that the 'local' is an elusive and non-specific concept and can be interpreted very much in terms of the specific circumstances and place of the institution, within the national and regional context of states and governments.

A widely accepted definition of regionalism has yet to be generated. Interpretations vary from a group of countries located in the same geographically specified area (Mansfield & Milner 1999:589), to studies that define regions largely in terms of non-geographic

criteria, and place relatively little emphasis on physical location. Other interpretations are of a more local-regional nature or are an effort to decentralise government and make it more democratic (Yoder 1998:203). The term “region” can refer to many different dimensions. It can refer to the immediate hinterland, a large part of a country, a state in federal countries or wider pan-national areas (Goddard 1999b:17).

Kacowicz (1999:528) maintains that there always was some arbitrariness in the definition of regions. This entails a geographical continuity, interaction, and a subjective perception of belonging to a distinctive community and having a collective regional identity. Several common characteristics can be found in a region, such as:

- a certain amount or degree of social and cultural *homogeneity*;
- similar *political* attitudes or external behaviour toward third parties;
- common political institutions as an expression of *political interdependency*;
- a certain degree of economic interdependence; and
- Common behavioural criteria.

Imperatives for sound regional development are a strong economy, a healthy environment, social equity and civic engagement. In the past, regionalism was narrowly conceived, seldom discussed and its influence rated as minimal. According to Peirce (1998:37) both the concept and practice of regionalism have escaped these narrow bonds. The nature of the local environment for the production of goods and services is as important as the national macro-economic situation in determining the ability of businesses to remain competitive within global markets. Within the local environment, the availability of knowledge and skills are as relevant as the physical infrastructure and, in this regard, the regionally engaged further education institution becomes a key local asset and an authoritative centre for economic development (Peirce 1998:37).

Further education institutions interface through a ripple effect with their regions and therefore touch many participants in the immediate region. Who are these participants?

2.3.1 Stakeholders in regional responsiveness

The term “stakeholder” refers to those organisations or individuals in the region who interact, or have the potential to interact, with the further education sector. This comprises several groups:

- The *educational sector* as represented by schools, the further education and training sector, and both private and public further and higher education institutions.
- The business and industrial community, employers and employers’ organisations and privately run research activities.
- *Support organisations* such as trade unions, regional development organisations, inward investment and promotional organisations, chambers of commerce, arts organisations and regional media.
- Central, local and regional governments.
- *Educational users* embracing a range of learners from full-time students to those participating in continuing professional courses and non-accredited liberal adult education. This group can also include recent graduates, as well as present and prospective students (Goddard 1998:4; Goddard 1999b:32).

Stakeholders and the world in which they operate, present a fragmented field and establishing relationships between further education institutions and stakeholders can be problematic. Stakeholders function within explicitly defined areas, while higher education institutions operate on different scales: different time scales and different geographical scales, for instance. In addition, each stakeholder represents a different set of values and operations. Each of these groups has different agendas, financial drivers, constraints and customer/client relationships. The nature of the interest of these groups in the region and in the local community can also differ. It would therefore be difficult to balance territorial interests with those of regional partners. Notwithstanding these differences the partners have to work together towards developing a framework which focuses on the nature of their regional interest and which can provide a starting point for further discussion (Goddard 1998:4).

The issue of how they should respond to regional needs is relatively uncharted territory for most further education institutions. While often describing themselves as community-based institutions serving the needs of the local area or region, many further education institutions tend in fact to lean more towards a national or international perspective of themselves. The issues around the territoriality of an institution are very complex and raise questions about the stakeholders in the institutions that can challenge the autonomy of the institution (OECD 1999:17). This could also have implications for institutional management, as it requires the institution to act corporately and to respond to the demands of a new and diverse set of clients and agencies representing them, many of whom are directly or indirectly concerned with regional development (OECD 1999:22).

It is a complicated task to develop mechanisms to connect further education institutions with regional stakeholders, but there are certain methods that can be used to accomplish this.

2.3.2 Practical ways to establish stakeholder co-ordination

Major ways in which stakeholders can engage with further education include the following:

- Stakeholders can work with local further and higher education institutions in local or regional economic development. These relationships are usually the most productive ones.
- Stakeholders can influence the strategies and missions of further education institutions by playing an active role in governing bodies and by acting in an advisory capacity.
- Stakeholders can assist the management of further education institutions to develop more managerial competencies in order to manage the institutions themselves.
- Stakeholders can promote the concept of lifelong learning and provide ongoing access to further education for employees.
- They can also provide students with opportunities for work-related learning. In South Africa provision is made at this stage for learnerships in every vocational and

training sector. In these sectors Sectoral Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) will function as quality assurers of vocational qualifications and parts thereof (Hofmeyr 2000:12).

- Stakeholders can use staff of further education institutions in a consultancy capacity.
- By sharing physical facilities of such as laboratories, workshops and libraries, duplication can be avoided.
- Through grants or contract funding the quality, quantity and direction of research at further education institutions can be influenced.

2.3.3 Mechanisms to promote the role of further education in the region

Roisin (1999:84) reports on several studies done to explore the value of higher and further education in regional development. He came to the conclusion that while a number of studies have identified a broad range of social, political and cultural contributions that further education institutions make to regional development, little effort has been made to measure anything other than narrowly economic indicators. He advises that without a co-ordinated, explicit and effective regional further education and training policy, encompassing economic growth and regional development as well as social inclusion, the effectiveness of further education may be hindered (Roisin 1999:90).

Atkins (1999:280) views the regional role of further education institutions more holistically. Their role is to bring leading edge thinking and practice to bear on national or regional problems, to attract inward investors and keep them, to participate in numerous economic development and regeneration partnerships and to stimulate the cultural and leisure opportunities in their area. He also advises that further education institutions should undertake a survey of all community-based activities. Each area of activity needs a clearly identified “socket” within the FET institution into which individuals and organisations in the local community can plug (Goddard, Charles, Pike, Potts & Bradley 1994:4). This slots in neatly with the warning of Roisin (1999:90) that without a co-ordinated, explicit and effective regional further education policy,

encompassing economic growth and regional development as well as social inclusion, the effectiveness of further education may be hindered.

Subsequently all further education institutions will have to reappraise their governance structures and management processes in the light of these challenges. When considering their relationship with industry in a regional context, further education institutions need to consider themselves as being located at the head of a supply chain which is devoted to the provision of knowledge, skills and attitude to alleviate societal problems (Goddard 1999a:43).

An obvious starting point for an improved understanding of the local and regional impact of further education institutions could be provided by an audit of existing regionally relevant activities, with the audit being jointly commissioned by further and higher education institutions and regional agencies. This audit could encompass the following aspects:

- the direct impact analysis of further education institutions as an economic sector;
- the dynamic effects which an institution can have through interaction with industry;
- consultancies that can be provided;
- partners in research grants can be identified;
- the impact of the teaching programmes to answer to regional development needs can be determined;
- the recruitment of graduates by regional businesses and through programmes of continuing professional development;
- the contribution of further education institutions to social and community development;
- further education institutions can participate in creating the skills that the local workforce needs and can raise the levels of education attainment in different parts of the region;
- recruiting of non-local students and placing them with local employers;
- vocational programmes in medicine and social sciences which bring direct community benefits can be identified;

- further education institutions will need to demonstrate contributions to non-vocational education and cultural programmes in the arts;
- the role of staff and students of further education institutions in providing key leaders in local civil society by participating in voluntary activities;
- interpreting world affairs in the regional media; and
- the undertaking and documenting of a strategic analysis of the regional economy and social situation.

It is thus not only further education institutions in a region who have a role in promoting regional co-operation - local regional government and businesses must also do their share. Local policy itself needs to be innovative and entrepreneurial through drawing on a wider network of resources, building alliances between local and other tiers of government, education institutions, private sector interests and non-profit organisations so that communities can connect the global and the local and create a civic culture to attract and retain investment (Goddard 1998:5). The state and provincial governments must be seen as potential partners, and not saviours, in helping regions to prosper. Communication between further education institutions and regional stakeholders can be improved where lead agencies for various sectors exist, such as local economic development, employment, culture and health, for instance (Goddard 1999b:32).

To enable further education to be responsive to regional needs, the service role of further education institutions needs to be revised and critically reflected upon.

2.4 THE LINK BETWEEN FURTHER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES, RESPONSIVENESS AND SERVICE IN A REGIONAL CONTEXT

UNESCO (1998:3) declared in their Framework for Priority Action for Change and Development that higher and further education institutions should establish priorities in their programmes and structures to take all necessary measures to reinforce their service to the community, especially their activities aimed at eliminating poverty, intolerance, violence, illiteracy, hunger and disease, through an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary

approach in the analysis of challenges, problems and different subjects. Roisin (1999:90) summarises this statement when he declares that further education institutions have the capacity to improve not just the economic life of their regions but also the social, political and cultural life.

The word *service* means the delivery, installation and maintenance of knowledge-based applications to clients wherever they may be. At several American education institutions the term *outreach* is preferred to service. The characteristics of this kind of service can be described as a form of accomplishment that cuts across teaching, research and service. It involves producing, transmitting, applying and preserving knowledge for the direct benefit of external audiences in ways that are consistent with further education institutions. The following are examples of such activities:

- technical assistance,
- policy analysis,
- programme evaluations,
- organisational development,
- public information,
- social development, and
- expert assessments.

The service role of further education institutions can have many benefits for the region as well as for the institution itself. The following constitute the most of these benefits.

- Tailor-made courses will be developed for particular users/user groups.
- More and shorter course programmes (1 week – 1 semester) will be developed.
- Relatively many teaching assistants (part-time) positions will be contracted.
- Institutions will create more separate departments for various types of service functions (outreach).
- Planning and concluding contracts with users will take place at the institution.
- The socialisation of the student body will be affected by stronger efficiency norms of the institution.

The following discourse will touch on measures that higher education institutions can apply to strengthen their service role.

2.4.1 Further education and responsive teaching directed at regional development

Further education institutions are increasingly expected to contribute to regional economic development with appropriate educational programmes. One way to make this contribution is to create a system of entrepreneurial education as a strategic response of further education and business schools. Entrepreneurial education focuses upon single individuals. They are receivers, even objects, to be transformed by and within a linear educational process, which culminates in a qualification. This will (ideally) furnish them with a set of personal capabilities, and provides an enabling social stature and legitimisation, manifested in diplomas. Later, after having crossed the institution-environment border, the individuals are expected to turn into economic actors or agents. It is through their autonomous, educationally pre-programmed behaviours that impacts like new business creation are tacitly assumed to be realised, or at least made more likely (Laukkanen 2000:27). By sending well educated and trained graduates into the region, especially in entrepreneurial enterprises, further education institutions can play a economic developmental role.

In their action plan for higher and further education institutions in Africa, UNESCO (1998:37) suggests that national education programmes must aim at diversification with a greater emphasis on a regionalisation of specific disciplines. This could be a means of getting institutions to serve the specific needs of disadvantaged areas and groups. These programmes should target specific needs that will generate employment or create jobs. Training programmes and structures should be flexible in order to adapt rapidly to changing needs. It would also be necessary to develop a wider variety of short duration programmes (UNESCO 1998:36). It is thus essential for further education institutions to keep their teaching missions relevant to the needs and constraints of the local, national, regional and international environments.

Another development in the field of further education programmes is the greater emphasis that is placed on enhancing the employability of graduates through the adoption of generic key skills into the curriculum. A steady stream of reports and papers during the last decade has been urging the sector to sharpen the focus on employability of graduates. The arguments surrounding the social and economic rate of return of graduates are complex. Some argue that the government would obtain a better rate of return from investment in basic adult numeracy and literacy than from further expanding undergraduate provision (Atkins 1999:269).

Atkins (1999:268) also points out that there is currently a skills' gap between what employers need and what further education institutions are producing. There is a huge difference between the needs of small family businesses, regional SMEs and global companies for the kind of employees and the skills that they need. However, it is difficult to argue that further education institutions should align themselves just to the skill needs of the region or to a particular sector of the economy. Far from a common response, greater variation in the preparation for employment both within and between different further education institutions is needed and should be reflected in institutions' missions (Atkins 1999:269; Kleinberg Neimark1999:20).

Another trend in the teaching of manpower is that corporations can deploy their training costs to public post-secondary education and also recruit their prospective employees from this source. Community colleges and business schools are increasingly forming alliances with companies and their corporate universities to develop and deliver customised programmes. Especially in South Africa with unemployment figures steadily rising, it is necessary to devise a range of strategies to decrease welfare dependency by increasing work capacity. To achieve this, it is necessary to encourage a lifelong learning culture according to which individuals develop an expectation that they will return to formal skills and knowledge learning throughout their lives as circumstances change (Preece 2000:2).

2.4.2 The role of lifelong learning in responsive programmes

Lifelong learning and professional development go hand in hand. Professional development is taken to mean the enhancement of the knowledge, skills and understanding of individuals or groups in learning contexts that maybe identified by themselves or their institutions (Gill 2000:370). As a result of rapid changes in business and technological environments as well as in the increase, development and availability of information, many professionals and managers find their basic training and even their graduate degrees insufficient if they wish to retain their competitive advantage. There is thus a need to acquire new skills continuously or to update them to prevent intellectual or professional obsolescence. Lifelong learning permeates not only employment and personal development, but also social life and the use of leisure time. A rising number of people need to change career later on in life and these mature, local students are in need of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. In particular, there is a greater demand for the provision of vocational and professional education which reflects the needs of the regional economy. In the context of the lifelong learning agenda, learning and teaching activities have moved away from a linear model of transmission of knowledge based upon the classroom and are becoming more interactive and experiential, drawing upon, for example, project work and work-based learning much of which is location specific (OECD 1999:21).

Many further education institutions do not serve this community need for lifelong learning. This has resulted in private businesses seizing the opportunity to deliver products that can be sold directly to paying consumers. They are very much consumer and user orientated and demand-driven. This flexibility or ability to change and respond to demands is usually not possible in traditional universities. Services that are performed outside of the physical location of the institution to reach and touch the lives of people in its region, can also contribute to the development of the region. One of the main contributions further education institutions can make here, and especially institutions located in the third world, is community service to help impoverished and underdeveloped communities and regions to better their living standards.

As the focus of this study is on the development of needs-driven programmes for the Free State region, it is imperative to engage in a discussion on the Free State's profile in terms of needs-driven education and training programmes.

2.5 REGIONAL NEEDS IN THE FREE STATE

It is recognised that the Free State region has major development needs. This province contributes a small 6% towards the Gross Domestic Product (GPD) of South Africa and is regarded as the second poorest in the country, indicating the serious developmental challenges that the province is faced with (POS Newsletter of August/September 1999:8). The following statistics give a profile of some of the main components of this province in comparison with the rest of South Africa.

Table 2.1: Profile of the Free State Province

| Profile of the Free State | Figures and/or Percentages | In comparison to South Africa |
|----------------------------------|---|--|
| Population | 2 782 470 (7% of national total) | 43 586 097 |
| Unemployment | Unemployment stands at 26% to 30% | Unemployment stands at 23% |
| Matriculation pass rates | 53% in 2000 | 58% in 2000 |
| Population growth | Estimated at 0,72% per annum | Estimated at 1,35% per annum |
| HIV/Aids | HIV/Aids – prevalence rate: 32,2% (2001) | HIV/Aids – prevalence rate: 24,5% (2000) |
| Life expectancy | 56.29 years Figures for 1997 | 48.09 years Figures for 2001 |
| Literacy | Estimated at 85% In 1999 | Estimated at 81,8% in 1995 |
| Poverty | Poverty profile of 66%, but rises to 75% in rural areas | Nearly 50% |

Sources: *PSP Newsletter*, August/September 1999:8; World Fact Book 2001:1-2; USAID South Africa 2001:1; Shindler J & Beard 2001:3; BMR 2001:1; *The Sowetan*, 2 October 2001:1; HIVinSite 2001:2; Free State Province 1998:6,10.

From the above statistics it is clear that the Free State has serious developmental deficiencies. Poverty and unemployment go hand in hand and with the increasing HIV/Aids prevalence this could give rise to further unemployment and poverty: clearly, there is a dire need for development in the province.

In doing an environmental scan of the province the following strengths and weaknesses surfaced:

Strengths:

- A strong farming and agriculture-business sector.
- A well-developed mining sector.
- Emphasis on service rendering.
- Continued diversification of the economy (Minnaar, Gillard, Nolte & Thoahlane 2000:97).

Weaknesses:

- Production and employment structures are too highly concentrated.
- There is an absence of a large industrial sector.
- A lack of an entrepreneurial culture and skills exists.
- The education and skills levels in the province are fairly low in relation to the developmental requirements of the province. Almost 13% of the labour force have no formal schooling at all and the proportion of the labour force with matric and post-matric qualifications is a low 20% (Minnaar *et al.* 2000:98).

There are nevertheless certain opportunities and advantages in the province, such as the following:

- It is the central location of the province in South Africa and a relatively “crime free” environment.

- Development opportunities exist for small-scale mining industries, as well as small-scale farming.
- There is the production of downstream, high value chemical products in the Northern Free State.
- Areas of growth are identified in the construction and trade sectors, communications, business services, community and social services and in recreational and cultural service (Minnaar *et al.* 2000:98).

2.5.1 Needs and expectations of the business sector regarding further education

According to the Executive Director of the Bloemfontein Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Minnaar *et al.* 2000:99-101) the needs and expectations of the business sector regarding higher and further education in the Free State are the following:

- The creation of employment and opportunities is mainly to be found in SMEs – which are very poorly developed due to the dominance of large mining houses and conglomerates’ major holding on the economy.
- Basic education is of a poor quality.
- The main priority is enhancing job creation and economic development.
- Globalisation is forcing bigger corporates in South Africa to become more competitive. This often leads to restructuring and mechanisation with concomitant job losses.
- In the past only the Small Business Development Corporation assisted the development of SMEs.
- The Free State is in need of a culture of entrepreneurship where each individual accepts responsibility for him/herself as well as the basic knowledge and skills to run a business.

- The Employment Equity Act (RSA. DoL 1998a) is responsible for an economy in transformation. Fast tracking of a new generation of middle and senior managers is required.
- Transformation also requires from education systems the addressing of specific new problems not present in other countries, for example:
 - Managers need knowledge of the differences between cultures and must be able to deal with transformation, for example equity and a culturally diverse workforce.
 - Young, bright black executives have the intellectual capacity but often lack first-hand experience.
- Information technology like the Internet will have a profound impact on commercial activity and a dire need exists for skills and expertise in this area.

Apart from the above expectations for further education and training in the province, the Department of Labour (RSA DoL 2001:45) also recommends specifically for the Free State that “in the wake of a very slow moving provincial economy, great emphasis must be placed on skills development in the framework of the informal sector and specifically entrepreneurial development to alleviate poverty in the Province”.

2.5.2 Rural development as a specific need in the Free State

Rural areas are defined as the sparsely populated areas in which people farm or depend on natural resources, including the villages and small towns that are dispersed through these areas. In addition, they include large settlements in the former homelands, created by the apartheid removals, which depend for their survival on migratory labour and remittances (RSA RDP 1997:9).

As large regions of the Free State province consist of rural areas, it is necessary to include rural development and rural needs in our discussion. Information specifically concerning rural areas in the Free State is difficult to obtain. For this reason information referring to rural development in South Africa in general is discussed. Almost three-quarters of the people below the poverty line in South Africa live in rural areas. Of these,

children less than five years, youths and the elderly are particularly vulnerable - women more so than men. In South Africa the poorest ten per cent of the population account for just one per cent of consumer spending. The highly skewed distribution of income in South Africa goes hand in hand with highly inequitable literacy levels, education, health and housing, and access to water and fuel (RSA RDP 1997:9). With the high rate of unemployment in South Africa and the low wages for those with jobs, nearly 50% of South Africans live below the poverty line. In the Free State this figure is as high as 75% in the rural areas (Free State Province 1998:6). Rural areas therefore have specific development needs. Table 2.2 provides an overview of the development needs in rural areas.

Table 2.2: Development needs in rural areas

| AREA | DESCRIPTION |
|---|--|
| Institutional development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Helping rural people set the priorities in their own communities through effective and democratic bodies. ❑ Providing access to funds to plan and implement local economic development. |
| Investment in basic infrastructure and social services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ The provision of physical infrastructure (e.g. housing, water and power supplies, transport) and social services (e.g. basic health care and schools). |
| Improving income and employment opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Broadening access to natural resources (e.g. arable and grazing land, irrigation water, woodland and forests). |
| Restoration of basic economic rights | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Establishing periodic markets as the organizing spatial and temporal framework for development. |
| Resource conservation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Investing efforts in the sustainable use of natural resources. |
| Justice, equity and security | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Dealing with the injustices of the past and ensuring the safety and security of the rural population, especially that of women. |

(RSA Rural Development Task Team and the Department of Land Affairs 1997:10)

Batukhtin (2000:186) sees the role of higher education institutions at regional level as the raising of the general level of culture and education. Further education institutions can play a vital role in various ways in contributing to their local cultural scene. They could

act as a host to art festivals or could stage these festivals themselves. Theatres could stage student performances and art galleries with exhibitions from students as well as local, national and international artists could contribute to the general level of culture and education. These facilities should mostly be open to public access. Internally, the campus of a further education institution could have student newspapers, a radio station, a television station, cafés and other leisure activities. Sports activities could also be grouped under this heading where spectators from the surrounding localities could be drawn (Koning 2000:5). These activities could all touch the lives of the ordinary people and have an influence on the region and community linked directly to a specific higher education institution.

2.6 CONCLUSION

For many further education institutions, regional engagement is becoming the crucible for survival in a changing economic and competitive corporate world. For the survival of FET, regional responsiveness may be the best kept secret of the decade. Collaboration in the new enterprise environment, working across the borders of institutions in effective discourse with other organisations and their different cultures, working with partners from many traditions and persuasions as more learning organisations emerge, can all contribute to enrich their various overlapping learning sectors.

To conclude this chapter the words of Van der Sijde and Schutte (2000:13) may be quoted as they declare "...that there is no single formula for an institution to interact with its region. Education institutions respond to their regions in the way the regions want them to". Further education institutions in South Africa and particularly in the Free State cannot afford to be ivory towers but must address the 'dark side' of their mission and vision - their developmental and service role to the Free State - with vigour and enthusiasm. The scope of the work to be done is vast and the service and developmental role of the institutions can contribute to their own survival, as well as to the survival of a poverty stricken region of the country.

From this chapter it is clear that the current FET system has a long road of transformation ahead in order to be relevant and responsive. In the following chapter a discussion is provided on the need for the urgent transformation of this system, the envisaged vision of and expectations for this sector.

CHAPTER 3

THE NEED FOR TRANSFORMING THE SOUTH AFRICAN FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING (FET) SYSTEM'S PROGRAMMES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is first of all to elucidate the need for transforming the FET sector. This is done by formulating an acceptable definition of FET for the South African context and to clarify the overarching proposed purposes for this sector. The chapter identifies the different types of providers, programmes and target groups to be reached. A closer look to the implications of the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act 1995 and outcomes-based education for FET programmes as well as other applicable legislation is provided.

3.2 DEFINING FET WITHIN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

In an attempt to define the work to be done by the Further Education and Training sector, the purpose provided by the FET Act 98 of 1998 for this sector is a safe point of departure. The FET Act (RSA. DoE 1998) indicates its purpose as to “*establish a national co-ordinated further education and training system, which promotes governance and provides for programme-based further education and training.*” In this Act the skills development of South African citizens is prioritised and derived from the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa which indicates in Section 29(1) that everyone has the right to basic education, including adult basic education and further education, which should be made progressively more available and accessible.

The FET Act (RSA. DoE 1998) and the Green Paper on Further Education and Training (RSA. DoE 1998:42) assign learning and training programmes leading to Levels 2 to 4

qualifications on the National Qualifications Framework to the FET sector. Although this Act limits training in this sector to NQF levels 2-4, the Green Paper (RSA. DoE 1998:42) indicates the possibility that the Act may be amended under specific conditions, to provide training to level 5. Levels 2-4 are the equivalents to Grades 10-12 in the secondary school system (which is currently part of the General Education and Training). The FET is, however, not compulsory education. By definition, it has no age restrictions. It therefore promotes, as one of its main focuses, lifelong learning and education on-the-job.

3.3 OVERARCHING PURPOSES OF FET IN SOUTH AFRICA

Various discussions, and policy documents as already referred to, lead to the following vision and mission for this sector. This vision and mission represent the distinctive nature of this sector.

3.3.1 Vision of FET

The Department of Education commits itself to the vision of the FET. In the National Strategy for Further Education and Training for 1999-2001 (RSA. DoE 1999:2) the vision to be a unit of government that steers a high-quality, coordinated system of Further Education and Training at national and provincial levels that is responsive, flexible and meets the needs of a learning society, is clear.

The Report of the NCFE (RSA. DoE 1997) provides the foundation for this vision by indicating that the Ministry intends to provide, through the FET sector, an open learning system, responsive to the needs of individuals and communities, and contributing to the development of the country's human resources. It intends to make flexible, relevant, accessible, high quality programmes progressively available to all eligible citizens who are capable of benefiting from them. In doing so it will promote the development of human talents and abilities, redress past inequalities, and build a just, democratic and prosperous South African society. This is a rather ambitious vision, although most

appropriate for the South African context. The implementation thereof is still in a preliminary phase and there seem to be a variety of stumbling blocks that prevent progress.

3.3.2 Mission of FET

The mission of the FET sector as initially outlined in the Report of the NCFE (RSA. DoE 1997) and echoed in all FET policy documents up to the FET Green Paper (RSA. DoE 1998:5) is to foster intermediate to high level skills and to facilitate the transition from school to work. It is expected of the FET system to lay the foundation for higher education and to provide opportunities for life-long learning through the articulation of learning programmes. Finally it has to contribute towards developing well-educated, autonomous citizens.

The above-mentioned ambitious mission for the FET sector in South Africa provides clear guidelines to ensure market-driven FET programmes. However, its implementation already shows that much more time, money and effort to re-align and capacitate the national, provincial and institutional ability and preparedness to deliver the envisaged mission will be necessary.

3.3.3 Goals of FET

In ensuring that the proposed mission and vision for FET in South Africa is achieved, various goals have been formulated by the NCFE Report (RSA. DoE 1997). Amongst them is the obligation to promote equal opportunities for all learners, as a means of redress and development, through a strategy of planned growth and to promote nation building and democratisation by enabling people to contribute to society as autonomous, responsible and tolerant citizens. It aims to provide learners with the knowledge, skills and values, which will enable them to function as critical problem solvers in the changing world and to provide for opportunities of continuing education, retraining and personal development. Groups such as rural dwellers and women are an important target group.

Therefore it is argued that institutional transformation and capacity building should be facilitated in order to offer accessible, high quality, relevant learning programmes. The overarching goals are to promote human development through the provision of lifelong learning opportunities. To achieve above mentioned goals, vision and mission, various types of institutions (providers) have been identified to offer education and training.

3.3.4 Institutional diversity

A new transformed FET sector must be able to prove that it embodies the principle of diversity in the following arenas namely:

- **Programmes:** FET Institutions must be able to provide programmes to a wide variety of niche markets in the economic environment as well as social spheres of the community.
- **Delivery Modes:** The delivery modes of an FET institution must meet the needs of the community and must be diverse and adaptable to serve students with different circumstances and different needs.
- **Students:** Diversity in a transformed FET Institution also means to serve the diversity of the nation pertaining to student registration and numbers and must guard against serving only specific or certain groups of students.
- **Employers:** The entire spectrum of employers and their different training needs must be served by the FET sector.
- **Staff:** Diversity among the staff is a high priority for the government and the FET sector must adhere in all terms to the Employment Equity Act.

3.3.5 Funding

For governments across the world the prioritising of funding for education is a common debate. Across the world the provision of training by government remains a priority to greater or lesser extent. To answer the question of why a government should take the responsibility to make provision for training, the NCFE (RSA. DoE 1997:102) provides the following grounds:

- External market benefits: governments benefit from a better educated, trained and flexible work force.
- Remedying market weaknesses: in many countries the infrastructure of the private sector lacks the capacity to provide training.
- Social equity: targeted support for marginalised and disadvantaged groups to assist them to participate in the labour market. The rationale for such expenditure is the costs which otherwise would be borne by government if the needs of disadvantaged groups were not met: for example increased crime, the economic effects of prolonged unemployment, and a lack of social cohesion.

The South African government accepts its responsibility in clear terms as indicated in various policy documents and specifically in The New Institutional Landscape for Public Further Education and Training Colleges (RSA. DoE 2001:21-24). The problem, however, is the financial constraints of the South African Government to provide in all aspects for the needs of the FET sector, especially in the light of the financial inputs required during the transformation of this sector, which may hold a serious threat for its successful transformation.

During the course of the NCFE consultations a number of issues were raised about the future financing of FET as indicated in the Report of the NCFE: (RSA. DoE 1997:111-117).

3.3.5.1 Public funding

Since the submission of the mentioned report the Department of Education has accepted its responsibility in terms of the provision of FET. The provincial governments have to budget for the provision of the FET sector in the respective provinces. A danger in this co-operative governance model is that while the national government provides clear policy with respect to the FET sector, it may happen that the provincial governments do not accept or make possible in terms of financing and executive leadership and guidance, adherence to the national policies.

3.3.5.2 Formula funding

Much support has been voiced for a formula-based funding of the FET in the future. Strong support has been expressed for a favourable and user friendly weighted formula to address national issues of redress and equity as well as national, provincial and local priorities. The merger plan for the transformation of FET in South Africa indicated that the Department of Education would provide the new funding formula by mid 2003. At this stage the New Institutional Landscape for Public FET and Training Colleges (RSA. DoE 2001:22-23) indicates that the envisaged funding formula will comprise three key elements namely:

- the identification of immediate and targeted funding to facilitate and support the declaration and merger processes for public FET colleges;
- the development of a new funding model for declared public FET colleges; and
- the development of interim funding requirements and allocations to meet a potential gap between the new funding model and the current mechanisms for funding.

Other policy debates may be ideas on earmarked funding, and urgent development and initiatives towards student financial aid, support agencies in specific fields, the mode of delivery that may influence the funding formula, higher education programmes that are offered by the FET sector, partnerships with the private sector and industry to assist with funding, self funding by institutions, user fees and the control by government to make the public FET sector accessible for all people. Tax incentives for the private sector and industry who become involve in funding the FET sector, the application of the levy/grant system and the efficiency versus redress debate in funding, are also aspects deserving consideration.

As indicated in research done by the NCFE the challenge for the South African government to develop a funding model for the public FET sector is not an easy task: the principles, policy debates and assumptions as well as the governance of funding in the South African FET context with its own realities and circumstances, are key issues.

3.4 DIFFERENT TYPES OF PROVIDERS

Currently there is uncertainty regarding who should be FET providers. Consequently a number of unresolved issues regarding the provision of FET are leading to misinterpretations and vacillation. This is due to a lack of knowledge regarding a proper database on providers, co-ordination and unnecessary duplication of programmes. Some of the reasons offered for the misinterpretations are, amongst others, the fact that it was initially stated that Grades 10-12 (which are traditionally part of general education and training) should be integrated into the FET sector. Schools are largely either primary or secondary, rather than general or further education providers. As a result, schooling data on the further education band has to be desegregated from total secondary education figures.

There is only patchy and imperfect survey information on the activities of the private sector, whilst little information exists on the movement of pupils, students and trainees between the various providers of the FET system. This type of information is important, because views about the articulation of the system often rest on implicit, but untested, assumptions.

To emphasise the current complexity and lack of co-ordination of the FET sector, it may be necessary to provide further information on the 13 providers (categorised into four main sectors: secondary schools, publicly funded colleges, private off-the-job providers and work-based education and training) based on information provided to the NCFE (RSA. DoE 1997:9-10), namely:

- ordinary public, special and private schools which offer senior secondary schooling from Grades 10 to 12;
- adult education centers, often referred to as “night schools”, and offering programmes across the schooling spectrum (Grades 1 to 12);
- youth colleges and “finishing schools” in provincial departments of education;
- state and state-aided technical colleges which offer programmes from N1-N3;

- universities and technikons through their outreach and community programmes;
- government departments which provide training for civil servants in central, provincial and local government;
- training trusts, regional training centers and private providers which deliver training funded by the Department of Labour;
- government departments other than Education and Labour (e.g. the Department of Trade and Industry's programmes to train entrepreneurs and public works programmes);
- enterprises which train their own employees in-house and fund Industrial Training Boards;
- industrial training boards (now incorporated into SETAs);
- community colleges/centres;
- private, for profit, colleges;
- non-governmental organisations.

From the above it is clear that a variety of role players and interest groups exist in the delivery of FET programmes. However, as the FET Green Paper (RSA. DoE 1998:5) outlines, the primary responsibility for FET lies largely within the national and provincial departments of education. The Department of Labour (DoL), government departments and private providers including private companies, are also important role players. To make the types of providers less complicated the FET Green Paper (RSA. DoE 1998:14) suggests that all the providers should be grouped into public schools and colleges, independent schools, independent colleges and on-the-job trainers.

According to the Ministry of Education, these providers should fulfill complementary roles in responding to the diversity of social, economic and personal needs that confront the system by means of needs-driven programmes.

3.4.1 Private providers and enterprise-based training

The Ministry appreciates the much needed private and enterprise based, industrial training system which has emerged as a result of the responsiveness of FET to meet demand, on the one hand, and state co-ordination of supply-side provision, on the other. It is comforting to know that private providers get the acknowledgement they deserve, as many of them have excellent quality management systems and programmes that played an important role in the past and will continue to do so in the vocational and technical training arena. Private providers have the ability to stay in contact with the demands in their respective training fields and to be responsive in their delivery, without the red tape of the public providers which prevents them from fulfilling the needs of their communities.

3.4.2 Distance and open learning providers

In addition to Technisa (correspondence technical college of South Africa), the establishment of a more comprehensive national public dedicated institution for open and distance learning was announced by the Department of Education in the new Institutional Landscape for FET (RSA. DoE 2001:19). This proposed public institution would be responsible for the development and support of public distance and open learning products and services across South Africa. It is anticipated, however, that the actual delivery of distance and open education will be through the FET colleges in the various provinces.

Distance learning requires the use of various modes of delivery, sites of learning and scheduling of programmes, which suit adult learners in a range of contexts. The opportunities provided by using FET colleges as delivery points for nationally coordinated and supported learning materials would provide the effective integration of existing resources.

The underlying assumptions for the future FET system are characterised by learner centredness, lifelong learning, and flexibility of learning provision, access to learning, and the recognition of prior learning. Through the use of guided self-study and the appropriate use of a variety of media, among other things, FET Colleges will give practical effect to these open learning principles according to the New Institutional Landscape for FET (RSA. DoE 2001:19).

The ability of the FET sector to co-ordinate their resources across public and private providers as well as industry, and their willingness to take hands in the delivery of relevant and needs-driven programmes as mentioned, provides an enormous challenge to the FET sector.

3.5 FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMMES

In analysing the focus areas of vocational training in various countries across the world, one tends to find consensus in terms of the scope of work, services and programmes this sector is supposed to deliver. According to Mafisa (1999:30) the focus of most countries' FET sectors are contextualised according to the community it has to serve.

3.5.1 Critique against current FET programmes

To be able to understand the intended outcomes of FET programmes it is helpful to highlight the weaknesses and deficiencies of the current curricula. A discussion of these characteristics emphasises the urgency for transformation and substantiates the perspective that current FET programmes have failed to equip South African learners for the social, economic and cultural challenges facing them during the 21st century (RSA. DoE National Curriculum Framework for FET 2000:5).

Programmes offered by FET institutions are often accused of separating theory and practice, giving rise to irrelevant programmes and failing to meet the needs of learners and the changing demands of the economy and society. The lack of relevant training

programmes is often said to contribute to high levels of unemployment, whilst the poorly articulated FET programmes and qualifications inhibit learner mobility across programmes and institutions. What is of even greater concern is that programmes differ widely with respect to quality, standards of provision, outcomes and curricula - thus affecting equivalence and portability. Learners exiting the system have to repeat passed subjects when they re-enter the system, leading to high levels of inefficiency. The Ministry is, however, anxious to rectify the above mentioned problems.

Factors such as a lack of money for the proper provision of up to date facilities in a rapidly changing technological and scientific environment, and the inhibiting funding formula based on the full-time-equivalent registration according to the NATED 191 Report provided reason for much concern in terms of responsiveness in the past. Another serious past and present concern is the red tape and nearly immovable national structures involved in assisting with the updating of old programmes to meet the needs of the day. Matters like these need to be addressed urgently to pave the way for national FET structures to make it possible for the FET sector to fulfill the ideals of the sector and to prevent the public FET sector from becoming the laughing stock of education in South Africa. The public FET sector must also be protected from hijacking by the private FET sector. The private FET sector does not have to bear the burden of an inhibiting system on the national frontier. These inhibiting factors stem to a great extent from the current funding formula for staff which depends on the programmes and weighting factors in the NATED 191 programmes dictated by national government and pertaining to full time programmes. The FET institutions which are already linking the National Skills Strategy to short courses not listed in the NATED 191 programme document do so at their own expense; this practice does not necessarily serve the ideals and the vision for an effective FET sector.

The hope is expressed that by following an integrated curriculum approach, the FET will be brought in line with the principles of the NQF, which will guide the entire process of development of relevant curricula, qualifications, unit standards, programmes and assessment strategies consistent with an outcomes-based approach.

3.5.2 Types of programmes offered

One of the greatest concerns voiced in the National Business Initiative Quantitative Overview of South African Technical Colleges (NBI 2000:25) is the narrow range of programme provision. The technical colleges over-emphasise training in business and engineering studies which are probably more applicable to colleges such as the Training and Further Education (TAFE) colleges in Australia, where programmes are offered over 13 different vocational fields, without a single one dominating the training in the country.

To serve the needs of each specific community and to provide a wider range of job opportunities for the learners, the FET sector of the future must accept the challenge of providing a wider programme mix across the 12 organising fields of learning identified by SAQA:

Table 3.1: Learning fields of SAQA

| No. | <i>LEARNING FIELDS</i> |
|-----|--|
| 01 | Agriculture and Nature Conservation |
| 02 | Culture and Arts |
| 03 | Business, Commerce and Management Studies |
| 04 | Communication Studies and Language |
| 05 | Education, Training and Development |
| 06 | Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology |
| 07 | Human and Social studies |
| 08 | Law, Military Science and Security |
| 09 | Health Sciences and Social Services |
| 10 | Physical, Mathematical, Computer and Life Sciences |
| 11 | Services |
| 12 | Physical Planning and Construction |

If a serious effort is made to implement relevant and responsive programmes in all of these learning fields, progress in this regard can be made.

3.5.3 The need for accreditation and articulation of FET programmes

Most learners enter the FET either to prepare themselves for work or because they are engaged in and an interim phase of their career plan, with the Higher Education (HE) sector as the next step in mind. The concept of articulation has its roots in the goals of the FET sector, which intends to prepare its learners for further and lifelong learning (RSA. DoE NCFE 1997:55). The FET sector must therefore provide training which will enable learners to access in a more flexible way the higher education sector. It is thus imperative that FET programmes be designed according to the NQF guidelines in order to ensure that articulation is possible. The FET sector will in future be expected to accommodate large numbers of graduates from the HE sector which could use the FET sector as a turning point or a career change, or for career orientation training in addition to their theoretical training.

Efficient articulation for learners not only from FET to higher education, but also from general education and training to FET will only be possible when well communicated, interactive programme development takes place between all the sectors. Interdependent programme development among the different sectors will then automatically lead to a more efficient accreditation of programmes by the different bands of education and training to serve the learners of South Africa appropriately. Not only are the needs of the different training sectors necessary to plan curricula interdependently, but serious attempts should also be made to ensure that the needs and concerns of workers, employers and communities are addressed. The SETAs, who are well represented among these mentioned role-players, can play a significant role as part of a representative team responsible for programme planning and articulation.

The NQF provides a natural foundation which guides programme planning in sectors and institutions towards articulation, with its key principles of learner progression, portability and recognition of prior learning (RPL). All sectors must adhere to these principles in their education and training.

3.5.4 The need for training in entrepreneurial skills

As already implied one of the five key purposes of FET is to provide education and training which contributes to the economic and social development of South Africa. It is general knowledge that the single biggest South African work provider for the future will be the ability of this nation to establish work for themselves. In short, the FET must challenge the ability of learners to generate their own income. This belief that the problem of unemployment can be solved by promoting small business enterprises is not unique to South Africa. It is also widely accepted in the rest of Africa, as evidenced in an article from the *Journal of Small Business Management*, January 1998 (author unknown).

According to the above mentioned article the success for promoting small business enterprises does not only come from the “vocationalisation” of education and training, as even people with technical skills are unemployed in great numbers in South Africa. Therefore, success in promoting small business enterprises lies in going a bit further than just training learners with the necessary skills. Such initiatives should be supported by Entrepreneurial Skills Development programmes (ESDPs). ESDPs may be defined as any comprehensively planned effort undertaken by an individual, group of individuals, or any institution or agency to develop competencies in people. These competencies are intended to lead to self-employment, economic self sufficiency and employment generation through long-term education or short term training.

The White Paper of the Department of Trade and Industry on *The National Strategy for the Development and Promotion of Small Business in South Africa* (RSA. Department of Trade and Industry 1995) also indicates the importance of different types of mentorship programmes and initiatives (e.g. internships and franchises) to add to the training of entrepreneurial skills. This strategy document also serves as an important source of information for the development and promotion of small businesses in South Africa and relevant issues pertaining to development of entrepreneurial skills.

During 1995, the Department of Trade and Industry provided several challenges as core elements for fostering small businesses in South Africa. The following expectations are highlighted as national strategies for the development of small businesses and the FET sector should assist with these strategies wherever possible:

- Knowledge about training programmes has to be disseminated more effectively to reach entrepreneurs all over the country to help match particular needs and specific training programmes.
- School curricula, which include the FET curricula and other school/college related activities, should give more scope for the inclusion of entrepreneurial attitudes and a general awareness about self-employment opportunities. All suppliers of training have to reconsider the nature, content and effectiveness of their programmes, taking into account the small business environment in the different sectors of the economy and working closely with the business sector. Thus, training has to become far more sector-specific, focusing on the particular needs and practical problems of small enterprises. To solve the sector specific needs of business development the FET sector has to develop programmes to serve certain needs pertaining to business/entrepreneurship development. Programmes need to target the survivalist entrepreneurs and micro-enterprises lacking basic literacy, women entrepreneurs who want to focus on specific entrepreneurial issues and problem areas and who need particular time considerations by training providers to match home duties and training. Generic business skills are needed in sectors like construction, manufacturing, small-scale agriculture, tourism and other sectors needed in specific regions. Programmes have to address the self-employment problems experienced by the youth, where the emphasis will have to fall on awareness of opportunities and development paths. Training should also, in general, help to break with traditional gender roles in business and skills categories.
- Training programmes have to be modular, so that the trainer can combine training from different institutions as indicated in the National Strategy for the Development and Promotion of Small Business in South Africa (RSA. Department of Trade and Industry 1995).

To reduce illiteracy in South Africa significantly, and to reduce the historic neglect of ABET, the Department of Education has formulated the following vision for ABET as provided in the Policy document on Adult Basic Education and Training (RSA. DoE 1997:9):

“A literate South Africa within which all its citizens have acquired basic education and training that enables effective participation in socio-economic and political processes to contribute to reconstruction, development and social transformation.”

Due to the fact that the public FET sector has open access for all South African citizens, well spread across the country, with a fairly well established infrastructure, this sector has the potential to become a major role-player in the provision of ABET. This view is in concord with the new Institutional Landscape Document for public FET colleges (RSA. DoE 2001:18) which articulates the desperate need for the training of illiterates in the communities surrounding the FET institutions.

The provision of ABET by public FET institutions can rely heavily on funding from designated governmental funds for this purpose. Trusts, community funds and discretionary grants from SETAs for this purpose can make this provision a reality, because illiterates have financial constraints and education and training is unaffordable and impossible if not provided by government or other community development funds.

The FET sector has to consider more effective communication and co-operation with the Ministry, employers, trade unions and administrators of national and provincial public and community funds designated for ABET. It is imperative to channel funding through structures which have the ability to serve the needs in designated areas more effectively in terms of finances, quality and accessibility. The networking towards the achievement of community upliftment and development is not currently distinctive of the technical college system and has to be developed urgently to provide programmes that serve the needs of the communities.

3.5.5 The need for different and multiple skills and competencies

It is imperative for the FET sector to understand the needs of the employer as far as skills are concerned of the graduates they employ from this sector. This challenge is a universal topic that is more and more researched across the world. Research conducted by Alt (2001) shows that the employers in business and industry prioritised the following five skills and competencies as the most important and the next three skills as less important in general for graduates to be able to perform naturally when employed:

- Graduate students must be capable of basic skills, namely reading, writing, performing arithmetic and mathematical operations, listening and speaking.
- Employers also expect from graduates to have mastered thinking skills which relate to thinking creatively, making decisions, solving problems, visualising and knowing how to learn and how to reason.
- An employed graduate who has mastered the personal qualities i.e. displaying responsibility, self esteem, sociability, self management, integrity and honesty will be a great asset and will adapt well to any working environment.
- Employees have also indicated that they expect from their newly graduated employees to be able to identify resources relevant to a working context and be able to organise, plan and allocate these resources successfully.
- Graduates who fail to co-operate and work with others will have serious problems in adapting to most working environments and in contributing to the well-being and smooth operation of a system and everybody involved.

The following three skills have also been indicated to be important, but of lesser importance than the five skills mentioned above.

- Graduates who understand the social, organisational and technological systems in a working environment and have the ability to monitor and correct performance, as well as being capable of improving and even designing new systems, will adapt well and will add much value to any working environment.
- The world of work today relies heavily on graduates who have mastered the skills of selecting appropriate technology for a task, applying that technology and maintaining and troubleshooting regarding the relevant technology.
- The ability to acquire and evaluate any form of information needed or relevant to the working environment and the organising and maintaining of such information also seems to be very important for the employer.

The South African government tried to respond to these imperatives by passing various policies and acts that impact directly on the FET system as well as on their programmes. The challenge now lies before the FET sector to seek solutions and means to incorporate the needs of the world of work into their programmes, and to provide needs-driven programmes to prepare FET graduates for the world of work.

3.5.6 Insufficient focus on technology

As far as the technological factors are concerned there are two main areas to concentrate on in solving the problem for the FET sector for the future, namely infrastructure and the provision of programmes. As far as infrastructure is concerned it is well known that most of the technical colleges across South Africa cannot claim that they have the technological infrastructure to train their students in the latest technological needs of the country and their region. The National Ministry of Education also admits in the Landscape for Public FET (RSA. DoE 2001:13) that this aspect needs urgent attention. The Ministry accepts the responsibility of large investment in this direction, indicating at the same time that the government will not be able to solve this problem alone. The FET

institutions, together with their provincial structures, will have to be innovative in seeking partnerships to solve this problem.

As far as the provision of technological programmes is concerned Mafisa (1999:33) makes it clear that the FET sector has a great responsibility regarding the development of scientific literacy in South Africa. The development of scientific literacy, he feels, “offers scope for students to be introduced to basic scientific concepts and operations. It is a study which primarily focuses on equipping students to develop knowledge, skills, and values necessary for them to function as informed, productive citizens.” The responsibility of the FET sector in relation to the development of technological literacy takes on far more meaning when an FET institution aligns itself with the three main goals of the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology as spelled out in the National Research and Technology Foresight Project (RSA. Department of Arts, Culture and Science 1999:5) namely:

- the establishment of an inclusive system of technological and social innovation;
- the development of a culture that values the advancement of knowledge as an important component of national development;
- improved support for all kinds of innovation that is fundamental to sustainable economic growth, employment creation, and equity through redress and social development.

FET institutions can play a major role in developing employment-orientated training on its designated levels if they liaise with business and industry in their region, in incorporating technological needs into programmes.

3.6 TARGET GROUPS FOR FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMMES

A distinction is made between the pre-employed, employed and unemployed target groups for further education training programmes.

3.6.1 The pre-employed

These learners are all the prospective new entrants to the labour market, and are predominantly youth found in senior secondary schools, technical colleges, youth colleges, finishing schools, community centres and private FET providers. As great numbers of them are already enrolled in FET programmes, the challenge revolves around the ability of the FET sector to improve the quality and relevance of programmes for them and to re-direct them towards vocational programmes.

The high priority that learners and parents place on obtaining a Grade 12 certificate, regardless of the employability of the learner afterwards, implies that the FET faces the challenge either to route these learners to vocational programmes or to increase the relevance of FET curriculum to suit the needs of the world of work. South Africa needs to place greater emphasis on mathematics, science, technology and computer literacy, as well as on training in broad occupational areas with work experience through learnerships and other relevant initiatives for the 21st century. The gradual implementation of Curriculum 2005 is at least a starting point in trying to solve part of the problem pertaining to the current senior secondary school phase. However, the reform of the senior secondary curriculum must become a very high priority in the transformation of the entire FET sector.

3.6.2 The employed

The employed clientele presents a further challenge to improve quantity and quality of FET programmes. According to the NCFE (RSA. DoE 1998:32) only 10-25 percent of the current employed have ever received training. Much of this training has been too narrowly job-specific, with other important problem solving skills having been neglected.

It is proposed that in future FET programmes for the employed must provide a greater balance of generic and specific skills, whilst the existing skills of employed workers need to be recognised and upgraded to meet the increasing demands of the economy. It is

required of the FET sector to keep track with industrial and commercial restructuring in its training. As most employed clientele are adults, learning must be provided in accessible, flexible modes of delivery, leading to recognised qualifications, or credits towards qualifications, so that the skills required become portable. In addition, the FET sector must also strive to provide programmes in personal development to improve the quality of life of clients. One accepts that some of these programmes may not necessarily lead to recognised qualifications, but they should be presented in such a way that they encourage learners to progress to programmes which lead to formal qualifications.

One can only hope that all the national structures outlined in legislation and policies pertaining to the transformation of education in South Africa (e.g. the National Qualifications Framework, the National Standards Bodies, the Standard Generating Structures, Education Quality Assurance bodies etc.) will give impetus to the entire restructuring process

3.6.3 The unemployed

The FET faces a very important challenge pertaining to the alarmingly high unemployment figures in South Africa. It must concentrate on improving both the quantity and quality of training for this target group. The critical part of this challenge lies in the ability of the FET sector to determine specific needs, to increase the range of skills taught, the duration of the programmes and the ability to link the training to work experience. The unemployed include the disabled, militarised youth and the in-prison population, as well as the youth who did not obtain an FET qualification or those who need to improve the market value of their FET qualification. The unemployed also include the unemployed without an FET Certificate, unemployed youth, adults and the retrenched. Women, especially in rural areas and informal settlements, and the illiterate are also part of the unemployed target groups for the FET sector.

To address above mentioned priorities, the FET Sector, with specific reference to the provincial and institutional leadership, will have to develop a culture of networking to

prioritise strategically for these markets and to negotiate for funding from extra-ordinary funding channels. This funding is often available on national and provincial levels and includes subsidies for those unemployed clients who do not have funds for training that will capacitate them. Discretionary funds available from SETAs from the unclaimed levies are important channels to obtain funds for economic and social upliftment. In designing needs-driven programmes it is important to analyse briefly the role and expectations of SAQA in this regard.

It is important to highlight that the effectiveness of an FET system is based on whether the social and economic realities and needs of the community are reflected in education and training priorities as well as in the nature and the content of programmes delivered.

3.7 IMPLICATIONS OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY (SAQA) ACT 58 OF 1995 AND OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION FOR FET PROGRAMMES

According to the Skills Development Strategy (RSA. DoE 2001:17) the SAQA Act is an attempt to bridge the big gap between education and training. In the past, after a person finished schooling, he/she could continue their education either at universities, or through technikons and colleges. The learning at universities and theoretical courses at technikons and colleges was thought of as “education” while the practical learning at technikons and colleges was seen as ‘training’. ‘Education’ had more status than technikon or college ‘training’.

The SAQA Act (RSA. DoE 1995) indicates that education and training are both recognised forms of learning. People need both skills and knowledge to deal with all the changes that will happen in their lives in the 21st century. Education, in other words, is not only about academic theory only, and training is not only about practical skills. The SAQA Act directs that people should be able to move about freely in the education and training system – they must never be stuck on either side of an education and training

divide. They must be able to use the learning that they have gained on one hand, to go forward on the other.

The mission of SAQA, according to the National Qualifications Framework: An Overview (RSA. DoE 2000:2), is to ensure the development and implementation of a National Qualifications Framework, which contributes to the full development of each learner, as well as to the social and economic development of the nation at large. This mission also reflects the mission of the FET sector, and with the functions allocated to the SAQA, the structures provided for within this body with specific reference to the NQF and the principles according to which the SAQA operates, provide a very important foundation for the realisation of the goals of the FET sector in South Africa. The problems pertaining to the FET sector as indicated in various reports, e.g. the NCFE (RSA. DoE 1998) Report, the NBI (National Business Initiative) reports and statements of the National Minister of Education, are to a great extent addressed by relevant provisions in the SAQA Act.

In the NQF: An overview (RSA. DoE 2000:11-12) the SAQA is described as a body of 29 members appointed by the Ministers of Education and Labour. The members are nominated by identified national stakeholders in education and training. The functions of the SAQA are in essence twofold:

- To oversee the development of the National Qualifications Framework, by formulating and publishing policies and criteria for the designation of bodies responsible for establishing education and training standards or qualifications and for the accreditation of bodies responsible for monitoring and auditing achievements in terms of such standards and qualifications.
- To oversee the implementations of the NQF by ensuring the registration, accreditation and assignment of functions to the bodies referred to above, as well as the registration of national standards and qualifications on the framework. It must also take steps to ensure that provisions for accreditation are complied with and

where appropriate, that registered standards and qualifications are internationally comparable.

SAQA must advise the Ministers of Education and Labour. The Authority is required to perform its tasks after consultation and in co-operation with all bodies and institutions responsible for education, training and certification of standards, which will be affected by the NQF. It must also comply with the various rights and powers of bodies in terms of the Constitution and Act of Parliament. The office of SAQA is responsible for implementing the policies and decisions of the Authority.

In relation to standards, qualifications, credits and the recognition of prior learning the SAQA Act makes the following provision:

- All skills must be written as learning outcomes, which say what a learner will know and be able to do when they are competent. These outcomes will be recognised through national standards and qualifications.
- A qualification is made up of unit standards, each of which carries a number of smaller parts called credits. Each credit is equal to an average of about ten hours of learning. Universities opted for the registration of whole qualifications.
- People can earn their credits without going to a course if they can show that they already have the skills and knowledge required in the standards and qualifications. This recognition of prior learning (RPL) means that people's skills must be recognised even if they have learnt them simply through doing, rather than through a formal course as already indicated.
- The SAQA, according to An Introduction to the Skills Development Strategy (RSA. DoE (2001:18-23), establishes various structures with different goals and responsibilities in ensuring quality of education and training in South Africa and in providing many different entry, exit and re-entry point during an individual's process of life-long learning. In the following paragraphs the different structures which assist the SAQA Act to execute its responsibilities are explained.

3.7.1 National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

In An Overview of the NQF (RSA. DoE 2000:1) the NQF is defined as a framework which sets boundaries – a set of principles and guidelines which provides a vision, a philosophical base and an organisational structure – for construction in this case, of a qualification system. Detailed development and implementation is carried out within these boundaries. It is a national resource, representing a national effort at integrating education and training into a unified structure or recognised qualification. It is a framework of qualifications i.e. record of learner achievement. In short, the NQF is the set of principles according to which records of learner achievement are registered to enable national recognition of acquired skills and knowledge, thereby ensuring an integrated system that encourages life-long learning.

The objectives of the NQF as outlined in the SAQA Act are as follows:

- to create an integrated national framework for learning achievements;
- to facilitate access to, and mobility and progression within, education, training and career paths;
- to enhance the quality of education and training;
- to accelerate the redress of past unfair discrimination in education, training and employment opportunities; and
- to contribute to the full personal development of each learner and the social and economic development of the nation at large.

An introduction to the Skills Development Strategy (RSA. DoL 2001: 19-21) explained the format and interpretation of the NQF as a single but wide ladder which covers all the many possible learning and career paths which include all forms of education and training. Like all ladders, the NQF has different levels, which make it clear how far a person is from the bottom or top, and what the next step is. This structure is outlined in figure 3.1.

Figure 3.2: Structure of the National Qualifications Framework

| Band | NQF LEVEL | Types of Qualifications and Certificates | | | |
|--|------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| | | General | | Career focused | |
| Higher Education | 8 | Doctor of Philosophy | | Doctor of Philosophy | |
| | PG 4 | Doctor of Philosophy | | Professional Doctorates | |
| And | 8 | Research | Structured | Research | Structured |
| | PG 3 | Master ‘s Degree | Master’s Degree | Master Degree | Master’s Degree |
| Training | 8 | | Master’s Diploma | Master’s Diploma | Professional Master’s Degree |
| | PG 2 | | Master’s Diploma | Master’s Diploma | Professional Master’s Degree |
| Band | 8 | Bachelor Honour’s Degree | General Postgraduate Diploma | Advanced Career focused e.g. B Tech | Career focused Post graduate Diploma |
| | PG 1 | Bachelor Honour’s Degree | General Postgraduate Diploma | Advanced Career focused e.g. B Tech | Career focused Post graduate Diploma |
| Band | 7 | General Bachelor’s Degree | | Career focused Bachelor’s Degree | |
| | 6 | General Diploma | | Career focused Diploma | |
| | 5 | | | Career focused Certificate | |
| Further Education and Training Certificates | | | | | |
| Further Education | 4 | School/College/Training Certificates | | | |
| | | Mix of units from all (NGOs) | | | |
| And | 3 | School/College/Training Certificates | | | |
| | | Mix of units from all (NGOs) | | | |

| | | | |
|--|----------|--|---------------------|
| Training Band | 2 | School/College/Training Certificates Mix of units from all (NGOs) | |
| General Education and Training Certificates | | | |
| General Education And Training Band | | Senior Phase | ABET Level 4 |
| | | Intermediate Phase | ABET Level 3 |
| | | Foundation Phase | ABET Level 2 |
| | | Pre-school | ABET Level 1 |

The NQF classifies all education and training according to eight levels, which are illustrated in figure 3.1 above. The levels measure how difficult the learning for different qualifications is rather than how long the person has studied. The levels allow comparison between different courses. They follow comparison between education and training received in different ways and in different institutions. A person can use the credits from one institution to qualify at another institution for a different but related course. The levels also allow comparison between South African education and training and the education and training obtained in other countries.

Level 1 of the NQF comes at the end of ordinary, compulsory schooling up to Grade 9 (Standard 7). It can also be reached through adult basic education and training for adults who did not have the chance to complete their schooling. Level 1 is the end of the first band of the NQF. This band is known as the General Education and Training Band. Levels 2, 3 and 4 of the NQF make up the second band. They cover further education and training – schooling and technical certificates up to the equivalent of Grade 12, or matric. Levels 5, 6, 7 and 8 are band 3. Band 3 covers all qualification of higher

education and training. People can progress through these levels no matter what their age, through life-long learning.

The establishment of the NQF is guided by the following principles:

- **Integration:** brings together systems and approaches – education and training, theory and practice, academic and vocational into a single system.
- **Relevance:** ensures that education and training is useful for social, economic and political development and matches learner needs.
- **Credibility:** ensures that the education and training system is valued and accepted nationally and internationally.
- **Coherence:** ensures that all areas of learning are part of the framework so that learners can move easily from one learning situation to another.
- **Flexibility:** checks that different paths – workplace courses, community courses, Technikon courses - all lead to the same learning ends.
- **Standards:** puts the accepted units of learning in a nationally agreed framework.
- **Legitimacy:** ensures that all national stakeholders participate in planning and co-ordination.
- **Accessibility:** makes it easy for learners to come into the education and training system at the right level and follow relevant learning and career paths.
- **Articulation:** makes it possible for learners to move easily between the different parts of the system.
- **Progression:** enables learners to move through the different levels of the education and training system and build up their qualifications.
- **Portability:** recognises and lets a learner transfer credits and qualifications from one learning situation to another.
- **Recognition of Prior Learning:** gives credit to all learning which people have gained through life experience and non-formal courses.
- **Guidance for learners:** assists learners to understand and make decisions on how they enter and move through the system.

As the NQF advocates an outcomes-based approach towards teaching and training it is appropriate to highlight briefly the characteristics of an OBE approach.

3.7.2 Outcomes-based Education (OBE)

The Ministry of Education indicates in the Draft National Curriculum Framework for FET (RSA. DoE 2000:13-15) its commitment to an outcomes-based approach due to its concern about the previous education system, which was to a large extent content based and teacher centered.

The OBE approach is founded on the belief that all learners can learn and achieve, and that the role of the learning institution is to create the conditions that will enable them to do so. In this context, the learner is the focus of learning activities and the teacher is a facilitator. The focus is on learning by doing, learning how to learn, learning through experience and using critical contextual information for analysis.

Outcomes have been defined as end products of the learning processes. These outcomes state clearly what competencies a learner should be able to demonstrate. Programmes of learning are then designed to help learners to achieve these outcomes. As part of the Ministry's commitment to transformation, FET will be driven by critical cross-field and developmental outcomes as indicated by SAQA, with learning and the learner being the central focus of curriculum development. Both the learners and the educators focus their attention on the results (outcomes) expected at the end of each learning process, as well as on the processes of constructing knowledge in order that the learner may achieve the outcomes. Learning outcomes are thus the observable and/or measurable knowledge, skills and values that learners are expected to have acquired at certain key stages of the learning process.

The critical cross-field outcomes as indicated by the NQF which must be built into all qualifications are:

- identifying and solving problems;
- working together with other people;
- organising and managing yourself;
- collecting and analysing information;
- communicating well;
- using science and technology and being aware of their effects on people and the environment;
- realising that we – and all problems we tackle in learning and doing – are part of a bigger society and world.

The developmental outcomes are:

- learning skills – reflect and explore a variety of strategies to learn more effectively;
- citizenship – participate as responsible citizens in the life of local, national and global communities;
- cultural and aesthetic understanding – be culturally and aesthetically sensitive across a range of social contexts;
- employment seeking skills – explore education and career opportunities;
- entrepreneurship – develop entrepreneurial opportunities.

When FET institutions are thus designing programmes it is important for them to take all of above specified outcomes into consideration in order to follow a holistic approach to education and training and ensuring that the graduates they deliver possess these required skills, knowledge and attitudes.

3.8 CONCLUSION

In Chapter 3 the factors and forces which urged the transformation of the FET sector in South Africa are highlighted. The assumptions which form the basis of the transformation process were stressed, together with the policies which are supposed to give impetus to the transformation process. The essence of what was touched upon in this chapter evolves from and leads back to the imperative of responsiveness and its

determining factors. Taking into account the realities of South Africa and the slow or lack of progress in the transformation of the FET sector, one can only hope that the problems of whatever kind can be solved to allow entry into a much needed vibrant future for the South African FET sector.

It is clear from the definition, goals, mission and vision of the future public FET sector that this sector faces serious challenges pertaining to both the economic and social development of South Africa. It also has to accept the challenges towards social redress and development needs for a country with a long history of social and economic imbalances, which led to a legacy of marginalised and deprived communities. The FET sector is well positioned with its clear vision and the transformation ahead to fulfill an important role in regard to the socio-economic realities of South Africa. If the FET sector, with all its structures and different types of institutions, acknowledges the factors impacting on FET systems, their partners and all role players in the FET sector as outlined in this chapter, it will succeed in establishing the great ideals of this sector, and will be able to contribute towards the economic and social upliftment needed.

**NEEDS-DRIVEN FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING (FET)
PROGRAMMES:
CHALLENGES AND IMPERATIVES**

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Having focused in the previous chapters on the role FET programmes should play in the socio-economic growth and upliftment of South Africa, the question that now arises is what the implications of all the policies, acts, needs and initiatives are for effective programme planning and development in the FET sector. This chapter, therefore, attempts to address the following issues:

- the role of leadership, management and quality provision in needs-driven programmes;
- programme planning and development;
- recognition of prior learning (RPL); and
- evaluation of programmes.

**4.2 THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND QUALITY
PROVISION IN NEEDS-DRIVEN PROGRAMMES**

Transformation and quality provision of the FET sector and, education in general in South Africa, needs national, provincial and institutional leadership that understands and has managed to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes characteristic of charismatic transformational leaders. The FET sector is often accused of not having sufficient and/or transformational leadership. It thus seems appropriate to consider the type of leadership that is necessary to ensure needs-driven programmes.

Conger and Kanungo (1987) reason that charismatic leaders have an idealised goal or vision that they want to achieve, and that they have with a strong personal commitment to

that goal. They are often perceived as unconventional, as agents of radical change, rather than as managers of the status quo. Transformational leaders possess the above mentioned characteristics associated with charismatic leaders, yet according to Avolio and Bass (in Robbins 1993) they have more than just charisma. These authors describe the difference between these two types of leaders as follows:

“The charismatic leader may want followers to adopt the charismatic’s world view and go no further; the transformational leader will attempt to instil in followers the ability to question not only established views but eventually those established by the leader.”

From the above description one can deduce that the transformational leader empowers followers. Apart from this characteristic a transformational leader is usually a value driven person who likes to invest in other people; they take risks and are courageous individuals. They also have the ability to deal with complexities, ambiguity and uncertainty. To summarise, they are visionaries, and engage in defining their vision or purpose in a way that gives meaning and purpose to whatever action they are requesting from followers.

The transformation process of the FET sector and education in South Africa in general, have an urgent need for leaders and not only managers: Darling (1992) and Nanus (1992) differentiate between these two as follows:

| A Manager: | A Leader: |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| * administers | * innovates |
| * is a copy | * is an original |
| * focuses on systems and structure | * focuses on people |
| * relies on control | * inspires trust |
| * has a short-range view | * has a long range perspective |
| * asks how and when? | * asks what and why? |
| * has his/her eye on the bottom line | * has his/her eye on the horizon |
| * imitates | * originates |
| * accepts the status quo | * challenges the status quo |

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * is the classic good soldier * does things right | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * is his/her own person * does the right things |
|--|--|

A serious warning regarding to the appointment of too many managers in the governance hierarchy of the FET sector may lead to the failure of the transformation to a lesser or greater extent as indicated by Darling (1992) and Capowski (1994). These two pointed out that the primary factor which prevents FET institutions from growing and changing is that they tend to be over-managed and under-led. The appointment of appropriate leaders in the FET sector is of utmost importance in the transformation, otherwise too many disadvantaged citizens who depend on the transformation, as well as the country as a whole, are going to pay the expensive price in terms of illiteracy, joblessness, underdeveloped and unskilled human resources. If the FET sector fails to appoint strong leaders, the managers who lack the qualities of transformational charismatic leaders will fail to lead the challenge regarding the determination and development of new programmes from the current state of ineffective programmes towards the needs-driven programmes essential to the social and economic growth of South Africa.

4.2.1 Governance and institutional leadership

Apart from the national and provincial government structures in the FET sector, the FET Act 98 of 1998 makes provision for the establishment of a Council, Academic Board and sub-structures to help to govern the FET institutions. It is imperative that these structures, from provincial to Council structures, are well informed on what their responsibilities are. Urgent budgeting and prioritising pertaining to this matter, together with the development of the institutional executive team, must take place. The NBI has committed itself together with the FET Colleges Collaboration Fund, to assist with training, but much more than what has been planned according to this initiative is necessary to get everybody on board.

The institutional leadership with the appropriate structures must be able to set the example pro-actively in a democratic way for a new approach towards programme

planning. It should formulate a definite charismatic, transformational leadership plan, organise all the activities and resources appropriately, co-ordinate all activities and resources, control all processes and motivate all people involved. The institutional leadership must be able to drive quality on the programme level and to ensure that the institution has a quality management policy and procedures in place, linked with the institution's financial, staffing, marketing and human resource development plans, as well as a code of conduct, language policy, estate plan, staffing plan and equity plan.

4.2.2 Administration and management of programmes

The management of the administration with regard to the finances, curriculum activities and administrative processes of an FET institution should also appeal to the strongly proactive democratic leadership of the institution together with its delegated structures and powers.

4.2.2.1 Curriculum

Curriculum development and delivery is the core business of any institution of education and training. The FET sector has a transformational responsibility towards the citizens of South Africa in terms of a needs-driven approach. It is expected of the Academic Board and its relevant structures, in co-operation with all the other support structures at the institution according the Draft Criteria for the Registration of an FET Institution by the National Board for Further Education and Training (NBFET) and to have proper policies and procedures in place to provide the following services:

- to provide registered programmes at the NQF;
- to set institutional performance targets;
- to have plans available to improve access to all students;
- to plan for a wider curriculum for all;
- to identify the education and training needs of its learners;
- to plan and implement appropriate strategies;

- for institutional based curriculum development;
- to design and adapt learning and training materials;
- to have teaching staff with appropriate skills and experience in interpreting standards, and/or curriculum for education training purpose;
- to ensure that there are arrangements to provide impartial guidance to all students;
- to ensure the adoption of integration in education and training;
- to provide opportunities for students to acquire accredited practical training;
- to provide opportunities for students to acquire appropriate workplace experience;
- and
- to have student management records in place.

For an FET institution in South Africa to have the above mentioned abilities will take much institutional development, investment and staff development.

4.2.2.2 Administration

In the light of all the transformation required and challenges to be faced in adhering to the criteria of a well-functioning FET institution, the development of effective administrative systems is crucial. Policies, procedures and structures that suit the needs of the institution to assist the core business of the institution must be developed and maintained. The institution must be able to develop:

- administrative systems and structures;
- management systems and structures;
- managerial knowledge and skills;
- and Education Management Information System (EMIS) as a management tool for monitoring, evaluation and reporting purposes.

A well developed and organised administrative process consists of well thought-out policy making, organising, financing, staffing, determining of work procedures and control. If any of above mentioned processes within the administrative process is not

properly attended to, the administrative process is doomed and will not be able to support the core business of the institution.

4.2.2.3 Resources

To provide the appropriate balance of physical resources, financial resources and human resources in an institution to implement needs-driven programmes requires visionary and pro-active planning leadership of these institutions. Resources and provisioning according to needs in a responsive manner has always been a great problem in the past in the technical college system. The National Department of Education promises a funding formula which will provide for various resources (RSA. DoE New Institutional Landscape 2001:22-33). It is imperative that the national government, understand the importance of this type of investment to allow this sector to provide needs-driven programmes with the relevant resources to satisfy the needs not only of the specific regions and the country, but also to compete with the best in the world. Obviously one would like to believe that industry will also become seriously involved in the provision of facilities, but one must retain realistic expectations in the view of the current strenuous economic environment affecting the private sector of South Africa. Another important factor to consider with regard to the provision of facilities is the type of environment and the regional economic climate of the communities. It is doubtful whether the industries of economically poor provinces like the Free State and the Eastern Cape would be in a position to contribute in the same way to the resources of the FET sectors in their areas as would industries in areas such as Gauteng.

The draft criteria for the registration of FET institutions provided by the National Board for Further Education and Training (NBFET) indicate the following types of resources as prerequisites for the implementation of needs-driven programmes.

4.2.2.4 Physical resources

The provisioning of appropriate infra-structural resources, including learning and teaching resources such as accredited programmes and support materials, delivery and assessment resources, is a prerequisite in the management of needs-driven programmes. Other physical resources that are required access to the basic minimum requirements for teaching and learning as per national norms e.g. facilities, equipment and training materials appropriate to the method of delivery. The physical resources should also be appropriate to ensure that assessment requirements as well as adequately resourced workshops for practical work are available.

4.2.2.5 Financial resources

An FET institution has to take care of financial control which must be in compliance with the GAAP (General Accepting Accounting Practices), and must oversee the implementation of appropriate mechanisms to access programmatic funding from the SETAs, for example. Particular attention must be paid to mechanisms to develop a student fee system as well as a student financial aid scheme. Clearly, strategic plans linked to the National Skills Fund and the institution equity plan, should be developed.

4.2.2.6 Human resources

Without well and applicably trained human resources it will not be possible to deliver programmes of high quality. It is therefore important that institutional staff establishments meet the minimum requirements in terms of national norms and standards. Special emphasis should be placed on developing the competencies of appropriate institutional staff establishments, e.g. the administrative staff, while a policy aligned to national laws should be developed and implemented for the employing of additional staff (educator and non-educator staff). Obviously this should not be done without linking strategic plans and the institution's equity plan.

4.2.2.7 Student support

Optimal operating student support systems are of the utmost importance for any effective and efficient FET institution to support and assist the learners to the best of the institution's ability. The draft criteria for the registration of public FET institutions indicate the following services and structures to be in place to support the learners efficiently:

- administration and learner record management procedures;
- policies and practices for assuring the integrity of records i.e. security, confidentiality, archiving, access by learners;
- ability to provide timely and appropriate information, advice and support services for learners;
- provisioning to widen participation with special educational needs in line with labour market trends and potential employment prospects;
- processes to trace student progress;
- processes to assist learners to find job placements;
- facilities to conduct post-service interviews with learners; and
- adequate support services to deal with learner needs.

A documented code of practice on the following issues will assist in dealing with these essential matters pertaining to student support:

- Admission process
- Marketing
- Delivery
- Assessment
- Appeals process
- Grievance processes
- Fees charged
- Refund policy
- Student welfare and counselling services

- Learner feedback instruments
- Dissemination and consistent application procedural material within the institution.

4.2.2.8 Quality assurance on programme level

The ability of the FET sector to prove to its clients, industry, government structures and so on that it can deliver needs-driven, cost effective and responsive programmes is of fundamental importance in the successful contribution of mid-level skills training in South Africa.

Highlighted as one of the draft criteria by the NBFET for the declaration of public FET institutions, quality assurance and quality improvement are fundamental to ensuring that the further education and training programmes meet the needs of learners, communities, employers and society. All provision and delivery must be consistently good and continuously improving. Institutions must strive for the excellence which learners are entitled to expect from publicly funded education and training. Quality assurance in relation to a public further education and training institution includes both programme and institutional evaluations. Such evaluations determine the effectiveness of the programmes offered by the institution as well as the overall performance and management of the institution.

According to the draft criteria for the declaration of public FET institutions to be able to provide quality programmes, the institution would be required to provide evidence in the form of:

- documented processes for undertaking self-assessments, evaluations and action planning;
- obtaining and responding to the views of learners and other customers about opportunities and services offered;
- the development of an Education Management Information System as a management tool for monitoring, evaluation and reporting purposes; and

- target setting using benchmarking based on relevant and consistent performance indicators.

4.2.2.9 External role players pertaining to quality assurance

Not only is the important external dimension of quality assurance and promotion emphasised in the Further Education and Training Act (RSA. DoE 1998b) but is it expected of all FET institutions to provide annual reports on their institution's quality. Such reports have to be submitted to the Director-General of the Department of Education, the NBFET and Head of Department Education of each province. However, the above mentioned external role players outside the FET institutions are not the only ones to account to as far as the programmes and activities of the FET are concerned.

In the Green Paper on FET (RSA. DoE April 1998a:45) mention was made of the need for a FET umbrella authority, which was established recently and is known as UMALUSI. Previously this body was known as the SAFCERT and during the interim also known as the GENFETQA. This body has the responsibility for quality promotion and quality assurance, the accreditation of providers, certification of learners, monitoring of provisioning, facilitation of moderation and the auditing of providers' quality management systems as well as collaboration with the SETAs for quality assurance and promotion across the FET system. The expected collaboration between Umalusi the ETQAs and the SETAs is currently causing problems and in fact seems to be a very cumbersome process. The functions and mandates of all of these bodies are not yet clear and this is what is currently leading to confusion.

The call for the above mentioned structure was answered by the compilation of the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance (RSA. DoE 2001:13). The Council envisaged by this Bill is to serve both the General Education Band and the Further Education and Training band by undertaking the following functions:

- to accredit general and further education and training providers;

- to recognise learners' achievements and award qualifications and credits towards qualifications registered on the National Qualifications Framework;
- to issue certificates;
- to co-operate with the relevant bodies appointed to moderate quality assurance against specific standards or qualifications, for which one or more education and training quality assurance bodies are accredited; and
- to recommend new standards or qualifications to the National Standards Bodies for consideration or modifications to existing standards and to maintain a database.

As indicated in the Green Paper (RSA. DoE 1998a:45), the Ministry believes furthermore that a Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Body (FETQA) should be located within the national DoE. Its governing body could be constituted as a committee of the NBFET. The FET sector will surely learn in due time if this need has been established within the NBFET. This Paper foresees a possible amendment on the provision of Level 5 programmes by the FET sector. The HEQC will be responsible for the quality assurance function for qualifications and unit standards which fall within the higher education band. This will avert the danger of overlapping functions and potentially conflicting approaches by the further education and training quality assurer and the higher education quality committee.

The intentions of the Ministry to continue with public examinations to ensure comparability, integrity of results and currency of FET qualifications highlight the importance of this external quality mechanism to enhance the culture of quality, effectiveness and accountability of an FET institution.

Another serious consideration for quality assurance and promotion to serve international accreditation and acceptance is the adherence to the International Standards Organisation's (ISO) quality assurance systems where applicable in the FET institutions.

4.2.2.10 Internal quality assurance procedures and mechanisms

The Green Paper on FET (RSA. DoE 1998a) indicates, and rightfully so, that the primary responsibility of quality assurance rests with FET institutions themselves. International and local experience shows that quality is driven from within organisations and institutions.

The FET Act (RSA. DoE 1998b) also indicates in Chapter 6 that assessment toward excellence is primarily an institutional responsibility within a framework of approved learning programmes and quality assurance mechanisms. The Academic Board of an FET institution is specifically designated in the FET Act to guide suitable assessment processes and to assure quality as will be discussed in paragraph 4.5.

The instruction from the FET Act to FET institutions to accept responsibility for quality assurance and promotion emphasises the international and national perspectives on Institutional Quality Assurance Management Systems (IQAMS) described by Strydom and Van der Westhuizen (2001:i) in the following statement: “Quality assurance and management should form an integral part of the normal and strategic institutional management processes. In this way quality assurance and management will not be an “add-on” nor a pen-and-paper exercise for “window-dressing” purposes, but it will be embedded in the structures and processes of the institution and will become part of the daily activities of managers and staff. This will lead to the development of a culture of quality in the institution and will give effect to a continuous top-down and bottom-up process where improvement permeates the system. Any analysis of the establishment of an IQAMS therefore has to take institutional management processes as a point of departure.

4.3 PROGRAMME PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The further education and training sector in South Africa in general is not familiar with having a particular culture or an organised way of dealing with programme planning and

development. The FET system used to operate on a supply driven basis with the programme development mainly done and provided by the national structures, according to national initiatives.

According to all the legislation and policies guiding the transformation of the FET sector for the future of South Africa, the national Education Ministry has to develop a well managed process of planning and development of programmes and also has to provide channels for the FET institutions to be able to develop programmes, responsive to the needs of the community. These channels and control processes by the national Ministry will have to be smooth running and without any delays to assist institutions towards the provision of needs-driven programmes.

To assist FET institutions, governing bodies and provincial structures must decide on ideas of how programme planning and development can take place. The strategies that have been developed by Steyn (1999) of the University of the Free State for the transformation of their programmes and the determination of their programme niches are worth highlighting. These strategies and processes were highly commended by the Executive Director of the South African Qualifications Authority and the senior official of the Department of Education. In the light of the fact that role players outside the University of Free State regarded these strategies and processes as a model for other tertiary institutions, it is felt that this model is a good example for the FET sector to learn from. These strategies and model of the University of Free State were also deemed relevant because the entire process was designed to encourage market-driven value oriented perspectives, which is the main aim of this research.

4.3.1 Strategies for programme planning and development

For Steyn (1999) the development and implementation of specific strategies, based on the co-ownership of colleagues, and collaboration between academic departments is a prerequisite in all programme planning and development activities. He proposes that academic leaders and management are enlightened about why things must be done in

specific ways and be prioritised by the institution. In addition, he stresses the importance of the connections that should be developed among different initiatives and individuals in an institution in order to create synergy and to provide momentum for further initiatives. To ensure success supporting structures (for example as a Division for Academic Programme Planning and Development) need to be set up to create incentives and provide resources for change efforts.

4.3.2 Criteria for the development of programme niches

Part of the planning for the implementation of the programme planning and development process at institutions should be a collaborative approach where the academics and administrators should decide on criteria of values such as the following:

- The vision and mission of the institution should be the point of departure
- Uniqueness of all products should be a priority
- Demand for such programmes (learners and market as well as employers are influential stakeholders)
- Financial sustainability (a continual financial sustainability plan is important)
- Meet the particular needs of learners even if they should exceed the boundaries of disciplines
- Address generic skills
- Requirements of occupational registration and professional associations
- Start with the application and then move towards fundamental knowledge
- Transformation requirements (occupations, private and civil sector)
- Functioning in a diverse community (encompassing a variety of transferable skills)
- Value should be added to the student
- International acknowledgement
- National needs should be taken into account and addressed if possible
- Balance between scientific deepening and market directed
- Relevancy

- Coherence
- Role/value of teaching methods and study guidance
- Applicability of resources (human, physical and financial)
- Effectiveness (realisation of outcomes)
- Quality of programme management
- Accomplishing ownership by personnel
- Ethnic dimension in programmes for education of professional people
- Logistic and personnel capacity to present quality programmes (Steyn 1999).

It is imperative for the FET sector to consider the above criteria in determining their niches to be responsive to the needs of a region.

4.3.3 Process of programme planning and development

The process of programme planning and development as developed by Steyn (1999) is also applicable to the FET sector and could be of great assistance in the development of needs-driven programmes in the FET sector. The process consists of 15 main steps of which some are broken up in sub-steps, as provided in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Process of programme planning and development

| | ACTION: (What?) | METHOD: (How?) |
|----|---|---|
| 1. | Determine the focus of the proposed programme | Find a brief precise title to define the educational bid of the area of study |
| 2. | Define the broad overall competence which will direct the programme | Take the overall competence of each qualification (learning programme) within the programme into account and integrate in order to determine such overall competence for the programme. Your point of departure will be the end product/result of the learning process. Such end result of learning will be awarded with a certificate/diploma. It will also define/be defined by the professional role(s) of the programme as directed |
| 3. | Indicate the titles of qualifications, which | Which qualification(s) fit the programme focus? |

| | | |
|-------|--|---|
| | will be delivered by the programme | You may list qualifications from the lowest to the highest academic levels |
| 4. | Scrutinise the programme proposal by application of the following verifiers | |
| 4.1 | Motivation for the programme | Why should the institution offer such programme? |
| 4.2 | Financial and academic viability | |
| 4.2.1 | Student numbers (also years ahead) | Student enrollment for each qualification within the program as well as the overall student numbers for the programme |
| 4.2.2 | Market demand | Justify the programme proposal by means of a market analysis. The programme bid should be met by a clear demand for such trained people in the market place |
| 4.2.3 | Business plan | Justify your programme in financial terms – balance potential/actual income and expenditure of the programme. Income/revenue may be earned by means of student fees, state subsidy, contracts, etc. Expenditure should take personnel, running and Capital costs into account. (Only broad indications) |
| 4.2.4 | Staff capacity | Do you have the adequate number, category and level of professional staff in order to run the programme effectively over at least a three/four year period? |
| 4.2.5 | Champions in the field | Do you have staff who are recognised as specialists in their respective field(s) of study (nationally and internationally)? Back up your response by citing specific examples. Does your staff participate in community forums and professional contexts? Provide examples |
| 4.3.6 | Established market and co-operation agreements | Does your programme have a strong client-base OR do you have evidence which portrays programme viability? It is crucial from the state's perspective to encourage the sharing of resources. Indicate co-operation agreements, which may minimise expenditure in delivering your programme |
| 4.3.7 | Does the programme fit the nature of your institution? | In what way(s) does the programme satisfy FET criteria/characteristics? |
| 4.3.8 | Occupational/professional links | Which profession/employment is accessible for learners who have achieved the learning outcomes set by the programme? |
| 5. | Focus and/or broaden the direction of the programme in order to design interdisciplinary, multi disciplinary and | |

| | | |
|-----|---|---|
| | interfaculty programmes | |
| 6. | Ensure alignment between qualification and programme focus | Justify the contribution of each qualification towards the focus of the programme. Make adjustments where necessary |
| 7. | Compile a competence profile for each qualification. This implies the analysing and clustering (combining) of learning outcomes for each qualification in the programme | Analyse/design learning outcomes for disciplines which will bid for inclusion into the qualification and programme. The activities will be directed by Faculty Programme Committees |
| 8. | Draft qualification formats within the approved framework of the Department of Education and the SAQA | Representatives from the disciplinary fields participate in teamwork |
| 9. | Fit programme proposals to competence profiles of qualifications | Faculty Programme Committees, with representation from subject/disciplinary fields take up this task |
| 10. | Take specific exit level outcomes as point of departure to select unit standards | Specify and design unit standards |
| 11. | Align unit standards in order to achieve outcomes of the programme | The number and scope of unit standards are combined in order to address progression, articulation and mobility of learners in the programme |
| 12. | Strategically focus the institution's programmes | Summit of top management, deans, programme directors and programme committee of the institution |
| 13. | Final forwarding of institution's qualifications for registration with SAQA. In the case of FET – First to Provincial Directorate; to National FET directorate and other ETQAs for approval | Faculty Programme Committees round off qualifications formats and hand to the Registrar |
| 14. | Marketing of unit standards – qualifications | Present unit standards, qualifications to different institutional programmes |
| 15. | Describe and market the programme as a whole | Market the programme professionally |

(Source: Steyn (1999))

In reflecting on all of these issues and questions institutions have a bigger chance of developing needs-driven programmes.

Another challenge for the transformation of needs-driven programmes is to accommodate the important concept of recognition of prior learning (RPL) which the FET sector must also attend to as education and training within the FET sector make use of learnerships and enroll adults who have gained experiences and knowledge in a variety of social

environments. Various steps for instance steps 2, 3, 7, 9, 10 and 11 from the above model link directly with the process of recognition of prior learning as described in the following paragraph.

4.4 RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)

To ensure that the programmes offered by an FET institution adhere to the underlying principles of the NQF it is important to explain the role of RPL in needs-driven programmes. The implementation of RPL in access policies in institutions allows credit to be given for learning which has already been acquired through life experiences and training courses that were not linked in formal certificates (COSATU) 2000:12).

RPL is a process which recognises life-long learning for the purpose of giving credit, exemption or recognition of an individual's achievements regardless of when, where and how competence was acquired according to Van Rooyen and Lategan (2000:17). The recognition of prior learning means the comparison of the previous learning and experience of a learner however obtained against the learning outcomes required for a specified qualification, and the acceptance for purposes of qualification of that which meets the requirements. The aim of RPL is to make a contribution towards social justice, the validation of knowledge, personal and social empowerment and job opportunities.

The SAQA has drawn up criteria to guide the development of a system of quality assurance in respect of all RPL related programmes and services by ETQAs and accredited training providers and assessors in South Africa, and has provided the following statements in the discussion document for public comment on RPL (2001:17-26).

4.4.1 Institutional policy and environment

Institutions must develop a shared commitment on the part of accredited providers, workplaces and ETQAs to provide enabling environments for learning and assessment, inclusive of close cooperation between administration, learning facilitators, evidence facilitators, advisors, assessors, moderators, professional organisations, employers, trade unions and communities.

4.4.2 Services and support to learners

RPL centres must always be in a position and prepared to support candidates through properly conducted evidence facilitation and advice and support services to enable learners to see how to use RPL to achieve their personal, educational and career goals. They must also be assisted in dealing with personal, social and technical barriers to learning, and in the preparation of evidence to back up their application for RPL assessment.

4.4.3 Training of staff and registration of assessors in RPL

RPL centres must be prepared to plan and budget for the training of assessors and other personnel involved in RPL. This is a key element in the quality of assessments and in the provision of assessment services to learners. Training enables all those involved in the advising and assessment process, including evidence facilitators, assessors, moderators, advisors and administrative personnel, to provide a holistic, learner centred RPL service that is in keeping with the objectives of the NQF and related policies. Providers of training are critical to the development of all key RPL personnel and as such should be particularly vigilant in meeting the criteria and procedures for quality assurance as laid down in the mentioned discussion document and in the policies of SAQA's constituent ETQAs. ETQAs in their turn must develop and monitor policies for the accreditation of training providers and the registration of assessors and moderators, that include provision

for regular updating of their professional competencies in RPL related services and programmes.

4.4.4 Methods and processes of assessment

RPL centres are responsible for all assessment for the purposes of recognition of prior learning by means of a systematic, flexible, collaborative and transparent process, involving the learner and assessor within a specific context and site, such as the workplace or institution of education and training. ETQA-registered moderators and verifiers are key role players in the final determination of what methods and instruments are used, how they are used, the decisions concerning candidates' competence, and in ensuring that the processes of assessments are consistent and fair to all candidates.

4.4.5 RPL and curriculum development

Whenever FET institutions plan and develop programmes, they must always remember that the RPL principles must increasingly inform the development of new standards, qualifications, programmes and curriculum. Providers must use multiple methods of instruction and delivery including experiential and problem based methods, in order to provide curricula to meet the diverse cultural, ethnic, linguistic and educational needs of adult learners. The decision of what should be included and assessed in new qualifications and programmes takes into account the nature and form of knowledge produced in previously excluded constituencies and locations, e.g. indigenous knowledge, women's knowledge, workers' knowledge. Decisions in this regard are taken by the relevant structures of providers in consultation with representative stakeholders, NSBs and the ETQAs.

4.4.6 Quality management systems (QMS)

RPL centres must always assure that quality management systems and processes are vital elements in the continuous development and provision of RPL services and programmes

to the adult learner. Reporting and record-keeping should be designed as an integral part of the QMS, to inform strategic planning requirements at national, sectoral and provider levels, and to sustain the critical integrity of the whole system.

Despite quality management pertaining to RPL, it is imperative to address another important aspect of quality management relating to needs-driven programmes, and this is the evaluation of programmes by the institution itself or by external bodies.

4.5 PROGRAMME EVALUATION

Although quality assurance has been covered in paragraphs 4.2.2.8 to 4.2.2.10 in this chapter, attention to programme evaluation (internally and/or externally) is imperative in order to make sure that the FET sector provides responsive programmes at all times. Strydom, Lategan and Muller (1997:604-615) emphasise this exercise in any educational institution to be the basis of a quality assurance system at institutional and programme levels.

The FET sector will, with some urgency, have to urgently develop a permanent structure and process within each institution to exercise this important process as has been highlighted in the mentioned publication to ensure that needs-driven programmes are delivered by the FET sector.

4.5.1 Phases of implementing programme assessment

According to Hay and Strydom (1999:380) there are two phases of implementing programme assessment as part of a quality assurance system:

- programme policy formulation (comprising elements such as formulating outcomes, deciding on responsibility-sharing and review mechanisms, etc.) and
- programme policy implementation.

Hay and Strydom are clear about the fact that the two phases should inform each other perpetually and should never be seen as two separate entities. Programme assessment should also be seen as a crucial and integral element of policy formulation, planning and implementation which will ensure the continuous improvement of an institution's programmes and quality.

As a step in the quality assurance process, programme (self-) assessment could contribute in:

- presenting a succinct, comprehensive statement of the view of the institution and the programmes provided;
- providing a framework against which the institution and the study programme will be assessed and which will also contribute towards institutional quality improvement;
- providing assurance to the public that the required level of quality is achieved;
- providing assurance to the public (employers) that a particular set of professional standards are met; and
- demonstrating the overall efficiency of institutions.

4.5.2 Framework for developing an assessment policy for programmes

A framework was developed by Hay and Strydom (1999:382-385) for developing an assessment policy for programmes. The following factors should be adhered to as part of programme policy formulation:

4.5.2.1 Situational analysis

To reflect on external influences, the political, social and economic expectations including the expectations of society, employer requirements, community aspirations, values and ideologies need to be considered.

Requirements and challenges posed by the FET system, e.g. policy statements, regional expectations, initiatives and pressures, projects on programmes and FET education research must be taken into account.

The changing nature of programme content to be lectured as influenced by national and global demands, the expected flow of resources into the institution, and the defined FET needs of learners, abilities and aptitudes are also very important to take into account upon policy formulation.

The values, attitudes, skills, knowledge, experience, special strengths and weaknesses, and roles to be performed by lecturers need to be analysed.

Factors which will reflect on the internal influences are the institutional value system and political structures: common assumptions and expectations including traditions, power distribution, authority relationships, methods of achieving conformity to norms and dealing with transformation both nationally and in global context. Physical and human resources available and potential for enhancing these must not be forgotten, and perceived problems and shortcomings in existing curricula/programmes must be considered.

4.5.2.2 Formulation of aims and policy objectives

During this exercise the institution must determine the basic principles, values, orientations and priorities (i.e. the ongoing improvement of the quality of the programme), and must formulate clear, precise, concrete and measurable objectives.

4.5.2.3 Resource analysis

Consideration should be given to the resources needed to implement the above mentioned objectives, including the whole operation of freeing resources for use in particular institutions.

4.5.2.4 Programme management system and responsibility sharing

At this stage of the framework it is important to determine the indicators and data that will be used as well as the groups that will provide reflective information on the programme (i.e. students' and lecturers' perceptions, success rates, job placement, employers' assessment, etc.). Careful job descriptions must be developed for specific tasks to be performed at an institution, i.e. a designation for roles including role relationships and exchange of policy information. Various individuals, committees, administrative and academic bodies and what their responsibilities will be, must also be determined.

4.5.2.5 Methods and procedures for identifying and prioritising the programmes to be assessed

Establish at this stage which, where, how and when programmes will be assessed.

4.5.2.6 Programme assessment process

The programme assessment process consists of three phases namely the:

- assessment outline where decisions are made on how preparations for the assessment will take place as well as the administrative phases and issues to adhere to;
- assessment itself is the phase where decisions have to be made on how data will be gathered, which individuals or authorities will be used and how external people's inputs will be used. During this phase focus must also be placed on the progress of the report (time schedule for completion, approval and dissemination); and
- assessment follow-up. At this stage links must be established between programme assessment and decisions made by the institution, by explaining the conditions governing the preparation and adoption of an action plan for improvement by the institution.

4.5.2.7 Policy review mechanisms and procedures

The focus of this step should be (1) to facilitate awareness of the gaps between the objectives formulated in step 2 and the implementation of the policy; and (2) to promote a review of objectives in the light of experience(s) at the implementation stage. A factor to analyse is the identifying of a review mechanism that will ensure that policy development will be done continuously.

4.5.3 Prerequisites for quality in programme assessment policy formulation

According to Hay and Strydom (1999: 385) it can be maintained that imperative to an effective programme (self-assessment policy planning) is the formulation of indispensable conditions such as top quality management/leadership, collaboration, and a sensitivity for moral issues. For programme assessment to be of high quality, attributes such as fitness for purpose, using the most appropriate assessment methodology and accuracy come to the fore. SAQA (Van Rooyen & Lategan 1998:9) makes it explicitly clear that programme providers should have “the necessary quality assurance and management policies and procedures in place to undertake their responsibilities and functions”.

4.5.3.1 Programme policy formulation for programme implementation

Hay and Strydom (1999: 389 –407) suggest that it is necessary to reflect on various related criteria and issues during programme policy implementation to ensure that academic efficiency, cost effectiveness and quality are achieved. Ensuring the successful implementation of programme policies, institutions should give serious consideration to the following.

4.5.3.2 The quality of programme management

The ETQA regulations proposed by SAQA prescribe that institutions offering programmes should demonstrate:

- a quality management system with clearly formulated management policies and review mechanisms in place;
- an effective administrative support system for implementing the quality management system;
- provision for the registration of assessment, moderation and evaluation of practitioners (Van Rooyen & Lategan 1998: 10).

4.5.3.3 Sufficient financial, administrative and physical resources

The institutions should provide evidence of the sustainability of these as well as provide evidence of policies and practices in place for learner entry, guidance and a support system for learners.

4.5.3.4 Programme relevance

The FET sector has to answer clearly on the question of how the programme relates to the provision for the educational, social and economic demands of a changing South African society. Other critical criteria to which institutions will have to adhere, are the following:

- providing successful students with a significant advantage in (new) labour markets;
- contributing towards the establishment of a spirit of cultural/political/religious etc. tolerance;
- making FET education and training more accessible to a greater variety of students;
- enabling educationally disadvantaged students to make progress at a feasible rate;
- contributing to the elimination of historically established discrimination on the grounds of race and gender;
- contributing towards the scholarly or scientific pursuit of African themes; and

- providing room for study of or research into problems that are peculiar to the South African context.

4.5.3.5 Programme coherence and content

Programme coherence and content will ensure the culmination of programmes into specified registered qualifications. Within the South African context, FET institutions should also account for the following aspects of programme planning:

- There should be coherence between the content of the programme and the formulated outcomes of the programme.
- The programme should have a clear focus.
- The various components of the programme content should interrelate in a complementary way.
- All relevant disciplines should be represented if the programme is interdisciplinary.
- Interdisciplinarity should be substantive and synergetic in nature.
- Undergraduate programmes should lay a sound basis for postgraduate studies.

4.5.3.6 The value of teaching methods and student supervision

Programme planning should address the heterogeneous needs of students from a variety of social and cultural backgrounds. This should be reflected in teaching strategies and support provided to students (i.e. bridging programmes).

4.5.3.7 Programme effectiveness

This relates to the ability of the FET sector to achieve the desired programme outcomes. In their self assessment FET institutions should use these criteria as points of reference to compare the actual status of the programme at the time of assessment.

4.6 CONCLUSION

The ability of the FET sector to provide needs-driven programmes depends largely upon their capacity to understand their responsibilities and markets as discussed in Chapters 1, 2 and 3. The FET sector also has to succeed in its endeavours to employ the right leaders who are capable of establishing the necessary structures to quality assure their programmes and services, and to establish the appropriate programme planning, development and evaluation structures and processes, as well as to provide products in line with the socio-economic needs of the community and the country in specific niche areas.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapters the vision, mission and objectives together with related processes and procedures for the provision of needs-driven programmes by the FET sector were elucidated. The complexity of the transformation of the FET sector and the responsibilities earmarked for this education and training band have been highlighted. A qualitative and quantitative investigation was deemed imperative to test the opinion of graduates and their employers regarding the training they had received from the FET sector. This investigation attempted to encourage respondents to disclose their own experiences regarding the lack of responsive programmes in the FET sector. The first set of questionnaires was intended to determine the opinions of graduates from a leading Free State FET institution as well as their employers, with regard to their experiences of the quality and relevance of the training and the resulting employability of products of the Free State FET sector.

Quantitative and qualitative research was also undertaken to determine the understanding and readiness of the executive management at delivery sites across the Free State in terms of the challenges facing the FET in the Free State, to provide needs-driven programmes in the region.

In this chapter the following issues are addressed:

- theoretical background on the qualitative and quantitative research methods;
- differences between qualitative and quantitative research;
- a combination of qualitative and quantitative research; and
- theoretical perspectives on qualitative research and findings.

In educational research, empirical enquiry or quantitative research methodology is not able to capture the human element sufficiently (Pring 2000:32). The qualitative researcher's emphasis is on studying human action in its natural setting and through the eyes of the actors themselves. The research was therefore concentrated upon very prominent stakeholders in the providing of needs-driven FET programmes to the community i.e. the graduates, their employers and the executive management of colleges who have the responsibility of managing the process of needs-driven programme development.

5.2 QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

Both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies have their own places in scientific research, although researchers almost always use quantitative research in natural science due to the nature of natural sciences. Either of these approaches may be used in all other sciences such as social sciences, natural sciences and commercial sciences, for instance. It all depends on the approach the researcher wishes to follow, which type of research will be used, and also the type of knowledge the researcher wishes to produce. It can be dangerous to make too sharp a distinction between the different types of research, however. For many years the quantitative research approach was regarded as the only "true" reflection of the truth and the qualitative research as an assault on the search for "truth". Positivists alleged that qualitative researchers write fiction, not science, and that qualitative researchers have no way of verifying their truth statement. Quantitative researchers thus saw their view of research as the only true search for meaning (Denzin & Lincoln 2000:8).

The reason why some quantitative researchers are so negative about qualitative research is because quantitative researchers are seen to have a distinctive view about the nature of our knowledge regarding the physical and the social world. Qualitative researchers on the other hand question the view of the quantitative researchers and often reject quantitative enterprise as 'epistemologically' flawed (Pring 2000:43). The differences are also reflected in the respective language of each approach, and the way in which key

ideas or concepts take on different logical characters. Some of these philosophical concepts link together in logically different ways and take on slightly different meanings. Such words as 'objectivity and subjectivity', 'reality', 'truth' and 'verification', 'knowledge' and 'meaning' are interrelated and defined differently within the two paradigms (Pring 2000:43). Punch (2000:61) agrees that there are differences between quantitative and qualitative research approaches.

The type of study will determine what type of data will be used. It may be all quantitative, all qualitative or it may be a combination of both. The type of data the study consists of should determine primarily what approach should be followed. The researcher should, first of all, concentrate on what he/she is trying to find out and not be limited by the rigid application of a research method.

The following section will describe the differences between qualitative and quantitative research methodologies and also how these methodologies may be combined.

5.2.1 Qualitative research defined

It is very difficult to define qualitative research methodology because of all the different labels and meanings it has gathered throughout the years. There are researchers who prefer the label 'ethnographic research' or a more restrained description such as 'ethno methodology'. A recent description of qualitative research is that of 'naturalistic inquiry' (Crowson 1987:3). In order to obtain a relevant definition of qualitative research for this study, various definitions have been explored.

Qualitative research, according to Winberg (1997:3), is research that produces descriptions of how and why people do certain things. Crowson (1987:3-4) on the other hand finds it difficult to define qualitative research because of the different viewpoints on this research methodology.

To work in the qualitative paradigm is to constantly employ techniques such as data collection, participant observation, the discovery and use of unobtrusive measures, informal interviewing, life history construction, content analysis, and videotaping. After the data is collected, the researcher seeks from the data an understanding of the phenomena observed rather than generalisable knowledge or explanation, prediction, and control (Crowson 1987:3-4).

Denzin and Lincoln (2000:7-8) describe qualitative research as a set of practices, embraced within its own multiple disciplinary histories, constant tensions and contradictions over the project itself, including its methods and interpretations. The field sprawls between and crosscuts the human disciplines, even including, in some cases, the physical sciences. The process of qualitative research puts an emphasis on the qualities of entries and on the process and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured (if measured at all) in terms of quantity, amount, intensity, or frequency. Qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed or nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry. Such researchers emphasise the value-laden nature of inquiry. They seek answers to questions that stress how social experience is created and given meaning.

McMillan and Schumacher (1989:386) narrow the definition down to that of education. They see educational ethnographic (qualitative) research as an analytical description of a social environment and groups which recreate for the reader the “shared beliefs, practices, artifacts, folk knowledge, and behaviours” of those people in an educational activity. They also state that reality is a social construction, in which individuals or groups derive or ascribe meanings to specific entities such as events, persons, or objects. Individuals form constructions in order to make sense of constructions as viewpoints and/or perceptions. Belief systems are thus “constructed realities” of individuals or groups. In other words, the data are, so to speak, the constructions offered by or in the sources; data analysis leads to a reconstruction of the construction. To narrow the definition down, educational qualitative research is a process, a way of studying human life as it relates to education. Data collection strategies are conducive to obtaining

people's perceptions in social settings. The process is inductive which builds abstracts from the particular social constructions (data) that have been gathered.

Babbie and Mouton (2001:53, 270) simplify the description of what qualitative research is. They describe qualitative research as research conducted in a natural setting, attempting to study human action from the insider's perspective (also referred to as the "emic" perspective). For them the goal of research is defined so as to describe and understand rather than to explain and predict human behaviour. The focus of qualitative research is thus rather on the processes involved than on the outcomes. The emphasis, therefore, is on methods such as unstructured interviewing, participant observation and the use of personal documents that place the primary aim on in-depth descriptions and understanding of actions and events. The research process is often inductive in its approach, resulting in the generation of new hypotheses and theories. The qualitative researcher is also seen as the "main instrument" in the research process.

5.2.2 Quantitative research defined

Babbie and Mouton (2001:49) draw our attention to the qualification of constructs in the quantitative research paradigm. The quantitative researcher believes that the best, or only, way of measurement, is that of assigning numbers to the perceived qualities of things. A related topic concerns the central role of variables in describing and analysing human behaviour. This has become known as variable analysis. The central role is afforded to control for sources of error in the research process. The nature of control is either through experimental control (in experimental design) or through statistical controls (in multivariate analysis). We obviously know by now that human behaviour is far too complex to try and explain it in this way.

Punch (2000:4) and McMillan and Schumacher (1989:14) simplify the description of quantitative research as empirical research where the data are in the form of numbers. It is indirect and abstract and treats experiences as similar, adding or multiplying them together, or 'quantifying' them. However, Cherry (2000:41, 77) explains that

quantitative research statistical techniques have been developed so that quantitative methods can be applied using experimental approaches, cross sectional/survey design and time-series design. McMillan and Schumacher (1989:12) describe quantitative research as a hypothetic-deductive approach. It makes deductions from theory and thereafter identifies a hypothesis. The hypothesis is then tested, by means of the data to confirm, reject, or modify the theory.

As described in section 5.3 there are various differences and similarities between the qualitative and quantitative research approaches. The following section focuses on some of these similarities and differences in order to establish a research approach for this study.

5.3 SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

Before describing the similarities and differences between qualitative and quantitative research, it is important to note that it would be inappropriate to conceive research methodology as a single continuum – with conventional quantitative inquiry at one end and the qualitative approach to research (naturalism) at the other end. Crowson (1987:4) makes this statement and also asserts that these two research paradigms have fundamentally different epistemological traditions, although despite these differences, have recently been treated as potentially compatible systems of investigation.

5.3.1 Differences between qualitative and quantitative research

The two types of differences included in this study are firstly those of Blaxter, Hughes and Tight (2001:65), who describe the differences in qualitative and quantitative research in broader terms (*vide* Table 5.1). The second description is taken from McMillan and Schumacher (1989:14-15) who focus on the research process itself.

Table 5.1: The differences between qualitative and quantitative research

| Qualitative paradigms | Quantitative paradigms |
|---|---|
| Concerned with understanding behaviour from actors' own frames | Seek the facts/causes of social phenomena |
| Naturalistic and uncontrolled observations | Obtrusive and controlled measurement |
| Subjective | Objective |
| Close to the data: the 'insider' perspective | Removed from the data: the 'outsider' perspective |
| Grounded, discovery-orientated, exploratory, expansionist, descriptive, inductive | Ungrounded, verification oriented, reductionist, hypothetical-deductive |
| Process-oriented | Outcome-oriented |
| Valid: real, rich, deep data | Reliable: hard and replicable data |
| Ungeneralisable: single case studies | Generalisable: multiple case studies |
| Holistic | Particularistic |
| Assume a dynamic reality | Assume a stable reality |

(Source: Blaxter, Hughes & Tight 2001:65)

The most important distinction between qualitative and quantitative research, according to Blaxter, Hughes and Tight (2001:65), is that qualitative research investigates behaviour in an unstructured way, while quantitative research focuses on facts that cause social phenomena. In the study regarding a framework for needs-driven programmes for the FET sector, both of these approaches were used. Some information gathered consists of facts, while other information consists of respondents' interpretations of events.

McMillan and Schumacher (1989:14-15) also note some distinctions between qualitative and quantitative research within the research process, as discussed below.

5.3.1.1 Assumptions about the world

Quantitative research is usually based on what is called a "logical positivist" philosophy, which assumes there are social facts with a single objective reality, separate from the feelings and beliefs of the individuals. Qualitative research is based more on what is called a "naturalistic-phenomenological" philosophy, which assumes that multiple

realities are socially constructed through individual and collective definitions of the situation.

5.3.1.2 Research purpose

Quantitative research seeks to establish relationships and explain courses of changes in measured social facts. Qualitative research is more concerned with understanding the social phenomenon from the ‘participants’ perspectives. This occurs through the researcher’s participation in the life of those actors in a research role or through historical empathy with participants in past social events.

5.3.1.3 Research methods and process

In quantitative studies there is an established set of procedures and steps that guide the researcher. The quantitative researchers also choose methods as part of a pre-established design before data collection. In qualitative studies, there is greater flexibility in both the methods and the research process. Typically, a qualitative researcher uses an emergent design and makes decisions about the data collection strategies during the study.

5.3.1.4 Prototypical studies

The quantitative researcher employs experimental or correlational designs to reduce error, bias, and extraneous variables. Quantitative research also seeks to control for bias through design, and to take into account subjectivity in data analysis and interpretation. Qualitative research also includes the prototypical study of past events in historical research using analytical research techniques to reconstruct and understand the multiple realities of past events.

5.3.1.5 Role of the researcher

The ideal quantitative researcher is detached from the study to avoid bias. In quantitative research the scholars emphasise the importance of data collected by a skilled, prepared person in contrast to an instrument. Qualitative researchers become “immersed” in the situation, present or past, and the phenomenon being studied, for example, ethnographers assume interactive social roles in which they record observations and interviews with participants in a range of contexts.

Researchers may combine both qualitative and quantitative research methods in a single study, or may use some of the characteristics of one of the methods. This means that the different research paradigms may be used together. Although the two research approaches have various differences, some similarities also exist.

5.3.2 Similarities between qualitative and quantitative research

Just as there are differences between qualitative and quantitative research there are also similarities. Blaxter *et al.* (2001:65) describe some of these similarities.

- While quantitative research may be mostly used for testing theory, it can also be used for exploring an area and generating hypotheses and theories.
- Similarly, qualitative research can be used for testing hypotheses and theories, even though it is mostly used for theory generation.
- Qualitative data often includes quantification (e.g. statements such as more than, less than, most, as well as specific numbers).
- Quantitative approaches (e.g. large-scale surveys) can collect qualitative (non-numeric) data through open-ended questions.
- The underlying philosophical positions are not necessarily as distinct as the stereotypes suggest.

5.4 THE COMBINATION OF QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

The philosophic cornerstone of qualitative methodology is its effort to describe and render understandable the world of subjective experience. In the quantitative methodology, the researcher tries to discover its “truths” or generalisable cause-effect relationship (Denzin & Lincoln 2000:8). When a researcher conducts a qualitative study, for example, and makes use of statistical techniques, he/she is also using quantitative techniques. In such a case the researcher is using the philosophy of one research methodology, in this case that of qualitative research, but employing some techniques of another research philosophy, i.e. quantitative research.

Studies differ from each other. The type of techniques used by the researcher is determined before the start of the study, or is determined as the study progresses. It is important to note that there are fundamental differences between qualitative (phenomenological) and quantitative (positivist) research traditions as Babbie and Mouton (2001:271-273) correctly point out. It is inevitable, though, that a specific study would be more inclined towards a qualitative nature, or more towards a quantitative nature. Blaxter *et al.* (2001:67) agree when they point out that a researcher may use the families, approaches and techniques that represent different dimensions of the research process. The researcher may use alternatives from the different dimensions in combination as appropriate to the study. This may include a particular set of research questions and may focus on specific approaches or techniques, and may concentrate on either a qualitative or a quantitative strategy. The researcher may mix or vary the usage of these techniques. It is up to the researcher, his//her preferences, the resources available, the constraints of the study and the particular issues of the research, as to how he/she will conduct the research.

5.5 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH: SOME THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

When a specific research paradigm is followed, certain principles should be adhered to in order to achieve the goal set by the researcher.

5.5.1 Procedural principles of qualitative research

The procedural principles of qualitative research in higher education are best described by Crowson (1987:10-11). He states that the inquiry in higher education rests upon four key procedural principles, namely that:

- the central research objective is to understand rather to explain, predict, or control;
- true understanding, according to the qualitative approach in higher education, will be achieved if the researcher is the prime instrument of data collection;
- the research process will be conducted with an emphasis upon analytical induction, rather than in a hypothesis-testing sense; and
- the search for understanding is heavily value-laden.

5.5.2 Objectivity and subjectivity

In describing the differences between qualitative and quantitative research Blaxter *et al.* (2001:65) describe qualitative research as subjective, and quantitative research as objective, although this may be an oversimplification. The term 'objective' may briefly be described as doing justice to the subject of study (Babbie & Mouton 2001:274). It is important to note that objectivity is both a procedure and a characteristic of sound research practices. McMillan and Schumacher (1987:10) state that objectivity means, to the layperson, being unbiased, open-minded, and not subjective. As a procedure, objectivity refers to data collection and analysis procedures from which only one meaning or interpretation can be made. Objectivity in qualitative (non-statistical) research means explicitness in the way the data were collected, categorised, reconstructed, and interpreted. Objectivity thus refers to the quality of the data produced by the procedures for collecting and analysing data and not to the researcher's personal

characteristics. The importance of objectivity is broader and pervades the entire research process. Exact descriptions of research procedures allow other researchers to replicate a study. This is done more easily in a controlled laboratory situation with measurements made by machines of high reliability and precision. Although objectivity is important in research, it is more difficult when humans are the subject of research.

5.5.3 Reliability and validity

Babbie and Mouton (2001:276) describe reliability and validity as trustworthiness. They state that the basic issue of trustworthiness is uncomplicated. They ask the question how an inquirer can persuade his or her audience (including him or herself) that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to or worth taking account of. They also explain that a quantitative study cannot be considered valid unless it is reliable, and a qualitative study cannot be called transferable unless it is credible, and it cannot be deemed credible unless it is dependable.

5.5.4 Methods of gathering data

Punch (2000:149) states that the researcher is essentially the main measurement device in a study. Qualitative data collection can be done by means of observations and interviews (*vide* sections 6.3.11 and 6.4.14). In depth individual interviews were used in this research with regard to graduates from the Free State FET sector and also persons who are now employers of the graduates from the FET system. The interviews were conducted to assist the researcher in obtaining more data for this research.

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001:249), face-to-face interviews are the most common method of collecting survey data in national surveys in South Africa. Rather than asking respondents to read questionnaires and enter their own answers, researchers can conduct the interviews themselves or send interviewers to ask the questions orally and then record respondents' answers. The interview (*vide* sections 6.3.11 and 6.4.14) has the explicit purpose of one person obtaining information from another during a

structured conversation based on a prearranged set of questions. The questionnaire to the graduates, their employers and executive management of the Free State FET institutions (*vide* sections 6.3-6.5) were used for this purpose in this research. One of the advantages of a structured interview is that the researcher obtains more relevant information from the respondent during an interview, than with a questionnaire. This was indeed experienced by the researcher.

For this study the researcher took the opportunity of interviewing (*vide* section 6.3.11) graduates from a leading Free State FET institution who have progressed to being employers of the products of this very same system. These employer-graduates of the FET sector were helpful in this research with respect to their own experience, both in the training they personally received and in the position they occupy in being able to judge the system with respect to their being employers of graduates. These interviewed respondents were from the fields of the engineering and hair care programmes.

Another method of collecting data is the questionnaire, which was also used in this study. A questionnaire is not just a form to be completed, nor is it simply a set of questions which have been casually jotted down without much thought. The questionnaire has a job to do: its function is measurement. According to Oppenheim (1992:112), the respondent is required to give a free response, and is not allowed any kind of choice. The questionnaire may also be classified as qualitative and can be very useful in qualitative research. With regard to this research the questionnaire was personally completed by target group respondents and also served as a guiding “agenda” for the interviews which were conducted (*vide* section 6.5).

To design a questionnaire is not a simple exercise. According to the Information Systems Services of Leeds University (Burgess 2001:1) and Oppenheim (1992:7-8) survey designs usually follow the following steps or actions:

- Defining of the research aims.
- Identifying of the population and sample.
- Deciding how to collect replies.

- Designing the questionnaire.
- Running a pilot survey.
- Carrying out the main survey.
- Analysing the data.

The format of a questionnaire is just as important as the nature and wording of the questions asked (Babbie & Mouton 2001:239). Burgess (2001:6) explains that the questionnaire design usually comprises of three elements:

- Determine the questions to be asked.
- Select the question type for each question and specify the wording.
- Design the question sequence and overall questionnaire layout.

The multiple uses of data collection are called triangulation. The use of triangulation, according to Punch (2000:247) is to check the findings of one study against the findings of another. For example, the results of a qualitative investigation might be checked against those of a quantitative study. The aim is generally to enhance the validity of the findings.

The main methods of gathering data in this part of the study were questionnaires and interviews (*vide* appendices A, B and C.) The questions used in these questionnaires were both closed questions and open or free response questions. This implies that a qualitative research approach and questions with quantitative research characteristics were used.

As indicated in the introductory part of this section it is important for the questionnaire to be correctly designed because most problems with questionnaires and their analysis can be traced back to the design phase of the project. Surveys should be properly structured to obtain the information that is required according to the aims of the project. This does not mean the outcome of the research is planned, only the process.

In the design of the questionnaires for this study, certain criteria were considered (*vide* section 5.5.4) and influenced by the advice provided by Babbie and Mouton (2001:239) and Burgess (2001:1-6) (*vide* appendices A, B and C for examples):

- The research aims regarding the survey design determined that three separate questionnaires should be designed: one for the graduate, one for the employer of the graduate and one for executive management at FET institutions in the Free State.
- The target population for the questionnaires were 75 National Diploma and N6 graduates from seven learning fields from a leading FET institution in the Free State. Different levels of graduates were involved, including National Certificate N6 graduates of seven different programmes offered by the institution, and Diploma graduates who has completed their 18 months' practical work experience after having obtained their N6 Certificates. National N3 Certificate hair care students were also involved. The mentioned target population was decided upon because they are regarded as qualified graduates in the FET sector or exit level students.
- The questions asked were based on the extensive literature review on the research topic.
- The type of questions range from open-ended questions for a more qualitative unstructured response from the respondents, to structured questions where more structured answers were needed. For some of the structured answers, the respondents were requested to provide their own interpretation if they wished to do so.
- Explanatory letters accompanied the questionnaires to inform the respondents regarding their involvement and on what was expected from them.

The questionnaire followed a number of steps. The first step was the initial design of the questionnaires, which were then referred to staff members of the involved FET institution. After this step the questionnaires were language edited and sent to the respondents. The only way in which the researcher was able to make contact with possible respondents was to use the address list of the October 2002 Certificate/Diploma Ceremony. This unfortunate limitation with regard to respondents resulted from the total non-existence of a student information tracking system. The previous and merged FET

sector does not have a proper Education Management and Information System (EMIS) to retain students, previously enrolled, at a given time, for a given programme.

5.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter has attempted to describe how the theory on qualitative and quantitative research methods and procedures influenced the researcher's views and choice of research methods and procedures. Chapter 6 describes the administering of the questionnaire and the results derived from it as well as responses from the interviews.

CHAPTER 6
INVESTIGATION INTO
FET PROGRAMMES IN THE FREE STATE

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter an outline and thorough description is provided on the investigation regarding how well the FET sector in the Free State is preparing their students for the world of work and whether sufficient attention is paid to the implementation of needs-driven programmes. In order to achieve this, three questionnaires were designed and sent to three different target groups namely the graduates, employers and executive management members of the twelve FET institutions in the Free State. These questionnaires are attached to the dissertation as Appendices A, B and C. Attempts were also made to verify and supplement the responses from the questionnaires with interviews that were conducted with employers and with graduates from a leading Free State FET institution.

Cognisance should be taken that it was not the intention of the researcher to engage in quantitative analysis of responses but rather to elicit trends and patterns within the Free State region. Therefore the research findings cannot be generalised. The research contributes towards the laying of foundations for future research that needs to be done, as well as informing the relevant stakeholders on the findings of the research.

A description of the following aspects provides the structure for this chapter:

- the sampling and site selection;
- questionnaires and interviews with graduates of a leading Free State FET institution;
- questionnaires and interviews with the employers of graduates of the FET sector in the Free State;
- questionnaires to executive management of the twelve Free State FET institutions;
- limitations of the research; and
- report on research findings.

6.2 SAMPLING AND SITE SELECTION

In qualitative research, sampling is important because, according to Punch (2000:193), not everyone can be studied everywhere doing everything. When choosing a sample for a qualitative study, the researcher should first decide which group of people is going to be studied. Cherry (2000:54) and Babbie and Mouton (2001:287) describe two methods of qualitative sampling. The first is the traditional social-science approach where a representative sample of the population is studied. Second is the phenomenological approach where a sample technique is employed.

Punch (2000:193) describes three types of sampling techniques in qualitative research. He identifies a maximum variation sampling where the researcher would deliberately seek as much variation in the research population as possible. The homogeneous sampling plan would seek to minimise variation, while for convenience sampling, advantage is taken of cases, events and situations of informants that are close at hand. The most important consideration regarding sampling and site selection is that there should be adherence to a clear principle, which is the overall validity of the research design.

6.2.1 Sampling of graduates and employers

The sampling or selection of participants was unfortunately limited to the address list of the October 2002 Certificate/Diploma Ceremony of graduates from a leading Free State FET institution of exit level students. A total of 75 addresses were available, according to the exit level graduate criteria, and these were spread across seven different programmes namely Public Relations, Management Assistant, Financial Management, Educare, Hair Care, Engineering and Hospitality. The questionnaires were mailed to the respondents. Each respondent received a questionnaire, a questionnaire to be completed by his/her employer, and a franked envelope. The respondents were requested to complete the questionnaire, and to request their employers to complete their

questionnaire and to return the completed questionnaire from the graduate and employer in the franked envelope. This arrangement was the only practical way to make contact with employers of graduates without having knowledge of where, and by whom, FET graduates are employed. Questions to the graduates concentrated mainly on the experiences of the graduate with regard to the quality of the training they had received in relation to the expectations of the employer, and in relation to their employability. The questions to the employers were intended to establish the experiences of the employer regarding the quality and relevance of the training of the graduate employed in his/her service or under his/her supervision. These questions were mainly open-ended questions, which attempted to elicit the perceptions and experiences of the employer regarding the student's knowledge, skills and attitude in the workplace. Open-ended questions were asked to allow respondents to record their perspectives and understanding of the research topic.

The response rate for both the graduates and the employers was 29%. Due to this disappointing response, the researcher arranged for personal interviews with graduates and current employers in the Hair Care and Engineering fields of study in order to gather additional information.

6.2.2 Sampling of executive management

The researcher sent a questionnaire to each of the Acting Managers and Campus Rectors of the twelve Free State FET institutions by mail, with franked envelopes. These FET institutions in the Free State include a wide variety of institutions with a history of a so-called disadvantaged, advantaged situation, and with previously segmented Departments of Education resulting from the apartheid dispensation. This sample included institutions from both rural areas and city centres. Seven rectors responded to this request, thus ensuring a 58% response rate.

The questionnaires for the institutional executive management concentrated mainly on the ability of the institutions to manage the implementation of programmes as well as the

planning systems and structures as explained in Section 4.5, to provide needs-driven programmes. Attempts were made to establish whether the executive management of the Free State FET institutions had any knowledge pertaining to the accreditation structures for programmes, and if so, what their knowledge and understanding was of needs-driven FET programmes and of how to achieve this goal.

6.3 QUESTIONNAIRES TO GRADUATES OF A LEADING FREE STATE FET INSTITUTION

With this questionnaire an attempt was made to establish the time lapsed after graduation and before employment was found as well as the graduate's experience in the world of work with regard to the relevance of their training. The questionnaires were sent to 75 graduates from seven different programmes, as previously mentioned in section 6.2.1. In the interest of confidentiality the name of the institution is not mentioned, although it is relevant to mention that this particular FET institution offers the widest range of programmes in South Africa. This relevance pertains to the fact that the research was limited to only one institution because of the lack of any kind of system by which graduates and/or their employers can be traced in the FET system, and thus the only means available was the Diploma/Certificate ceremony list.

Responses were received from graduates from the seven training fields as listed in the tables. The initial response from the 75 graduates was a disappointing 22 (29%) and therefore the researcher arranged for follow-up interviews (*vide* Section 6.3.11) with graduates from the FET sector who are now employers. This was done to supplement the data obtained from graduates and employers through the questionnaires. The responses gathered through the interviews cannot be quantified in terms of a percentage but provided valuable information. The interviewed employers represent experience and knowledge of substantive numbers of graduates over a long period of time. Tables 6.1 to 6.18 reflect the responses to the questionnaires by the respondents.

6.3.1 Programmes and levels of qualification obtained at an FET institution by the graduates

The intention of this question was to determine the training field of the graduate as well as the level of the qualification, to ensure that the responses recorded were in line with the criteria of exit level qualifications. All respondents indicated that they fell within this category of exit level graduates from the FET system. The researcher concentrated only on students who graduated on an exit level. Many students of the FET sector leave the system before the completion of their intended exit level. The researcher was only interested in incorporating information from exit level students to ensure that the entire training of graduates was investigated.

6.3.2 Studies completed in the prescribed period by the graduates

The purpose of this question was to ensure that information would not be incorporated from respondents who had not completed their studies up to the exit level criteria. All the respondents indicated that they had completed their studies within the prescribed period.

6.3.3 Reasons for not completing the studies

Once again the intention was to ensure that information would not be included from respondents who had not completed their studies up to the exit level criteria. None of the respondents indicated that they had not completed their studies as indicated above. The researcher was again assured of the incorporation of information from the correct target respondents.

6.3.4 Duration of time before employment

The researcher was interested in information which could assist with any indication of a very long time lapse before employment. This could lead to a further research on the reasons why the respondents had to wait for long periods before finding employment.

Information on this question could mean that there is no need or too great a supply of graduates in specific learning fields.

Table 6.1: Duration of time before employment

| Learning field | Average months lapsed before employed |
|-----------------------|--|
| Public Relations | 9 |
| Management Assistant | 8 |
| Financial Management | 12 |
| Educare | 24 |
| Hospitality | 6 |
| Hair Care | 3 |
| Engineering | To be discussed in following paragraph |

The responses received on how long it takes to become employed in specific fields of training ranged from immediate employment, for example with the engineering learnership students, to an average of 24 months as in the case of educare students. The motivation received with regard to the engineering learnership students who are immediately employed in comparison with the private students (students who only register for the theory training without the practical training and experience) who battle to become employed, is a definite indication that training where there is a harmony of skills, knowledge and attitudes (for example engineering learnership students and hair care students), is more likely to afford graduates quick employment. In the case of educare students where a relatively long time elapsed before employment, graduates find themselves in an environment where employment is limited. However, self employment in entrepreneurial areas such as becoming day care centre owners or owners of hair salons is a possible option for the strong and confident graduate.

Upon first glance at the table above, one might be tempted to think that the students who waited the longest to be employed after graduation, are the students with the least relevant training, or where there is an oversupply. An over-simplification of this nature is inappropriate because the students are usually not only trained for employment by some one else but also for self employment.

6.3.5 Employment in field of training

The purpose of this question was to determine whether there are differences in the employability of students with different types of training, whether they were employed and if evidence exists that there is a need for other types of training in the world of work. If graduates were overwhelmingly not employed in their fields of training, then there could be a strong possibility that a need for the specific training does not exist. It was important to establish whether there was an over-supply or under-supply of graduates in specific areas.

Table 6.2: Employment in field of study

| FIELD OF STUDY | YES/NO |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Public Relations | 50% YES |
| Management Assistant | 90% YES |
| Financial Management | 90% YES |
| Educare | 100% YES |
| Hospitality | 100% YES |
| Hair Care | 100% YES |
| Engineering | Learnership learners – 100% YES |

The information above received from the 21 out of 75 respondents by means of the questionnaire and two interviews with two experienced students and current employers of FET graduates, reflects to a great extent the criticism (*vide* Section 3.5.1) that the separation of theory and practice in training leads to unemployment. With respect to public relations, 50% of the respondents indicated that they were employed in a field not specifically related to their training, and private engineering students battled to find employment. It seems clear, from the responses received from the programmes where graduates have been trained with knowledge, skills and attitudes on a continuous basis in the specific training environments, that employability for these students is much more probable.

6.3.6 Valuable skills, knowledge and attitudes obtained during training

The purpose of this question was to determine whether the FET sector succeeds in training its graduates with regard to the most needed skills expected by employers as indicated (*vide* Section 3.5.5). Table 6.3 provides a synopsis of the desirable skills the graduates perceived as valuable in their training.

Table 6.3: Most valuable skills and knowledge obtained during training

| LEARNING FIELD | SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE FROM WHICH GRADUATE BENEFITED MOST |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Public Relations | Computer skills Interpersonal skills Self confidence Communication skills |
| Management Assistant | Computer skills Communication skills Interpersonal skills |
| Financial Management | Computer skills Communication skills Specific subject knowledge |
| Educare | Community environment networks Teaching practice Subject specific knowledge Problem solving skills Communication skills Daycare practice |
| Hospitality | Specific subject knowledge |
| Hair care | Skills, knowledge and attitudes were balanced |
| Engineering | Learnership students- skills, knowledge and attitude were balanced |

Although criticism has been expressed (see Section 3.5.1) that FET programmes are outdated and irrelevant, it certainly seems, from the responses of the graduates targeted in the research, that not all training offered by the FET sector is irrelevant. Most of the

graduates highlighted the training in communication skills as one of the most valuable subjects.

Another observation from the opinions reflected by the respondents is that training where the learner is exposed to both the theory and practice through whatever initiatives, leads to more satisfactory experiences for the graduates. This proven experience and reflection from graduates from the FET sector, once again highlights the importance of needs-driven programme delivery where theory and practice are equally provided.

6.3.7 Additional training required for employment

The purpose of this question was to determine the employability of the student, whether the FET sector succeeded in providing relevant training in the respondents' cases and whether the students had to do additional training before they were employed.

Table 6.4: Additional training required for employment

| LEARNING FIELD | YES/NO – OTHER FIELD OF TRAINING |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Public Relations | Enrichment courses |
| Management Assistant | No |
| Financial Management | No |
| Educare | No |
| Hospitality | Enrichment courses |
| Hair Care | Enrichment and product upgrading |
| Engineering | Learnership students – only enrichment and product upgrading |

One is led to believe that although there are students who leave the FET sector and who are fortunate enough to be employed amongst the rising unemployment realities of South Africa, FET programmes are nevertheless regarded as irrelevant and not fit-for-purpose. The experience captured in above table, however, indicates that the FET can offer relevant, fit-for-purpose programmes which train for employability and allow students to adapt well and comfortably in the world of work. The researcher would like to draw the

conclusion that while employers are in general satisfied with the training of the FET sector they must accept that they need to invest in training which pertains to the technical improvement and changes in their specific fields. The FET sector on the other hand must concentrate on research with regard to the quantity and frequency of enrichment courses. If certain enrichment courses are constantly needed in a specific fields, one should draw the conclusion that it may be necessary to include these in the formal programmes to provide needs-driven programmes.

Obviously this findings cannot be generalised as the size of the survey is too small and as only a small number of students of one institution have responded.

6.3.8 Most relevant aspects of training

The purpose of this question was to determine whether graduates were able to identify specific strengths with regard to their training at an FET institution.

Table 6.5: Most relevant aspects of training

| LEARNING FIELD | MOST USEFUL TRAINING |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Public Relations | The variety of themes and subjects offered in their training as well as the content |
| Management Assistant | Computer skills The variety of themes and subjects offered in their training as well as the content |
| Financial Management | The variety of themes and subjects offered in their training as well as the content |
| Educare | Subject combination and content of programmes |
| Hospitality | Relevant combination and content |
| Hair Care | Subject combination and content of programmes |
| Engineering | Learnership students – complete programme combination and multiple opportunity for practice |

Experiences captured in this table reflect complacency and satisfaction from graduates that they received training which prepared them well for their responsibilities in the world of work. The variety of themes and combination of subjects seem to prepare the graduates of the FET sector adequately for employment. From the responses one could derive an idea of the adaptability to and preparedness for the world of work. The exception, however, is again registered with the private engineering students who have not been exposed to any practical experience/ and or training.

6.3.9 Irrelevant aspects of training

This question was intended to establish whether the graduate experienced any part of their training as irrelevant or a waste of time and energy.

Table 6.6: Irrelevant aspects of training

| LEARNING FIELD | IRRELEVANT TRAINING |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Public Relations | None |
| Management Assistant | None |
| Financial Management | None |
| Educare | None |
| Hospitality | Accounting |
| Hair Care | None |
| Engineering | None |

Data captured in this table again underlines the opinion expressed in the previous table, indicating that training by the FET sector is not necessarily outdated and irrelevant. The single respondent who indicated that accounting was not relevant to the training of hospitality practitioners, is certainly fortunate to be in a position where his/her responsibilities do not include this vital aspect of catering and hospitality. Whether or not this respondent retains this view in the future remains to be seen.

6.3.10 Suggestions to the FET institutions for more responsive programmes

The researcher attempted to collect information from the graduates' experiences on what they view to be worthwhile additions to the training provided by the FET sector. Table 6.7 provides a synopsis of suggestions they made.

Table 6.7: Suggestions for improving training

| LEARNING FIELD | SUGGESTIONS FOR TRAINING BY GRADUATE |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Public Relations | Compulsory training on Word, Excel and Powerpoint Concentrate on partnerships for practical training |
| Management Assistant | Labour relations for personal knowledge |
| Financial Management | Practical experience in world of work |
| Educare | Remedial knowledge for children with learning disabilities |
| Hospitality | Flower arranging Guest house management |
| Hair Care | None |
| Engineering | Do not train private learners without having accredited workshops for full practical training |

The inputs received from graduates constitute an example of the influence that students themselves can have in programme development and planning for needs-driven programmes. This exercise indicates how important it is for the FET sector to invest in effective Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) in place as a matter of urgency. This will ensure that institutions can keep track of their students so as to capitalise on their experiences. Without a proper EMIS this will be impossible and the FET institutions will continue to lose this important input. The comments provided by the graduates are realistic and most useful and ought to be considered by all FET institutions. Taking the trouble to tap the experiences of their graduates to provide relevant needs-driven training will surely pay dividends for the future.

6.3.11 Interviews with graduates from FET sector

In-depth interviews were conducted with two graduates from the FET sector in an attempt to increase the opinion base of this stakeholder group with regard to their experiences in the world of work.

6.3.11.1 Interview with hair care graduate

The first interview was conducted with a hair care graduate who currently owns her own hair salon in Bloemfontein. An informal but semi-structured interview with this graduate was conducted, and the responses were captured in writing. The questionnaire for graduates was used as the agenda for the interview.

The graduate reported that she had completed her studies in the prescribed period. She had found employment with another salon owner immediately after her graduation. Approximately three years after her graduation she managed to buy her own hair salon. Hard work and dedication enabled her to build a strong clientele who are very loyal to her and appreciative of her professional services. This graduate reported that the skills, knowledge and attitudes provided during her training were all attributes that were in harmony in assisting her to make a success of her career. She reported that she had not needed any additional training to fit into the world of work, although she occasionally took specific hair product enrichment courses to keep her in touch with the hair products on the market, to the benefit of herself and her clients. With regard to suggestions to the FET sector on how to improve its training and products, the graduate commented that she would in fact like to congratulate the FET sector for having succeeded in preparing her well for the world of work in the personal care industry. She extended her appreciation for the theoretical knowledge which was hands-on, practical training in well-equipped hair salon classrooms which had given her the opportunity to gain practical experience while she was studying. She felt that the desired attitude in the world of work environment had been well inculcated during her training.

6.3.11.2 Interview with engineering graduate

The researcher also conducted an interview with a graduate in the engineering field who had done his theoretical training up to N6 on a part time basis while he was employed as a full time apprentice at Transnet. This was obviously an ideal situation because he received daily practical experiences on the theory he was exposed to and at the same time was fortunate enough to be employed. He expressed his serious concern, however, about the situation where engineering students are enrolled at FET institutions which do not have accredited workshops to provide practical experience, or where students are not employed and so cannot gain essential practical experience. This graduate felt very strongly that the engineering training in these two cases is incomplete and unbalanced. According to him the important practical hands-on experience and the subsequent development of the desired attitude in this field of learning cannot take place because the theory is over-emphasised, without the balance of practice and the development of the desired attitude towards an engineering career.

As a result of his learnership relationship with his employer, this graduate was employed directly after graduation. The employer was by then in a position to have gained experience regarding the strengths of this graduate who in fact continued his working relationship with his employer for many years, eventually progressing into the promotion ranks. The fact that he has been the proud owner of a well-established engineering business for the past five years can be partially ascribed to his training. He extended his appreciation to the FET sector which contributed to his career and personal development and ultimately to the success that he is presently experiencing.

This graduate felt that he did not want to highlight specific attributes of his training because he was of the opinion that all facets of theory and practice were balanced. According to him the theory training at the FET institution complemented his practical experience at work and visa versa.

6.4 QUESTIONNAIRES TO EMPLOYERS OF FET GRADUATES

The questions in the questionnaire to employers concentrated on gathering information on the employability of FET graduates and the relevance of their training and skills. The researcher needed to gather the opinions of employers regarding the appropriateness and relevance of skills, knowledge and attitudes graduates from the FET sector have. Employers are valuable sources of information in testing the employability developed throughout their training and the quality of training offered by the FET institution. Employers completed their questionnaires, which were sent to the graduates of seven different types of programmes of a leading Free State FET institution. These questionnaires were returned, together with the completed questionnaires of the graduates. The response rate was a rather disappointing 29%. Subsequently employers who are knowledgeable about the training and the employability of FET sector graduates were interviewed – this to enhance the validity and reliability of the study. The findings stemming from the questionnaire are discussed in paragraph 6.5. An attempt will be made to reflect responses received from the questionnaires returned by the employers. This questionnaire is attached as Appendix B.

6.4.1 Type of job graduate employed in

The researcher wished to establish whether the employer and the graduate were in agreement regarding the type of work the graduate was doing. The majority of responses were positive in this regard.

6.4.2 Employment within field of study

It was necessary to establish whether the graduate and employer were in agreement that the graduate was employed within his/her field of training. The researcher also wanted to determine whether there was evidence of a need to continue the training or not.

Table 6.8: Employment within field of study

| LEARNING FIELD | YES/NO |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Public Relations | 90% |
| Management Assistant | 90% |
| Financial Management | 90% |
| Educare | 100% Yes |
| Hospitality | 100% Yes |
| Hair Care | 100% Yes |
| Engineering | Learnership learners – 100% Yes |

Employers of FET graduates agreed with the graduates in terms of the responses reflected in the above table, that the FET sector does provide employable graduates where the theory and practice are in harmony.

6.4.3 Required knowledge, skills and attitudes observed in graduates

It was also important to determine whether the employer was satisfied that the graduate had the desired knowledge, skills and attitudes for their specific area of work. If the employer experienced problems, then it was necessary to establish which the specific areas of concern were. The reasoning behind this was that with this input the FET sector could adapt their training to meet the desired skills.

Table 6.9: Required knowledge, skills and attitudes observed in graduates

| LEARNING FIELD | YES/NO |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Public Relations | 90% |
| Management Assistant | 100% - Yes |
| Financial Management | 100% - Yes |
| Educare | 100% - Yes |
| Hospitality | 100% - Yes |
| Hair Care | 100% - Yes |
| Engineering | Learnership learners – 100% Yes |

It is again evident from this research that employers are satisfied with relevant, fit-for-purpose training when none of the skills, knowledge and attitude in the training has been

neglected or over-emphasised at the expense of one of the others. The private students in the engineering field of study seem to be a concern because the theory training is over-emphasised at the expense of the practical experience. The private engineering students who study at FET institutions without accredited workshops with regard to their specific field of study are never placed in a position where they can gain practical experience, and are not employed where they can get experience.

6.4.4 Employers' experiences of basic skills of graduates

The intention of this question was to determine whether employers felt that the basic skills of the graduates were sufficient, and if not, then to consider where the FET could concentrate on improving programmes.

Table 6.10: Employers' experiences of graduates' skills

| LEARNING FIELD | EMPLOYERS' EXPERIENCES OF BASIC SKILLS OF GRADUATE |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Public Relations | Satisfactorily |
| Management Assistant | Good |
| Financial Management | Appropriate |
| Educare | Satisfactorily |
| Hospitality | Good |
| Hair Care | Good |
| Engineering | Acceptable |

All the employers voiced their satisfaction pertaining to the ability of the FET sector to prepare its graduates with the basic skills of reading, writing, the performing of arithmetical and mathematical operations, listening and speaking skills in the specific specialised training fields.

6.4.5 Employers' experiences of graduates' thinking skills

The researcher attempted to gain the experience of the employers with regard to the ability of graduates to think creatively, make decisions, solve problems, visualise, know

how to learn and how to reason and to measure the success of training in relation to these thinking skills.

Table 6.11: Employers' experiences of graduates' thinking skills

| LEARNING FIELD | EMPLOYERS' EXPERIENCES ON THINKING SKILLS OF GRADUATES |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Public Relations | Good |
| Management Assistant | Satisfactorily |
| Financial Management | Appropriate |
| Educare | Sufficient |
| Hospitality | Good |
| Hair Care | Appropriate |
| Engineering | Good |

The opinion of employers regarding the abilities of the FET graduates in terms of thinking creatively, making decisions, solving problems, visualising, knowing how to learn and how to reason, also compliments the training offered by the FET sector. The responses indicated that the employers are, in general, with respect to this limited research, satisfied with the thinking abilities of graduates.

6.4.6 Employers' experiences of graduates' personal qualities

The researcher also wanted to gather the experience of the employers in relation to the ability of the graduates to show responsibility in their specific environments, their integrity, honesty, sociability and soon to form an opinion on the success or lack of ability of the FET sector to assist its graduates in developing personal qualities.

Table 6.12: Employers' experiences of graduates' personal qualities

| LEARNING FIELD | EMPLOYERS' EXPERIENCES ON PERSONAL QUALITIES OF GRADUATES |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Public Relations | Satisfactorily |
| Management Assistant | Good |

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Financial Management | Appropriate for this level |
| Educare | Adequate |
| Hospitality | Good |
| Engineering | Sufficient |
| Hair Care | Appropriate |

The graduates of the FET sector proved to their employers that their personal qualities e.g. displaying responsibility, self confidence, sociability, self management, integrity and honesty are attributes that they could offer to their employers, and it is clear that the employers are very satisfied with these qualities.

6.4.7 Employers' experiences of the graduates' abilities to adapt to resources

The researcher wanted to determine whether the FET sector succeeded in preparing graduates to identify the correct resources for their responsibilities and to organise, plan and to allocate these resources.

Table 6.13: Employers' experiences of graduates' abilities to adapt to resources

| LEARNING FIELD | EMPLOYERS' EXPERIENCES OF THE GRADUATE'S ABILITY TO ADAPT TO RESOURCES |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Public Relations | Sufficient |
| Management Assistant | Good |
| Financial Management | Appropriate |
| Educare | Satisfactorily |
| Hospitality | Adequate |
| Hair Care | Good |
| Engineering | Learnership students – good |

Although practical experience on resources is in many cases very limited and outdated, the researcher gathered from the response in this research that the employers are more than satisfied with the abilities of the FET graduates to identify, organise, plan and allocate resources in their specific environments in the world of work. It is evident from the responses received that the Free State FET sector manages to prepare its graduates to adapt to and manage resources in their world of work.

6.4.8 Employers' experiences of the graduates' system orientation

To complete this study the researcher had to determine whether the employers were satisfied with the way in which the FET graduates succeeded in adapting to various systems in their technical, institutional and social environments. This ability is in general regarded as a very important asset of graduates to adapt well to the world of work.

Table 6.14: Employers' experiences of graduates' systems orientation

| LEARNING FIELD | EMPLOYERS' EXPERIENCES OF GRADUATES' SYSTEMS ORIENTATION |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Public Relations | Fairly good |
| Management Assistant | Good |
| Financial Management | Adequate |
| Educare | Sufficient |
| Hospitality | Acceptable |
| Hair Care | Good |
| Engineering | Acceptable in the cases of Learnership students |

Employers reflect that they do not experience problems with the abilities of the FET graduates in terms of knowing how social, organisational and technological systems work. The graduates prove to be able to operate effectively within these systems.

6.4.9 Employers' experiences of graduates' technological skills

In an era where technological developments are the order of the day, it is expected from graduates to adapt easily to their specific technological environments to be effective and productive assets to their working environments. To be regarded as well adapted employable employees, this skill is highly regarded by employers and therefore the researcher had to seek a response with regard to this aspect from employers.

Table 6.15: Employers' experiences of graduates' technological skills

| LEARNING FIELD | EMPLOYERS' EXPERIENCES OF GRADUATES' TECHNOLOGICAL SKILLS |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Public Relations | Fairly satisfied |
| Management Assistant | Good |
| Financial Management | Sufficient |
| Educare | Acceptable |
| Hospitality | Applicable |
| Hair Care | Appropriate |
| Engineering | Learnership learners – good |

Despite the fact that one of the strongest and probably most deserved criticisms against the training offered by the FET sector as described in Section. 3.5.6 is the failure of the sector to keep up with technological innovations in their training, graduates of the sector still manage to satisfy their employers with regard to their ability to select technology, judge sets of procedures and roles of machines including computers and their programmes, and are able to produce the desired results in their specific environments. This compliment is further understood and enhanced when recalling comments from graduates during interviews that they were trained to innovate and to make something out of nothing by the FET sector.

6.4.10 Employers' experiences of graduate's information processing skills

To be employable, employers expect from graduates to be able to process and interpret information spontaneously. To test whether employers are satisfied with the extent to which graduates are prepared with regard to this important skill, the researcher had to pose this question to employers.

Table 6.16: Employers' experiences of graduates' information processing skills

| LEARNING FIELD | EMPLOYERS' EXPERIENCES OF GRADUATES' INFORMATION PROCESSING SKILLS |
|-----------------------|---|
|-----------------------|---|

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Public Relations | Good |
| Management Assistant | Satisfactorily |
| Financial Management | Acceptable |
| Educare | Applicable |
| Hospitality | Good |
| Hair Care | Appropriate |
| Engineering | Learnership learners – good |

Once again it is clear that employers show appreciation for the ability of the FET sector graduates in terms of their information processing skills. This factor had, however, been evident at all stages of this research, and did not just surface as a result of the questionnaire.

6.4.11 Most outstanding skills, knowledge and attitudes pertaining to the performance of graduates

The researcher wanted to gain knowledge from the employers on which skills the FET sector managed to establish to serve as outstanding assets in the work of work with regard to the graduates of the FET sector. This knowledge is valuable for the FET sector to maintain and uphold as strengths in their training strategies.

Table 6.17: Most outstanding skills, knowledge and attitudes of graduates

| LEARNING FIELD | SKILLS | KNOWLEDGE | ATTITUDES |
|-----------------------------|---|---|--|
| Public Relations | Computer skills Communication | Job-specific knowledge | Positive attitude |
| Management Assistant | Computer skills General office routine Typing skills | Job-specific knowledge Organising and manage diaries | Positive attitude Adapt easily for challenges |
| Educare | Learning techniques Patience Understanding | Subject knowledge | Confidence Positive attitude |
| Hospitality | Nothing reported | Nothing reported | Positive attitude |
| Hair care | Applied skills | Subject knowledge | Positive attitude |

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|--------------------------|--|
| Engineering | Applied skills (Learnership stud.) | Subject knowledge | Positive attitude (Learnership stud.) |
| Financial Management | Computer skills Office administration skills | Subject knowledge | Positive attitude |

Once again the employers voiced their satisfaction with various aspects of training pertaining to the knowledge, skills and attitudes of FET graduates. The above table highlights once again the contentment of employers.

In general one can derive from the above table that the FET sector succeeds in preparing graduates to maintain themselves with regard to their computer literacy and application skills as well as their specific applied skills in their environments.

With regard to relevant knowledge, the employers registered the FET graduates' knowledge in relation to their specific subject fields and operational areas.

The attitudes of the FET graduates are in general experienced by employers as very positive, confident and keen to make a difference and to contribute productively in their specific employed environments.

6.4.12 Weaknesses experienced by employers with regard to skills, knowledge and attitudes

Although it sounds too good to be true, none of the employer respondents reported any weakness with regard to the graduates from the FET sector employed by them. If this is really the situation, the researcher does not have much of an option but to regard this as a compliment to the FET sector.

6.4.13 Suggestions to the FET sector on how to improve the employability of students

None of the respondents attempted to make any suggestions in relation to the improvement of the employability of the FET sector graduates. From this response the researcher had no choice but to come to the conclusion that the employers are satisfied with regard to their specific experiences in relation to the FET graduates employed by them.

6.4.14 Interviews with employers of graduates

The researcher arranged for interviews with employers of FET graduates in the hair care field of training and the engineering field of training, to support the responses received from the employers by means of the questionnaires. The researcher used the questionnaire to the employers as the agenda for the informal interviews. The researcher captured the responses cryptically in writing while the employers responded to the questions.

6.4.14.1 Interview with hair care employer

This hair care employer, who has many years of experience of learnership students, was of the opinion that the knowledge, skills and attitudes of the hair care graduates from the FET sector were cause for great satisfaction. She was confident that the FET sector succeeded in providing hair care students with appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes. Graduates never needed to be trained additionally to fit in with the world of work, and were only sent to enrichment courses on specific products in the hair industry. The opinion of the employer was that the close contact the FET institutions kept with the old Hair Care Trade Industry Board, now the Services SETA, contributed largely to the hands-on training with a balance between knowledge, practice and desired attitudes.

The interviewed employer with regard to the hair care graduates expressed her reluctance to highlight specific attributes or shortcomings, or to provide specific suggestions on how to improve the training of FET graduates because she regarded the training of these graduates as very balanced and most appropriate for employability in the world of work.

6.4.14.2 Interview with employer from the engineering field of learning

The employer from the engineering field of study had 20 years' experience as supervisor in Transnet over graduates from the FET sector and five years' experience as owner of an engineering business, employing graduates from the FET sector regularly.

According to this employer, both from his experiences as supervisor and as an employer, students who had learnership contracts with employers and who graduate from the FET sector, do not have problems with regard to their knowledge, practical experience and attitudes in the world of work. This employer was of the opinion that the knowledge, practical experience and attitudes of the learnership graduates of the FET sector are in general in harmony with one another and that not one of the three mentioned is over-emphasised. The employer was very concerned about training given to so-called "private students" by the FET sector who receive only the theory but are never in a position to get the practical experience or to develop the desired attitudes for the world of work through learnership contracts with employers or in accredited workshops at the FET institutions.

This concern of the employer typifies the situation where employers are hesitant to employ "theory" graduates, and often do not employ these graduates at all because of their incomplete training with regard to the essential practical experience and the desired attitudes that need to be developed in harmony with the knowledge and the skills.

The employer conveyed his appreciation to the FET institutions who train their students adequately, in partnership with practice, by means of learnership contracts with employers or well-equipped accredited workshops where the graduates are placed in a position to receive balanced training.

The interviewed employer issued a warning to the FET sector with regard to the training of “private” engineering students without practical experience of any kind. Such students lack essential experience and attitudes, and the employer felt that these students were in general doomed to unemployment and personal frustration.

6.5 QUESTIONNAIRES TO THE EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT OF FET INSTITUTIONS IN THE FREE STATE

The aim of this questionnaire was to determine whether the FET institutions in the Free State had programme development and programme management processes and structures in place, and if these institutions had sufficient knowledge of how to plan, manage and quality assure programme development towards needs-driven programmes. In Table 6.18 a synopsis is provided to indicate the responses received.

Table 6.18: Existing programme development and management processes and structures within the FET sector

| PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT PROCESSES AND STRUCTURES | YES % | NO % | RESPONSES FORM OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS |
|--|--------------|-------------|---|
| 1. Does your institution have an official programme manager or process of managing academic programmes? | 34 | 66 | The existence of Academic Boards responsible for this task was reported. |
| 2. If yes, what are the main duties of this person or structure? | 34 | 66 | 34% of respondents reported that typical programme management and development structures were in place. No respondent indicated typical duties of this important structure/persons. No evidence was provided that respondents understood the duties of this structure/person. |
| 3. Who determines what academic programmes should be offered? Is market research done? | | | Most respondents reported that the management and staff decide upon new programmes. |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| | | | Limited market research is reported by 50% of respondents. No scientific basis for decision making on programmes were reported. |
| 4. How often do you reconsider and review your programmes? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0-6 months • 6-12 months • 12-18 months • 2 years • not indicated | | 0 33 16 16 35 | Although respondents made their choices with regard to those provided no respondent indicated specific rationale or procedures determining the consideration of programmes. Only a drop in students enrolments was indicated as a basis for reconsideration of programmes. |
| 5. How does your institution decide which programmes must be terminated? | | | As soon as student registration numbers drop – management decides that there is no longer a demand for specific programmes. |
| 6. Which of the following role players are approached to evaluate the responsiveness of your programmes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students • Lecturers • Employers • Department of Education • Umalusi • SETAs • Other (specify) | 33 33 33 0 0 33 | 67 67 67 100 100 67 | Although respondents indicated yes to the involvement of these role players not a single response indicated how it was done or how often, and no one motivated their response with other comments which could be helpful to determine the effectiveness of the process. |
| 7. Are your programmes registered with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAQA/NQF • SETAs (ETQAs) • Department of Education • Professional bodies (ETQAs) • Foreign institutions or bodies • Other (specify) | 50 33 67 0 0 | 50 67 33 100 100 | Although the respondents, as in the previous question, responded positively to the involvement of the listed quality assurance bodies – no response was qualified or motivated by how or when, or in fact any other comments. A single respondent indicated their registration at the Institute for Administration and Commerce. |
| 8. Which type of staff development opportunities is required to ensure needs-driven programmes? | | | Most respondents did not answer this question. The following two suggestions were received from two different respondents: Establishing of partnerships and the upgrading of specialist knowledge. |
| 9. Does your institution have the following programme operating systems in place? (motivate) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective programme | 33 | 67 | Although respondents were positive in some cases that their specific FET institution have a form of the listed operating systems in place, no qualification or motivation of their |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> management • Sufficient human resource management towards quality and relevant programmes delivery • Sufficient financial resource management to provide quality and relevant programmes • Sufficient physical resources management to support quality and relevant programmes • Effective programme marketing systems • Are your programmes coherent and do they have articulation possibilities? • Do you participate in programme accreditation and registration procedures? • Sufficient and relevant quality learning materials and study guides? • Effective learning facilitation by well trained lecturers and tutors? • Well formulated assessment and moderation system and procedures? (motivate) • Effective learner support systems? | <p>17</p> <p>17</p> <p>17</p> <p>50</p> <p>50</p> <p>17</p> <p>17</p> <p>66</p> <p>33</p> <p>50</p> | <p>83</p> <p>83</p> <p>83</p> <p>50</p> <p>50</p> <p>83</p> <p>83</p> <p>34</p> <p>67</p> <p>50</p> | <p>understanding of how these systems relate to programme development and how effective their systems are, was received.</p> <p>Faculties were indicated – not qualified or motivated.</p> |
| <p>10. Does your institution have regular surveys regarding the following role players in testing the employability of your graduates? (How regularly?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student surveys • Employer surveys • SETA surveys | <p>34</p> | <p>100</p> <p>66</p> <p>100</p> | <p>Although positive response was received with regard to employer surveys, no qualification or motivation was given on this question.</p> |

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| 11. Define needs-driven programmes | | | Needs should be identified by commerce and industry. It could be defined as practical training and entrepreneurial training. Needs-driven are primarily related to all the needs of learners and should not be based only employable training. |
|---|--|--|--|

From the above responses, it seems clear that the FET institutions in the Free State in general do not have programme planning structures in place to research the needs, or to plan and develop needs-driven programmes and structure with which to evaluate and monitor programmes. Programmes to be offered at Free State FET institutions are in general determined upon a non-scientific basis, without sound research and gathering of information from the most important role players. No determination is made as to whether there is a need, or whether job opportunities exist. The academic board, as indicated by one of the institutions as their structure for programme planning and development, is, in the opinion of the researcher, a monitoring body for this function, and not the structure to execute all these above mentioned responsibilities.

One can also derive from the above table that the majority of FET institutions in the Free State currently fail to register their programmes at the relevant external quality assurance bodies, never mind foreign institutions or world class leaders for global competitiveness. One can only express one's concern with regard to this failure with reference to relevant accreditation. Institutions, provincial and national FET structures need to be warned urgently to attend to these imperatives to make sure that the FET sector gathers the trust to become and to remain a leader in skills training in South Africa.

It is also alarming to derive from the responses received that very little attention is being given to sound human resources structures, financial resources management, physical resources management, effective programme marketing and networking systems, relevant, up-to-date learning materials, well-formulated assessment and moderation systems and effective learner support, in order to provide needs-driven programmes in the Free State FET sector.

The lack of knowledge and capacity of executive management of Free State FET institution to define needs-driven programmes requires urgent attention. Without this vision the transformation of a vital education and training sector such as the FET will never succeed.

6.6 LIMITATIONS OF THIS RESEARCH

An obvious limitation to this part of the research was the inability of the researcher to have access to larger samples and evenly spread numbers of graduates with their employers and programmes to focus the study on. As previously mentioned the only means of contacting respondents was the address list of the last Certificate/Diploma Ceremony of the largest FET institution in the Free State.

Another limitation was the low response rate from respondents. It is of course possible that many of the questionnaires did not reach the graduates because the addresses available were their address while they were students at the FET institution and possibly not relevant anymore.

Another limitation in terms of the reluctance of the graduates to respond may be the ever-increasing high unemployment rate in the country. Students may simply have felt, as has been indicated by graduates, that they cannot complete the questionnaire because they are still unemployed.

6.7 SUMMARY AND MAIN RESEARCH FINDINGS

Before discussing the research findings it is important to note that there is, according to Babbie and Mouton (2001:490), no single neat and tidy data analysis approach to qualitative data analysis, nor even one approach to each specific type of qualitative data analysis. Punch (2000:199) states that there are a variety of techniques because there are different questions to be addressed and different versions of social reality that can be

elaborated upon. The different techniques are often interconnected, overlapping and complementary, and sometimes mutually exclusive, as in the case with this research.

A key question in assessing a piece of research is: how did the researcher get to these conclusions from these data? The last step of data analysis is that of concluding or drawing conclusions from the data (Crowson 1987:43; Punch 2000:203). Crowson (1987:43) describes the qualitative researcher as a solid technician that has to be sceptic and must perform as a creative intellectual craftsman, flexible, aware, innovative and responsive.

The researcher tried to draw conclusions from the data received through the questionnaires and interviews in an innovative manner, and responsive to the research objectives outlined in Chapter 1.

6.7.1 Research findings on graduate questionnaires and interviews

One can derive from the experiences of the graduates relating to their employability and to the relevance of their training, that they do not experience problems with regard to these aspects and that, as has been reported in this research, they are comfortable in their specific employment environments. One can deduce therefore that graduates regard themselves as employable with adequate, relevant training as received by the FET sector.

6.7.2 Research findings on employer questionnaires and interviews

The employers who offered their opinion regarding this research are satisfied that the FET sector has provided them with graduates who are capable in their specific employment environments, and who are equipped with relevant and adequate training in terms of the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed by the employers.

The need for multiple skills as prioritised by employers according to the research undertaken by Alt (2003) (*vide* Section 3.5.5) that need to be offered by employable

graduates has been tested in this research. The employers are confident that their employees from the FET sector have mastered the necessary competencies.

6.7.3 Research findings on executive management questionnaire

It is evident from the responses received to this questionnaire that the Free State FET sector does not have strong programme planning and development structures in place with the typical functions and responsibilities of such structures as explained in paragraphs 4.2, 4.3 and 4.5.

Another alarming finding is that no scientifically based research has been done to determine the needs of a region to be served by the FET institution. In the responses received, only a single FET institution in the Free State reported doing limited research towards needs-driven programme delivery.

As far as programme reviewing is concerned, the respondents of the FET institutions in the Free State indicated that they usually consider the termination of programmes when the student registration numbers drop, and did not indicate that any programme reviewing processes as described in Section 4.5 are in place.

Another observation was the lack of accreditation and registration of programmes by professional bodies, SETAs and international training leaders, which results also in a lack of knowledge about what is needed nationally and internationally in the specific training fields. Together with this concern is the lack of any structured verification of programmes taking place with important role players such as the employers, students, and or any other concerned stakeholders in the specific fields of training.

The response from the executive management also indicates that the institutional leaders of the Free State FET sector have little knowledge of what training, and/or retraining their staff needs in order to be important role players in the provision of needs-driven programmes in the Free State FET sector. The importance of being knowledgeable about

the transformed educational structures and processes does not seem to be a priority amongst these respondents.

Not only do the Free State FET institutions lack sound programme planning and development structures, but they also need to establish sound policies, procedures and structures to support needs-driven programme delivery, together with rigorous human resource management, financial resource management, physical resource management, quality assurance structures and student support systems if they wish to survive with any credibility.

Knowledge of or even awareness of the importance of quality management and the structures involved with the FET sector towards quality delivery of needs-driven programmes as described in paragraphs 4.2.2.8- 4.2.2.10 was not reported at any stage.

Although learner support services were reported to be in place at some FET institutions, no mention was made of the important duties as listed in paragraph 4.2.2.7. Neither was mention made of the importance of establishing an RPL centre as described in paragraph 4.4, or the importance of guiding students towards the concept of life-long learning and the processes and structures in place in the transformed South African education arena to make the concept of life-long learning a reality.

6.8 CONCLUSION

The researcher's final conclusion from this research is that the FET sector has programmes available which are in general relevant and employable needs-driven programmes. The formal registered programmes of technical colleges, which are still in demand, need to be rewritten in unit standards (because of the portability of unit standards) to address the subject specific upgrading according to the latest technology.

The most important criticism derived from this research is not in terms of relevance or short-comings of the current programmes offered, but mainly the alarming lack of

diversity and the narrow range of programmes offered by the FET sector as also indicated in section 3.5.2 of this research. It appears that some programmes offered by the FET sector as reflected in the response tables above, offer high employability and provide satisfaction to the employers. The main problem that seems clear from above observation is that the FET sector does not yet understand or address the economic, social and political needs of the country and its specific regions with the delivery of needs-driven FET programmes. In the endeavours of the FET sector to address the social, economic and political needs of South Africa in the specific regions, the leadership of the FET and the executive structures need to acquaint themselves with the vision of this sector and they need to learn how to analyse the economical and social realities within South Africa's democratic political context, as well as to network towards solutions for these challenges. These challenges include a much wider economic and social spectrum of needs to be addressed, with a much wider spectrum of target markets to be taken into consideration.

The only other major problem derived from the research, which inhibits quality and needs-driven programme delivery by the FET sector, is the over-emphasising of theory in some programmes without the practical skills training which also includes the shaping of attitudes. In the remaining chapter, recommendations are made on how the FET sector can make progress in delivering needs-driven programmes.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

As indicated in Chapter 1 (see par.1.2) the main research aim of this study was to develop a framework for FET institutions that could assist them to become needs-driven institutions. In this chapter this aim is achieved by (1) highlighting the main findings of this research and (2) to provide a framework by means of recommendations that could assist FET institutions to ensure needs-driven programmes.

7.2 MAIN FINDINGS OF RESEARCH

With regard to the legislation and policies in terms of the “ideal” FET sector for South Africa, one can congratulate the government of the day for having succeeded in establishing a clear vision and mission for the needs of our country which must be served by the FET sector. However, the current lack of policy implementation is detrimental to the entire system and hampering the idea of responsive, needs-driven programmes.

The enormous load of responsibilities that has been placed on the shoulders of the FET sector is complex and diverse. Despite all the attempts made by politicians, Departments of Education and a few of the institutions, one nevertheless fails to see the progress envisaged by the government with regard to this sector. Much more needs to be done in various fields to make progress within this enormous transformation picture.

From the start the envisaged time frames for the transformation of the FET were over optimistic and the realities regarding the implementation of the legislation and subsequent policies were never understood. Some of the most important structures, e.g. sound and supporting provincial offices for the FET, management structures for the institutions and vigorous financial support and investment into the sector have not yet

been put in place. One would like to offer the opinion that the government should immediately re-strategise and prioritise with regard to this very important transformation and put their money where their mouth is for the benefit of the social and economic growth of South Africa. If the national, provincial and institutional management of the FET sector does not succeed urgently in implementing the transformation, too many disadvantaged citizens of South Africa, who depends on this sector, will forfeit the opportunity of training and development, and therefore also the satisfaction of gaining in self-worth and training in order to be able just to earn a living.

Another alarming factor is causing to a great extent the implementation paralysis of the FET legislation is the dragging of feet in the realisation of the skills development legislation. The proper implementation of this legislation could to a great extent support and assist the transformation of the FET. As long as role players and structures with regard to the skills development legislation such as the SETAs, are not completely functional, and national, provincial and institutional FET management fails to take hands and to realign themselves with structures and procedures, another dream of the delivery of needs-driven programmes will not materialise: opportunities for too many South Africans will be jeopardised.

Important networks need to be established urgently to provide clear guidance on how all the important stakeholders, the FET structures, Department of Labour, the industry and so on, will join hands to make progress in this vast transformation process to the social and economic benefit of South Africa. If/when the FET sector succeeds in networking effectively with all the important stakeholders to gather information on the provision of programmes that are needed according to the diversity of the region, employability will become a reality.

Greater strides in terms of progress will be made if more is done to capacitate the people, from management to operational levels, to understand the challenges and the work to be done by the FET sector, to allow the sector to move forward. It is clear from the responses from the executive management of FET institutions (*vide* section 6.5), that

most of them do not have solutions on how to improve or even implement needs-driven programme delivery at their institutions.

A few specific recommendations towards progress in transforming the FET sector to provide needs-driven programmes are now offered.

7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE DELIVERY OF NEEDS-DRIVEN PROGRAMMES

The following specific initiatives are imperative for progress in the implementation of needs-driven programmes for the FET sector. These recommendations are based on both the literature review and responses from the empirical investigation.

7.3.1 The influence of demographic and social trends on programme design and development

For any FET institution that strives to serve the needs of its region with needs-driven programmes, it is imperative to be well informed about the demographic and social trends nationally and provincially (*vide* section 2.5). The national, together with the provincial demographic and social realities, will assist the decision-makers of the FET institution to strategise properly towards needs-driven programmes for the region (*vide* section 2.5). The institutional programme planning and development team must take seriously notice of national and provincial census reports as well as social statistics, if they want to deliver relevant programmes to address the economical and social needs of their region (see Chapter 2).

Social statistics with regard to unemployment, illiteracy, target markets for social upliftment projects, realities pertaining to HIV/Aids and much more information on this frontier needs to be considered to broaden the scope also of social programme delivery by the FET sector.

The following are only examples of national and regional demographic realities, which could sensitise and assist the programme planning and development team of an institution to further investigate the realities with regard to their provincial and regional situation.

- Knowledge of national realities such as the population growth in terms of stabilisation or decline, especially a decline in the school-age population (see section 2.5), can assist with long term strategy in relation to facilities and a possible redirection of needs-driven programme provision towards the provision of the youth or adult needs.
- Another example of the importance of national and provincial demographics is the reality of urbanisation which must also be dealt with for proper strategising towards needs-driven programmes in the FET sector.
- School survival rates and high repetition rates mean more students who, in the short term, will be available for the FET sector and who must be catered for with needs-driven programmes.
- Another very important demographic reality for the FET is the continuing efficiencies/inefficiencies in secondary schooling. The Report on the NCFE (1997:27) who provides an opportunity for the FET sector to assist the Grade 12 school leavers to improve their Grade 12 results to enable them to enter the Higher Education sector.

Another important resource available to the FET sector to plan in line with the provincial realities and needs in terms of demographics, is the provincial Labour Market Situational Analysis available from the HSRC.

Helpful information which can assist any planning team towards a future in the FET sector may be information pertaining to provincial or regional population figures, with specific interest in the age distribution, employment figures, unemployment figures, the educational profile with specific reference to levels of education e.g. Higher Education, Secondary School Training, Completed Primary, Some Primary Training, no training etc. as indicated in the Free State: Labour Market Analysis (HSRC 2000:2-7). Any regional

figures available on employment and unemployment, together with the age breakdowns, may be very directive in a broader vision of needs provision.

7.3.2 Suggestions for Government

Government must first of all be willing to accept certain responsibilities to make the FET a dynamic reality and have commitment to do so.

7.3.2.1 Financial aid must recognise a specific training need

Government must rely on the communication structures and advisors to inform it on priorities of training for the country. It should try to provide specific funds toward capital investment and bursaries for training in specific training fields which are desperately needed in the country (*vide* section 3.3.5). Currently the government is implementing legislation adopted from a rich, first world country, namely the U.K without keeping in mind the realities of not having the abundant funds to make this legislation fit in a less rich third-world, developing country, namely South Africa.

7.3.2.2 Tax incentives for industry/education partnerships

Government should consider tax incentives to increase the attractiveness of industry donations to institutions of training. Government itself must consider specific budgeting for funding to training institutions where high capital investment is needed to keep up with the technological and scientific developments to ensure that training remains relevant and responsive.

7.3.2.3 Secondary School reform

Expand the pool of skills training needs: Curriculum issues in schools, particularly in Mathematics, Science and Entrepreneurship, are areas where governmental attention is

needed. Government at all levels must address this issue to prepare learners better for needs-driven training towards the economic development of the country.

7.3.3 Industry initiatives

If the industry wants to bear the fruit of training in their specific needs, it must be prepared to participate in the cycle of training. Industry can make contributions in the following ways to become active partners in the cycle of needs training as described in the following paragraphs:

7.3.3.1 Balanced funding

Industry must budget more aggressively to assist candidates with bursaries on all levels of training, not only university students, but also the students in the FET sector. Each level of students has a different role to fulfill in industry and all are needed.

7.3.3.2 Partnerships to address specific learning

At the FET sector and private training level, industry needs to continue developing partnerships that address industry-specific and regional training needs. In South Africa the involvement in learnerships according to the relevant labour legislation provides an excellent opportunity for all to become involved in partnerships.

7.3.3.3 Better articulation of industry

To reform course offerings, the business community needs to articulate broader industry needs more effectively. Regional alliances and professional associates will help individual companies focus on long-term needs that are relevant throughout industry. The provincial economic planning desks, sectoral bodies with sectoral plans e.g. SETAs, can contribute towards this endeavour. Corporates, leading industries and leading

professional bodies in learning fields can make a big difference with regard to this recommendation.

7.3.3.4 Sharing product information with training institutions

To help institutions provide more relevant, up-to-date training, up-to-date product information must be made available to institutions while still protecting intellectual property rights.

7.3.3.5 Corporate donations

Business can help institutions to remain up-to-date through investing in updating and upgrading facilities and providing relevant training to lecturing staff.

7.3.3.6 Company policies to facilitate collaboration

In developing collaborative relationships, companies should establish clear expectations and make accommodations for their employees who are asked to provide training and coordinate activities with training institutions. If company leaders do not set specific goals for such collaboration, the initiatives will probably die from neglect because they are forced to compete with priorities more urgent to the company's core business.

7.3.4 FET initiatives to deliver needs-driven programmes

The FET sector could improve its responsiveness to industry by demonstrating more speed and flexibility in curriculum development and review. With regard to this, the National Directorate has to assist as mentioned earlier, to lift any restrictive funding or other measures, and in fact should try to accommodate institutions that succeed with proven responsive training through funding and incentives.

The following aspects must be considered if FET institutions want to train responsively according to the needs of industry.

7.3.4.1 Revising curricula more often

The FET sector and/or institutions must do everything possible to improve their responsiveness to what is needed by industry and must develop methods and processes to integrate industry input into course offerings as soon as possible. The FET sector must seriously address the red tape problems from national to provincial, right through to institutional level, to get rid of practices of any kind that prevent institutions from adapting their curricula to needs-driven programmes. The SAQA-NQF structures and the delays they provide with regard to the registration of unit standards is a typical example and must be addressed in serious terms.

7.3.4.2 Flexible delivery modes

FET institutions must be flexible to meet the needs of students/workers who are unable to spend substantial portions of their days on campus. That means offering more courses over the Internet or via any alternative delivery method that will suit the needs of students.

7.3.4.3 Articulation among training institutions

Better articulation among training institutions through the different levels of training like the General Education, Further Education and Training and Higher Education bands needs to be incorporated. Students' time, money and effort should not be wasted in repetition and should be accommodated and respected through the hierarchy of training bands to motivate students towards life-long learning and development in general.

7.3.4.4 Local and national industry input

The FET sector cannot make these curriculum changes in a vacuum. Every FET institution should seek to establish a local alliance to gain meaningful input on how to make course offerings more relevant and up-to-date. The FET sector must also work closely with industry through national organisations such as the SETAs and professional bodies on national level to get the big picture of labour and training needs in order to plan pro-actively towards needs-driven programmes.

7.3.4.5 Attitude shift

Some sectors of FET need an attitude shift. They must acknowledge that “real world” problems are worthy of intellectual effort and avoid the attitude that “the problems of industry have already been solved in theory in the classroom”. To accomplish this shift, industry and the training sector must engage in ongoing dialogue to see that training institutions have a better sense of the skills that are needed in the world of work.

As a final remark on responsiveness, it would be appropriate to stress that responsiveness can only be achieved with close co-operation among all stakeholders and to achieve that is a difficult but imperative challenge which has to be overcome. Constant communication and interaction towards this goal has to be developed to get all stakeholders to accept their responsibilities spontaneously, to make this great endeavor work.

7.3.4.6 Programme planning and development structures

FET institutions must urgently establish programme planning, development and evaluation units as described in paragraph 4.5 to provide needs-driven programmes in a pro-active, structured manner.

7.3.4.7 Staff development

To meet the needs of the transformed education environment in South Africa and to be able to be part of the provision of needs-driven programmes, the leaders in the FET sector must invest more in the development of staff to re-align with the new paradigms and challenges provided by the transformed education arena in South Africa. It is important to recognise the different roles facilitators and lecturers have to fulfil in vocational training, for example the challenge of succeeding in becoming facilitators in the outcomes based education and training paradigm. Assessment, moderation and verification responsibilities as prescribed in the OBE approach must also be considered, and a further challenge for lecturers is the ability to network with various role players to be able to keep up with the latest trends in specialist learning fields. It could also be required of them to assist with research responsibilities regarding needs-driven programme delivery.

7.4 CONCLUSION

In general much has been said about the transformation of this crucial education and training sector in South Africa in this study. The sooner all stakeholders accept their responsibilities and align themselves in proper structures and by doing what is needed to be done, South Africa can look forward to an FET sector which can make a big difference to the social and economic development of this country.

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SUMMARY

This research concentrates on the establishment of guidelines in various fields to provide needs driven programmes.

The vision, mission and target markets of a transformed Further Education and Training sector (FET) were highlighted.

Furthermore this research concentrated on the role the FET sector can play in addressing the social and economic needs of the institutions specific regions. With regard to this function of the FET sector, practical ways to make contact with stakeholders, responsive programmes, rural development and issues relating to the needs of regions have been discussed.

An important focus for this research was to provide practical models on the research and management of curriculum for needs driven programmes.

The different types of providers, accreditation, quality assurance and the training of different types of skills have been addressed in detail.

Education and skills development legislation were discussed with respect to their contribution and involvement in the transformation of the FET sector in South Africa.

OPSOMMING

Hierdie navorsing konsentreer op die ontwikkeling van riglyne in verskillende rigtings om programme volgens behoefte te voorsien.

Die visie, misie en spesifieke markte van 'n getransformeerde Verdere Onderwys en Opleiding sector (VOO) word uitgelig.

Verder konsentreer hierdie navorsing op die rol wat die VOO sektor kan speel in die hantering van die sosiale en ekonomiese behoeftes in die instansies se omgewings. Met verwysing na hierdie belangrike rol van die VOO sektor, word spesifiek verwys na die praktiese maniere hoe om kontak te maak met rolspelers, lewensvatbare programme, plattelandse ontwikkeling en sake wat verband hou met die omgewingsbehoefte.

'n Belangrike fokus van hierdie navorsing was om praktiese modelle te voorsien ten opsigte van die navorsing en bestuur van kurrikulum vir behoefte-aangedrewe programme.

Die verskillende tipes opleidingsvoorsieners, akkreditasie, kwaliteitsversekering en die opleiding van verskillende tipes vaardighede word in besonderheid bespreek.

Opleiding- en vaardigheidsontwikkeling-wetgewing word in verband gebring met die bydrae en betrokkenheid van die transformasie van die VOO sektor in Suid-Afrika.