



Independent

THINKING Lifelong Learning Curves

MAY 2016

EXPLORING THE POST-SCHOOL TERRAIN: A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN INDEPENDENT MEDIA AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

EMPOWERING OUR PEOPLE:

Real increases to the DHET's budget celebrated



PRIORITY POLICIES: A key part of the post-school system is Technical and Vocational Education and Training, and central to that is artisan training.

DHET
Budget 2016

BLADE NZIMANDE

Rise to address this house as our higher education and training system is grappling with significant challenges and is under intense public scrutiny. But I rise confident that, despite the challenges we face as a developing country with a history and legacy of national oppression and super-exploitation, we have made enormous strides in building post-school education and training the likes of which have never before been seen in South Africa.

Post-school education and training system

Our system provides diverse and very real opportunities for our people to empower themselves for

the future. And we have a clear and powerful vision of how to continue to build this system to serve the needs of individuals, the economy and society. Many challenges however still lie ahead. That is why we are currently developing a 15-year plan for the entire system, based on the vision captured in the White Paper on Post-School Education and Training I released in early 2014, and on the National Development Plan (NDP).

Recent university challenges

Let us not, in the context of recent challenges in the universities, forget three things:
● Firstly, the vast majority of students raising their voices on issues close to their hearts and pockets were from previously disadvantaged backgrounds,

showing clearly that we have made great strides and are well on the way to transforming access to higher education;
● Secondly, 99.9% of those who took their very real and genuine issues into the streets last year are back at their books and in their laboratories, working hard for qualifications to take them further; and
● Thirdly, the protests confirm that we remain a country of robust, open and free discussion and debate, a country whose government – as the fees outcome showed – listens and is responsive.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training

A key part of our system is

Technical and Vocational Education and Training, known as TVET. Expanding this historically very small system has been our priority, as we have moved TVET and adult education to the national Department from the provinces. In the meantime, we have successfully expanded the TVET numbers, shifting from a 1 to 4 ratio of college to university students to close to a 1 to 1 ratio.
Now, our focus is on consolidation and improving teaching and learning in the sector. To this end, the University of the Western Cape is ready to deliver its first postgraduate programme for TVET lecturers. It is the trailblazer for several more universities developing similar programmes.
We have also recognised and responded to the need for foundation learning programmes for TVET students requiring additional support in mathematics

and English.
TVET growth continues. In January, Waterberg College in Limpopo enrolled 333 students for the new Thabazimbi campus. It has taken over Kumba Iron Ore's skills centre. Two other new TVET campuses are scheduled for completion in July.
An audit is underway to link infrastructure expansion and maintenance more stringently to budgeting processes. This will ensure that college infrastructure upgrading and maintenance is planned and budgeted for systematically and sustainably.

Role of employers

But despite the successes we can point to, Government cannot provide technical and vocational education alone.

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APPEARING IN ALL THE FOLLOWING PUBLICATIONS

