



## higher education & training

Department:  
Higher Education and Training  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**Speech by the Director-General of Higher Education and Training, GF Qonde,  
at the signing of the Memoranda of Agreements formalising the partnerships  
between Unisa and 12 Technical and Vocational Education and Training  
Colleges at Unisa, Kgorong Building on 28 October 2014**

- Programme Director
- The Principal and Vice-Chancellor of Unisa, Professor Mandla Makhanya
- Vice Principal for Institutional Development of Unisa, Dr Molapo Qhobela
- Managers and Deans of Faculties of Unisa
- College Principals and Deputy Principals
- Officials from the Department of Higher Education and Training
- Ladies and Gentlemen

The South African National Development Plan highlights that by 2030, South Africa should have access to education and training of the highest quality, leading to significantly improved learning outcomes. The education and training system is envisaged to play a greater role in building an inclusive society, providing equal opportunities and helping all South Africans to realise their full potential, in particular those previously disadvantaged by apartheid policies, namely black people, women and people with disabilities.

In order to realize this goal we need to create a post-school education and training system that provides a range of accessible alternatives for young and older people in all post-school education and training institutions where different parts of the education and training system works together allowing learners to take different pathways that offer high quality learning opportunities. There should be clear linkages between schools, Technical and Vocational Education and Training colleges, universities, other providers of education and training and the world of work.

The post-school education and training sector must comprise of an appropriate mix of institutions for a growing economy and equal society, ensuring that there is articulation and mobility between vocational, general and technical education with multiple entry and exit points in the post school education and training system.

In the educational discourse, the term “articulation” refers to the systematic coordination of educational institutions, programmes and qualifications so that students are able to pursue their chosen learning pathways in an efficient manner.

Poor articulation between and within institutions of the post-school education and training system results in the costly waste of state and private investment, induces serious frustration and disappointment among students, and deprives the country of essential skilled human resources. Effective articulation is the cornerstone of an effective post-school education and training system.

Since the establishment of this Department, the Minister of Higher Education and Training, the honourable Dr Bade Nzimande, has embarked on an aggressive drive to build an integrated post-school education and training sector. Most if not all of us, would have had interfaced with the White Paper on Post-School Education and Training which was launched here at Unisa on 16 January 2014 and has laid the foundation for this discourse that brought us here today. One of the issues that feature strongly in the White Paper is the need to build an articulated post-school education and training system connected horizontally and vertically without unnecessary dead-ends.

On 27 June 2014, the Minister gazetted for public information and comment, the Report of the Ministerial Committee and the advice of the South African Qualifications Authority on the principles that should underlie a policy to direct the articulation pathways on the National Qualifications Framework. Both documents contain important proposals to deal with articulation blockages that still challenge our post-school system.

The Ministerial Committee on Articulation Policy analysed the post-school education and training system in its socio-economic context and considered that the key challenge was to design a flexible system that enables people to find “articulation pathways” that meet their needs. Such pathways need to be between institutions as

well as within institutions, and should be brought about by means of articulation agreements between and within institutions based on an articulation policy framework determined by the Minister of Higher Education and Training. The key principle must be that articulation is achieved by design not by default.

Today we are one-step closer to achieving this goal, as we are celebrating the formal establishment of partnerships between the University of South Africa and twelve Technical and Vocational Education and Training colleges through the signing of Memoranda of Agreement, which will enable TVET colleges to offer Unisa qualifications on their college campuses under the authority of Unisa.

The basis for formalizing these partnerships between the university and colleges is found in section 43 of the Further Education and Training Colleges Act (Act 16 of 2006), which states that a public college may only provide higher education programmes under the authority of a higher education institution after permission is granted by the Minister of Higher Education and Training and published in the Government Gazette.

I am happy to announce that the Minister will sign the Government Notice and today's event of entering into partnership agreements between Unisa and TVET colleges means that as public institutions the legal requirements have been met and that the partnerships will therefore comply with legislation.

Unisa is one of two public universities that have begun to build partnerships with TVET colleges and I would like to thank Unisa and the TVET college Principals for taking the bold step to embark on this partnership, which shows courage and vision from your side. It sends out the message that the programme offerings on TVET college sites is expanding and making further learning opportunities accessible to students who would otherwise have been denied access to higher education courses.

I am delighted to see that the institutions have decided to implement this initiative with level five Higher Certificate Qualifications, which is the ideal level and qualification type to allow students to articulate from school and TVET college programmes into Diploma and Degree studies.

The 12 TVET colleges present here today:

- College of Cape Town;
- Eastcape Midlands;
- Ekurhuleni East;
- False Bay;
- Flavius Mareka;
- Gert Sibande;
- Letaba;
- Northlink;
- Port Elizabeth;
- Umfolozi;
- Western; and
- West Coast TVET Colleges

will be offering various combinations of level 5 Higher Certificate Programmes in:

- Tourism Management;
- Banking;
- Economic and Management Sciences;
- Accounting Sciences; and
- Bachelor of Education (BEd) (Early Childhood Development: Foundation Phase).

Let me express gratitude to the Rector and Vice-Chancellor of Unisa, Professor Mandla Makhanya together with the Vice Principal for Institutional Development of Unisa, Dr Molapo Qhobela and the entire team at Unisa, along with the Principals of the 12 TVET colleges present here today.

I must really thank you for your commitment to make learning opportunities accessible to our young people. You are the anchor of this partnership project that will make access and articulation for our students a reality.

I thank you.