



higher education & training

Department:
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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

NATIONAL POLICY FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGES

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
AET	Adult Education and Training
CLC	Community Learning Centre
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DoE	Department of Education
DoL	Department of Labour
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ETDP	Education Training and Development Practices
FET	Further Education and Training
FETC	Further Education and Training Colleges
HET	Higher Education and Training
HRD	Human Resources Development
IEB	Independent Examinations Board
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPO	Non-Profit Organisation
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSDS	National Skills Development Strategy
PALC	Public Adult Learning Centre
PED	Provincial Education Department
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 1.1 Education is an essential component of reconstruction, development and transformation of the South African society. It has become accepted worldwide that all individuals require a sound education in order to participate effectively in increasingly complex social and economic environment. The skills in the 21st century are becoming increasingly complex given the pervasive use of information technology and the pace of scientific and technological advancement.
- 1.2 Education and training must address the enormous developmental challenges of poverty, inequality and unemployment. The call for a developmental state in South Africa requires the development of the necessary skills and capabilities for this to be possible.
- 1.3 The provision of education and training must be made available through viable institutions to the employed and unemployed, young and old to encourage an economically active population and community participation.
- 1.4 The state provides Adult Education and Training (AET) through its Provincial Education Departments (PEDs). Public Adult Learning Centres (PALCs), most of which are located in schools, provide institutional learning to adults on a part-time basis. However in terms of the Further Education and Training Act 2013, these will be deemed to be Community Colleges. The Act will become effective on 1 April 2015.
- 1.5 There are also private adult learning centres including Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) with a diverse range of offerings which may include formal provision towards the ABET GETC at NQF level 1.
- 1.6 In January 2014, the Minister of Higher Education and Training launched the White Paper for Post School Education and Training in which key challenges facing South African higher education and training were identified. The White Paper articulates weaknesses with reference to the provision of AET.
- 1.7 It posits that the current AET qualification has not been able to contribute meaningfully and significantly to realising the right to adult basic education. The various existing institutions have not been able to address this target group due to poor articulation. There is limited diversity of programmes, inadequate second chance opportunities and minimal support for non-formal education.

- 1.8 Gender, class, race, disability, geography, age and other inequalities persist with regards to access to educational opportunities in the adult education and training system.
- 1.9 Access and success in the AET qualification is low and its quality is in doubt. More concerning is the lack of impact of the programmes with regard to issues around skills development, poverty alleviation and unemployment.
- 1.10 The current AET provision indicates that very few adults acquire the full GETC qualification, most collect only a few learning area certificates. This means that there is limited progression to further learning.
- 1.11 The system of provision is not accessible to all learners as tuition is accorded limited hours. This is partly the result of several policy interventions and plans that have been under-resourced and sporadically initiated. In many instances the centres have little or no clear institutional identity or capacity. PALCs do not have full-time staff and are staffed through short-term contracts. PALCs operate in the evenings and this situation does not afford adequate opportunity for effective tuition.
- 1.12 The AET provision has concentrated more attention on formal qualifications which poses a problem to many learners who may not necessarily want a qualification. The current AET approach and curriculum in the PALCs with the focus on general education, often means they fail to attract large numbers of adults and youths interested not only in completing a school qualification, but also in gaining labour market currency and skills for sustainable livelihoods.
- 1.13 There are too few flexible pathways and rigidity in offerings (part or full-time) for out-of- compulsory school-going age youth and adults. There is insufficient focus on quality GETC qualification NQF level 4 qualification and programme offerings.
- 1.14 Out-of-compulsory school-going age youth and adults also experience a number of interrelated barriers to participation, including psychological, situational and structural barriers. Most of these are directly related to the material condition of the youth and adults.
- 1.15 To find a lasting solution to these challenges, the Minister established a Task Team to conceptualize a workable institutional model for community education and training that is distinct in its ethos and mission, provides a diversity of programmes, its qualifications or part qualifications articulate with qualifications of existing institutions, is oriented towards provision for communities and ensures lifelong learning opportunities.

- 1.16 The brief of the Task Team was to consider policy and legal implications, make recommendations on relevant programmes, investigate and propose appropriate funding modalities and suitable governance mechanisms, develop broad implementation steps to institutionalize the provision of community education and training, and to review relevant local and international literature.
- 1.17 The CETC report proposes the establishment of Community Colleges and Community Learning Centres as a third tier institutions alongside Universities and Further Education and Training (FET) Colleges. Community Colleges that can cater for the provision of second- chance learning opportunities for out-of-school youth and adults. The Community Colleges shall build on the current offerings of the existing PALCs, which offer general education programmes and could also offer knowledge and skills leading to sustainable livelihoods outside of the formal sector. They will be a diverse set of institutions, including public and private institutions.
- 1.18 The introduction and development of a new institutional type called Community College, is meant to play a pivotal role in contributing to improved levels of educational attainment among youth and adults.
- 1.19 The National Development Plan (NDP) indicates that there are currently about 3 million young people aged 18-24 who are not in employment, education or training (NEET).
- 1.20 The findings of the 2011 South African Census reveal that 15 918 454 South Africans aged 25 years and above, have not completed Grade 12. This figure represents 60% of the population in the said cohort.
- 1.21 Census 2011 data further shed some light on the numbers of adult learners nationally, as follows:
- a) 665 874 million or 8.6% have no schooling;
 - b) 790 134 million or 12.2% have some primary schooling;
 - c) 413 895 million or 4.6% have completed primary schooling; and
 - d) 481 577 million or 33.9% have some secondary but did not complete grade 12.
- 1.22 This then is the context within which this policy on Community Colleges is conceptualized.

SECTION 2: PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES

2.1 The establishment and operations of Community Colleges must be founded on a set of principles, which, when construed as a collective should define what community colleges are about. Accordingly, principles have been selected as definitive that shall underpin the establishment or declaration of community colleges are:

- a) Social justice;
- b) Community determination, access, participation, success and development;
- c) Partnerships, employer and work organisation involvement;
- d) Local community developmental agenda determination;
- e) Inter-departmental cooperation;
- f) Agency for the State's developmental agenda; and
- g) Robust research, monitoring and evaluation.

SECTION 3: APPROACHES TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES

3.1 One approach to the establishment or declaration of a Community College is a merger whereby a Community College is established or declared in terms of the Further Education and Training Colleges Amendment Act, 2013 (Act No 1 of 2013) which will only come into effect after Presidential Proclamation and then other Community Colleges are merged into such a college in terms of policy directions. The advantage of this approach is that it gives the Minister control on the means to achieve his vision.

3.2 The second approach entails the merging of the existing PALCs through the AET Act, 2000, which will be done under the authority of the Provincial Education Department as directed by their political principals.

3.3 Policy positions advanced in this framework are informed by the approach articulated in par. 3(1) above.

SECTION 4: LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY CONTEXT

4.1 This policy must be read in conjunction with the following policies and legislation:

- a) White Paper on the Post-School Education and Training, 2014;
- b) Further Education and Training Colleges Act, 2006
- c) Further Education and Training Colleges Amendment Act, 2013;
- d) National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008;
- e) General and Further Education Quality Assurance Act, 2001;
- f) Public Service Act, 1994;
- g) Skills Development Act, 1998;
- h) National Skill Development Strategy (2010-2016);
- i) Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996; and
- j) Labour Relations Act, 1996.

SECTION 5: PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

5.1 The policy provides a framework for the establishment of Community Colleges, governance and management of these institutional types, employment of staff, funding framework, programmes and qualification offerings, quality assurance, examination and assessment, regulation of private provision, as well as monitoring and evaluation.

SECTION 6: APPLICATION

6.1 This policy applies to public community colleges declared or established by the Minister in terms of the FETC Amendment Act, 2013.

6.2 It also applies to private Community Colleges that may be established by private individuals and are registered with the State as required in terms of Section 29 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996.

SECTION 7: ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMUNITY COLLEGE

- 7.1 Notwithstanding that the FETC Amendment Act, 2013 refers to Public and Private Community Education and Training Colleges. These will be henceforth referred to as Public and Private Community Colleges.
- 7.2 The establishment or declaration of a public Community College vests with the Minister of Higher Education and Training.
- 7.3 The Minister reserves the right to establish Community Colleges that transcend geographical boundaries based on the communities of interest or practice. In other words term community is not limited to a geographical community.
- 7.4 The registration of private Community Colleges vests with the Director-General in terms of section 27.1 of the FETCA, 2006.
- 7.5 Community Colleges in terms of 7.3 will carry a distinctive nomenclature, i.e. Public Community College.

SECTION 8: PROCESS OF ESTABLISHING OF PUBLIC COMMUNITY COLLEGES

- 8.1 Subject to availability of State funding, the Minister shall establish on a phase-in basis Community Colleges in all district municipalities of South Africa and Community Colleges of interest.
- 8.2 The phase-in approach shall commence with the establishment of at least two Community Colleges per province.
- 8.3 The next phase shall be the establishment of Community Colleges at district municipality level.
- 8.4 The adequacy of the post-school institutions in communities shall be reviewed in order to determine community needs for additional educational facilities within available funding.
- 8.5 The rollout of additional communities will be contained in a further policy instrument.

- 8.6 The Minister shall determine the name and seat of a community college, which shall be published in the Government Gazette, together with its learning site, called Community Learning Centres.
- 8.7 The Minister will determine a policy on the branding of Community Colleges (Public/Private) as well as public Community Learning Centres.

SECTION 9: MERGER OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES

- 9.1 A Community College shall be a multi-centre institution and, subject to approval of the Minister, may be expanded or rationalised through a process of Community College mergers and demergers.
- 9.2 As functions move from PEDs to the Department, the current PALCs will be deemed to be public Community Colleges, as soon as this is effected, all the public Community Colleges will be merged into 9 public Community Colleges, one per province.

SECTION 10: GOVERNANCE

- 10.1 A Community College referred to in paragraph 7(1) shall be governed by a council constituted in terms of section 10 of the FETCA, 2006.
- 10.2 The Minister may determine in terms of Section 7 of the Act that a Community College council takes responsibility for the governance of more than one Community College.
- 10.3 A Community College must have a student representative council constituted in terms of the FETCA, 2006, and the Standard Statutes.
- 10.4 If deemed necessary by the Minister, a Community College may constitute an academic board, otherwise the Department of Higher Education and Training shall execute the responsibilities of the Academic Board as defined in the FETCA, 2006. The Minister will determine the criteria for constituting an academic board.

SECTION 11: MANAGEMENT

- 11.1 A principal of a Community College shall be appointed by the Minister on the organisational structure of the Department of Higher Education and Training as a Member of the Senior Management Service at the level of a Director.
- 11.2 The management staff of a Community College shall consist of the Principal and Vice- Principal(s). The Vice-Principal shall, depending on the size of a Community College, take responsibility for all or some of the following programmes:
- a) Finance and Corporate Service;
 - b) Institutional Development and Support;
 - c) Education, Training and Skills Development;
 - d) Examinations and Assessment; and
 - e) Partnerships and Community Development Programme.
- 11.3 A Vice-Principal shall be appointed by the Minister on the organisational structure of the DHET as a Member of the Middle Management Service (MMS) in terms of the Public Service Act, 1994 at the Level of a Deputy Director.
- 11.4 A Community Learning Centre manager shall be appointed by the Minister on the organisational structure of the DHET as a Member of the Middle Management (MMS) in terms of the Public Service Act, 1994 at the Level of an Assistant Director.
- 11.5 The number of Vice-Principals post establishment at each college will be determined through a post-provision policy to be determined by the Minister.

SECTION 12: EMPLOYMENT OF STAFF

- 12.1 The Minister shall determine, in terms of section 20(1)-(3), read with section 23 of the FETCA, 2006 the post establishment of a Community College.
- 12.2 A Community College council may appoint staff additional to the staff paid by the Minister, but this function is subject to the provision of Section 20 (4) 10 of the FETCA, 2006.
- 12.3 Post provisioning norms for staff will be determined through policy.

SECTION 13: FUNDING FRAMEWORK

- 13.1 Public Community Colleges shall be funded in accordance with the National Norms and Standards for Funding public Community Colleges as provided for in terms of section 23 of the FETCA, 2006, as well as through other funding stream as identified in section 24 of the Act.
- 13.2 Every Community College must submit to the Department of Higher Education and Training audited annual financial statements in manner determined by the Minister as provided in Section 25 of the Act.
- 13.3 The funding norms for public Community Colleges will during the transitional period from PEDs be the funding convention as currently in operation in each Province.

SECTION 14: PROGRAMMES AND QUALIFICATION OFFERINGS

- 14.1 Community Colleges shall be flexible in their programme offerings and shall include programmes driven by the community developmental priorities, as well as the priorities of the State.
- 14.2 Accordingly, a public Community College shall offer programmes that are driven and funded by the State, as well as programmes that respond to the immediate needs of the community.
- 14.3 A holistic approach to education and training shall be adopted in order to offer learning options in which both soft and hard skills are developed within an integrated development framework that seeks to improve livelihoods, promote inclusion into the world of work and that supports community and individual needs.
- 14.4 Qualifications and part-qualifications that shall be offered under the auspices of the Department of Higher Education and Training shall include:
- a) General Education and Training Certificate for Adults;
 - b) Senior Certificate; and
 - c) National Senior Certificate for Adults.

14.5 Programme offerings that shall be offered based in collaboration with local authorities, SETAs, community organisations and other Government Departments, as well as industry may include but not be limited to:

- a) Early Childhood Development;
- b) Community Development Works Programmes;
- c) Worker Education;
- d) Cooperative and Entrepreneurship Education and Training;
- e) Plumbing, Construction, Carpentry, Electricity, Welding, Auto Body Repair,
- f) Motor Mechanics;
- g) Home-Based Care;
- h) Parenting and Childcare;
- i) Civic Education, Community Mobilisation and Organisation;
- j) Expanded Public Works Programme;
- k) Community Health Workers Programme, including HIV/AIDS Education;
- l) Information and Communication Technology; and
- m) Arts and Crafts.

14.6 Non-formal programmes shall take place on a ‘needs’ basis, and shall be aligned strongly to local contexts, and to employment and community development opportunities. Non-formal offerings do not lead to qualification or part-qualifications, however may also be made available to learners participating in adult education programmes in varied institutional, workplace and community-based settings. Community colleges may offer non-formal programmes which may include, but not limited to:

- a) School Governing Body Training;
- b) Civic and Citizenship Education;
- c) SMME Training and Co-operatives Training;
- d) Driver’s Learners’ Licence;
- e) Life Skills;
- f) Voter Education; and
- g) Consumer Education.

SECTION 15: INFRASTRUCTURE FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGES

- 15.1 The Department of Higher Education and Training intends to provide the infrastructure for Public Community Colleges in order to foster their distinct institutional identity.
- 15.2 In the short- to medium term, the Department may use the existing infrastructure of schools, TVET Colleges, community faith based and interest (focus) industries.
- 15.3 The infrastructure of schools and colleges may be utilised after securing the approval of the governing structures of the TVET Colleges and schools.
- 15.4 In instances where the existing PALCs have their own infrastructure, such infrastructure may be used for Community Colleges' activities.

SECTION 16: REGULATION OF PRIVATE COMMUNITY EDUCATION TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

- 16.1 Private education institutions that wish to offer education and training qualifications or part qualification as community colleges are required to register with the Department of Higher Education and Training in terms of the FETCA, 2006 and the Regulations.

SECTION 17: Quality assurance

- 17.1 Community colleges shall offer qualifications or part-qualifications that are registered on Levels 1 to 4 of the National Qualifications Framework.
- 17.2 General academic or vocational qualifications or part-qualification shall be quality-assured by Umalusi.
- 17.3 Occupational qualifications or part-qualifications shall be quality-assured by the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO).
- 17.4 A private education institution or organisation wanting to register as private community college to offer qualifications or part-qualifications must apply for

accreditation by Umalusi or QCTO, depending on which sub-framework of the NQF the qualification is registered.

- 17.5 If a qualification offered by a community college requires a summative exit national examination administered by the Department as an assessment body, the community college offering such a qualification must apply for registration as an examination centre in a manner determined by the Department. This is applicable to both the GENFETQA qualifications as determined by the Department and occupational qualifications by QCTO.

SECTION 18: MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- 18.1 Every college must submit the information that is required by the Director-General at the intervals determined by the Director-General.
- 18.2 The information to be submitted by a Community College must comply with the information and data standards of the Department of Higher Education and Training as contained in the Higher Education and Training Information Policy, 2013.

SECTION 19: COMMENCEMENT

- 19.1 This policy shall take effect on the date of publication in the Government Gazette.