

Staffing the universities

Improving access and increasing the number of students to universities means more staff, but increasing staff without transforming an apartheid imposed racial imbalance would simply create greater problems.

For this reason, the Department of Higher Education and Training has launched a major initiative to transform staff at South African universities.

The Department says in its Annual Report for 2014/15 that this initiative, called Staffing South Africa's Universities Framework (SSAUF) was approved by the Minister of Higher Education, Dr Blade Nzimande, in January 2015 following full consultation across the sector.

The set of proposals that make up the SSAUF will make a significant contribution to the effectiveness, composition and sustainability of the country's university system.

The SSAUF consists of four core programmes linked to an academic development pathway.

The programmes are:

- The Nurturing Emerging Scholars Programme (NESP);
- The New Generation Academics Programme (nGAP);
- The Existing Academics Capacity Enhancement Programme (EACEP); and
- The Supplementary Staff Employment Programme (SSEP).

Cutting across all four core programmes to support the teaching and research development needs in each of them is the Staffing South Africa's Universities Development Programme (SSAU-DP).

The first phase of the SSAUF, the nGAP programme, is already being implemented, and by the end of February 2015, universities had submitted more than 500 applications for nGAP posts.

These were reviewed and 125 posts were allocated in March 2015, and recruitment processes to fill these posts will be undertaken during the 2015/16 financial year.