



Evaluation of DHET Policy on Community Colleges

Key Questions to Treasury

1. PALCs are being moved to DHET. Have there been any submissions from DHET in respect of the function shift from a provincial to a national competence?
2. Will there be any shift of budget from Province to DHET in this regard? If so, will the amounts involved be equivalent to what has been involved in running the PALCs under provincial auspices?
3. A report of the Auditor General makes clear that the functioning of PALCs has been far from optimum. Has DHET requested financial resources which will allow it to attend to the deficiencies identified?
4. One of the advantages of the PALCs identified in the White Paper on Post Schooling is that they are distributed and hence close to where their target audiences live. The Provincial AET offices have however found it difficult to oversee the many adult learning centres under their control. How do you see DHET being able to oversee these distributed centre? Will provincial offices be created under DHET? Are there precedents for such arrangements in other sectors?
5. How do you see the amalgamation of PALCs into a single entity; does such an entity become a prototype Community College?
6. Is the development of Community Colleges seen as a Cabinet priority?
 - a. Who do you see as the main target groups of Community Colleges and what would you see them offering?
 - b. If not, what other initiatives is Treasury supporting to address the issues of the NEETs and why is Treasury allocating so much to TVET Colleges when so many are non-functional?
 - c. If yes, what resources have Treasury allocated to Community Colleges? Have there been any submissions from DHET to establish new Community Colleges (rather than the merger of PALCs into Community Colleges)?
 - d. How has Treasury responded to such submissions?
 - e. Are there ways in which DHET could improve their submissions to receive more funds?

7. We understand that Treasury has not been sympathetic to the creation of SAIVCET.
- a. Is this correct, and if so, why?

This could be the perception, since the National Treasury recommended to the department, in 2012, that the proposed new chapter 4 to the FET Colleges Act (which establishes the SAIVCET) be removed.

See reasons below.

- b. Our view is that such an institution is essential to the functioning of the Community Colleges allowing them to have well designed resources to offer effectively a range of national needs such as NASCA, NSC rewrites, ABET levels 1 – 4, Early childhood care, as well as Community health, Parenting and childcare, Care for the aged, Citizenship education, Effective use of Consumer technologies etc.¹ while giving them time to respond to more local needs. (Note some of what the AG found, was a dearth of learning materials.) Would Treasury also have a tepid response to a SAIVCET?

In May 2012, the Deputy Minister of Finance communicated to the Minister of Higher Education and Training the concerns of the National Treasury with the specific amendment to the FET Colleges Act that gives effect to the establishment of the SAIVCET. The concerns were that:

The (then proposed) establishment of the Institute was not discussed with the National Treasury – as required by Sections 38(1)(m) read with Section 54(2) of the PFMA. The establishment of an entity requires that a business case is presented to the National Treasury and the Department of Public Service and Administration in which the form and functions are outlined and justified and the financial implications are presented; and this should all happen prior to legislation establishing the entity is passed in Cabinet.

The outlined functions of the Institute should be part of the roles and responsibilities of the department; in fact most of the functions are meant to be performed by the department's Programme 4: *Vocational and Continuing Education and Training*.

The reason was that Treasury was/is of the view that the proposed functions on the SAIVCET could and should be performed within the department's Programme 4. You may have a look at the description of Programme 4 including all its sub-programmes (this information on the programme's functions is available in the ENE document and in the department's Strategic and Annual Performance Plan).

The Treasury highlighted that the Institute was being established without prior consultation and in doing so, in contravention of requirements of the PFMA. The Treasury also made its contention that there was no need to establish the Institute.

¹ The Draft Policy on Qualifications in Higher Education for Adult Education and Training Educators and Community Education and Training College Lecturers (DHET February 2014 pages 2-3). The draft policy is clear that: The state assumes a responsibility to provide adult education and training and community education and training and development in the areas listed above as well as in a variety of other areas.