Education and Skills Development

FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING (FET) COLLEGES AT A GLANCE IN 2010

FET COLLEGES AUDIT

MAY - JULY 2010

Authors: Michael Cosser, Andre Kraak and Lolita Winnaar with the FET audit project team¹

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¹ Vijay Reddy, Tshilidzi Netshitangani, Thembinkosi Twalo, Shawn Rogers, Gamong Mokgatle, Bongiwe Mncwango, Andrea Juan, Vanessa Taylor, Carel Garisch, Marianne Spies, Gina Weir-Smith and Tholang Mokhele.



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INTRODUCTION

Between May and July 2010 the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) undertook, on behalf of the National Board for Further Education and Training (NBFET), an audit of the Further Education and Training (FET) college sector in South Africa. The corporate campuses of all fifty colleges were visited over a two-day period. In the course of the audit, the HSRC collected information on college governance and management, staff and student profiles, and student efficiency rates. While the research team's brief was to focus on college governance and management in an attempt to address the question of whether colleges were ready to be absorbed into the newly-formed Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and to operate on a defined autonomy basis, the comprehensiveness of the audit (entailing visits to all fifty colleges) provided the research team with an opportunity to collect information on the other aforementioned aspects: staff and student profiles; and student efficiency rates. The decision to collect these other pieces of information was motivated also by the rationale that colleges' ability to participate in the survey would itself provide a good indication of their capacity for self-, or at least semi-autonomous, governance. Indeed, the findings of the audit bear out the differential capacity of the different parts of the sector in responding to an exercise of this kind.

There are four sections to this report. The first, **by Michael Cosser with the FET audit project team**, presents, in five sub-sections, a set of tables containing key high-level findings of the project on a set of indicators under the rubrics of: Governance; Management; Staff Profiles; Student Profiles; and Efficiency Rates. The second section, also **by Michael Cosser with the FET audit project team**, comprises a description and analysis of the tables in Section 1. The third section, **by Andre Kraak and Lolita Winnaar**, comprises a comparative analysis of the size and shape of the FET college sector in 2010 and in the years leading up to this point. The fourth section, by **Gina Weir-Smith and Tholang Mokhele**, presents a spatial analysis of the FET college sector in 2010.

Note on the data

Every effort was made, during the fieldwork period and over the two months following it, to collect the six pieces of data from each college reproduced in the appendices: three questionnaires – Governance, Management and Administration, and Profiles and Efficiency Indicators; and three spreadsheets – council member, staff, and student profiles. Certain colleges were not, however, able to provide all the data requested. In total, the HSRC received completed Governance, Management and Administration, and Profiles and Efficiency Indicators questionnaires from all 50 colleges, council member spreadsheets from 41 of the 50 colleges.

For the purposes of Sections 1 and 2, the research team, in order to provide as full a picture as possible of staff and student profiles, elected to supplement the missing data with data from the Further Education and Training Management Information System (FETMIS) data of the DHET. Accordingly, certain data underpinning the calculations presented in the tables in Section 1 are taken or derived from the recently released preliminary data-sets on the FET college system (DHET, 2011). The full data-set, showing which data are FET audit- and which data are FETMIS-derived, is available on request.

The data underpinning Section 3 are derived primarily from three sources: the HSRC's FET audit data (HSRC, 2011; data collected chiefly between May and July 2010); preliminary

FETMIS data (DHET, 2011; data provided by the DHET in February 2011); and the NBI's quantitative overview data of 2002 (Powell & Hall, 2004). As this section shows, the data are sometimes contradictory and are not therefore entirely reliable; however, every effort has been made to provide the most accurate student enrolment and staff complement profiles possible.

The data used to generate the maps in Section 4 are derived from the physical addresses of the central and academic campuses of the 50 colleges.

References

HSRC (Human Sciences Research Council) (2011). FET college audit dataset 2010. Pretoria.

DHET (Department of Higher Education and Training) (2011). FETMIS database 2010. Pretoria: Department of Higher Education and Training.

Powell, L. & Hall, G. (2004). *Quantitative Overview of the Further Education and Training College Sector: A Sector in Transition:* Pretoria: Department of Education.

SECTION 1: QUANTITATIVE OVERVIEW OF THE FET COLLEGE SYSTEM IN 2010

Governance¹

 Table 1.1: College governance, 2009-2010

Province		Council com	position, 2010		Council membe	Council meeting attendance, 2009 ²		
	# on council ³ # bla		# female	Age	# with qualification below diploma	# of specified areas in which members are collectively competent ⁴	# of council members trained for council portfolio	Ordinary council meeting attendance
EC	14 (ave)	12 (ave)	5 (ave)	46 (ave)	3 (ave)	4 (ave)	9 (ave)	11 (ave)
FS	13 (ave)	11 (ave)	3 (ave)	44 (ave)	2 (ave)	3 (ave)	11 (ave)	11 (ave)
G	11 (ave)	8 (ave)	4 (ave)	45 (ave)	1 (ave)	4 (ave)	6 (ave)	10 (ave)
KZN	13 (ave)	12 (ave)	4 (ave)	49 (ave)	1 (ave)	4 (ave)	3 (ave)	11 (ave)
L	13 (ave)	10 (ave)	4 (ave)	47 (ave)	1 (ave)	4 (ave)	13 (ave)	10 (ave)
м	13 (ave)	10 (ave)	4 (ave)	48 (ave)	2 (ave)	4 (ave)	5 (ave)	11 (ave)
NC	11 (ave)	8 (ave)	5 (ave)	42 (ave)	2 (ave)	2 (ave)	0 (ave)	8 (ave)
NW	20 (ave)	16 (ave)	8 (ave)	44 (ave)	3 (ave)	4 (ave)	13 (ave)	13 (ave)
wc	15 (ave)	11 (ave) 5 (ave) 46 (ave)		1 (ave)	4 (ave)	9 (ave)	11 (ave)	
National	13 (ave)	11 (ave)	4 (ave)	46 (ave)	2 (ave)	4 (ave)	8 (ave)	11 (ave)

		Compliance with	FET Act of 2006 ⁵	Staff employer ⁶			
Province ⁴	Policies, plans & procedures (max. 64)	<i>Financial</i> (max. 12)	Governance structures (max. 38)	Overall (max. 114)	# employed by college (council)	# employed by state	% staff employed by the college (council)
EC	38 (ave)	10 (ave)	31 (ave)	79 (ave)	100 (ave)	135 (ave)	47
FS	48 (ave)	9 (ave)	34 (ave)	90 (ave)	160 (ave)	114 (ave)	54
G	52 (ave)	11 (ave)	34 (ave)	96 (ave)	158 (ave)	267 (ave)	43
KZN	46 (ave)	9 (ave)	32 (ave)	87 (ave)	177 (ave)	118 (ave)	62
L	50 (ave)	11 (ave)	34 (ave)	95 (ave)	55 (ave)	132 (ave)	31
м	43 (ave)	12 (ave)	33 (ave)	87 (ave)	122 (ave)	110 (ave)	53
NC	61 (ave)	12 (ave)	35 (ave)	108 (ave)	111 (ave)	49 (ave)	68
NW	54 (ave)	11 (ave)	32 (ave)	97 (ave)	124 (ave)	63 (ave)	74
wc	59 (ave)	12 (ave)	35 (ave)	105 (ave)	240 (ave)	155 (ave)	58
National	49 (ave)	10 (ave)	33 (ave)	92 (ave)	141 (ave)	144 (ave)	50

Key

1 Data derived from the Governance instrument in Appendix A and Council Member spreadsheet in Appendix B.

2 Combined attendance of the first four meetings listed by the college divided by the total possible attendance of the four meetings.

3 The FET Act (2006) specifies that there should be 16 members on the council.

4 EC = Eastern Cape; FS = Free State; G = Gauteng; KZN = KwaZulu-Natal; L = Limpopo; M = Mpumalanga; NC = Northern Cape; NW = North West; WC = Western Cape.

5 No. of categories (out of 7) in which the college collectively has competence as per the FET Act of 2006 (one point allocated per category regardless of how many members are competent in a category).

6 The following variables were included under "Policies, plans and procedures": V4.1-8; V4.18-33; V5.8; V12.2-7. Under "Financial governance" the following were included: V4.9-15. Under "Governance structures" the following were included: V1.2-3; V8.1-5; V9.1-4; V9.6-7; V9.9; V11.1-5.

7 Staff = all staff of the college (lecturing, management and support), of whom only two – the principal and his/her deputy – should (according to the FET Act of 2006) be management staff and employed by the state. Data derived from the Staff member spreadsheet in Appendix C.

Management¹

Table 1.2: College management, 2007-2010

		Fi	nances	Reports	FETMIS System	ICT	
Province	# of colleges with CFOs Sources of college funding (%) ²		Recapitalisation # of qualified funding received, audits per college, 2007-2009 ³ 2007-2009		College submission of reports to council, 2007-2009 ⁴ (max. 24)	ollege submission of reports to ouncil, 2007-2009 ⁴ (max. 24)	
EC	1 (of 8)	43	R 34 729 285 (ave)	1 (ave)	21 (ave)	DB2000 (6 of 8)	20 (ave)
FS	0 (of 4)	41	R 33 042 500 (ave)	2 (ave)	21 (ave)	COLTECH (4 of 4)	30 (ave)
G	3 (of 8)	24	R 47 587 598 (ave)	0 (ave)	18 (ave)	COLTECH (4 of 8)	32 (ave)
KZN	0 (of 9)	51	R 41 378 105 (ave)	1 (ave)	18 (ave)	COLTECH (9 of 9)	29 (ave)
L	1 (of 7)	45	R 44 254 571 (ave)	1 (ave)	17 (ave)	DB2000 (6 of 7)	24 (ave)
м	2 (of 3)	0	R 40 545 000 (ave)	0 (ave)	13 (ave)	COLTECH (2 of 3)	22 (ave)
NC	0 (of 2)	22	R 12 810 000 (ave)	1 (ave)	23 (ave)	None / COLTECH	29 (ave)
NW	1 (of 3)	67	R 39 456 335 (ave)	1 (ave)	18 (ave)	DB2000 (3 OF 3)	38 (ave)
wc	6 (of 6)	35	R 37 884 167 (ave)	1 (ave)	20 (ave)	COLTECH (6 of 6)	39 (ave)
National	14 (of 50)	39	R 39 316 380 (ave)	1 (ave)	19 (ave)	COLTECH (28 of 50)	29 (ave)

Province		# of skills development-related Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs)										
	Business	Local communities	SETAs	Other education & training institutions	Local government departments and municipalities	Other institutions						
EC	2 (ave)	0 (ave)	1 (ave)	2 (ave)	2 (ave)	1 (ave)						
FS	1 (ave)	0 (ave)	0 (ave)	1 (ave)	1 (ave)	0 (ave)						
G	3 (ave)	1 (ave)	1 (ave)	1 (ave)	1 (ave)	1 (ave)						
KZN	1 (ave)	0 (ave)	0 (ave)	1 (ave)	2 (ave)	0 (ave)						
L	2 (ave)	0 (ave)	0 (ave)	1 (ave)	1 (ave)	0 (ave)						
м	0 (ave)	0 (ave)	1 (ave)	2 (ave)	1 (ave)	0 (ave)						
NC	2 (ave)	0 (ave)	1 (ave)	1 (ave)	1 (ave)	0 (ave)						
NW	4 (ave)	0 (ave)	2 (ave)	2 (ave)	3 (ave)	0 (ave)						
wc	3 (ave)	2 (ave) 1 (ave)		2 (ave)	1 (ave)	2 (ave)						
National	2 (ave)	0 (ave)	1 (ave)	1 (ave)	1 (ave)	0 (ave)						

Key

 Data derived from Management and Administration instrument in Appendix D, the Staff Member spreadsheet in Appendix C, and the Student spreadsheet in Appendix E.
 Percentage of income from sources other than: Donations; Money raised by the college; Money raised through loans; Income derived from investments; Money from services rendered; Student fees; Accommodation or other services.

Actual amount received over the three-year period. 3

Management, Student academic performance, financial audit, and Annual reports: two points for hard evidence, one for soft evidence, zero for no evidence. 4

System most commonly in use. 5

Composite rating based on v30.1-v31.5 in the Management instrument (see Appendix B): two points for hard evidence, one for soft evidence, zero for no evidence). 6

Staff profile¹

Table 1.3: College staff profile, 2008-2010

Province	Lecturing staff demography			Qualifications		Staff ratios		Teaching load	Staff disruptions to the teaching / learning process
	% female	% black ²	Age	% of lecturing staff with less than first degree / higher diploma	Lecturer- to- student ³	Lecturer to support staff ⁴	Full-time to part-time lecturing staff ⁵	# of periods taught per week	<i># of staff disruptions per college, 2008 to 2010</i>
EC	52	86	38	58	1 : 31	59 : 41	91 : 9	20 (ave)	1 (ave)
FS	47	64	40	46	1 : 32	57 : 43	80 : 20	18 (ave)	0 (ave)
G	48	75	40	53	1 : 31	64 : 36	93 : 7	19 (ave)	1 (ave)
KZN	44	87	36	68	1 : 26	58 : 42	96 : 4	17 (ave)	1 (ave)
L	42	84	38	62	1 : 37	62 : 38	94 : 6	24 (ave)	0 (ave)
м	45	80	39	59	1 : 28	57 : 43	91 : 9	18 (ave)	0 (ave)
NC	41	62	41	54	1 : 38	53 : 47	88 : 12	28 (ave)	0 (ave)
NW	45	77	39	55	1:47	70 : 30	50 : 50	22 (ave)	0 (ave)
wc	57	54	45	45	1 : 26	55 : 45	78 : 22	18 (ave)	0 (ave)
National	47	77	39	57	1 : 32	60 : 40	88 : 12	20 (ave)	1 (ave)

		Academic staff loss and gain											
Province		2008			2009			2010	Net loss	Total no.			
	<u>Gain</u>	Loss	<u>Main cause</u> of loss ⁷	<u>Gain</u>	<u>Loss</u>	<u>Main cause of</u> <u>loss</u>	<u>Gain</u>	<u>Loss</u>	<u>Main cause</u> <u>of loss</u>	/gain, 2008 to 2010 ⁶	lecturing staff		
EC	25 (ave)	16 (ave)	Resignation	57 (ave)	8 (ave)	Retirement	41 (ave)	2 (ave)	Death & Resignation	42 (ave)	133 (ave)		
FS	34 (ave)	19 (ave)	Resignation	24 (ave)	11 (ave)	Resignation	16 (ave)	5 (ave)	Resignation	39 (ave)	132 (ave)		
G	66 (ave)	68 (ave)	Resignation	102 (ave)	54 (ave)	Resignation	42 (ave)	16 (ave)	Resignation	71 (ave)	260 (ave)		
KZN	70 (ave)	28 (ave)	Resignation	45 (ave)	25 (ave)	Resignation	18 (ave)	6 (ave)	Resignation	42 (ave)	175 (ave)		
L	37 (ave)	15 (ave)	Resignation	75 (ave)	13 (ave)	Resignation	27 (ave)	3 (ave)	Resignation	97 (ave)	111 (ave)		
м	25 (ave)	25 (ave)	Unhappiness with college	21 (ave)	12 (ave)	Resignation	19 (ave)	3 (ave)	Resignation	26 (ave)	140 (ave)		
NC	MD	MD	MD	MD	MD	MD	MD	MD	MD	MD	84		
NW	31 (ave)	12 (ave)	Resignation	39 (ave)	13 (ave)	Resignation	20 (ave)	13 (ave)	Resignation	31 (ave)	129 (ave)		
wc	32 (ave)	39 (ave)	Resignation	63 (ave)	27 (ave)	Resignation	29 (ave)	7 (ave)	Resignation	51 (ave)	222 (ave)		
National	44 (ave)	30 (ave)	Resignation (25 actual) (MD = 17)	59 (ave)	23 (ave)	Resignation (26 actual) (MD = 17)	28 (ave)	7 (ave)	Resignation (27 actual) (MD = 19)	+46 (ave)	167 (ave)		

	Academic staff development in 2009						
Province	Proportion of staff trained (%) ⁸	Time spent on training per staff member (days)	Proportion of total college expenditure on staff development (%)				
EC	63	4	1.6				
FS	69	5	0.6				
G	55	9	1.1				
KZN	60	9	1.6				
L	57	10	1.1				
Μ	68	9	1.4				
NC	28	5	7.6				
NW	100	56	1.1				
wc	88	3	0.6				
National	65	10 (ave)	1.4				

Key

Data derived from the Management and Administration instrument in Appendix D and the Staff Member spreadsheet in Appendix E.
 Black = black African, coloured and Indian / Asian.

- Ratio of total number of lecturing staff to total number of students enrolled. Percentage of total lecturing staff to percentage of total support staff. Percentage of total full-time lecturing staff to percentage of total part-time lecturing staff. Average net gain = "+" (e.g., +25); average net loss = "-" (e.g., -10). Categories are: retirement; ill-health; death; resignation; unhappiness with college; and other.
- Number of staff trained (v43.6) divided by the number of academic staff in the college (v.47.28+v47.37) (Management instrument, Appendix D).

Student profile¹

Table 1.4: College student profile, 2007-2010

	Demography							Home province	Financial support		rt		
Province	% female % blac	% black	% disabled, 2008-2010	Age				% students from outside	% students not in	% students in receipt of support from:			
				<u>15-19</u>	<u>20-24</u>	<u>25-29</u>	<u>30-34</u>	<u>35-39</u>	<u>40+</u>	province of college	receipt of support	<u>NSFAS</u>	<u>Other</u>
EC	54	98	0.2	21	55	16	5	2	1	0	71	27	3
FS	53	86	0	19	54	13	6	5	3	2.6	87	6	7
G	45	96	0	22	58	12	4	2	2	29.4	55	45	0
KZN	56	98	0	18	56	16	5	2	2	10	70	20	11
L	54	100	0	13	68	14	3	1	2	1.8	30	70	0
м	53	98	0.2	15	61	15	5	3	2	15.3	47	41	12
NC	52	96	MD	20	50	13	7	5	2	MD	28	54	18
NW	49	96	0.5	19	56	14	5	3	2	6	79	21	0
wc	55	90	0.9	29	44	11	6	5	2	2.3	44	36	20
National	52	96	0.2	20	56	14	5	3	2	9 (MD = 18)	58	36	6

Province	Student disruptions to the teaching / learning process		Student exit data		
	# of disruptions per college, 2008-2010	% (# of colleges that keep		
		NC(V) programmes	NATED programmes	Other programmes	student exit data
EC	1 (ave)	65	26	9	3 (of 8)
FS	1 (ave)	52	44	4	1 (of 4)
G	1 (ave)	47	48	5	3 (of 8)
KZN	1 (ave)	50	39	11	1 (of 9)
L	2 (ave)	87	12	1	4 (of 7)
м	0 (ave)	78	18	4	1 (of 3)
NC	2 (ave)	44	46	11	0 (of 2)
NW	1 (ave)	53	37	10	1 (of 3)
WC	0 (ave)	48 22 30			4 (of 6)
National	1 (ave)	58	32	10	18 (of 50)

Key
 1 Data derived from the Management and Administration instrument in Appendix D and the Student spreadsheet in Appendix E.

Efficiency rates, 2007-2009¹

Table 1.5: Student throughput rates, 2007-2009 (%): NATED (N) programmes

Province		Throughput rate for N		
	2007	2008	2009	2007-2009
EC	27	30	32	30 (ave)
FS	38	43	42	41 (ave)
G	49	56	63	63 (ave)
KZN	34	57	45	36 (ave)
L	44	45	36	44 (ave)
м	66	48	46	53 (ave)
NC	MD	MD	MD	MD
NW	61	62	62	61 (ave)
WC	68	65	52	62 (ave)
National	45	50	46	47 (ave)

Drovince		Throughput rate for NC(V)		
Frovince	2007	2008	2009	programmes, 2007-2009
EC	15	20	24	23 (ave)
FS	18	19	21	19 (ave)
G	56	38	41	50 (ave)
KZN	24	26	31	28 (ave)
L	24	29	44	32 (ave)
м	40	42	54	45 (ave)
NC	MD	MD	MD	MD
NW	35	36	40	38 (ave)
wc	25	23	23	20 (ave)
National	29	28	34	30 (ave)

Table 1.6: Student throughput rates, 2007-2009 (%): NC(V) programmes

Brovinco		Throughput rate for Other		
FIOVINCE	2007	2008	2009	programmes, 2007-2009
EC	53	96	65	81 (ave)
FS	MD	MD	MD	MD
G	100 ²	9	44	42 (ave)
KZN	100 ³	63	64	69 (ave)
L	73	65	46	59 (ave)
м	5	90	93	78 (ave)
NC	MD	MD	MD	MD
NW	MD	MD	MD	MD
wc	69	70	68	69 (ave)
National	75	62	60	66 (ave)

Table 1.7: Student throughput rates, 2007-2009 (%): Other (NSC, occupational and skills programmes, other programmes)

Key

1 In Tables 1.5, 1.6 and 1.7, the efficiency rate is the number of students who passed as a percentage of the number of students enrolled in the programme – that is, the throughput rate – across all levels of the programme. Data derived from the Profiles and Efficiency Indicators instrument in Appendix F.

2 The number who passed was higher than the number enrolled. The throughput rate is therefore set at 100%.

3 The number who passed was higher than the number enrolled. The throughput rate is therefore set at 100%.

SECTION 2: NARRATIVE REPORT ON THE QUANTITATIVE OVERVIEW OF THE FET COLLEGE SYSTEM

College governance

Profile of council

A juxtaposition of the purpose clauses of the Further Education and Training (FET) Act of 1998 (DoE, 1998) and the FET Colleges Act of 2006 (DoE, 2006) reveals only one major difference between the two:

FET Act of 1998

- 1. To regulate further education and training;
- to provide for the establishment, governance and funding of public further education and training institutions;
- 3. to provide for the registration of private further education and training institutions;
- 4. to provide for quality assurance and quality promotion in further education and training;
- 5. to provide for transitional arrangements and the repeal of laws; and
- 6. to provide for matters connected therewith.

FET Colleges Act of 2006

- 1. To provide for the regulation of further education and training;
- to provide for the establishment, governance and funding of public further education and training colleges;
- 3. to provide for the employment of staff at public further education and training colleges;
- 4. to provide for the registration of private further education and training colleges;
- 5. to provide for the promotion of quality in further education and training;
- 6. to provide for transitional arrangements and the repeal or amendment of laws; and
- 7. to provide for matters connected therewith.

The 2006 Act makes provision for the employment of staff at public FET colleges – declaring that "The college is the employer of all lecturers and support staff" (DoE, 2006: 20(1)). This one distinction gives college councils powers – to create posts and appoint staff to them – not available to them under the previous dispensation.

In the FET Act of 1998 the nomination of council members was driven in part by considerations of stakeholder category representation:

(9) The Member of the Executive Council must, by notice in the *Provincial Gazette*, and by any other reasonably practicable means, invite nominations for the members contemplated in subsection (4) (*c*) [not more than five persons appointed by the Member of the Executive Council] and (*h*) [such additional persons as may be determined by the council in consultation with the Member of the Executive Council] from -

- (a) the public;
- (b) organised business; and
- (c) organised labour.

This requirement is *absent* in the FET Colleges Act of 2006, where there is a different requirement –

(6) The council must, in consultation with the Member of the Executive Council, appoint four additional external persons with financial, human resources and legal skills as members of the council

– a requirement extended in the Standard College Statute (which also forms part of the 2006 Act) to include "a broad spectrum of competencies in the fields of education, business, finance, law, marketing, information technology and human resource management" (DoE, 2006: 6(1)(h)). Appointment of lecturing staff, then, pre-supposes certain kinds of academic and professional expertise amongst council members – which underpins the nature of the investigation of college council composition below.

Council composition

The FET Act of 2006 specifies that there should be 16 members on each college council. The reasons for having a fairly large number of persons on councils are implied rather than explicitly stated in the FET Act (2006). From the Governance table in Section 1 we see that the average number of council members at national level is 13. None of the nine provinces has an average of 16 members on its council: all provinces therefore fall short of the requirement of the Act. The Western Cape approximates the requirement most closely, with an average of 15 council members. North West has an average of 20 council members; councillors are therefore in oversupply in this province.

The council should be broadly representative of the community served by the public college in terms of race, gender and disability (DoE, 2006: 7(c)). With regard to race, it should also be representative in terms of national and provincial demographics. With regard to gender, the council composition should ideally reflect the percentage distribution of females in the general population (52% female).

In 1998, Hall (1999) found, in a study of technical colleges in KwaZulu-Natal, that the majority (49%) of council members were white. There are no figures for the country as a whole (the National Business Initiative publications – Powell & Hall, 2000; 2002; 2004 – do not report on this); but from the 2010 audit we see that, nationally, an average of 11 council members are black (black here, and throughout the report, comprises black African, coloured, and Indian / Asian persons). There has been a major change in council member representation since the late 1990s, black representation now approximating the proportion of black people in the general population (around 90%). Black representation on councils across the nine provinces is in line with this figure.

From a gender perspective, on average fewer than 4 council members across the country are women. Colleges have a long way to go, then, in increasing this proportion to a representative level.

<u>Age</u>

Our interpretation of the age of council members is that a council with an average age of below 30 is possibly too young and inexperienced to govern a college with wisdom, while an average age of 60 or more would suggest that the council is on average too old, in that while it brings

collective experience and wisdom to the governing process, it does not cater for youth by bringing new blood into the council. The average age of council members across all nine provinces is in the 42 to 49-year-old range, which would seem to indicate an appropriate balance of youth and experience.

Qualifications

From a qualifications perspective, the possession by a council member of a diploma or above would ensure that members have a certain depth of knowledge in a particular discipline and are therefore well qualified to make judgements about issues of college governance, especially regarding academic matters. The national average of two councillors with a qualification below a diploma suggests that council members across the country are adequately academically qualified to govern.

Competence

The 2006 Act requires broad council competence in seven specified areas: Education; Business; Finance; Law; Marketing; Information Technology; and Human Resource Management. If all external members have expertise in the same field, however, this will compromise the ability of the council to make decisions requiring expertise in the other specified areas. A balance, therefore, would seem to be required. Collective competence in four of the seven areas would suggest an adequate representation of areas of expertise; anything below four suggests that expertise may be lacking.

Nationally, the profile reveals that members are mostly competent in four areas: education, followed by finance, business, and then law. While the specific areas of competence in seven of the nine provinces might differ, there is collective competence in four of the areas also. In the Free State, however, there is collective competence in only three areas, in the Northern Cape only two.

Training in portfolio area

Besides the possession of qualifications and experience in a specified area, council members should ideally have undergone some training in their portfolio areas. A training rate where fewer than half of the council members have been trained in their portfolio area would suggest that the council is not optimally placed to make governance decisions, while a rate of more than half would suggest basic competence in decision making. At the national level, we see that an average of 8 out of 13 council members have received some training in their portfolio area – suggesting a healthy emphasis on training by the college.

Provincially there is a great deal of variation. While more than half of all councillors have received portfolio-related training in six of the nine provinces (Eastern Cape, Free State, Gauteng, Limpopo, North West and Western Cape), the remaining provinces (KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga and Northern Cape) have not attained this mark. At the extremes, Limpopo has a 100% staff training record, while Northern Cape has not trained any of its councillors in their portfolio areas.

While training in a portfolio area would seem to be important, however, exposure to portfoliospecific training in governance is no guarantee of enhanced performance. This aspect was not gauged in the course of the fieldwork.

Council meeting attendance, 2009

One of the concerns around any elected body's functionality is the extent of meeting attendance (let alone meaningful participation). The capacity of a body to make decisions representative of the various constituencies of which it is composed would seem to depend fundamentally on the number of persons either voting for or achieving consensus on a particular issue. Clause 10(2) of the 2006 FET Colleges Act specifies that a council meeting quorum is half plus 1. This suggests that, to be considered adequate, the average attendance of ordinary council meetings in any given college should be above 50%. Poor attendance would therefore be below 50%.

We see from the national profile that the average ordinary council meeting attendance per college in 2009 – an average for the first four meetings for which attendance was indicated by college council secretaries – was 11 out of a national average of 13 members per council. Well above 50% of members attended ordinary council meetings nationally, then – a robust state of affairs. Council meeting attendance across all the provinces except the North West (where, on average, 13 of the 20 councillors attended meetings) is high.

Compliance with FET Act of 2006

A range of questions in the Governance instrument probed the extent to which FET colleges have complied with specifications of the FET Act of 2006 in three areas: policies, plans and procedures for college governance; financial governance; and governance structure establishment. (See the Governance instrument for the full set of variables included under these three areas.)¹

The Governance instrument asked project field-workers to indicate whether colleges had provided *hard* evidence (H) of the existence of a characteristic, *soft*, or spoken (S), evidence of a characteristic, *or no* evidence of a characteristic. Two points per variable were awarded for hard evidence, one for soft evidence, and zero for no evidence. As the Governance table in Section 1 of this report reveals, colleges could score a maximum of 64 points on the "Policies, plans and procedures" section, 12 points on the "Financial governance" section, and 38 points on the "Governance structure establishment" section – a grand total of 114 points.

While the national averages indicate greater compliance with financial governance and governance structure establishment than with policy, plan and procedure establishment, any score less than 100% in each of these three categories – or a total score of 114 – connotes a lack of full compliance, which in terms of corporate governance indicates greater or lesser deficiency.

With regard to "Policies, plans and procedures" – which included questions on the college's strategic plan, student support, code of conduct and disciplinary measures for staff and

¹ The following variables were included under "Policies, plans and procedures": V4.1-V4.8; V4.18-V4.33; V5.8; V12.2-V12.7. Under "Financial governance" the following were included: V4.9-4.13, and V4.15. Under "Governance structures" the following were included: V1.2-V1.3; V8.1-V8.5; V9.1-V9.4; V9.6-V9.7; V9.9; V11.1-V11.5.

students, conditions of employment for staff, the language policy of the college, and the college's admissions policy – the national average score was 49 (out of 64) per college. Again there is some variation provincially. Three provinces (Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga) score below the national average on this indicator, with the Eastern Cape scoring only 38. The Western Cape scores an impressive 59.

With regard to "Financial governance" – which included questions on college appointment of an auditor and a financial officer, approval of the college's financial budget, and council determination of tuition and accommodation fees payable by students / employees – the national average score was 10 (out of 12) per college. Two of the nine provinces (Free State and KwaZulu-Natal) scored 9, while six of the provinces (Gauteng, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape, North West and Western Cape scores above the average. Mpumalanga, Northern Cape and Western Cape achieved the maximum number of points (12) on this indicator.

With regard to "Governance structure establishment" – which included questions on council establishment of an academic board and students' representative council, appointment of committees, the composition of the academic board, and the determination of the functions of and procedures at committee meetings – the national average score was 33 (out of 38) per college. There is little variation at the provincial level, scores ranging between 31 (Eastern Cape) and 35 (Western Cape).

Across the three sub-indicators (Policies, Plans and Procedures; Financial; and Governance Structure Establishment), the national score was 92 out of 114 – leaving much room for improvement. Across the three sub-indicators (Policies, Plans and Procedures; Financial; and Governance Structure Establishment), the greatest provincial variation occurs in the first, suggesting that the management of information in the areas that make up this sub-indicator needs to be significantly improved. At the aggregate level, we see that the Northern and Western Cape comply most strongly with the requirements of the FET Act of 2006, the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal most weakly.

Staff employment

The staff spreadsheet gauged the extent to which the college had indeed appropriated for itself the role of staff employer as required by the 2006 FET Colleges Act. "Staff" includes all staff of the college (lecturing, management and support), of whom only two – the Principal and his / her deputy – are management staff and appointed by the Member of the Executive Council (Education) in the province.

The profile of staff appointed by the college versus those appointed by the state indicates the colleges' levels of compliance with the FET Act of 2006. Nationally, an average of 141 staff members were found to have been appointed by the college (council), 144 by the Department of Education: 50% of staff, then, were appointed by the college (council). Since all staff except management were supposed to have been appointed by the college in the wake of the 2006 FET Act, there has been widespread non-compliance with this aspect of the legislation.

Blame for such non-compliance cannot, however, be laid at the door of individual colleges. Before the FET Act of 2006 was enacted, some colleges already had a large number of councilemployed staff – due in part to the state's failure to fill college posts. After the promulgation of the Act, the transfer of departmental staff to colleges was handled provincially rather than at college level. Staff were never fully transferred to colleges, moreover, because of failed negotiations between staff (unions) and the Department of Education over the issue. This resulted in colleges' retention of all the departmental staff (other than those who elected not to remain in the college) they had prior to the Act. Non-compliance with the staff transfer requirement, therefore, is a systemic rather than a college issue.

A further aggravating factor is that while, in the FET audit, most colleges classified department staff transferred to colleges as department staff, some colleges, depending on their interpretations of the request for information, may have classified these staff as college council employees. This means that while some colleges would have reported that the majority of their staff had been employed by their councils, most colleges will have reported half or fewer than half of their lecturing staff as being employed by their councils (Taylor, 2011).

The declaration arising from the 2010 FET Summit asserted that, henceforth, all *core* staff of the college would be appointed by the DHET, all non-core staff by the college. This distinction mirrors the situation in schools, where School Governing Bodies (SGBs) appoint what the Department of Basic Education would deem "supernumerary" staff to reduce teacher-student ratios in the classroom. The rationale behind the DHET's decision with regard to FET college staffing is presumably to allow colleges to appoint part-time staff drawn from industry on an ad hoc, modular basis as the need arises.

The irony is that college non-compliance with regard to staffing, whatever the reasons for it, may have simplified the staffing procedures that will follow from the DHET's new staffing policy.

College management

Finances

This section on the management of college finances deals with four areas: the number of colleges with Chief Financial Officers (CFOs); the sources of college funding; receipt of recapitalisation funds; and the number of qualified audits per college.

College appointment of CFOs

Although the FET Colleges Act of 2006 does not demand that colleges appoint CFOs – the requirement is that "The council of a public college must appoint a financial officer" (DoE, 2006: 32(2)) – the person responsible for managing college finances must perforce deal with huge and / or complex budgets and be well versed in the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) and Treasury regulations. The likelihood of a financial officer succeeding in this role is slight. For this reason, some colleges – notably those in the Western Cape – have appointed CFOs.

At the national level, only 14 of the 50 colleges have appointed a CFO. The widespread failure to appoint CFOs may have contributed to the high number of qualified audits reported by colleges over a three-year period (2007-2009). Provincially, only the Western Cape has seen fit to appoint CFOs to all six of its colleges. Mpumalanga has CFOs in two of its three colleges, while Gauteng has CFOs in three of its eight colleges. Three colleges (Free State, KwaZulu-Natal and Northern Cape) have not appointed a single CFO.

Sources of college funding

Whence colleges derive their funding is a key issue for college management. Since all colleges in the FET sector are (in different measures) state-funded, we would expect departmental funding to constitute the largest source of college income. This is assessed in each college in relation to other sources of income.

The question posed in the Management questionnaire concerned the percentage of income derived from sources other than: donations; money raised by the college; money raised through loans; income derived from investments; money from services rendered; student fees; and accommodation or other services. Nationally, 39% of college income was derived from sources other than those listed – which means that nearly three-fifths of college income came from the listed sources, which do not include a grant from the Department of Education. This accounts in large measure for the financial plight in which many colleges find themselves.

At the provincial level, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape and Gauteng, at 0%, 22% and 24% respectively, were significantly below the average on this indicator, while KwaZulu-Natal and North West, at 51% and 67% respectively, were significantly above the average.

Recapitalisation funding received, 2007-2009

One major source of income over the period 2007 to 2009 was the Recapitalisation Fund, set up by the state to inject colleges with much-needed capital to position them to become major players in the post-school education and training landscape. An excerpt from the 21 June 2006 Minutes of the Education and Recreation Select Committee of the Parliamentary Monitoring Group looking at the recapitalisation of FET colleges (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2006) is worth quoting from extensively in this regard, since it encapsulates the context within which the Recapitalisation Fund was established:

Ms Penny Vinjevold (Deputy Director-General: Further Education and Training (FET), DOE) addressed the Committee She explained that the recapitalisation of the Further Education and Training Colleges (FET Colleges) was aiming to address the problem of unemployed youth in the country. At present 87% of children were enrolled in secondary schools, and the FET colleges had the least enrolment in South Africa. The Department aimed to improve the quality of the programmes offered and increase the enrolment in the colleges. The old N1 to N6 programs were out of date and were not leading to employment. These programmes would be phased out from 2007. The FET colleges did have the capacity and infrastructure, Treasury had given R1,9 billion for the recapitalisation process and thirteen new programmes would be introduced in 2007.

Against this backdrop, this college report seeks to pit the recapitalisation (Recap) amount received by the college against the average amounts received by colleges nationally and provincially. From the Management table in Section 1 we see that the national average was R39,316,380. Only the Northern Cape received an average Recap significantly outside of the range between R 33m and R 47.6m, having been awarded a Recap amount of only R 12,8m. Since the Recapitalisation amounts received by colleges depended on the nature and strengths of their submissions for funding, however, the reasons for the differentials in the amounts received by colleges in a province and by the different provinces in the country are not strictly comparable.

Qualified audits per college, 2007 to 2009

An *unqualified* audit is issued when it is the opinion of a firm's auditors that its financial statements are fairly presented in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP). Such an audit does not necessarily mean that the firm is financially strong or that its future is favourable, since even financially weak firms generally receive unqualified audits (Financial Dictionary, 2010b). A *qualified* audit is issued when an auditor states that he/she is unable to render a full opinion about a company's finances, or a portion thereof, because the company's accounting does not meet with GAAP or because the information was for some reason incomplete. In other words, a qualified opinion states that the company's accounting is so inadequate that the auditor cannot render an opinion (Financial Dictionary, 2010b).

Nationally we see that, on average, each college in the country received a qualified audit in one of the three years (2007, 2008 and 2009) under review. This is a poor reflection on the accounting capacity of colleges, underscoring the need for a CFO to be appointed in each college. This said, the appointment of a CFO is no guarantee either of the financial soundness of a college or of its capacity to receive an unqualified audit – though a competent CFO is likely to be an asset to any organisation.

Provincially, only Gauteng and Mpumalanga colleges did not receive a qualified audit over the three-year period. Free State received an average of two qualified audits.

Reports

Each FET college, as per the 2006 Act, needs to submit a number of specified reports to its council on an annual basis. The measure here is of the composite number of management, student academic performance, financial audit and annual reports submitted to council over a three-year period (2007-2009). The college should score 22 to 24 points on this measure to be compliant (two points for the existence of hard evidence, one for soft evidence, and zero for no evidence). The annual report for 2009 may not have been produced yet at the time of the survey, in May / June 2010 – hence the small margin of error.

Nationally, we see that, on average, each college scored 19 out of 24 points on this measure. This suggests that colleges across the board are falling short of the requirement of the Act, if only by a small margin. Most of the provinces scored between 17 and 21 points on this indicator. Mpumalanga scored only 13, while the Northern Cape showed the strongest compliance, at 23.

Further Education and Training Management Information System (FETMIS) and Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

FET college management of information is one of the more critical aspects of its operational capacity. In an information age where the collection and storage of data are computerised, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Management Information Systems (MIS) are often synonymous. The FET audit ascertained that in practice the two are indeed inextricably linked – MIS relying entirely on the ICT platform in place in the college.

The Management instrument sought to ascertain which particular system was used in each of the 50 colleges. In the light of the fact that many colleges have traditionally used the COLTECH system, we briefly review this system here. On its web-site (COLTECH, 2010), COLTECH describes itself as having been established in 1990 to provide training to staff members of technical colleges (hence the name). In June 1991, COLTECH bought an administration system used by five colleges since 1990 with all rights. This system was revamped, and reference manuals and training manuals were written, leading to the implementation of the first COLTECH system in June 1992. Between 1992 and 2000 the number of users increased to more than 110 technical colleges, community colleges and schools. There are purportedly more than 30 colleges of education using the system.

The first measure used here reports on the system most commonly used nationally, provincially and in the college in question. Nationally, we see that the COLTECH system is most widely used; 28 of the 50 colleges use this system. MIS usage tends to be provincially determined. For example, in the Free State and KwaZulu-Natal all colleges use the COLTECH system, in the North West the DB 2000 system, while in the Eastern Cape, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and the Western Cape, almost all colleges uses the same, provincially-determined, system. In Gauteng, however, half the colleges use COLTECH, while the other half use other systems.

The questions in the Management instrument from which the second composite variable used here – Effectiveness of college usage of ICT (regardless of the name of the system) – were constructed have to do with e-mail connectivity, internet access, inter-campus connectivity, college-Department communication, web-site management, use of ICT in the teaching / learning process and in student support, and ICT support and maintenance. As in the case of the Compliance section in the Governance instrument reported on above, two points were awarded for the existence of hard evidence, one for soft / spoken evidence, and zero for no evidence of the characteristic. Nationally, each college scored, on average, 29 out of a possible 42 points on this measure – suggesting that colleges collectively have a long way to go in meeting the needs of their end users (whether staff, students, stakeholders, or their education line managers). The worst-performing provinces on this measure are the Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga and Limpopo – perhaps, not surprisingly, two of these being predominantly rural provinces – while the North West and Western Cape scored significantly above the national average, at 38 and 39 points respectively.

Skills development-related Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs)

The number of skills development-related MOUs between a college and external stakeholders (education and training institutions, Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) and industries) is in all likelihood a strong measure of the responsiveness of the college to the skills demands of the labour market. MOUs below are considered according to six categories:

- 1. Business
- 2. Local communities
- 3. SETAs
- 4. Other (non-SETA) education and training institutions
- 5. Local government departments and municipalities; and
- 6. Other institutions not yet mentioned.

Across the board, there are very few MOUs with external stakeholders at both national and provincial levels. Whether this is a function of incomplete reporting by colleges themselves or by

the fieldworkers who verified this reporting is not clear. No college has yet contradicted the profile established between May and July 2010 and reported on in the draft college reports.

The average number of MOUs with business at the national level is 2 per college, while the average number of MOUs with SETAs, Other education and training institutions, and Local government departments and municipalities is 1 per college. Nationally there are on average no MOUs with local communities or other (unspecified) institutions. Particularly noteworthy, from an FET Summit policy perspective, is the paucity of MOUs with SETAs – one of the key indicators of college success as identified at the FET Summit itself.² In total, there are on average 5 MOUs per college with external stakeholders at the national level.

The provinces with MOUs significantly above this number are the North West and the Western Cape, both of which boast an average of 11 MOUs with stakeholders. The worst-performing province in this regard is the Free State, with an average of 3.

Staff profile

Profile of academic staff

Race and gender

Section 7 of the 2006 FET Colleges Act specifies that lecturers and support staff be employed with due regard to: ability; equity; redress of past injustices; and representivity. Three of the four have a particular bearing on race, gender and disability.

In 2002 (Powell & Hall, 2004), 54% of lecturing staff nationally were black, while 46% were white. While this reflects an improvement on the 1998 profile, where only 39% of the lecturing staff were black, it nonetheless paints a skewed picture of racial distribution in a country where nine out of ten persons are black. The profile in 2010, 16 years into democracy, reveals that 77% of lecturing staff are black – as against a black student population in 2010 of 96%. While 77% reflects a highly commendable 23 percentage point improvement within an eight-year period, it continues to reflect a lack of black representation in the staff complement.

The gender profile is somewhat less encouraging. In 2002 (Powell & Hall, 2004), 47% of lecturing staff were female. That percentage has not changed in eight years. Attempts will need to be made to grow the female quotient to 52% – the percentage of females in the general population. The odds, it may be argued, are stacked against women in a largely technical arena. Engineering and business studies have dominated N-programme provision since inception, and five of the NC(V) programme areas – Management, Building & civil construction, Engineering & related design, Electrical infrastructure construction, and Mechatronics – are traditionally maledominated preserves. But as the student enrolment profile in universities has shown (Cosser with Sehlola, 2009), while 29% of male students who were in grade 12 in 2005 enrolled in business / commerce programmes (rather than in other programme areas) in universities in 2006, 32% of female students did so. This suggests that the business-oriented programmes in the NC(V) – Office Administration; Marketing; and Finance, Economics & Accounting – as well as programmes such as Information Technology & Computer Science, Primary Agriculture, Hospitality, Tourism, and Education, Training & Development should be able to attract more

² The Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Blade Nzimande, made an impassioned plea at the Summit both to SETAs and to industry to forge partnerships with the colleges to offer qualification programmes which would be SETA-accredited.

female students. And if more female students enter these fields, the lecturing staff component should follow suit.

The provinces with black academic staff complements above the 77% national average are Eastern Cape (86%), KwaZulu-Natal (87%), Limpopo (84%), and Mpumalanga (80%). Those with black staff percentages – and bear in mind that "black" throughout this report *includes* coloured people – significantly below the national percentage are the Western Cape (54%), Northern Cape (62%) and, more surprisingly, Free State (64%). Transformation in terms of racial equity will need to become a priority in these three provinces.

From a gender perspective, we see that female academic staff are in the majority in only two of the provinces: the Eastern Cape (52%); and the Western Cape (57%). The other provinces have female staff complements of between 41% and 49%. Encouragingly, in every province more than two out of five academic staff are women.

<u>Age</u>

The staff profile table indicates the average age of lecturing staff across the college sector. An average age of above 55 would seem to be too high, suggesting that no new blood is coming into the college and that skills transfer to the younger generation is not occurring. Older staff, moreover, may not be the best placed persons to teach on the NC(V), some college principals suggesting that older staff struggle to appropriate new teaching methodologies.

From the profiles we see that, nationally, the average age of lecturing staff in 2010 is 39. The average age of lecturing staff in 2002 was 42 (Powell & Hall, 2004). The average age of staff has therefore hovered around the 40-year mark over the past 8 years. This suggests that there has been a steady influx of new staff to replace ageing or retiring staff.

Provincially, the figure ranges between 36 (KwaZulu-Natal) and 45 (Western Cape), which therefore has staff with more experience in its colleges than do the other provinces. These figures suggest an equitable distribution of younger and older staff across the system.

An average age of around 40, however, masks some of the dynamics that may be operating in colleges (Taylor, 2011). There are often very young and inexperienced staff at one end of the age continuum (frequently college graduates with no work experience and no experience in their field of training) while at the other end there are older and sometimes retired persons with work experience who have started teaching at colleges (this is often the case with engineering staff). With staff sitting at the extremes of the age continuum, average age comes in at about 40. Many good lecturers in the 35-50 range have left colleges. It is this group that tends to be more experienced.

Qualifications

The National Business Initiative report of 2004 (Powell & Hall, 2004) deemed lecturing staff with less than a diploma to be un- or under-qualified, and therefore considered staff with a diploma to be qualified. However, in this report our benchmark for qualified staff is staff with a degree or higher diploma. The benchmark here is the National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa (the NPFTED – DoE, 2007), which specifies that all school-teachers are to be degreed. Such a requirement would seem to be equally, if not more,

important in the context of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) at the FET (i.e., grade 10-12-equivalent) level *and above*, given that FET colleges now fall within the higher education and training band by virtue of their inclusion within the DHET.

In 2002, the percentage of lecturing staff with less than a degree / higher diploma was 54%. In 2010, we see that, nationally, 57% of lecturing staff have less than a degree / higher diploma, which indicates not only that there has been a regression in the qualifications levels of staff but that nearly half of all lecturing staff nationally are not deemed qualified by the NPFTED standard. The highest percentages of under-qualified staff are in KwaZulu-Natal (68%) and Limpopo (62%), the lowest in the Western Cape (45%) and the Free State (46%). Across the board, universities of technology in particular will have to work with colleges to ensure that their staff achieve higher mean rates of qualification.

Qualification level is not the only measure of lecturer effectiveness, however. Staff experience in industry and teaching experience in the college are equally important measures in determining lecturer qualification for the job. In this regard, the national profile reveals that 74% of lecturers in 2010 had three or more years' experience in industry, and that 58% had three or more years' experience in college teaching (in their present college). Provincial figures in this regard are not included in the profile but are available on request.

Staff ratios

Lecturer-student ratio

It is a truism that the smaller the class, the more individual attention students receive, the higher their academic performance should be. A consideration of the lecturer-student ratio in colleges is therefore important. In 2002 (Powell & Hall, 2004), the lecturer-student ratio was 1 : 20. In 2010, the ratio is 1 : 32. This means that class sizes have increased significantly over the decade to a ratio approximating the norm proposed for the schooling system (between 1 : 35 and 1 : 40). Against this schooling norm, the provinces on the whole fare favourably; only in the North West is the ratio (1 : 47) cause for concern.

An essentially favourable lecturer : student ratio in the college system does suggest, however, that student outcomes should be much better than they are.

Lecturer-support staff ratio

The ratio of lecturing to support staff may be a measure of how much emphasis an institution places on the teaching / learning process. A strong lecturing staff contingent may convey this message. At the same time, an under-staffed support structure may place undue administrative burdens on lecturing staff, impacting negatively on teaching time. Balance is therefore required. In 2002 (Powell & Hall, 2004), the lecturer-support staff ratio nationally was 1.9 : 1 (or 65 : 35, in percentage terms). By 2010 this had shifted to a ratio of 60% : 40%, indicating a slight shift towards a larger administrative staff complement over the decade.

The most unbalanced ratios are to be found in the North West, where there are 3 administrative staff to support every 7 lecturers, and in Limpopo and Gauteng, where the ratios are 62 : 38 and 64 : 36 respectively.

While the data seem to indicate a favourable lecturer to support staff ratio, however, this does not necessarily mean that lecturers are well supported. In a college environment lecturers do not have direct administrative support. While there may appear to be a sufficiently large number of support staff, however, given that such a complement includes staff in central offices (managers, PAs and administrators) and at campus level (campus managers, receptionists, and grounds and hostel staff), lecturing staff are largely responsible for their own administration (Taylor, 2011). Time spent out of the classroom, then, is likely to be devoted to the very high administrative load attached to offering NC(V) programmes.

Full-time to part-time lecturer ratio

According to Hall (1999), we would expect – based on the large number of instructional offerings – to see a range of full-time versus part-time lecturing staff in colleges. Ninety-three percent of lecturing staff in KwaZulu-Natal technical colleges in 1998 were on full-time contracts – which for Hall pointed to the high cost of employing part-time staff.

With the introduction of the NC(V), however, the provisioning dynamics have changed. In 2010, the national ratio of full- to part-time lecturing staff was 88 : 12, still heavily skewed towards full-time staff – but hardly surprising given that colleges are funded to provide full-time NC(V) programmes. This figure may not be completely reliable, however, since at least one college appears to have assigned the labels "full-time" and "part-time" differently. Thus in the North West there is reportedly a 50 : 50 ratio, in the Western Cape a 78 : 22 full-time to part-time staff ratio. But while in the latter case the ratio might well reflect the student enrolment distribution by programme type (more than half the students in the Western Cape are enrolled in programmes other than the NC(V)), this is certainly not the case in the North West. For the most part, there appears to be a strong correlation between full-time to part-time staff complements and student enrolment distribution.

When colleges do provide learnership and skills programmes they usually contract in staff, predominantly on a part-time basis, to offer them. Such staff are remunerated from the funds received for the particular programmes being provided (Taylor, 2011).

The FET Summit provision for colleges to appoint non-core staff may be interpreted as an invitation to colleges to expand their programme provision through the appointment of part-time staff. However, the funding for such appointments would clearly have to come either from colleges themselves or through partnerships with SETAs and the private sector.

College-SETA and college-private sector partnerships increasingly became a core dimension of the programme mix, particularly in the more "settled" colleges, in the years (2004-2006) immediately preceding the onset of the NC(V) dispensation. In other words, colleges embraced demand-led, unit standard-based, NQF-aligned provisioning (learnerships, NQF-aligned qualifications, skills programmes, and the like) in partnership with external stakeholders. Such delivery was largely driven by contracted, part-time teaching staff – almost a separate provisioning stream – and human resource departments out of necessity had to adapt their systems to facilitate the recruitment and appointment of suitable staff. This state of institutional adjustment effectively came to a halt as a result of the all-consuming demands of NC(V)-alignment and –implementation (Garisch, 2011).

Teaching load

The issue of teaching load explains the staff complement, the extent to which lecturing staff are over- or under-extended, and the extent to which staff can give individual attention to students. In most cases, lecturer time is devoted to teaching (theory and / or practicals), lesson preparation, marking, and general administrative duties. Nationally, the average number of periods per week spent on teaching theory and running practicals is 20 – which in a 40-hour week leaves half lecturers' time for non-contact duties (preparation, marking, and administrative responsibilities). While this would seem to reflect a balanced allocation of time and human resources, however, the inordinately large administrative burden imposed by the NC(V) probably, as indicated above, accounts for the large majority of this non-contact time.

The Northern Cape is the only province to devote a disproportionately large block of time (on average, 28 periods per week) to teaching theory and running practicals. Staff in KwaZulu-Natal appear to have the lightest load, at an average of 17 periods per week. These numbers depend, however, on the nature and quality of provision in the classroom and may, therefore, portend little.

A limitation of this indicator lies in the fact that teaching periods are of different lengths – some 60 minutes, some 35 minutes, and some possibly of other lengths – depending on the post level. It would therefore have made more sense for the instrument to have asked colleges to indicate the number of *hours* taught per week.

Staff disruptions to teaching / learning

Staff disruptions are a sign of staff dissatisfaction with an aspect of their jobs, which impacts negatively on productivity, morale, the teaching / learning process, and student behaviour (the ripple effect of staff disruption). Disruptions may be symptomatic of management problems, governance concerns, or other issues. Staff disruptions impact negatively on the image of the institution, which is likely to affect student enrolment decisions. Even *one* staff disruption per year, of whatever nature and whatever the cause, is detrimental to an institution.

Nationally, every college on average experienced 1 staff disruption over the three-year period (2008-2010). However, this figure masks the fact that only half of the colleges experienced at least one staff disruption over the period. Only three of the nine provinces (Eastern Cape, Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal) on average experienced staff disruptions, which, by virtue of the number of colleges, issues in the national average of 1. Nevertheless, staff disruption in a college clearly impacts on teaching and learning, systemically reflecting poorly on the FET college sector as a whole.

Academic staff loss and gain

The anecdotal sense of the writing team from visits to the colleges – collectively, covering in the region of twenty colleges – was that there was a net *loss* of lecturing staff over the three-year period. However, the data firmly contradict this.

In terms of average net loss / gain over the three-year period under investigation, we see that at national level there was an average gain of 46 lecturing staff. Limpopo experienced the largest net gain, at an average 97, followed by Gauteng (71). The smallest net gains were in Mpumalanga (26) and the North West (31). Significantly, no college experienced a net loss of staff.

At the level of staff turnover, nevertheless, we calculate from the national profile figures that, across the three years, an average of 7 staff left each college per trimester; and if we compare these losses with the average number of lecturing staff per college (167 nationally), we see that staff turnover amounted to 4% per trimester.³

The main cause of staff loss – resignation – is reported in Table 1.3 in Section 1 of this report – on the assumption, made at the instrument design stage, that there would have been a net *loss*, not gain, of staff given the changes in employment conditions of staff following the promulgation of the FET Act of 2006. The reasons for net gain have not been probed, but are likely to be due to the need to appoint staff to teach on the NC(V) programmes in addition to the N-programmes, as well as to replace staff losses.

Resignation is the main reason for staff loss in 7 of the 9 provinces. There are missing data for the Northern Cape; and Resignation shares top spot with Death in the Eastern Cape.

Academic staff development, 2009

Academic staff development is important not only for enhancing lecturers' knowledge and understanding of their areas of expertise but for its impact on student academic performance. Where new curricula (for example, the NC(V)) are introduced, it is imperative that lecturers learn not only *what* to teach but *how* to teach the new programme.

Proportion of staff trained

Deciding what an acceptable level of training is will depend on the training model (cascaded down from the Department of Education) and the qualifications of staff, as well as the reduced need for training this implies. At the national level, we see that, on average, 65% of staff were trained across the entire college system in 2009.⁴ For two-thirds of lecturing staff to have undergone some form of staff development represents a high level of training – a level nevertheless incommensurate with the poor academic results of college students across the system, as reported on below.

Provincially, the training rate is significantly lower in the Northern Cape (28%) and significantly higher in the North West, which claimed a 100% staff training rate. This figure is likely to be incorrect, however, which means the national training rate will be slightly lower than 65%.

³ Total loss of staff over three years = 61. Divided by 3 to obtain an annual average, this is 20.3; and divided by 3 again to obtain a trimester average, this is 6.8 (rounded off to 7). ⁴ Data for this and the part coloridation (of the part of the par

⁴ Data for this and the next calculation (of the average number of days spent on staff training per annum) came from two sources: the FET audit, which accounts for the data for 34 of the 50 colleges; and the FETMIS database, which accounts for the data for the remaining 16 colleges.

Time spent on training

Nationally, each academic staff member trained spent on average a total of 10 days on training. But since the North West claimed to have spent an average of 56 days on training per staff member – 46 percentage points above the next highest percentage (and therefore also likely to be incorrect), the actual national training rate will be much lower than this.

Again, the acceptability of the training rate figures depends on the type and purpose of the training.

Proportion of staff expenditure on staff development

Nationally, the audit revealed that, on average, 1.4% of colleges' total expenditure went on academic staff development over the 2009/10 period (7 colleges did not supply data for this calculation). It is difficult to pronounce on the acceptability of this figure; but given that companies pay 1% of their annual *payroll* to the SETA under which they fall, the staff development expenditure figure would seem to be acceptable.

The impact of staff development, however, is not easily measurable: one needs to control for other factors that may explain improvements in staff performance. But where there are obvious benefits of development that lead, for example, to staff attainment of qualifications, staff promotions, improved assessment and moderation practices, and improved student outcomes that are demonstrably due to staff training, such development would seem to be justified.

In line with previous distortions, North West claims to have spent 7.6% of its annual expenditure on staff training – against a backdrop of a range across the other provinces between 0.6% (Free State) and 1.6% (Eastern Cape).

Student profile

Demography

<u>Gender</u>

While in 2002 (Powell & Hall, 2004) a total of 40% of students enrolled in colleges were female, by 2010 this figure had risen to 52% – which is exactly representative of the proportion of females in the general population. The implications of this shift at the systemic level are enormous: females are now fully represented in the college sector. However, this figure masks differences that may obtain at campus, programmatic and course levels.

The lowest proportion of female students is in Gauteng (45%), the highest in KwaZulu-Natal (56%).

<u>Race</u>

From a race perspective, 96% of students nationally are black, which is higher by 6% than the percentage of black people in the general population and in fact *over*-representative of the black population. The effect of this is the displacement of the 2002 figure of 17% of white students in the college sector (Powell & Hall, 2004) into other institutional types (presumably universities) and therefore, ironically, the continued marginalisation of black African learners.

The highest percentage of black students is in Limpopo (100%), the lowest in the Western Cape (90%), which is the only province whose enrolment figure for black students is perfectly aligned with the proportion of black people in the general population.

Disability

With regard to disability, the Code of Good Practice on the Employment of People with Disabilities (DoL, 2002) provides a framework for the recruitment and selection of persons with disabilities which would apply equally within the FET college sector as within all other workplaces.

Nationally, 0.2% of students enrolled over the 2008-2010 period were reportedly disabled. This percentage is based on data from only 24 of the 50 colleges, however, and is therefore unreliable.

Four of the 8 provinces (Free State, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo) recorded 0% of students enrolled as disabled. The highest enrolments of disabled students are reportedly in the North West (0.5%) and Western Cape (0.9%).

<u>Age</u>

The age of South African technical college / FET college students has traditionally set them apart from their international counterparts. Whereas students in the Australian TAFE system, for example, span age categories across the traditional student and working-age spectrum (58% of TAFE graduates in 1999 were older than 24 - NC(V)ER, 1999: 40), South African students are on average far younger. Thus, for example, in 2002 (Powell & Hall, 2004) the largest proportion of students (42%) were 20 to 24 years old, followed by 15 to 19 year olds (23%), 25 to 29 year olds (18%), 30 to 34 year olds (9%), 35 to 40 year olds (5%) and 41-plus-year-olds (4%).

The 2010 cohort reveals that, nationally, three-quarters (76%) of students were under 24 at the time of the survey in May / June. Fifty-six percent of students fell into the 20 to 24 year age category – an increase of 14 percentage points over the 2002 figure. From a comparative perspective – comparing the 2010 data with the NBI (Powell & Hall, 2004) distribution – South African college students are on average getting younger: whereas in 2002, 36% of students were older than 24, in 2010 only 24% of students across the FET college system are older than 24. One of the greatest challenges confronting the sector is to attract working-age persons into colleges to upgrade their skills and for colleges not to be seen as the exclusive preserve of school leavers. This is not to gainsay the importance of the sector as a stepping stone to university study for those pursuing technical and / or technological subjects, but only to flag the importance of developing an older cohort of student workers through a strengthened relationship between colleges and industry.

The highest percentage of students younger than 25 is recorded in Limpopo, where more than two-thirds of students enrolled (68%) are between 20 and 24 years old. There is no province in which more than 30% of students are older than 24. The Western Cape is home to the highest percentage (29%) of under 20-year-olds – suggesting that only in this province is the policy of admitting students from grade 9 a working proposition.

Home province

The home province of students is an important variable because it indicates the extent to which students choose, or have, to migrate to access FET college learning. The assumption behind FET institutional planning is that all students should be able, and want, to enrol in colleges in their home provinces. However, in the 2010 profile we see that almost 1 in 10 students nationally (9%) migrated to other provinces to access a college education. Without probing the reasons for this, we can speculate that student migration is a sub-set of the larger migration patterns we see in the country, where large numbers of the population migrate from rural to more urbanised provinces, particularly where there are greater perceived employment prospects. Thus, for example, a previous HSRC study (Kok, Gelderblom, Oucho & Van Zyl, 2005) has shown that while the Western Cape and Gauteng are net importers of people, the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and the northern provinces contiguous with Gauteng (the North West, Limpopo and Mpumalanga) are net exporters of people.

From the 32 college profiles that provided the FET audit data for this calculation, we see that the Kok et al. finding is indeed borne out in the Gauteng figures: a massive 29% of students enrolled in colleges in the province hailed from other provinces. The KwaZulu-Natal profile contradicts the Kok et al. finding, however: according to the FET audit, 10% of students studying in the province's colleges came from other provinces to do so. Similarly, 15% of Mpumalanga students came from other provinces – the only data likely to be fairly reliable, since all 3 colleges in the province keep migration data. Because of the high proportion of missing data, then, the findings as a whole, and particularly the national findings, should be treated with caution.

Financial support

From a national planning perspective it is clearly very important for the DHET to be able to plan its successive budgets according to the current profile of students accessing study loans and bursaries. Hence the focus in this report on National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) funding of students. Such an exercise also throws light upon the financial situations of students and their parents' / guardians' income levels. The increased use of NSFAS support may be indicative of the extent to which information about student support is made available to students and potential students in colleges and in their communities.

Collection of data on student financial support is also important for the college in terms of its request for annual subsidy for student fees from the Department of Education.

From the 2010 FET audit we see that 58% of students nationally (N = 22 colleges only) were not recipients of financial support. If this figure is indeed representative of the country as a whole, it underscores the significance of the DHET decision to fund all final-year financially needy FET college students enrolled in 2011. Of the 42% of students who did receive support, 36% nationally received support from the NSFAS, 6% from non-NSFAS sources. A calculation from statistics in NSFAS (NSFAS, 2010) and DBE (2010) reveals that 53,537 of the 420,475 students enrolled in FET colleges in 2009 received NSFAS funding (13% of the students enrolled in that year), which would suggest that the NSFAS-funded student figures from the FET audit are hugely inflated.

By way of comparison, a calculation from statistics in the same two sources (NSFAS, 2010; DBE, 2010) reveals that 138,235 of the 837,779 students enrolled in universities in 2009 (17%) received NSFAS funding. Very similar proportions of FET college and university students were therefore recipients of NSFAS financial support in 2009.

Only 13% of students in the Free State are reportedly recipients of financial aid (6% of which comes from the NSFAS), while in the Northern Cape 72% of students receive funding, 54% from NSFAS. The province with the highest proportion of NSFAS-funded students, according to the audit, is Limpopo (70%). As indicated, however, these data are likely to be inaccurate because of the inability of the majority of colleges (28 of the 50) to respond – itself a serious indictment of college management information systems.

Student disruptions to teaching / learning

Student disruptions may have various causes: symptoms of dissatisfaction with certain aspects of college management, administration, or teaching, including finance, fees, meals and accommodation; first-year students' social events; orientation and initiation practices; or unhappiness with lecturers – to name some of the more common ones. Or there may be external causes, such as service delivery protests in the community – which upsets learning by virtue of student involvement in such protests or the intimidation of students by those members of the community who are protesting.

As in the case of staff disruptions, nationally every college experienced, on average, 1 student disruption over the three-year period (2007-2009). Of course there may have been more disruptions in the second semester of 2010, particularly coinciding with the school teachers' strike. Audit data were collected between May and July 2010.

The impact of such disruptions on student academic performance is incalculable, but is likely to be large.

Only one province – the Western Cape – did not, on average, experience any student disruptions over the period. Limpopo and the Northern Cape each experienced an average of 2, while the remaining provinces each experienced an average of 1 disruption between 2008 and 2010.

Student enrolments by programme type

In 2002 (Powell & Hall, 2004), 86% of students enrolled in colleges were enrolled in N-programmes, the balance (14%) in non-N (i.e., non-accredited) programmes. In 2010, by contrast, 58% of students nationally were enrolled in NC(V) programmes, 32% in N-programmes, and the balance (10%) in other programmes (adult learning, skills, learnership, and NIC programmes).
The highest percentages of students enrolled in NC(V) programmes were in Limpopo (87%), Mpumalanga (78%) and the Eastern Cape (65%) – two of them with relatively large rural populations and lower levels of industrialisation than Gauteng, the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal (all of which recorded NC(V) enrolments below the national average). The highest proportions of enrolments in NATED (N) programmes were recorded in Gauteng (48%), the Northern Cape (46%), and the Free State (44%), concomitantly lower enrolments in N-programmes being recorded in Limpopo (12%), Mpumalanga (18%) and the Eastern Cape (26%). The Western Cape boasted the highest enrolments in Other programmes (learnerships, skills programmes, etc.) – higher by 20 percentage points than the provinces with the second highest Other programme enrolments – KwaZulu-Natal and the Northern Cape (both 11%).

Expansion of the FET college sector is henceforth to be driven by a Programme Qualifications Mix (PQM) approach (FET Summit Task Team 2, 2010). The proposal reads as follows:

This proposal assumes that there is a need for institutional diversity, that not all colleges will provide the same programmes and that the exact programme and qualification mix will be determined based on an agreed upon set of criteria One consequence of this diversity will be that individual colleges may develop areas of special programmatic expertise. In these areas they may well offer a spread of programmes across a range of related occupational areas and across more than one level on the NQF. They may also develop more structured partnerships with relevant SETAs. This will enable learners to progress from one occupational level to the next at the same college. Such colleges may well form programmatic partnerships with relevant universities of technology and other universities.

The enrolment profiles depicted in Section 1, and later in Section 3, of this report provide clear guidelines for how differentiation by programme offering and thence expansion of the college sector might proceed.

Student exit from the college

The FET audit revealed that very few colleges nationally – only 18 out of 50 (N = 44) – keep exit data on students. The highest proportion of colleges keeping student exit data was in the Western Cape, two-thirds of whose colleges kept student exit data, followed by Limpopo, 4 of whose 7 colleges kept student exit data. This lack of key data renders claims about the employability of FET college graduates highly unreliable. Since so few colleges actually keep student exit data, however, these figures are hardly representative.

The key finding here is the paucity of colleges keeping data on student destinations – an important task for colleges particularly in the context of unsubstantiated claims about the employability of FET college graduates.

Efficiency rates, 2007-2009

The importance of efficiency indicators cannot be overemphasized: they provide an indication of how efficient a college is in terms of student performance – the key responsibility of colleges. The standard of a college is judged by the academic performance of its students.

The efficiency indicators reported below refer to the throughput rates of students in the colleges over a three-year period (2007-2009). The throughput rate is calculated by dividing the number of students who pass an examination by the number of students who enrolled for the programme for which the examination constitutes the summative assessment. In others words, unlike pass rates, which divide the number of students who pass as a percentage of the number of students who sat for the examination, the throughput rate includes those students who dropped out of the course during the trimester, semester, or year.

The throughput rates discussed here do not trace a cohort of students from one year of study to another – which is ideally the best way to track student performance. Rather, the rates measure throughput in the course of each of the three years and then across the three-year period (that is, the average over the period).

Throughput rates are reported by programme type – that is: NATED, NC(V), and "Other". The latter type includes general education, learnerships, skills programmes, adult learning programmes, national introductory courses (NICs), and "other" programmes not mentioned. Disaggregations are not provided here, since the focus is on headcount enrolments and not student enrolments across the different courses that make up a programme (where there would obviously be duplications of headcount enrolments).

The data below are not likely to be completely reliable. Their unreliability may be a function of various factors, five being the following. First, the national examinations section of the Department of Education may not have furnished colleges with examination results timeously. Second, there may have been poor moderation and quality assurance of data. Third, missing data in the tables in Section 1 may be attributable to lack of administrative capacity in the college supplying the data. Fourth, many colleges supplied data on student enrolments but not on student passes. A zero or lack of response may have been interpreted by the fieldworker as missing data, notwithstanding careful re-checking of the data against the Profiles and Efficiency Indicators questionnaire after the data capturing phase. And fifth, with regard to NC(V) throughput rates, not all colleges interpreted "passed" as students who passed all seven subjects in the NC(V); anecdotal evidence suggests that some colleges may have interpreted "passed" as "passed five subjects".

Another difficulty lies in the interpretation of data for the calculation of the throughput rate for NATED programmes. At the time of the research the NATED programmes were being phased out, hence the drastic decrease in numbers in the years 2007-2009. In 2009 some colleges had no new intake: the students who enrolled did so for the purposes of completing incomplete qualifications. Because large numbers of these students were not registered for full qualifications, potential certifications were not considered. Such colleges, for statistical purposes, counted only those students who were registered for a full qualification, for example, all four subjects on the same level. It appears that not all colleges interpreted certification statistics in the same manner.

With these provisos, we see that, at the macro level, students enrolled for N-programmes perform, on average, better than students enrolled for NC(V) programmes, and that students enrolled for "Other" programmes perform much better than students in the other two programme types. The national average throughput rate for N-programmes is 47%, for NC(V) programmes it is 30%, and for "Other" programmes it is 66%. Expressed differently, for every 100 students who enrolled for Other programmes, 34 either failed or dropped out; for every 100 students who enrolled for N-programmes, 53 either failed or dropped out; and for every 100 students who enrolled for NC(V) programmes, a massive 70 students failed or dropped out. The throughput rates for N-Programmes and NC(V) programmes are alarmingly low, the rate for Other

programmes significantly higher. These are not flattering figures by any standards, and point to the amount of work FET colleges need to do to persuade their line managers and their clients alike (students, their parents / guardians, and the nation at large) that the colleges are, at worst, functional.

A comparison between these rates and those of students seven years ago, in 2002 (Powell & Hall, 2004) – when the NC(V) programme was of course not offered – reveals that the throughput rate of students enrolled for N-programmes at the post-N3 level in 2002 was 57%, at the FET level (i.e., N1, N2 and N3) 47%. The 2009 throughput rate of 45% is marginally lower than in 2002 at the FET level and significantly lower at the combined level (i.e., N1 through N6), where the rate was 52%.

While it is not possible to make a direct comparison between the FET college and schooling sectors – since the Department of Education publishes examination results for matriculants and not for all students enrolled in grades 10 to 12 (DoE, 2010) – it is nevertheless instructive to compare the throughput rate of students enrolled for the NC(V) in 2008 (the latest results available) with that of students enrolled for grade 12. Such a comparison reveals that while the throughput rate of FET college students enrolled for NC(V) programmes in 2008 was 28%, the throughput rate of those enrolled in grade 12 in schools was 58% – more than double that of college students. There is, proverbially, no comparison between the results of students of the two sectors.

At the provincial level, we see, within the NATED (N) programme, very mixed performance over the three-year period (2007-2009), with the throughput rate of some provinces increasing (Eastern Cape, Gauteng), the rate of some provinces decreasing (Limpopo, Mpumalanga, and Western Cape), and the rate of the remaining provinces either fluctuating (KwaZulu-Natal) or remaining steady (Free State, North West). There are no data for any of the three years for the Northern Cape.

Within the NC(V), there is a strong upward trend, performance steadily improving from 2007 to 2009 in all but one province (Gauteng). Within Other programmes, there is again very mixed performance, with fluctuating throughput rates (Eastern Cape, Gauteng), decreasing rates (KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo), rates remaining stead (Western Cape) and rates increasing (Mpumalanga).

The mixed performance of provinces in two of the three programme types (NATED and Other programmes) over the three-year period suggests that there is little stability in the system. Where some stability appears to have set in is within the NC(V), performance having improved steadily since the inception of the programme. The vast disparities between the provinces in terms of the academic performance of their students over the three years underscores the inherent volatility of the system: in all three programmes, performance ranges from 30% throughput (Eastern Cape) to 63% throughput (Gauteng), within the NC(V) from 19% (Free State) to 50% (Gauteng), and within Other programmes from 42% (Gauteng) to 81% (Eastern Cape). It is difficult not to be sceptical about the accuracy of these figures, particularly given Gauteng's ascendancy within NATED and the NC(V) and rock-bottom performance within Other programmes. Clearly more research is needed to verify the accuracy of the data and to ascertain the reasons for the very mixed performance of provinces across the different programme types.

National and provincial performance in summary

FET college performance against the indicators used in this report has been mixed. The sector has performed well on a number of indicators; this summary will focus on those areas needing improvement.

From a provincial perspective, there are similarities between the provinces on certain measures and divergences between them on others. On the whole there are more similarities than differences.

Governance

The sector has performed poorly in terms of gender equity in college council composition and the breadth of competence of councillors in terms of the requirements of the Act. Generally there has been inadequate compliance with the Act, particularly in terms of policies, plans and procedures and the establishment of governance structures. The issue of college staff employment is clearly something the DHET needs to resolve with a minimum of delay and unnecessarily protracted bureaucratic processes.

From a governance perspective, provinces are similar in terms of: race and gender representation on college councils; the age and qualification levels of councillors; the collective competence within councils; the extent of council meeting attendance; and financial and governance structure compliance with the FET Act of 2006. Provinces differ on: the average number of council members trained for their council portfolios; policy, plan and procedure compliance with the FET Act of 2006; and overall compliance with the FET Act of 2006. It would seem, then, that council members across the country have been similarly appointed and briefed in terms of the nominal discharge of their responsibilities, but that their oversight of college compliance with various specifications of the FET Act of 2006 in all areas other than financial sets them apart from one another.

Certain provinces, as we have seen, stand out on the compliance measure (the Northern and Western Cape), while others (the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga) lag behind. The challenge is to ensure full compliance with the Act, through provincial structures established for the purpose and / or through a quality development process of the kind implemented by The Learning and Skills Improvement Service in England (see LSIS, 2011).

Management

Though there has been compliance with certain financial requirements of the Act, the number of qualified audits across the system and inappropriate expenditure suggest that CFOs should be appointed as soon as possible and in those colleges (the vast majority) that do not have them. College management also needs to be improved, whether in terms of the management of information (including the submission of reports to college councils), the management of the ICT platform, or the establishment and implementation of student graduate and non-completer tracking devices. The paucity of skill development-related MOUs with stakeholders suggests the need for partnerships to be built with a far wider range of players and on a much more intensive basis, especially with SETAs.

From a financial management perspective, there is mixed performance by provinces. College appointment of CFOs differs widely across the system, though the differences do not necessarily follow provincial lines: they do in the Western Cape, but do not in Gauteng. Provinces diverge strongly on the issue of sources of funding, with varying degrees of reliance on the different sources of funding spelled out in the Act. They differ also in terms of their colleges' use of ICT – a key finding to be addressed in the short term. For there is no doubt that, with the speed of technology change, provinces like the Eastern Cape and Limpopo could easily be left behind unless their ICT infrastructure and usage are dramatically improved. The management of information depends centrally on the ICT platform in place and on the availability of skilled human resources to make optimal use of it.

Where provinces are more similar is in the number of qualified audits their colleges have received, in college submission of reports to their councils, and in the number of skills development-related MOUs their colleges have with stakeholders. This last area will be critical to college sustainability in a context of increasing government pressure for training agreements to be struck with SETAs and industry players, particularly within the ambit of the local economy.

Staff

The two main issues with respect to staff are academic and industry qualifications, which need immediate and ongoing attention through the development of partnerships with Universities of Technology for this purpose, and a normalising of conditions of service to preclude the need for industrial action.

Besides the odd anomaly, there are for the most part strong similarities between the provinces in terms of the profiles of their colleges' staff. From a demographic perspective all provinces except the Western Cape have similar proportions of black and female lecturing staff in their colleges, while in terms of age and qualifications there are no striking differences between staff across the country. The ratios of lecturers to students, of lecturing to support staff, and of full- to part-time staff do not, but for the anomaly of North West, differ markedly across the provinces. Nor do the extent of staff disruptions to the teaching / learning process. Resignation is the key reason for staff loss in all colleges across all years (2008-2010). Retirement does not feature as a reason for staff departure from colleges.

The differences between provinces are evident in the teaching loads of staff – which is probably as much as anything a function of the type of programme taught – and in the nature and extent of academic staff development. In the context of the massive under-qualification of lecturing staff across the country, the DHET will need to monitor which staff are trained, what they are trained in, and the duration of that training. This is arguably the most critical aspect to be attended to in the short to medium term if the academic performance of students is to improve.

Students

There are three main challenges to confront with respect to students.

First, the age range of students needs to be broadened such that FET colleges are not seen as the preserve of school-leavers. Colleges have a key role to play in the general up-skilling of the population as a whole.

Second, the issue of student financial support needs urgent attention. The progress already made in this regard – including a review of the NSFAS and the extension of free education to final-year FET college students – needs to be extended to include the introduction of mechanisms to make college education and training affordable for students. These would include partnerships with the SETAs and with targeted enterprises more specifically. The German model, in which companies offer employment to unskilled school-leavers and then train them up, both through FET colleges and on-the-job, for productive employment is certainly a model the DHET should be considering.

And third, the issue of student disruptions needs to be addressed. Solving the issue of funding may go some way towards alleviating this problem; but there are other, legitimate, student grievances that need to be addressed directly by college councils and management.

From a demographic perspective, as we have seen, there are very few differences between students across the nine provinces. Student disruptions to the teaching / learning process are a feature of all provinces except Mpumalanga and the Western Cape. There are, however, major differences between the provinces in terms of the home provinces of the students enrolled in colleges (ranging from 0% in the Eastern Cape to 29% in Gauteng), the extent and nature of financial support received by students (though incomplete information may exacerbate the differences), and the enrolment profiles of students. The flagship programme of the state, the NC(V), is, as we have seen, heavily subscribed in Mpumalanga and Limpopo but far less so in the Northern and Western Cape. The reasons for this will need to be probed through further research. Because the total enrolment profile is distribution-oriented in this study, moreover, the percentages of students enrolled in the NC(V) are offset by the proportions of students enrolled in N- and Other programmes. The Programme and Qualification Mix approach that will henceforth shape the enrolment profile nationwide will need to build on information on the distribution of enrolments across the three programmes across the nine provinces *and on the reasons for the enrolment patterns*.

That very few colleges keep student exit data becomes a critically important issue in the context not only of colleges' inability to substantiate claims of employment uptake of their students but of the redesign of their mission statements. There needs to be a far greater focus than hitherto not only on where FET college students have come from but where they go to after leaving the college (whether as graduates or non-completers). In the absence of such tracking procedures, generalised claims about the number of young people not in employment, education or training as derived from Statistics South Africa's Community Survey (Cloete, 2009) have limited usefulness.

College efficiency rates

When all is said and done, colleges are inevitably judged on the quality of their student outputs. This analysis has shown that the throughput rates for the NC(V) and NATED programmes leaves much to be desired. If the sector is seriously to compete even with the schooling sector in this regard, let alone take its rightful place as the key provider of intermediate-level education and training in the country, it will need to pay serious attention to the quality of teaching and learning.

The only discernible trend in college efficiency rates is a steady improvement in the throughput rate within the NC(V) across all provinces between 2007 and 2009. Since colleges are judged in large measure on the academic performance of their students, this issue remains top of the list

of DHET responsibilities. The first task is to bring stability to the system by taking early decisions on the future of non-NC(V) college provision (NATED programmes, learnerships, skills programmes, etc.) and to give provinces and their colleges clear leads in this regard.

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SECTION 3: THE SIZE AND SHAPE OF THE FET COLLEGE SECTOR IN 2010

Introduction

This section will present data for the FET college system for year 2010 but it will also compare 2010 data with data derived for the period 2007-2009, and with the findings of the last published quantitative audit of the FET college sector produced by the National Business Initiative (NBI) in 2002 (see Fisher et al., 2002).

The 'size' of the FET college sector will be measured primarily through headcount enrolments of learners. Institutional size will also be determined in this way, to distinguish, for example, between 'small' and 'large' colleges. Determining the 'shape' of the system is a less precise exercise and is usually based on measuring the extent of institutional differentiation within the - sector. The FET college sector is a relatively homogenous entity, although 'urban' and 'rural' locations have been used in the past as indicators of differentiation within the system. In this report, 'shape' will be based on the differentiation of vocational field and expertise. The next section will begin to unpack the dynamics of 'size', whilst the 'shape' of the system will only be discussed towards the end of the chapter.

Data problems

The production of this report has been frustrated by the non-availability of reliable data on the FET college sector. One of the main purposes of the HSRC's 2010 FET college audit was to resolve these problems through the production of a new database of reliable information. This has not straightforwardly been the case as even in this instance, data integrity has been compromised on some items due to poor data submission on the part of some colleges, and through inaccurate college self-reporting. Even though the HSRC audit provides a significant amount of new insight into the sector, in a number of instances its data has been compromised by sub-standard data retrieval from the colleges.

The statistics provided by the state also vary in terms of quality. The most reliable data published by the former Department of Education in the past has been its *Education Statistics in South Africa at a Glance* series. Table 3.1 highlights data on FET colleges from this source for the period 2002 – 2009. Note that the 2002 data presented here was produced by Powell & Hall (2004) on behalf of the Department in the last of the National Business Initiative's *Quantitative Overviews* of the sector:

	Educators	Student headcounts
2002	7,088	406,144
2004	6,477	394,027
2005	6,407	377,584
2006	7,096	361,186
2007	5,987	320,679
2008	5,753	418,053
2009	6,255	420,475

Table 3.1: Total enrolments and staffing, FET colleges, 2002-2009

Sources: DoE 'Statistics at a Glance', Powell & Hall, 2004; DoE, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008a, 2010

The *Statistics at a Glance* series reports a flat and declining trend in enrolments in FET colleges between 2002 and 2007, with a surprisingly large increase in just one year – 2008 – of just under 100 000 learners. No feasible explanation is provided for this 31 percent increase in enrolments after a four-year period of decline. As a consequence, these figures may also be unreliable.

Two other sources of data are currently available for the FET college system. The first is the data derived by the HSRC in its 2010 audit. The second is the data obtained officially through the DHET from the FETMIS administrative data system. These datasets do not talk to each other, as is evident in Table 3.2:

	Total 'N'	enrolments	Total enro	'NC(V)' Iments	'Other' e	nrolments	Total enrolled		
	DHET FETMIS	HSRC AUDIT	DHET FETMIS	HSRC AUDIT	DHET FETMIS	HSRC AUDIT	DHET FETMIS	HSRC AUDIT	
2007	245,230	415,376	14,999	31,414	36,903	45,449	297,132	492,239	
2008	178,086	328,486	16,909	81,742	37,631	41,250	232,626	451,478	
2009	175,999	250,850	70,279	166,469	43,264	42,638	289,542	459,957	
2010	169,803	81,469	130,061	122,257	40,520*	40,520*	299,864	284,766	

 Table 3.2: Comparison of core datasets: FETMIS versus HSRC audit, 2007-2010 data

Sources: DHET (2011); HSRC (2011)

Note: See Table 3.23 to see the discrete items that comprise 'Other' programmes

Note: * This aggregate is obtained from mixing both FETMIS and HSRC audit data together for the multiple items comprising the 'Other' category

Given all of these problems, it has been decided, for the purposes of this chapter, to use a strategically selected mix of the two data sources – HSRC audit figures and FETMIS data. A number of assumptions inform this decision:

- 1. It is assumed that total enrolment growth has not topped 400,000 since 2002 (Tables 3.1 and 3.2), and that new NC(V) enrolments have not been large enough to compensate for the drop in N enrolments and increase overall college size.
- 2. The 'N' course self reporting in the HSRC audit by college management for the period 2007-2009 is clearly upwardly exaggerated. In addition, the figure of 81,469 'N' enrolments recorded in June 2010 is only a partial measure and under-estimation as it does not reflect the 'N' enrolments which occurred in tri-semester tranches between July and December 2010. Given all these problems with the HSRC audit database, a decision has been made to use the FETMIS data for 'N' enrolments between 2007 and 2010.
- 3. In contrast to these problems, the HSRC audit and FETMIS aggregate enrolments for the NC(V) programmes converge in the year 2010, although they vary considerably in the preceding years. In particular, FETMIS enrolments of only 16,909 in the second year of the NC(V)'s implementation appears incorrect, and 70,279 in its third year, similarly so. For these reasons, the HSRC audit database will be used when describing the NC(V) programme in this Chapter.
- The category 'other' is a 'hold-all' category which includes all the other small enrolment programmes: the National Senior Certificate (Grade 12); learnerships and short-course skills programmes; and finally, ABET.
- 5. The FETMIS data has additional problems, for example, its inability to disaggregate to a number of lower-order variables such as staff qualifications. The HSRC audit data will then be used.
- 6. The HSRC audit has a number of unique questions in its survey instruments which were deployed in June 2010. The results derived from these unique questions will be

discussed in this chapter. Caution will need to be exercised in using this data as in some cases the number of colleges who answered each question is low; this will be indicated at the bottom of each table.

A strategic use of these two data sources – the 2010 HSRC results (HSRC, 2011) and the 2007-2010 FETMIS data (DHET, 2011) – seems to be the most reliable route along which to proceed at the present moment.

Basic facts about 'size'

The FET college sector in 2010 comprised 332,580 headcount enrolments, across the following programmes:

	Total 'N' enrolments	Total 'NC(V)' enrolments	Other enrolments	Total enrolled
2007	245,230	31,414	45,449	322,093
2008	178,086	81,742	41,250	301,078
2009	175,999	166,469	42,638	385,106
2010	169,803	122,257	40,520	332,580

Table 3.3: Total enrolments, FET college sector, 2007-2010

Source: 'N' enrolment data: DHET (2011); NC(V) and Other enrolment data: HSRC (2011) Note: 'Other' enrolment data from Table 3.24

As is evident in Table 3.3, aggregate enrolment in the FET college sector has remained relatively flat during the period 2007 to 2010, despite government policy which has sought to expand enrolments up to 1 million learners by 2014, despite extensive financial investments in the sector through the Recapitalization Programme. In addition, enrolments have remained flat in the past four years despite the provision of bursaries to students enrolling for the National Curriculum Vocational (NC(V)) as from January 2007. Contributing factors to this decline are as yet not determined by research, but one factor of concern is the fairly dramatic decline, notwithstanding a policy decision to phase out the NATED programmes, from a high of 245,230 in 2007 to a low of 169 803 learners in 2010 – a drop of 75,427 learners in four years.

Figure 3.1 represents overall headcount enrolment patterns for the past decade. Figure 3.1 shows a growth surge in the sector between 1998 and 2002, followed by a drop in enrolments and a small recovery thereafter. Overall, the sector has not grown over the past decade.



Figure 3.1: FET college headcount enrolments, 1998-2010

Source: Powell and Hall (2002; 2004); DHET (2011)

Number of institutions

Dramatic changes have occurred within and between institutions with regard to 'size' based on number of learners enrolled. The most prominent of these changes occurred in 2001 when the government introduced A New Institutional Landscape for FET Colleges (DoE, 2001). This policy document proposed the merger of 152 former Technical Colleges to form 50 new FET colleges. Significant changes in institutional size were envisaged by this major policy intervention, which sought the formation of large multi-site Colleges...' to achieve a critical mass that will bring about economies of scale and scope' (DoE, 2001: 16). Table 3.4 suggests that this scenario has not been achieved. There is only one large college with more than 15000 headcount learners, a major shift away from the institutional arrangements in 2002, which had 10 such large campuses (Akoojee, McGrath and Visser, 2008: 259). Similarly, the number of medium size colleges (5,000-14,999 learners) has also shrunk since 2002, with a reduction from 36 colleges in 2002 to 11 in 2010. The bulk of colleges (26 out of 50 institutions) today lie in the 'small' (3.000-5.999 learner) category with a further 10 colleges in the 'very small' category (0-2,999 learners). The cause of this drift back to smaller colleges has not been researched, but a major factor must be the dramatic decrease in the number of "N' programme learners, the high failure rate of the new NC(V) programmes which may have frightened off new enrolees, and the patterns of migration from rural areas to urban-based colleges - all key issues that will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter.

	Headcount, 2010											
Very small colleges	Small colleges	Medium Colleges	Large colleges	Total								
0 – 2,999	3,000 – 5,999	6,000 – 14,999	> 15,000									
10	26	11	1	48								

Table 3.4: Number of colleges by 'size' (headcount enrolments), 2010

Source: HSRC (2011); n = 48 colleges

A more detailed breakdown of enrolments

The bulk of this chapter will be dedicated to disaggregating the 2010 data as obtained from the FETMIS database and the HSRC audit. Firstly, a detailed profile of student enrolments by vocational programme, race and gender will be offered, followed secondly by a description of the staffing establishment in FET colleges in 2010.

Profile of students

Tables 3.5 and 3.6 provide a headcount of FET college sector learners by province, race, gender and age. Certain historical patterns of enrolment still persist, with the big provinces – Gauteng, KwaZulu Natal and to a lesser extent, Western Cape – still dominating the sector. On the positive side, gender parity is established across 8 of the 9 provinces. This reflects a major shift from 2002, where female enrolments were only 40 percent of the total (Powell & Hall, 2004: 76).

Province	Total no of Whites	Whites as a % of enrolment	Total no of Africans	Africans as a % of enrolment	Total no of Coloureds	Coloureds as a % of enrolment	Total no of Indians	Indians as a % of enrolment	Other	Other as a % of enrolment	Total	% female by province
EC	916	3	27 488	88	2 850	9	89	0	3	0	31 346	50.9
FS	570	2	22 517	96	297	1	14	0	12	0	23 410	50.7
G	3 219	4	72 959	86	1 009	1	374	0	7 707	9	85 268	47.1
KZN	2 460	4	56 401	90	652	1	3 174	5	13	0	62 700	50.7
L	282	1	32 892	99	26	0	4	0	18	0	33 222	52.2
м	1 418	7	17 646	91	158	1	141	1	5	0	19 368	52.1
NW	804	5	16 646	94	223	1	30	0	44	0	17 747	41.7
NC	127	2	3 930	61	1 956	30	12	0	441	7	6 466	51.8
WC	5 905	12	16 153	34	24 373	51	165	0	775	2	47 371	53.1
TOTAL	15 701	5	266 632	82	31 544	10	4 003	1	9 018	3	326 898	50.1

Table 3.5: Total headcount enrolment, FET colleges, 2010, by province, race and gender

Source: DHET (2011). Note: The category 'other' denotes unclassified data. This definition applies in all the tables.

PROVINCE	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
Eastern Cape	31 346	9.6
Free State	23 410	7.2
Gauteng	85 268	26.1
KwaZulu-Natal	62 700	19.2
Limpopo	33 222	10.2
Mpumalanga	19 368	5.9
North West	17 747	5.3
Northern Cape	6 466	2.0
Western Cape	47 371	14.5
Total	326 898	100.0

Table 3.6: Headcount enrolment by province, FET colleges, 2010

Source: DHET (2011)

Major gains have been made in transforming the FET college sector in terms of race. In 1991, African enrolments comprised a mere 18 percent of total enrolments (TVET Sector Review 1992: 4.23). In 2010, African enrolments stand at 82 percent. Relatedly, white enrolments have dropped dramatically, from 50 907 in 1991 (67% of enrolments) to only 15 701 in 2010 (5%) (TVET Sector Review, 1992: 4.23). The social transformation of this formerly racially structured vocational training system may have been too dramatic. This is because the white artisan tradition built up during the boom years of racial capitalism (the 1950s and 1960s), which was strongly linked to the FET college system, has been in reality phased out, constituting only 5 percent of total enrolments. This shrinkage represents not only a demographic correction but also the loss of crucial technical know-how in manufacturing production today – the artisan tradition.

Enrolments by age have also undergone dramatic shifts, as is evident in Table 3.7, with learners more concentrated in the age category of 20-24, with shrinkages in older and much younger learners. This shift poses two problems for policy makers. Firstly, there has been a reduction in the number of older learners, particularly in all the age categories older than 25. This means that the college system is failing to increase the rate of up-skilling of the existing workforce. Secondly, the reduction of enrolments of youngsters in the school going age of 15-19, from 34 percent to 20 percent, suggests that the FET colleges system is not operating as part of a dual-track schooling system. Rather, it tends to enrol students who are older, with many already in possession of a matric.

Table 3.7: Enrolment by age, FET colleges, 2010

Age	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40+
Percentage 1998	34	40	19	7	0	
Percentage 2002	23	42	18	9	8	
Percentage 2010	20	56	14	5	3	2

Source: (Powell & Hall, 2002; 2004). 2010 percentage extracted from HSRC (2011). Note: 5% of colleges did not provide data for this question in the audit.

Profile of FET college staff

Tables 3.8 and 3.9 highlight the total staff complement in FET colleges in 2010. It must be noted that previous analyses of college staffing (See Powell and Hall, 2002, 2004; McGrath and Akoojee, 2009) have looked only at academic (teaching) staff, and hence comparisons between the statistics presented here and those of other writers may suggest huge discrepancies. Table 3.8 suggests that the total number of employees in the FET college sector is 14,614, the vast majority of whom are permanently employed – 10,198. Of these permanent employees, 5,201 are academic staff, 4,435 are support staff, and 538 are management staff. The college sector still has a large number of temporary staff – 4,358, or 30 percent of the total.

The total number of permanent academic staff -5,201 in 2010 - is lower than the number of educators recorded in Table 3.1, a collation of data from the *Statistics at a Glance* series. It is clear that there has been significant loss of permanent academic staff, from over 7,000 in 2002 to a low of 5,200 in 2010 - a drop of 26 percent. Significantly, the HSRC audit put permanent academic staff at 6,280 in 2010 - 1,080 higher than the FETMIS level. The true number is probably somewhere between these two measures.

Duration	Staff Category	Black African	Coloured	Indian or Asian	Other	White	Missing	Grand Total
	Lecturing Staff	3,041	459	221	5	1,362	113	5,201
Full-Time	Management Staff	283	59	35	2	160	19	558
	Support Staff	3,128	6,18	89	3	507	90	4,435
	Missing		2			2		4
Sub-Total		6,452	1,138	345	10	2,031	222	10,198
Part-Time	Lecturing Staff	1,761	322	108	20	461	54	2,726

Table 3.8: Total staff, FET colleges, 2010, by staffing category, race and gender

Duration	Staff Category	Black African	Coloured	Indian or Asian	Other	White	Missing	Grand Total
	Management Staff	24	6	1		13		44
	Support Staff	1,264	189	14	1	92	26	1,586
	Missing					2		2
Sub-Total		3,049	517	123	21	568	80	4,358
	Lecturing Staff	21	3			5	1	30
Missing	Management Staff					1		1
	Support Staff	17	6	1		1	2	27
	Missing	38	9	1		7	3	58
Grand Total		9,539	1,664	469	31	2,606	305	14,614

Source: DHET (2011)

The HSRC audit database is now used to disaggregate down to variables such as staff data by race, gender and qualification. The total number of full-time and part-time academic staff recorded in 2010 is 7,024 lecturers. Table 3.9 breaks this aggregate number down further by race, gender and province. Sixty-three percent of academic staff are African, whilst only 22% are white. This is a significant departure from the racial profile of staff in 2002, where Africans constituted only 41% of teaching staff, and whites 46% (Powell & Hall, 2004: 265). Table 3.9 also reflects the dominance of the three big provinces in terms of employment of FET college staff.

		Black African	Black African %	Coloured	Coloured %	Indian / Asian	Indian / Asian %	White	White %	Grand Total	Female	Female %
	Full Time	504	66	104	14	16	2	139	18	763	367	48
EC	Part Time	34	48	12	17	0	0	25	35	71	71	100
	Full Time	388	70	52	9	4	1	112	20	556	203	37
FS	Part Time	131	79	8	5	3	2	24	14	166	99	60
	Full Time	1142	77	26	2	10	1	296	20	1474	293	20
G	Part Time	91	81	2	2	3	3	16	14	112	22	20
	Full Time	602	69	12	1	150	17	109	12	873	174	20
KZN	Part Time		0		0	2	40	3	60	5	1	23
	Full Time	728	94	1	0	1	0	46	6	776	258	33
L	Part Time	9	82	1	9		0	1	9	11	2	17
	Full Time	325	75	3	1	9	2	98	23	435	138	32
Μ	Part Time	67	88	0	0	1	1	8	11	76	15	20
	Full Time	201	80	2	1	1	0	46	18	250	89	35
NW	Part Time	58	77	1	1	0	0	16	21	75	29	38

Table 3.9: Total number of academic staff, FET colleges 2010, full-time, part-time, race and gender

	Full Time	22	29	27	36	2	3	24	32	75	35	46
NC	Part Time											
	Full Time	105	10	460	43	16	1	497	46	1078	329	31
WC	Part Time	35	15	77	34	0	0	116	51	228	228	
Grand Total		4442	63	788	11	218	3	1576	22	7024	2353	34

Source: HSRC (2011)

Qualifications of staff

Table 3.10 presents the qualifications of academic staff at FET colleges in 2010 using the HSRC audit database. As can be seen, the majority of academic staff hold either a diploma, higher diploma or first degree, and far fewer have advanced degrees. Only 6 percent of staff are qualified as artisans. Nineteen percent of staff have a qualification below the diploma level – a level which can be regarded as providing an insufficient basis for teaching at the post-school level.

Province	Artisan	%	Higher degree	%	1st degree or higher Diploma	%	Diploma	%	Below Diploma	%	Total
Eastern Cape	72	17	80	10	289	12	144	6	114	8	699
Free State	33	8	48	6	236	10	144	6	54	4	515
Gauteng	56	13	213	28	581	25	504	22	322	23	1 676
Kwazulu-Natal	40	10	71	9	179	8	443	19	301	21	1 034
Limpopo	56	13	113	15	271	11	343	15	93	7	876
Mpumalanga	25	6	34	4	173	7	307	13	216	15	755
North West	14	3	48	6	132	6	142	6	95	7	431
Northern Cape	9	2	5	1	26	1	29	1	6	0	75
Western Cape	114	27	158	21	472	20	283	12	216	15	1 243
Total	419	6	770	11	2 359	32	2 339	32	1 417	19	7 304

Table 3. 10: Qualifications of academic staff, full-time and part-time, FET colleges 2010

Source: HSRC (2011)

Note: The differences in the aggregate number of educators between Tables 3.8, 3.9 and 3.10 have to do with the fact that the FETMIS data cannot disaggregate down to qualification level, so the HSRC FET college audit data are used for Table 3.10.

Management staff

The management component in the FET college sector is small, comprising only 623 employees in 2010. Within this leadership cohort, 55% were African and 29% were white, reflecting some progress away from the leadership profile of 2002, where Africans constituted only 40% of management ranks, whilst whites constituted 60%.

Table 3.11: Management staff by race and gender, FET colleges, 2010

Race	Number of management staff by population group	Percentage of management staff by population group	Percentage of management staff who are women
Black African	341	55	19
Coloured	80	13	5
Indian or Asian	21	3	1
White	181	29	16
Total	623		

Source: HSRC (2011)

Staff attrition

Employment in the FET college sector has been very volatile in the period 2002-2010, as is reflected in Tables 3.1 and 3.9, with a significant loss of experienced members, and a large intake of new members, as is evident in Table 3.12. In the years 2007 to 2009, the college system lost 2,131 but gained 4,056, a surplus of 1,925 workers. Although levels of employment remain flat and have not decreased, this volatility in employment is not good for the development of an institutional culture based on quality of teaching and learning in the long-term. Furthermore, it is not clear how this volatility has affected the stock of highly skilled personnel in the colleges with advanced degrees and specialised technical knowledge, such as technicians and artisans.

Province	Total Gain	Total Loss	Net value
Eastern Cape	236	111	125
Free State	202	122	80
Gauteng	1,251	821	430
KwaZulu-Natal	507	250	257
Limpopo	741	165	576
Mpumalanga	195	114	81
North West	180	87	93
Northern Cape			
Western Cape	744	461	283
Total	4,056	2,131	1,925

Source: HSRC (2011), Profiles and Efficiency Indicators Questionnaire: Q1; n = 28 colleges

The reasons given for staff loss in the 2007-2009 period are listed in Table 3.13. As would be expected, the highest causal factor was personal resignation, probably triggered by the changes in employment conditions in FET colleges introduced in 2007, when the college council became the primary employer, taking over these functions from the provincial education department. In the ensuing transition, many permanent staff members resigned and sought employment in other sectors.

Table 3.13: Reasons for staff loss, FET colleges, 2010

% distribution

	Retirement	Retirement %	III-health	III-health %	Death	Death %	Resignation	Resignation %	Unhappiness with employer	Unhappiness with employer %	Other	Other %	Total per province
EC	12	11	4	4	15	14	10	9	17	15	52	47	110
FS	10	8	3	2	15	12	64	52		0	30	25	122
G	44	5	9	1	23	3	447	54	27	3	271	33	821
KZN	12	5	1	0	18	7	178	71		0	41	16	250
L	7	4	1	1	7	4	137	77	1	1	25	14	178
М	3	3	2	2	12	11	64	56	28	25	5	4	114
NW	13	15	3	3	6	7	58	67	0	0	7	8	87
NC													0
WC	34	7	4	1	14	3	246	53	3	1	160	35	461
Total	135	6	27	1	110	5	1204	56	76	4	591	28	2143

Source: HSRC (2011), Profiles and Efficiency Indicators Questionnaire, Q1; n = 35 colleges

The shape of FET colleges

The next section focuses on the 'shape' dimensions of the FET college system. It provides an analysis of the traditional 'N' programmes as well as the newly introduced NC(V). The section concludes by evaluating the potential for differentiating the sector based on vocational programme.

Profile of programmes

Historically, the 'N' courses were the flagship programmes of the FET college system. In the boom phase of the Apartheid economy during the 1950s and 1960s, the artisan system was the primary focus of the FET colleges. The N1 to N3 programmes provided the theoretical training for apprentices who were employed by private sector firms. Apprentices were also registered with the Department of Labour whose responsibility it was to regulate the conditions of apprenticeship. The apprenticeship system peaked in 1985 with 13,500 artisans graduating from the system. Thereafter, the system declined with only 2,548 artisans graduating in 2004 (Kraak, 2009: 486-487). More recent data is not yet publically available.

Surprisingly, enrolment patterns in 'N' courses did not drop because of the decline of apprenticeship. Learners began funding their own studies in the hope of finding employment after theoretical training – constituting a very different route through the FET college system if compared with the apprenticeship model. Today there are 169,803 learners enrolled in the 'N' programmes, with very few obtaining prior sponsorship from employers as was the case with the apprenticeship route.

However, with the introduction of the National Certificate Vocational (NC(V)) in 2007, enrolment in the 'N' programmes was discouraged by the National and Provincial Education Departments. New learners were steered towards the NC(V) route. This led to a dramatic fall in 'N' enrolments, as is evident in Tables 3.14 and 3.15. Most N1, N2 and N3 courses were closed to new enrolments, although as can be seen in the data, the engineering stream continued to enrol small cohort of students.

Programme Description	Business Studies	Engineering Studies	Art and Music	Utility Studies	Educare and Social Services	Other	Total enrolled	Share of enrolment at this level as a percentage of total enrolment
N1	0	743	0	3	2	0	748	0
N2	0	3,370	0	1	25	0	3,396	2
N3	1,817	16,697	12	6	2,263	0	20,795	12
N4	30,383	28,576	355	1,880	1,244	78	62,516	37
N5	22,814	20,288	142	1,633	644	57	45,578	27
N6	19,967	14,911	243	1,095	515	39	36,770	22
Total	74,981	84,585	752	4,618	4,693	174	169,803	100
Percentage share of programme field	44	50	0	3	3	0	100	

Table 3.14: Enrolment in 'N' programmes, 2010, FET colleges

Source: DHET (2011)

Table 3.15 provides data on the 'N' programmes for the period 2007-2009 from the FETMIS data system. As is evident, the data is not always categorised neatly across the 6 NQF levels and 6 academic fields. Nonetheless, in aggregate terms, the dramatic decrease in numbers is clearly evident – from 245,230 'N' learners in 2007 to 175,999 in 2009:

Table 3.15: N1 – N6 total enrolments by vocational field, 2007-2009, FET colleges

	Agriculture N1-N6			Art and Music N1 – N6	;	E	Business Studie N1 – N6	S	Educare and Social Services N1 – N6			
2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009	
157	194	50	1,836	1,611	1,048	96,774 72,328 80,177			2,285	1,964	1,365	

Table 3.15: N1 – N6 total enrolments by vocational field, 2007-2009, FET colleges

	Engineering N1 – N6			Utility Studies N1 – N6		Grand Total N1 – N6				
2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009		
139,251	96,543	89,743	139,251	96,543	89,743	139,251	96,543	89,743		

Source: HSRC (2011), Profiles & Efficiency Indicators questionnaire, Q.3; n = 33 colleges

Table 3.16 highlights the exceptionally poor results that have been achieved in the 'N' programmes, with most mean throughput rates being well below 50 percent. The combination of closing down the N1-N3 enrolments and the low throughput rates on these courses constitutes a double blow for the FET college sector in the late 2000s.

	Business Studies	Engineering	Art and Music	Utilities	Educare and Social Services
N1	33	16	*	*	*
N2	15	19	19	17	*
N3	28	24	54	31	*
N4	47	31	43	33	39
N5	45	30	40	45	46
N6	47	24	33	36	62

 Table 3.16: Mean throughput rates, 'N' programmes, 2007-2009, FET colleges (%)

Source: HSRC (2011): Profiles and Efficiency Indicators questionnaire, Q3; n= 33

* These mean throughput rates could not be calculated because the colleges did not provide complete data on pass rates.

The discussion now shifts to an evaluation of the NC(V) – a new programme intended to overcome the weaknesses of the 'N' programmes.

The NC(V) programme

The NC(V) was introduced in 2007. It comprises fourteen programmatic fields, which are all listed in Table 3.17. The Department of Education made a decision to steer most new learners in the direction of the NC(V) and to discontinue the N1, N2 and N3 programmes. As the NC(V) enrolments grew from 31,414 learners in 2007 to 166,469 in 2009 and then dipping to 122,257 learners in 2010 (See Tables 3.17 and 3.18), so the N enrolments shrank from a high of 245,230 in 2007 to 169,803 in 2010 (See Tables 3.1, 3.13 and 3.15). As is evident from these figures, a college enrolment 'stalemate' has occurred – new NC(V) enrolments are not large enough to compensate for the drop in N enrolments and substantially increase overall college size.

	Office administration			Marketing			Finance, Economics and Accounting			Management			Building and Civil Construction		
Year	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009
NC(V)2	5,235	11,021	21,904	1,155	2,245	3,919	2,333	4,957	8,356	1,095	2,907	6,600	2,647	5,860	10,096
NC(V)3	0	3,907	6,284	0	834	1,158	2	1,245	3,959	90	545	1,710	20	1,140	2,505
NC(V)4	0	16	4,530	0	0	459	0	0	583	0	26	338	0	9	578
NC(V) total	5,235	14,944	32,718	1,155	3,079	5,536	2,335	6,202	12,898	1,185	3,478	8,648	2,667	7,009	13,179

Table 3.17: FET college enrolment trends, NC(V) programmes, 2007-2009

	Engineering and related Design		Electrical Infrastructure Construction			Information Technology and Computer Science			Primary Agriculture			Hospitality			
Year	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009
NC(V)2	7,030	12,043	20,101	6,353	11,927	20,820	2,067	5,812	9,526	737	2,304	4,067	1,164	3,028	5,567
NC(V)3	147	3,369	5,315	114	2,387	5,190	25	827	2,802	0	441	1,120	19	562	1,249
NC(V)4	0	227	2,227	24	20	1,108	6	31	250	0	0	299	0	6	268
NC(V) total	7,177	15,639	27,643	6,491	14,334	27,118	2098	6670	12,578	737	2,745	5,486	1,183	3,596	7,084

	Tourism			Safety in Society			Mechatronics			E	ducation evelopm	and nent	Total NC(V) enrolments		
Year	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009
NC(V)2	1,132	2,401	5,700	0	1,206	5,574	0	0	373	0	0	133	30,948	65,711	122,736
NC(V)3	19	425	1,089	0	0	475	0	0	0	0	0	0	436	15,682	32,856
NC(V)4	0	14	237	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	30	349	10,877
NC(V) total	1,151	2,840	7,026	0	1,206	6,049	0	0	373	0	0	133	31,414	81,742	166,469

Source: HSRC (2011)

	Office administration	Marketing	Finance, Economics and Accounting	Management	Building and Civil Construction	Engineering and related Design	Electrical Infrastructure Construction	Information Technology and Computer Science	Primary Agriculture
NC(V) 2	14,148	4,785	7,718	5,410	7,121	10,417	15,881	6,578	1,357
NC(V) 3	8,482	2,309	4,075	2,073	2,708	6,336	6,260	3,509	670
NC(V) 4	3,292	538	1,513	815	1,013	2,041	1,909	972	327
Grand Total	25,922	7,632	13,306	8,298	10,842	18,794	24,050	11,059	2,354
	Hospitality	Tourism	Safety in Society	Mechatronics	Education and Development	Grand Total			
NC(V) 2	4,186	4555	3320	654	1,027	73,415			
NC(V) 3	2,118	2,217	1,874	546	97	36,422			
NC(V) 4	757	866	215	0	0	12,420			
Grand Total	7,061	7,638	5,409	1200	1124	122,257			
Sources H	CDC (2011)								

Table 3.18: Enrolment in NC(V) programmes, 2010

Source: HSRC (2011)

The dip in enrolments between 2009 and 2010 is significant, and a possible explanation for this is the poor throughput rates occurring across the three-year programme. Failure rates in individual subjects have been very high, and students have proceeded to NC(V) 2 with carry-over subjects from NC(V) 3 they still need to pass. This pattern has then been repeated in the third year with 'carry-over' problems in NC(V) 4, leading to a logjam in throughput across the entire NC(V) system. Colleges have responded to this crisis by enrolling fewer students in 2010 – because the preceding 2007-2009 cohorts have not yet successfully passed through the 3-level programme. The poor throughput problem is discussed further in the next section.

Throughput rates in the NC(V)

The mean throughput rates for learners on NC(V) programmes are generally very low across all subject fields, and results only improve as students move from NC(V) 2 to NC(V) 4, where a majority of subject 'mean' scores are above 50 percent. However, critical fields such as Engineering are characterised by very poor throughput, with learners scoring a low 29% for NC(V) 2, 30% for NC(V)3, and 20% for NC(V)4. These are extremely poor results, which do not improve on the outcomes of the 'N' programmes which the NC(V) fields were supposedly replacing.

Fields	Office administratio n	Marketing	Finance, Economics and Accounting	Management	Building	Engineering and related Design
Passed NC(V)2	40	45	35	29	26	29
Passed NC(V)3	45	48	55	37	22	30
Passed NC(V)4	56	55	53	60	24	22

Table 3 19: Mean	throughput rates	for 'NC(V)' pro	grammes 2007-2009	FFT colleges
Table 5.15. Weall	unougriput rates		grammes, 2007-2003	, I LI CONCYCS

Fields	Electrical Infrastructure Construction	Information Technology and Computer Science	Primary Agriculture	Hospitality	Tourism	Safety in Society
Passed NC(V)2	27	24	39	MD	38	27
Passed NC(V)3	34	31	51		53	44
Passed NC(V)4	27	54	65		29	

Fields	Mechatronics	Education and Development	Overall mean throughput rate	
Passed NC(V)2	47	27	34	
Passed NC(V)3	?	?	41	
Passed NC(V)4	?	0	42	

Source: HSRC (2011), Profiles and Efficiency Indicators questionnaire, Q3; n = 37 colleges

Learnerships

Learnerships were introduced by the Department of Labour in 2000 alongside the launch of 25 Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs). In theory, learnerships have a three-fold purpose. Firstly, they are aimed at providing workplace learning in a more structured and systematic form. Formalised learning will be provided by an accredited education and training provider (for example, a college). Secondly, Learnerships seek to link structured learning to multiple sites of work experience. And finally, all of this training and practical work experience must culminate in a nationally recognised qualification. Learnerships are intended at all levels of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and are not restricted to the intermediate levels, as has been the case with apprenticeships (Kraak, 2004).

The reality after a decade of training is that the FET colleges were not brought into the loop of SETA / Learnership training, with the bulk of SETA training initiatives being run by private sector training agencies. Much of the training which occurred was foundational, located at the low NQF levels. Table 3.20 suggests that Colleges trained 9,607 Learnerships in the period 2007-2009, with a high pass rate of 90%. An enrolment of 9,607 Learnerships, although small in terms of the skills deficit, represents 22% of the total number of Learnerships registered nationally – 43,569 Learnerships were registered in 2009/2010 (Janse van Rensburg et al., 2011: 18). This contribution is bigger than the size previously assumed for the sector. More significantly, whilst total learnership enrolments have decreased nationally – from 53,644 in 2005/6 to 43,569 in 2009/10 – enrolments in the FET college system have increased from 3,589 in 2007 to 9,609 in 2009. This is a positive development even though aggregate levels of enrolment in learnerships remain very low given the scale of the skills crisis in South Africa.

		20	07	2008		2009	
		Ν	% who passed	Ν	% who passed	Ν	% who passed
Enrolled Learnerships	in	3,589	69.9	8,186	78.5	9,607	90.9

Table 3.20: Enrolment and throughput rates in Learnerships, 2007-2009, FET colleges

Source: HSRC (2011), Profiles and Efficiency Indicators questionnaire, Q3, n = 24 colleges

FETMIS data for 2010 indicates that 23,118 learnerships were registered in that year. This number appears rather high (more than 50 percent of all learners registered by the SETA system annually) and may reflect categorisation errors made in the FETMIS data collection system between the full-qualification 'Learnership programme' and the short-course 'Skills Programmes'. Table 3.21 shows the vocational fields in which these Learnerships have been offered. The largest area of training is in the broad field of 'Education, Training and Development', including programmes to train Educare workers. Participation in Learnership training has been highly uneven, however, with only 11 out 50 colleges offering Learnerships at a relatively large level comprising 200 or more learners annually. These 11 colleges offer 13,636 of the 23,118 learnerships registered in 2010 – 59% of the total.

	College	Organising Field	Total
1	East Cape Midlands FET College	Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology	326
		Business, Commerce and Management Studies	251
2	Maluti FET College	Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology	235
		Physical, Mathematical, Computer and Life Sciences	393
3	Esayidi FET College	Physical, Mathematical, Computer and Life Sciences	229
4	Majuba FET College	Education, Training and Development	4,450
5	Orbit FET College	Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology	214
		Education, Training and Development	266
6	Vuselela FET College	Physical, Mathematical, Computer and Life Sciences	363
		Business, Commerce and Management Studies	484
7	Boland FET College	Education, Training and Development	1,364
		Education, Training and Development	1,937
		Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology	283
8	False Bay FET College	Education, Training and Development	531
		Business, Commerce and Management Studies	1,647
9	Northlink FET College	Education, Training and Development	1,181
		Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology	2,766
		Physical Planning and Construction	2,001
10	South Cape FET College	Education, Training and Development	809
11	West Coast FET College	Education, Training and Development	270

 Table 3.21: Enrolment in Learnerships, by college and organising field, 2010

Source: DHET (2011)

Other programmes offered

The FET colleges have always offered the schooling curriculum – the National Senior Certificate (NSC) – allowing school dropouts a second chance at completing twelve years of schooling. However, enrolments have always been low, and with the introduction of the NC(V) as a vocational alternative to the more academic school curriculum, numbers for the NSC in Colleges have not increased significantly. Current enrolment numbers in the NSC are exceedingly low considering the several hundreds of thousands of youngsters who have not completed Grade 12 and who are out of school and not in employment – and yet do not make use of these FET college facilities (Cloete et al., 2009).

Table 3.22: Headcount Enrolment for General Education, FET colleges, 2000-2010

	2000	2002	2007	2008	2009	2010
General Education	19,937	4,927	6,948	4,698	2,804	3,916

Source: HSRC (2011), Profiles and Efficiency Indicators questionnaire: Q3, n= 11; DHET (2011) for 2010 figures

FET colleges also offer a range of small courses, ranging from Skills Programmes funded by the SETAs to ABET courses offered to adult workers who have incomplete schooling. The numbers enrolled for 2007-2010 are outlined in Table 3.23:

Table	3.23:	Enrolment	in	other	education	and	training	programmes,	2007-2010,
FET co	olleges								

	2007	2008	2009	2010
NSC G10-12	6,948	4,698	2,804	3,916
Learnerships	4,019	7,730	9,043	23,118
Skills Programmes	18,034	16,958	18,388	5,458
Adult Learning Programmes	3,437	985	1,378	357
NICs	902	592	109	212
Other programmes	12,109	10,287	10,916	7,459
TOTAL FOR 'OTHER'	45,449	41,250	42,638	40,520

Source: HSRC (2011), Profiles and Efficiency Indicators questionnaire, Q3
'Shape' in terms of post-FET and 'niche' provision

The report of the 2000 'Size and Shape' Task Team of the Council on Higher Education (CHE, 2000) defined the 'shape' of the higher education system in terms of 'institutional differentiation'. This was achieved in two ways – by means of differentiation based on the levels of qualifications offered by institutions (vertical differentiation) as well as some measure of differentiation based on the types of qualifications offered at institutions (horizontal differentiation). In addition differentiation could be based on a number of other qualitative and quantitative institutional characteristics such as:

- Whether the institution was single purpose or multi-purpose
- The sector (i.e., private or public) in which the institution operates
- The NQF level at which qualifications will be offered
- The admission requirements that will be associated with the various types of institutions
- The minimum full-time equivalent (FTE) enrolments in each of three broad fields of study, i.e., science, engineering and technology; commerce; and the broad humanities (CHE, 2000: 1).

This kind of a framework has not yet been applied to the FET college system, although the FET Plan of 2008 (DoE, 2008b) and documents presented at the FET Summit of September 2010 both speak of the need for greater institutional diversity within the sector. This section will highlight the concept of 'shape' in two ways. Firstly, there is the issue of post-FET provision, and secondly, the issue of understanding differentiated 'shape' in terms of expanding existing areas of specialist provision – both possible determinants of greater institutional differentiation in the future.

Post-FET provision

Enrolments at the N4-N6 levels pose interesting policy problems (see Table 3.24). In the past, the FET college sector was encouraged to focus provision on the FET band (NQF Levels 2–4) rather than at the higher education and training levels (NQF Level 5 onwards).

However, with the introduction of the NC(V) programme, the N1-3 courses were dramatically reduced, dropping to 36,688 enrolments in 2009 and 24,939 in 2010. Enrolments in N4-N6, ironically, now constitute the majority share of 'N' enrolments, growing from 139,311 in 2009 to 144,864 in 2010 – a small growth trend. Enrolments are relatively large in both Business and Engineering Studies. This expansion (although small) runs contrary to governmental policy in the 2007-2009 period, which argued that the NC(V) programme was the priority, not 'N' programmes', and certainly not those programmes that entered the NQF Level 5 terrain.

Table 3.24: Enrolments in NQF Leve	I 5 programmes at FET	colleges, 2009
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	Agriculture	Agriculture Art and Music		Business Studies Studies Business Social Services		Utility Studies	Grand Total
Total N4-N6 enrolments	49	884	73,525	1,365	60,364	3,124	139,311

Source: DHET (2011)⁵

Table 3.25 indicates that there are a number of colleges with concentrated expertise in offering post-FET courses. The table attempts to highlight, using a simple numeric cut-off point, those colleges which have the potential to offer specialist 'niche' areas (as was proposed at the FET Summit of September 2010), based here purely on an enrolment of more than 1,000 learners in N4. It is significant that 24 out of 50 colleges still enrol fairly large numbers of post-FET students – contrary to official government policy.

Table 3.23. FIGUISION OF $post-1 \perp 1$ courses above the 1,000 level for 14
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Province	College Name	N4	N5	N6	Grand Total	
Eastern Cono	Buffalo City FET College	1,450	1,053	950	3,453	
Eastern Cape	King Sabata Dalindyebo FET	1,945	881	500	3,326	
	Flavius Mareka	1,817	1,208	730	3,755	
Free State	Maluti FET College	1,016	647	654	2,317	
	Motheo FET College	3,324	1,932	1,181	6,437	
	Central JHB	3,087	2,906	2,364	8,357	
	Ekurhuleni West College	3,617	2,690	2,074	8,381	
Gauteng	South West FET College	2,074	1,379	1,112	4,565	
	Tshwane North FET College	2,288	2,109	2,067	6,464	
	Tshwane South FET College	5,414	4,240	2,966	12,620	

⁵ There seems to be no breakdown by individual programmes, and no data are available for 2007 and 2008.

Province	College Name	N4	N5	N6	Grand Total	
	Western College FET	1,425	532	353	2,310	
	Coastal FET College	2,792	2,224	1,657	6,673	
	Majuba FET College	2,787	1,934	1,361	6,082	
KwaZulu-Natal	Mthashana FET College	1,138	824	635	2,597	
	Thekwini FET College	1,104	995	925	3,024	
	Umfolozi FET College	1,353	1,378	783	3,514	
	Umgungundlovu FET	2,169	1,548	1,103	4,820	
Limpopo	Sekhukhune FET College	1,090	991	509	2,590	
	Vhembe FET College	2,557	1,066	911	4,534	
Mpumalanga	Nkangala FET College	1,716	1,261	987	3,964	
North West	-	-	-	-	-	
Northern Cape	Northern Cape Urban FET College	1,325	482	307	2,114	
	Boland FET College	1,501	1,023	1,363	3,887	
Western Cape	College of Cape Town FET College	1,666	1,036	823	3,525	
	Northlink FET College	3,262	2,537	1,552	7,351	

Source: DHET (2011)⁶

Specialist 'niche' provision

Table 3.26 presents those colleges which have a potential for hosting specialist 'niche' areas of provision. The criterion used here is purely quantitative – the capacity to enrol more than 500 learners in specific NC(V) fields. Table 3.26 reveals two important institutional dimensions of the FET college system:

1. There are only five colleges which specialise in five or more NC(V) vocational curricula where niche specialism is defined in terms of enrolments larger than 500 learners.

⁶ As for Table 24, there seems to be no breakdown by individual programmes and no data are available for 2007 and 2008.

 There are very few colleges which offer key NC(V) specialist areas in concentrated mode (with classes larger than 500 learners). For example, there are only 19 colleges which offer Electrical Engineering in terms of 'large class' criteria; 15 colleges which offer Engineering; 11 which offer Business; 9 which offer Building; and 4 which offer Hospitality and Tourism respectively.

The limited extent of subject specialisation across the sector, as outlined in Table 3.26, is worrying given the high expectations amongst policy makers that the sector will begin to differentiate over time on the basis of specialist 'niche' fields. This may not happen on a large scale without stronger steering mechanisms.

College	Office Administration	Marketing	Finance	Management	Building	Engineering	Electrical	Agriculture	Hospitality	Tourism	Safety	Mechatronics	Education & Development	Number of 'niche' specialis t areas per college
Buffalo City														0
East Cape Midlands	524													1
Ikhala	2,180			684	692		516							4
Ingwe	947													1
Lovedale	214													0
PE	1,734	1,553	2,552	1,516	1,509	1,067	2,483		1,151	1,631	1,757	669		11
Flavius Mareka	912						826							2
Goldfields	655													1
Maluti	1,666		624		737	777								4
Motheo	682		618	1,490			514							4
Central Johannesburg														0
Ekurhuleni East	557													1
Ekurhuleni	937		564	509		805	775							5

 Table 3.26: Colleges with high concentrations of enrolment (more than 500 learners) in certain NC(V) fields, 2010

College	Office Administration	Marketing	Finance	Management	Building	Engineering	Electrical	Agriculture	Hospitality	Tourism	Safety	Mechatronics	Education & Development	Number of 'niche' specialis t areas per college
West														
Sedibeng	688					965	721							3
South West Gauteng	699	504					657							3
Tshwane North	641		534											2
Tshwane South	501				573	1,201	1,183							4
Westcol	2,478		769			1,442	1,622		537					5
Coastal	1,134				622	992	773							4
Elangeni	787													1
Esayidi	3,779		549				808	644						4
Thekwini	913					1,637	905				1,311			4
Umfolozi	556													1
Umgungundlovu	208													0
Capricorn	538	1,819	1,716	1,840	1,786	2,055	3,032		1,068	1,060	1,182			10
Lephalale														0
Letaba	809					536								2

College	Office Administration	Marketing	Finance	Management	Building	Engineering	Electrical	Agriculture	Hospitality	Tourism	Safety	Mechatronics	Education & Development	Number of 'niche' specialis t areas per college
Mopani					1,766	3,557	2,497			1,016				4
Sekhukhune	670	666		907		1,665	1,506							5
Vhembe			968		1,948		2,323							3
Waterberg														0
Ehlanzeni	1,130		1,622											2
Nkangala	539		381			906	774							3
Orbit	2,565		2,266	679	814	2,723	3,582		923	753				8
Taletso	561													1
Vuselela	599						501							2
Northern Cape Rural	339													0
Boland	557													1
Cape Town	No Data													-
False Bay														-
Northlink														-
South Cape	522													1

College	Office Administration	Marketing	Finance	Management	Building	Engineering	Electrical	Agriculture	Hospitality	Tourism	Safety	Mechatronics	Education & Development	Number of 'niche' specialis t areas per college
West Coast	969					667								2
Number of colleges with 'niche' specialist capacity	31	4	11	7	9	15	19	1	4	4	3	1	0	-

Source: DHET (2011)

CONCLUSION

This quantitative overview of FET colleges paints a rather bleak picture of the sector. For example, learner enrolment growth has declined by just under 80,000 learners over the past decade. With a benchmark measure established by the National Business Initiative of 406,143 learners in 2002, total enrolments have fluctuated between 290,000 and 330,000 in the period 2007-2010. This poor enrolment growth has occurred even though government has committed to expanding enrolments in the sector to 1 million by 2014.

Growth in academic staffing has also remained rather flat over the past decade, with employment levels fluctuating between 5,200 and 7,000 educators. However, these aggregate figures hide a massive amount of turbulence in the system, with high levels of older staff having left during the 'change in employer' transition of 2009 to 2010. These older employees have since been replaced by younger and less experienced lecturers. The qualifications spectrum of academic staff is far from ideal, with 19 percent of academic staff under-qualified at less than the Diploma level, and only 11 percent having a higher degree – thereby suggesting limited pedagogic and contextual expertise in the sector. In addition, only 6 percent of staff are qualified as artisans, revealing severe limits within the sector as regards technical expertise.

Prospects for greater institutional diversity seem poor. For example, the 2006 FET Act capped the provision of NQF Level 5 and 6 courses in FET colleges, making prior Ministerial approval a requirement. These programmes must also be managed under the authority of an accredited higher education provider. The FET Plan of 2008 suggested that only 20 percent of provision should be in non-NC(V) related training programmes – including post-FET courses.

These restrictions are not a new policy idea. Capping of programmes at the FE-HE interface has been occurring since at least 2001. In 2001 the New Institutional Landscape document instructed the sector to focus only on N1-N3 provision rather than the Post-N3 levels. The document suggested reducing Post-N3 delivery to no more than 10% of total provision. As a consequence of these rather short-sighted directives, Post-N3 provision was reduced from 57% of total enrolments in 1998 to 38% in 2004, reducing further to 144,864 learners by 2010. This trajectory of restriction poses problems today for those colleges that have the ability to build stronger articulation pathways between the FET colleges and higher education, particularly the universities of technology.

It is a strange irony, therefore, that enrolments in the N4-N6 programmes continue to remain relatively large in 2010, in defiance of the highly restrictive government policy during the 2007-2009 era. The current composition of the FET college system has become highly distorted because of the 'blunt' instruments used to enforce change over the past decade. Its current programmatic composition is as follows:

Table 3.27: Programme composition of the FET college system by programme type,2010

	Programme	Total enrolments	Percentage				
1	N1-N3 (FET level provision)	I-N3 (FET level provision) 24,939					
2	N4-N6 (Post-FET provision)	144,864	43				
3	NC(V)	130,061	38				
4	'Other'	40,520	12				
TOTAL		334,590	100				

It is ironic also that the post-N3 courses are now the bedrock of the FET System in terms of size – larger even than the NC(V) programmes, which were intended to replace the N programmes. This outcome was never planned or intended by official government policy.

Enrolments in the N1-N3 fields have been shut down, including in Engineering Studies, which comprises a key leg in the training of artisans in South Africa. The primary reason for this reduction was to make space for the new NC(V) programmes, which were introduced in 2007. As the NC(V) enrolments grew, so enrolments in the N1-N3 programmes were bluntly shut down. However, this 'N' programme shrinkage has not been adequately compensated for by a sufficient growth in NC(V) enrolments, leaving the entire FET college sector with a zig-zag growth curve (See Figure 1).

Throughput rates have worsened, especially in the NC(V) programmes. Outcomes have always been poor in the N programmes, historically, but new throughput challenges have emerged as a consequence of the structure and difficulty of the NC(V). Throughput rates in the NC(V) need to be understood at three levels:

- 1. At the subject specific level: In some instances, NC(V) subject results are quite good.
- At the full qualification level: Outcomes for the year-long NC(V) 2, NC(V) 3 and NC(V) 4 qualifications are extremely poor. For example, 8,216 learners graduated with NC(V) 2 and 789 with NC(V) 3 in 2009. However, total enrolments in NC(V) 2 in 2009 comprised 93,293 candidates and 24,637 for NC(V) 3 (DHET, 2009: 19). This suggests a completion rate of 8.8% for NC(V) 2 and 3.2% for NC(V) 3.
- 3. At the 'cohort' level: This requires data which shows progression rates from year one through to year three. Cohort progression rates are exceptionally low. For example, of the 26,540 students who enrolled for NC(V) Level 1 in 2007, only 1,194 passed the Level 4 NC(V) examinations in 2009 a 4.4 percent 'cohort' progression rate. Such poor cohort progression means that tens of thousands of learners are literally 'stuck' in the system with incomplete transitions to NC(V) 4, taking up valuable places by needing to repeat failed courses, and thereby restricting the entry of new learners into the NC(V) programme at Level 2. This is the primary reason for the decline in NC(V) enrolments, from 166,469 in 2009 to 122,257 in 2010.

There are some positive signals, however. For example, 48 percent of respondents in one large survey of FET college graduates indicated that they had proceeded to get higher education qualifications (NQF Level 5) in FET colleges in the six year period after graduation – acquiring either N5 or N6 certificates, or higher education certificates and diplomas. The

desire of the citizenry to upgrade their skills is a key aspect of a learning society and so these are important developments in the labour market (Gewer, 2010). In addition, 24 out of the 50 FET colleges indicated that they continue to offer N4-N6 classes in relatively large class format (enrolments which are in excess of 1,000 learners). This is a favourable signal that FET colleges have the capacity to offer post-FET courses in large numbers.

In sharp contrast, only five colleges currently have the capacity to enrol large numbers of learners in more than five NC(V) vocational fields, where 'niche' is defined in terms of enrolling large numbers – 500 learners – per vocational field. In addition, few colleges offer niche programmes in key economic fields; for example, only 19 colleges have a 'niche' in 'Electrical Engineering'; only 15 colleges have a 'niche' in 'Engineering'; 11 in 'Business Studies'; 9 in 'Building'; and 4 in 'Hospitality and Tourism'. It is clear that 'niche' development, even if understood simply as the capacity to handle large enrolment numbers, will require several more years of preparatory development before the idea can take root in the sector. These capabilities – providing quality education to a large number of learners in specialist areas – are not achieved overnight.

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