

MEDIA STATEMENT

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TO: All media

ATTENTION: News Editors/ Reporters

DRAFT POLICY FOR THE RECOGNITION OF SOUTH AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONAL TYPES, 2022

The Minister of Higher Education Science and Innovation, Dr Blade Nzimande, has published a call for public comment on the Draft Policy for the Recognition of South African Higher Education Institutional Types in the Government Gazette No. 47205, Notice 2359 of Monday, 8 August 2022. The development of the policy follows an extensive research and consultative process carried out by the Department which began in late 2018 and culminated in the publication of the draft policy.

The purpose of the policy is to give effect to the institutional types provided for by the Higher Education Act (Act 101 of 1997, as amended). The policy provides criteria for the recognition of Higher Education Colleges; University Colleges and Universities. The three types are defined in the Act in terms of scope and range of their activities, and governance - as an important element in the establishment and operations of higher education institutions - forms part of institutional criteria.

Moreover, the purpose is to fulfil the aspirations set out in the founding objectives of higher education in South Africa, that is, to promote diversification of access, curriculum and qualification structure, with programmes developed and articulated within the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), encouraging an open and flexible system based on credit accumulation and multiple entry and exit points for learners, thus permitting greater horizontal and vertical mobility by learners in the higher education system.

The policy will also promote the development of an articulated flexible learning system, with a diversity of institutional missions and programme mixes; and a system that improves the responsiveness of the higher education system to the present and future social and economic needs.

Higher education colleges have a relatively limited range and scope, focusing on undergraduate and skills development programmes. University Colleges are introduced as institutions to enable the developmental growth of new universities under the trusteeship of an established university. Universities are engaged in undergraduate and postgraduate higher education, knowledge production (research) and community engagement. Thus, the policy provides criteria by which institutions, including registered private higher education institutions, may be defined and officially registered as specific institutional types contemplated in the Act.

The draft policy provides a higher education structure that is 'well-suited to accommodate the varying backgrounds, needs, interests and abilities of the students of the future, to enable them to realise their potential, and contribute the necessary

range and quality of knowledge, insight, skill and capability to the development and reconstruction of our country', in line with the aspirations of the White Papers on Higher Education and Post School Education and Training.

The public is encouraged to comment on any aspect of the draft policy. The draft policy can be accessed from the Department's website: www.dhet.gov.za. Submissions or comments must reach the Department by 08 September 2022 at the address provided.

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