

## **5. Centres of Specialisation (CoS) Mid-Term Evaluation (*Zulaikha Brey, Kelly Brownell, Nargis Motala, Florus Prinsloo, Andrew Paterson, Raymond Matlala, and James Keevy*)**

In 2018, the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) commissioned a five-year Research Programme on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), funded by the National Skills Fund (NSF). The Programme is being managed by the University of the Western Cape (UWC) through the Institute of Post-School Studies (IPSS) who have partnered with several organisations to lead on the various projects under the programme.

The Department has designed and implemented the Centres of Specialisation (CoS) Programme in the TVET College sector. The CoS Programme involves the formation of a devoted unit within a host TVET College which functions as an anchor, working closely with employers, to deliver a dual-system based apprenticeship programme.

JET Education Services (JET) and Trialogue (Pty) Ltd conducted a Mid-Term Evaluation of the CoS Programme. The objective of the evaluation was to measure progress made and lessons learned to date. The evaluation measured at a high level, the sustainability and scalability of the CoS programme.

It finds that the CoS programme is well-designed and widely accepted as a solution to the shortage of artisans, and specifically also addresses some of the challenges in traditional apprenticeship training.

There are however a few systemic challenges which could affect both the sustainability of existing CoS, as well as the potential scalability to establish CoS in new trades and/or locations. Implementing the recommendations from this evaluation should assist to move the project from a pilot to a mainstream programme. The report makes the following recommendations:

- Improve capacity for delivery of apprentice training.
- Improve collaboration/coordination between stakeholders for the delivery of the CoS programme.
- Improve implementation and delivery of apprenticeship training.
- Improve the knowledge, skills, and competencies of the apprentices (employability).
- Reduce the timeframe to produce an artisan (faster throughput).
- Establish effective and efficient trade test centres for CoS trades.

The full report can be accessed as follows:

[https://www.dhet.gov.za/ResearchNew/TVET%20Research%20Programme/Centres%20of%20Specialisation%20\(CoS\)%20Programme%20Midterm%20Evaluation.pdf](https://www.dhet.gov.za/ResearchNew/TVET%20Research%20Programme/Centres%20of%20Specialisation%20(CoS)%20Programme%20Midterm%20Evaluation.pdf)

The findings of this study were presented at a webinar on 27 May 2022. This recording is available on the UWC website. The slide presentation can be accessed on the following link:

[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1cVRvaluCidHDG\\_GOkVeDD-c5UD4whRAMeGFJDWs9PAA/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1cVRvaluCidHDG_GOkVeDD-c5UD4whRAMeGFJDWs9PAA/edit?usp=sharing). You can also visit the DHET website to

read up on the other projects under the TVET Research Programme. Please see the following link to review the completed research project reports:

<https://www.dhet.gov.za/SitePages/TVET-Research-Programme.aspx>

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