



# higher education & training

---

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

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY THE MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING, DR BE NZIMANDE ON 20 MARCH 2014 AT THE CAREER EXPO IN UMSUNDUZI MUNICIPALITY, PIETERMARITZBURG**

Programme Director

Honourable Mayor, Chris Ndlela, uMbhele-kaSompisi

Municipal Councillors

Provincial Government Representatives

Sector Education and Training Authorities

Technical and Vocational Education and Training Colleges Principals and Lecturers

School Principals

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

And most importantly our Youth-Intsha

Sanibonani

As the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) we are delighted to be part of this important Career EXPO which is aimed at empowering our youth. When the DHET was established in 2009, one of the areas to which we paid particular attention was the building, prioritising, and institutionalising of career guidance programmes for our students. Yingakho

silapha nje namhlanje sizogqugquzela intsha yaseMsunduzi ngekusasa layo. Enkulmeni yami ngifuna ukukhuluma ngemisebenzi yomnyango wami ukuze umphakathi was Pietermaritzburg ubone indlela esesiyihambile since the establishment of my Department in 2009.

The recent launch of the White Paper for Post-school Education and Training on 16 January is major DHET milestone, demonstrating our serious commitment to higher education and training and our effort to expand the post school sector. This policy will bring about a single, coherent, highly articulated and diverse post-school education and training system, emphasising vocational training and with all sub-sectors and institutions playing their unique role.

The aim of this White Paper is to create a framework that defines DHET's focus and priorities and that enables it to shape its strategies and plans for the future. It sets out policies to guide the DHET and the institutions for which it is responsible in order to contribute to building a developmental state with a vibrant democracy and flourishing economy. I urge all of us to read the new White Paper and familiarize ourselves with its content in order to understand the nuances of our post-school-sector.

The White Paper emphasises the crucial role of technical and vocational education that combines academic and workplace learning. It sets out our strategies for transforming it further and ensuring that it leads to a brighter future for its students and for the country. This new policy will strengthen and expand the public colleges, enabling them to attract a large proportion of school leavers and become institutions of choice. This message is starting to bear fruit as nowadays growing numbers of young people study at TVET colleges.

Let me illustrate this: for the 2012 academic year we set a target of 550 000 student enrolments at TVET colleges. Instead, we achieved a total of 657 690, an increase of 54% when compared to the preceding academic year. Over the 2013 Medium Term Expenditure Framework period, we allocated R17.4 billion to ensure that TVET college enrolments continue on this trajectory. This includes investment in TVET college infrastructure in order to turn college campuses into learning, Information Communication and Technology, sports, entertainment and business incubation centres.

Ukuze sithuthukise ezimfundo, singu DHET we have built two new universities, the Sol Plaatje University in Kimberly and the University of Mpumalanga in Mbombela. The development of the two universities is expected to contribute to the process of accelerating access to university education and producing high level skills for our country. A key strategy to support this expansion has been significant infrastructure investments amounting to R6.8 billion between 2007 and 2011, and a further commitment of R6 billion over the 2012 to 2014 Medium Term Expenditure Framework. The establishment of new infrastructure for Sol Plaatje University will require a further investment of approximately R5 billion over the next ten years. The establishment of the University of Mpumalanga will require a further investment of approximately of R 7 billion over the next ten years.

The Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs), which are some of the main exhibitors in this Career EXPO, are an integral part of the post-school system. SETAs have developed excellent projects aimed at addressing some of the key challenges faced by young people in accessing education and training opportunities. Working together with government, TVET Colleges and private sector partners, SETAs continue to make a significant difference in the national and provincial economy by providing funding, career guidance, workplace-based training, apprenticeships, artisanship training learnerships, and other sector-focused interventions.

We have requested SETAs to open offices in townships and rural areas. They have heeded the call and to date we have 40 SETA offices in the country's different public TVET Colleges. These offices are not only expected to assist students with work placements but are also intended to play a central role in advising the youth about career opportunities. The DHET remains committed to opening even more such offices in TVET colleges, reaching out to townships and villages, and ensuring that career development is emphasised in these communities that are still too often at the margins of our society. The process, as I say, continues steadily: recently, on the 13<sup>th</sup> of March, we opened another SETA office at Ikhala College, in Ezibeleni township, Queenstown.

To meet the needs of those who do not qualify or cannot find a place at TVET colleges or universities, the DHET intends establishing a new type of institution – Community Colleges. It is vital to our future. Community Colleges will be built on the basis of the current adult learning centres which will be merged, strengthened and extended to include vocational and community-oriented programmes. We expect the Community Colleges to cater to one million students by 2030. The implication here is that no South African will be thrown into the dustbin of the illiterate, so to speak. Instead all will be afforded an opportunity to acquire skills irrespective of race, social status, and gender.

Poverty and social inequities stem from the exclusion of the majority from the labour market. Therefore, higher employment and economic participation would help greatly in reducing poverty and income inequality. But we cannot achieve high employment if we do not address the skills challenges. As a result, government has invested heavily in the post-school sector. For instance the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) budget has increased substantially in an effort to keep pace with the increasing number of students in dire need of funding, almost tripling from R3.1 billion in 2009 to over R9 billion in 2014. I also need to stress that a large section of today's black middle class owes its success to NSFAS and its forerunner, the Tertiary Education Fund of South Africa(Tefsa). Yimizamo kahulumeni kakhongolose yonke le.

In spite of this large increase in a short period of time, the financial demand in 2013 by eligible students led to a shortfall of R2.6 billion. This has led the Department to secure an additional R1 billion for NSFAS funding. This is still not enough, but as we all know there are many pressing demands on the fiscus and even something as important as financing tomorrow's skilled South Africans must compete for funds.

But, very importantly, the private sector should play a central role in funding post-school education in this country. On the 8<sup>th</sup> of February I presided over the official hand-over of contracts to matriculants who were awarded bursaries and learnership opportunities for the 2014 academic year by SAPREF oil refinery in Durban. SAPREF made offered 70 learnership opportunities and 10 bursaries for university studies in engineering. This is an immense contribution towards improving the lives of the beneficiaries and of the communities from which they come. We need more initiatives of this nature from the private sector.

The private sector should also ensure that our students receive workplace learning experience. Government has already come to the party in this regard. Indeed, our Department's slogan is, "turning every workplace into a training space". On November 28, 2013, DHET and the Gauteng provincial government launched the Gauteng FET graduate placement programme. During the launch, it was announced that more than 2500 learners had been placed in the province's various governmental departments for workplace training from a total of over 4000 learners. DHET officials are hard at work, engaging other provincial governments, including the one in this province, to draw lessons from the Gauteng student placement programme. And the response is positive. Disappointingly, few private companies are on board. The question is: how will the broader community of students find employment upon completion of their studies if they do not receive work experience?

Uma sesibheka izinhlelo zomnyango wami lapha ePietermaritzburg nakuProvince yonke, you will realize that apart from today's initiative, there are many others that the DHET is involved in la KwaZulu-Natal. For instance in October 26, 2013 we held the Mzala Nxumalo Lecture at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, lapha Emgungundlovu. This African National Congress (ANC) and South African Communist Party (SACP) activist and intellectual passed away on 22 February 1991 at a young age of only 35 years. Mzala, as Nxumalo was affectionately known, was an avid reader and writer and should be an inspiration to all the young people gathered here today. You must emulate Mzala and familiarise yourselves with his work and those of other African intellectuals. We are looking forward to establishing the Mzala Nxumalo Foundation possibly here at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, in honour of Nxumalo.

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of February the DHET held a function here in Pietermaritzburg and we provided fifty bursaries to the Municipality to enable needy students to study at our universities and TVET Colleges. Twenty five of these bursaries are for students who want to pursue their studies at FET colleges and the other half is for those who want to study at universities. The fifty bursaries that my Department has made available through the National Skills Fund (NSF), one of our wings, cover tuition fees, accommodation and book allowances. This initiative will enable us to produce future engineers, entrepreneurs, maritime experts, artisans and others.

In this province we are planning to build new FET campuses and two new Skills Centres. These will create an additional new FET college spaces. Here in Pietermaritzburg we have invested R300 million in the DUT Indumiso complex to expand infrastructure and programme offerings for engineering and mid-level health professionals. We also need to further upgrade the Plessislaer FET college campus as part of this revitalization of that educational precinct. This is also going to create jobs in Pietermaritzburg whilst expanding post school education and training opportunities. We have similar plans in other areas of the province. For example: for the period 2012/13 to 2014/15, provincial universities have received the following funding for student residences:

- DUT - R115 million
- MUT - R85 million
- Zululand - R120 million
- UKZN - R80 million.

In Durban:

- To date, the department has allocated a total of R585.1 million towards infrastructure development at Durban University of Technology (DUT). For the period 2007/08 to 2009/10, R50 million was allocated, for the period 2010/11 to 2011/12, R173.6 million was allocated and for the period 2012/13 to 2014/15, a further R361.5 million is allocated to DUT.
- To date, the department has allocated a total of R335.2 million towards infrastructure development at Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT). For the period 2008/09 to 2009/10, R30 million was allocated, for the period 2010/11 to 2011/12, R76.2 million was allocated and for the period 2012/13 to 2014/15, a further R229 million is allocated to MUT.
- To date, the department has allocated a total of R586.7 million towards infrastructure development at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). For the period 2006/07 to 2009/10, R 124 million was allocated, for the period 2010/11 to 2011/12, R218.7 million was allocated and for the period 2012/13 to 2014/15, a further R244 million is allocated to UKZN. Of course UKZN has a branch in Pietermaritzburg.

Ladies and gentlemen I hope that this outline helps to give you some idea of the depth and scope of the work facing the DHET. The youth of this province you must take advantage of the educational opportunities offered by the DHET. Ake nisukumele phezulu nivele in these institutions such as University of KwaZulu-Natal and TVET colleges such as Umgungundlovu ukuze nazi ukuthi yiziphi izintlelo zezemfundo that are offered by such institutions and how these could benefit you. In fact some of you have already completed your secondary schooling and if you want to study at a college or university next year, you need to *Apply Now!* Applications at some institutions close at the end of May. Therefore it is important to put your ducks in a row. Do not wait until next year.

Elokugcina: Take advantage of this Career EXPO and other opportunities offered by the DHET and reap the fruits offered. During apartheid African students were confined to careers considered to be appropriate for their subsidiary place in society. This racist ideology was well summed up by Hendrik Verwoerd, the architect of grand apartheid- unqondonqondo wobandlululo. In 1954 he asserted that “It [the Department of Native Affairs] will know for what class of higher education a Native is fitted and whether he will have a chance in life to use his knowledge .... what is the use of teaching the Bantu child mathematics when it cannot use it in practice”.

As a country we have come a long way. I urge you, the youth of post- apartheid South Africa, to take advantage of opportunities magnanimously presented to you. This Expo is an opportunity for you to interact directly with SETAs and all other stakeholders with career guidance skills.

I would like thank all those who have played a significant role in organizing this EXPO. This includes members of my Department and the Msunduzi Municipality under our Mayor, uMbhele kaSompisi. I would also like to thank the different exhibitors for agreeing to form part of this important initiative aimed at empowering our children - ngithi kini ukwanda kwaliwa umthakathi. To the youth gathered here today I say: Your future is in your hands.

Ngiyabonga