

Crossing the Boundaries:

The relationship between higher education and
TVET/FET in South Africa



First Pan African FET and TVET
Conference

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Introduction

- Examine the complex ways in which higher education (HE) does, could and should relate to FET and TVET
- Understanding this relationship helps to unpack a wider social and cultural phenomenon related to TVET and FET

Introduction

- Five dimensions
 - Knowledge production
 - Critical social engagement
 - Training of educators
 - Developing new programmes
 - Absorbing new graduates



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Higher Education	Universities	Universities of Technology	Private Providers	HEOC
	NSC NCV			Umalusi
Further Education and Training	Grades 10-12 in Schools	FET Colleges	Workplace	
	GEC ABET Certificates			
General Education and Training	Schools Grade R – 9	ABET Levels 1 – 4		

1. Knowledge Production

- Most research produced by a few key individuals
- Located outside universities, in organisations such as the HSRC, NBI or statutory bodies such as SAQA or Umalusi
- Funder driven imperatives

1. Knowledge Production

- Themes
 - Historical and Policy research
 - Knowledge and curriculum
 - Institutions and people in them
 - Size and shape
 - Management
- Technician-managerialist in orientation
- Sustainability determined by funding

2. Critical Engagement

- HE should be an independent, critical and constructive voice in the policy process
- Where are the HE people? Have they been engaging the public on some of the following:

2. Critical Engagement

- The new NCV curriculum?
- The move away from N4-N6?
- The impact of the mergers on staff and students?
- The consequences of new governance and funding models?
- The low pass rates?
- The levels of employment achieved?
- The nature of the students in the colleges?
- The move from apprenticeship to learnership?
- Etc etc etc

3. Educator Training

- Policy promotes professionalisation of educators
- Teacher education is a HE responsibility
- The capacity to train TVET teachers is limited
- Existing programmes focus on in-service and often modified schooling programmes

4. Development of Programmes

- The Bands on the NQF have been linked to institutional types
- College focus shifting away from post-secondary
- Who fills the gap?
- Would a flexible, overlapping model make more sense?

5. Student Access and Progression

- FET/TVET must allow vertical progression
 - Entry requirements
 - Access and bridging programmes
- Current discussion often focuses on how FET colleges can solve the problems of poorly prepared students

Summary

- HE generally, and education faculties specifically, have paid little or no attention to the FET and TVET sectors
 - Limited research
 - Limited engagement
 - Limited curriculum development
 - No desire to step into the gap
 - No serious engagement with student progression

WHY?

Colonial Culture and TVET

- South(ern) Africa suffers from the inheritance of the British legacy
 - TVET linked to class
 - Middle class white collar work
 - History of linkage to reform schooling and managing deviance
 - In SA this further overlaid by Apartheid

Conclusion

- TVET and FET suffers from neglect because we are locked into a worldview
- Need to break this view by crossing boundaries
 - Looking to other models
 - Drawing on indigenous traditions
 - Building capacity in HE
 - Strengthening the linkages between the institutions



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Thank you and best wishes
for your deliberations!