

SECOND IMPACT STUDY

Human Science Research Council

**Monitoring and Evaluation of
DANIDA Support to Education and Skills Development
(SESD) Programme**

**ORBIT COLLEGE
NORTH WEST**

March 2004

3278

1. ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE

Since the baseline study was conducted a year ago the Orbit college profile has changed in a few significant ways.

1.1 Demographic profile

Race

The learner profile at the 'formerly predominantly white' urban campuses of Rustenburg and Brits has become noticeably more representative of the wider community. However, there has been only a small corresponding change to the staff profiles on these two campuses. There has been no significant change to the learner and staff profiles at the Odi campus where, with a few exceptions, staff and students are black. Like Odi, the Temba campus is located in a former Bophuthatswana area and this is reflected in its racial profile.

Gender

The gender composition of the college management has changed since the appointment of a female CEO. The four campus heads (three of whom are still acting in this position) are male. The acting deputy campus heads are female.

Male staff members still outnumber female staff at head of department level while the gender distribution among the college educators is more equal.

The staff gender profile differs significantly from campus to campus. This situation reflects the traditional gender divisions in the workplace. For example, Odi campus, which offers a number of practical engineering programmes, has more male than female educators although mathematics and science are taught by young women. The Brits campus, which only offers business studies programmes, has a predominantly female staff. It has only two male educators, one of whom joined the staff this year.

The overall gender profile of students is roughly equal and it is evident that enrolments in traditionally male and female work programmes are slowly changing. For example, there are several women students in workshop-based construction and engineering programmes and more men in office administration programmes than was previously the case. Further, all four campuses have male and female student representatives, although men still outnumber women on the college SRC.

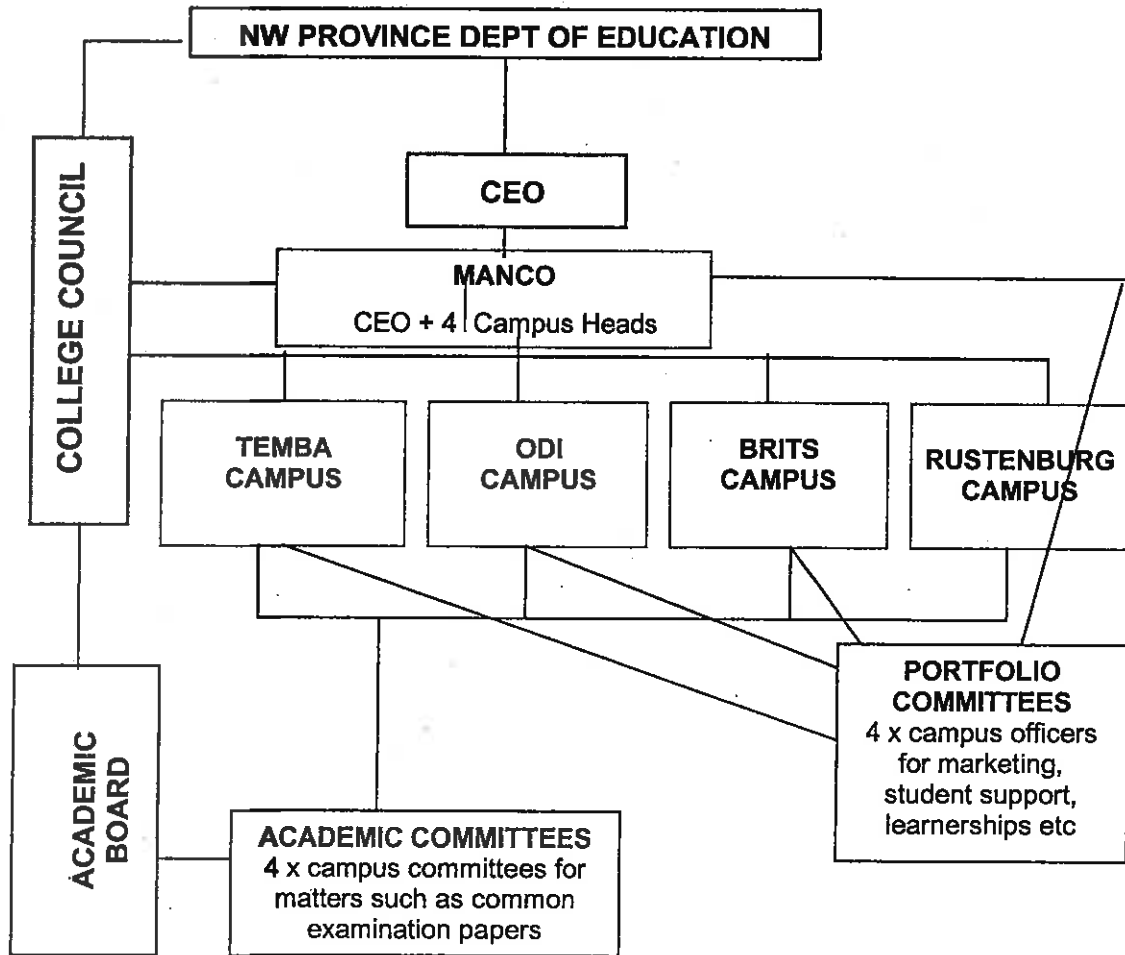
Enrolments

Although the researcher did not obtain any recent statistics on learner numbers, interviewees and focus group respondents report that the 2004 enrolment numbers differ across the college. For example, the Brits staff reports that they have as many students as the current staff complement can manage; the Odi staff reports that learner numbers have dropped and the CEO reports a 30% increase in student numbers at Rustenburg.

The college has become more inclusive in its approach to students. For example, certain of the campuses have begun to implement strategies to support students who would otherwise be excluded on either financial or educational grounds.

Two physically challenged students were seen on the Rustenburg campus, but on the whole the campuses, especially Odi, are unsuited to students with serious mobility problems.

1.2 Organisational Organogram



2. CURRICULUM PROFILE

1. Art – Music

TYPE	TITLE AND LEVEL	DURATION	CAMPUS or DELIVERY SITE
1.1 Formal DoE programmes (NATED)	NIC/N2 Classical / Popular Music	1 year	Rustenburg
1.7 Other	UNISA, ALMSA Music: Practical & Theory Grade 1 - 7; Instruments: Guitar, Bass Guitar, Piano, Organ, Violoncello Vocal	1 year	Rustenburg

2. Business Studies

TYPE	TITLE AND LEVEL	DURATION	CAMPUS or DELIVERY SITE
2.1 Formal DoE programmes (NATED)	Introductory Business Studies NIC/N2 NSC/N3	6 months 1 year 1 year	Brits, Odi, Rustenburg and Temba
	Management Assistant N4-N6 Business Management N4-N6	18 months 18 months	Brits, Odi, Rustenburg and Temba
	Financial Management N4-N6	18 months	Temba
	Legal Secretary N4-N6	18 months	Odi & Temba
	Human Resource Managemt N4-N6	18 months	Odi, R'burg & Temba
	Marketing Management N4-N6	18 months	Odi, R'burg & Temba
2.5 Short courses (not accredited; not assessed)	Operating a small business	36 hours over 12 weeks	All 4 campuses
	Debtors	10 hours over 2 to 4 weeks	All 4 campuses
	Creditors	10 hours over 2 to 4 weeks	All 4 campuses
	Wages	10 hours over 2 to 4 weeks	All 4 campuses
	Cash Books	10 hours over 2 to 4 weeks	All 4 campuses
	Overheads	4 to 8 hours over 4 to 8 weeks	All 4 campuses

Costing	4 to 8 hours over 4 to 8 weeks	All 4 campuses
Auditing	4 to 8 hours over 4 to 8 weeks	All 4 campuses
Company legal requirements	2 to 4 hours over 1 to 2 weeks	All 4 campuses
Quotations	3 to 6 hours over 2 to 3 weeks	All 4 campuses
Tendering	2 to 4 hours over 2 to 4 weeks	All 4 campuses
Marketing	4 hours over 5 days	All 4 campuses
Evaluation profits and losses	2 to 4 hours over 2 to 4 weeks	All 4 campuses
Business skills	12 hours over 4 weeks	All 4 campuses
Leadership skills	6 hours over 2 weeks	All 4 campuses
Secretarial finishing course	16 hours over 2 days	Rustenburg
Labour relations	16 hours over 2 days	Rustenburg
Job interviews and applications	16 hours over 2 days	Rustenburg
Tswana	30 hours over 10 weeks	Rustenburg and Brits
Pastel	68 hours over 7 weeks	Rustenburg and Brits
MS Word	40 hours over 10 weeks	Rustenburg and Brits
MS Excel	28 hours over 7 weeks	Rustenburg and Brits
Access	28 hours over 7 weeks	Rustenburg and Brits
Power Point	12 hours over 3 weeks	Rustenburg and Brits
E-mail and Internet	12 hours over 4 weeks	Rustenburg and Brits
Key board skills	6 hours over 3	Rustenburg and

	Introductory course	5 weeks	Brits Rustenburg and Brits
	Basic computer literacy	60 hours	Temba
	Advanced computer literacy	90 hours	Temba

3. Educare-Social Services

Orbit College no longer offers these programmes.

4. Engineering Studies

TYPE	TITLE AND LEVEL	DURATION	CAMPUS or DELIVERY SITE
4.1 Formal DoE programmes (NATED)	Mining N1	3 months	Rustenburg
	National Certificate (NCOR)	3 months	Rustenburg
	Electrical Engineering (Heavy Current) N1 - N6	18 months	Odi, Rustenburg, Temba
	Electronics N2 and N3	6 months	Odi, Rustenburg
	Electronics Mechanician N1 - N6	18 months	Odi
	Airconditioning & Refrigeration N1 - N6	18 months	Odi
	Automotive Trades (Diesel Mechanic) N1 - N6	18 months	Odi
	Automotive Mechanician N1 - N3	9 months	Odi
	Automotive Trades (Motor Mechanic) N1 - N6	18 months	Odi, Temba
	Automotive Electrician N1 - N6	18 months	Temba
	Metalwork Trades N1 - N6	18 months	Odi, Temba
	Fitter and Turner N1 - N6	18 months	Odi, Rustenburg, Temba
	Civil Engineering (Plumbing) N1 - N3	9 months	Odi, Temba
	Civil Engineering (Bricklaying and Plastering) N1-N3	9 months	Odi, Temba
	Carpentry & Joinery N1 - N3	9 months	Odi, Temba
	Metalwork Trades (Boilermaker) N1 - N6	18 months	Rustenburg
Upholstery and Trimming N1 - N3	9 months	Odi	

4.5 Short courses (not accredited; not assessed)	Welding & Gas Welding	All 3 months	Odi, Rustenburg, Temba
	Fence-making		Odi, Rustenburg
	Plumbing		Odi, Temba
	Electrical		Odi, Temba
	Carpentry		Odi, Temba
	Carpentry (roof brick-making)		Odi
	Brick – laying		Odi, Temba
	Plastering & Tiling		Odi, Temba
	Motor Repairs		Odi, Temba
4.6 Subjects offered in schools	Upgrading of Mathematics (SG) Grade 12 and Science (SG) Grade 12	Not stated	Not stated

5. General Education

TYPE	TITLE AND LEVEL	DURATION	CAMPUS or DELIVERY SITE
5.1 Formal DoE programmes (NATED)	Clothing Production N2 - N6	3 years and 6 months	Odi
5.5 Short courses (not accredited; not assessed)	Sewing Patterns Design Layouts for clothing Upholstery	72 hours over 6 weeks 72 hours over 6 weeks 72 hours over 6 weeks 72 hours over 6 weeks 50 hours over 10 days	All Odi

6. Utility Studies (catering and hospitality, cosmetology, haircare, interior decorating, tourism)

TYPE	TITLE AND LEVEL	DURATION	CAMPUS or DELIVERY SITE
6.1 Formal DoE programmes (NATED)	Cosmetology NIC/N2 - NSC/N3	2 years	Odi, Rustenburg
	Catering and Hospitality NIC/N2 - N4	1 year and 6 months	Odi
6.3 SETA-accredited	Jewelery making - in process		

6.4 Learnerships	Hair Care (Not accredited as busy with Unit Standards NIC/N2 - NSC/N3)	2 years	Odi and Rustenburg
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7. Other short courses (not related to any of the above fields)

TITLE AND TARGET GROUP	DURATION	CAMPUS or DELIVERY SITE
Ballroom Dancing	10 weeks	All Rustenburg
Art	10 weeks	
Interior Decorating	10 weeks	
Other enrichment courses	10 weeks	

8. Programmes and courses with common characteristics

8.1 Programmes or courses with an established reputation in the community or the geographical area served by the college.

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. N - courses, specifically Business Studies and courses with subjects Computer Practice, Accounting. 2. Skills programmes, in workshops. 3. Computer training |
|---|

8.2 Programmes or courses which are new or relatively new and are working towards establishing a strong reputation.

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|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ABET 2. Management Courses |
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8.3 Programmes or courses which attract the largest number of students.

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NOR - N3 programmes (junior groups) 2. Computer literacy courses. |
|---|

8.4 Programmes or courses which attract the smallest number of students.

- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. N5 - N6 (Senior Groups) |
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8.5 *Programmes or courses which offer the greatest potential for growth.*

1. ABET
2. Computer literacy courses

8.6 *Programmes or courses which generate the most income for the college.*

1. Formal N - programmes
2. Computer literacy courses
3. N1 - N6 Full-time and Part-time

8.7 *Programmes or courses which generate the least income for the college and can be offered only through cross-subsidisation.*

1. ABET

8.8 *Programmes or courses which were introduced at the request of employers or community groups.*

1. ABET
2. Computer training courses/programmes
3. Electrical programmes
4. Jewellery learnership

8.9 *Programmes or courses which were introduced at the request of local government, provincial government or national government departments.*

1. Music
2. Computer literacy

8.10 *Programmes or courses which were introduced at the request of or with the support of local or international funders.*

1. Jewellery learnership
2. ABET
3. Computer literacy

8.11 *Other*

We are in the process of entering into a partnership with various mining companies to offer the fundamentals for mining learnerships.
Tourism has been identified as a Niche programme for the Brits campus and we are in the process of implementing a programme based on Unit Standards.

3. CURRENT STATUS OF AREAS IN WHICH ACTIVITIES ARE PLANNED UNDER THE SESD PROGRAMME

3.1 The merger process and knowledge sharing

Since the first impact study in September 2003, the merged Orbit College identity has become widely accepted by all staff. For example, educators no longer express conflicting feelings about their institutional allegiance. However, despite campuses having undertaken various marketing efforts, the college identity is very much stronger internally than externally.

3.1.1 Progress in strengthening the Orbit institutional identity

The college mission statement is prominently displayed in all public and teaching spaces. The college brand is widely used on and outside of the campuses. Student representatives even have branded clothing which they were wearing at the time of the researcher's visit. Each campus has a marketing person who is responsible for marketing the campus' FET programme under the Orbit banner.

3.1.2 Progress in college operations

The framework of college policies, plans, codes of conduct and procedures which was being put in place six months ago has been significantly strengthened by the recent development of comprehensive and legally sound financial and human resources policies and accompanying procedural manuals.

The first combined college graduation ceremony took place in Rustenburg at the end of 2003. At present the academic committees are working on the first common examination papers which will be written according to the first common examination time-table.

The majority of staff have become accustomed to inter-campus teamwork and, unlike six months ago, none of the respondents made petty or stereotypical comments about colleagues on other campuses. The only complaints in relation to inter-campus co-operation were about some campuses contributing more time and resources to college tasks and committees than others. The 2004 SRC members express much enthusiasm for belonging to a large, multi-cultural institution and have already arranged some inter-campus sports days.

3.1.3 Vertical communication

Vertical communication has been hindered by the lack of an adequate FET division within the DoE and a perceived lack of commitment to FET by the province. The college staff communicates well with the recently appointed Provincial Technical Advisor and it hopes that his grasp of the situation will facilitate relations and expedite communication with the department.

Reactions to the procedure of having all campus communications with the department being routed through the CEO were mixed. Certain senior staff found this to be too formal and laborious while others were pleased to be relieved of the responsibility.

3.1.4 Horizontal communication

As was mentioned above, inter-campus communication between staff and students has increased and has become more open and productive. Campus managements spend considerable periods of time working and training together while portfolio committees present routine opportunities for sharing between educators. Informal telephonic communication between colleagues across campuses is also said to be frequent.

There is a minority view that the 'former manpower' colleges are disadvantaged in respect of inter-campus tasks because the delegation of work reflects a lack of trust in their staff capabilities.

Communication with other colleges continues although this has become more limited in respect of colleges beyond the North West Province than was the case six months ago.

3.1.5 External communication

Public relations is one of the management committee's priority concerns. Communication with regional businesses through organisations such as the Afrikaanse Handels Instituut has continued and relationships with newer bodies such as Invest North West have been initiated. The college gets some feature coverage in the local press, and the campuses advertise in the press and on local radio.

During the past six months, Orbit has been in regular contact with various external consultants including a labour law firm, an IT provider and financial advisors.

Respondents agree that the pressure of work has resulted in insufficient time and effort being given to community outreach. Although each campus has a marketing portfolio and plan, the college leadership perceives a need for a professional public relations officer for the college so that stronger and more productive links can be built with a wide range of stakeholders.

3.2 SAQA / NQF

Since all Orbit educators completed their assessor training, several staff have also been trained as verifiers. Nevertheless, the college is still offering 'illegal' programmes because only a few of its workshops have been accredited. The college staff has made good progress with Merseta and certain mechanical engineering programmes were the first to be registered. However, accreditation by the Services SETA is being held up because the department has not provided the necessary official letters and other relevant SETAs are said to still be developing unit standards.

Members of management expressed a range of views about the college's ETQA, the Umalusi alliance. Certain members said that Umalusi's inefficiencies and lack of concern is a serious brake on the accreditation of the college. However, others report that over the past six months the college's relationship with Umalusi has improved although the college still has to tolerate long delays.

College staff members are said to have a better grasp of the SAQA policies than they had six months ago. This is attributed to the policy road shows which took place at the beginning of 2004 and to the repetition of the NQF principles during several recent training courses.

3.3 Linkages and relationship building

Orbit continues to broaden its network of employers in the region and all stakeholders speak of seeking more and deeper partnerships with business and industry. Further, besides the marketing portfolio holders, each campus has a learnership coordinator who is responsible for doing the groundwork for the establishment of learnerships. Progress to date has been limited and uneven across the college. This is partially explained by the lack of both staffing and time over the past few months.

The staff hopes that the new council members will enhance Orbit's capacity to identify and respond to potential partnerships in business and the community. It is still too early to assess whether the recently appointed council will fulfil this expectation.

Rustenburg campus continues to build on its productive relationship with the relatively wealthy Bafokeng nation and it has also made recent strides towards establishing a learnership-linked training relationship with a platinum mining company. The Brits campus has managed to make early and productive short course training links with the large new Bridgestone-Firestone factory near the town. This partnership has the potential to continue for several years. No other new partnerships of any significance were mentioned.

3.4 Strategic planning processes

Six months ago Orbit's strategic planning process was largely complete and was assessed by senior staff as having been successful. However, since implementation has begun, the college has requested that a service provider be contracted to review the strategic plans. The underlying

concern is that the human resource deficits have resulted in the campus level strategic plans being neglected and crises management taking over.

Besides the perennial problem of staff shortages, there is a sense that several of the college middle management lack either the capacity or the commitment to the new objective-driven approach to running the college. In addition, senior staff have failed to adequately 'cascade' knowledge and information within their campuses and this has resulted in numbers of educators feeling 'left out of the loop'.

The researcher's impression was that Orbit should benefit from external support in adjusting its strategic plan so that it is better matched to the current staffing and capacity levels of the college. It would also benefit from assistance in person-centred approaches to operationalising of plans at all levels of the institution. The college should avoid the situation of having a significant proportion of senior staff feel that they are being overly 'driven' to meet strategic objectives without any recognition for their efforts or benefits to themselves.

3.5 Capacity building of college council and academic board

It is still too early to comment on the new college council. The section 9 council that should have been in place by October only convened for the first time at the end of March. Both the CEO and interim council chairperson said that the composition of the new council meets the college's requirement for broad representation.

Unfortunately, the college has already taken the former council members through a training process which included the relevant legislation, roles and responsibilities, and a code of conduct. This process has to start from scratch with the new council.

Without a council in place, the academic board is reported to have been 'limping along' with most of the work being carried out by the a few board members and the academic committees. The CEO has been directing academic affairs in the absence of council.

The current challenge in relation to the fulfilling the academic board's objectives is to introduce greater standardisation in the curriculum frameworks for Orbit programmes and to ensure high quality delivery across all campuses. Academic committees and educators on the different campuses would benefit from carefully targeted and context specific capacity building in support of these objectives.

Staff and students understand the difference between governance and management and most staff and SRC members have a good grasp of the functions of the council and the board.

Council and academic board in place			✓	Council and academic board not yet in place			✓
STAKEHOLDER TYPE	YES / NO		STAKEHOLDER TYPE	YES / NO			
	Council	A. board		Council	A. board		
Senior management	Yes	Yes	Local community	Yes	No		
Teaching staff	Yes	Yes	Business	Yes	No		
Non-academic staff	Yes	Yes	Higher education	Yes	No		
Learners	Yes	Yes	Other state bodies	Yes	No		

3.6 Capacity building of management

It is a pity that the DoE's late rush to use up the conditional training grant has demanded so much of management's time and has taken the CEO, campus heads and deputies away from applying the knowledge they gained during the SESD programme of 2003. This poorly planned intervention has also contributed to lower management morale. This underlines the problem of

the FET officials assuming that residential training courses are an effective and cost efficient solution to a range of inter-related development needs when the department might more usefully increase its financial or practical support to the colleges.

Orbit staff were divided on the issue of whether the first phase of implementation justified the recent more centralised and top-down management approach or whether this approach had disempowered rather than assisted middle managers. Several senior staff are said to resent the fact that nearly everything they undertake is currently vetted at college level. This trend towards increasingly centralised management and control reflects the leadership's response to the uneven levels of capacity which have emerged since implementation began. For example, the full extent of the lack of management experience and capacity in respect of vital areas of responsibility such as budgeting and financial management across the campuses has only become apparent during the period under review.

On at least two of the campuses there is a need for intensive workplace-based capacity development and sustained mentoring in financial management and administration. At Odi several problems which were caused by very basic errors by financial staff have only come to light during the internal audit. Although management has responded by introducing special measures such as drawing on the expertise of educators who teach accounting and getting assistance from another campus head who is good at financial management, these strategies are only feasible as interim measures.

SESD has supported some capacity development in financial management and the college's financial consultants have undertaken some campus-based training. Nevertheless, the situation on the large campus remains problematic. Educators and learners complain about the slow and inefficient registration process and about the numerous errors in students' fee accounts. Learner respondents also report that they receive a hostile reception from administrators when they try to point out errors in their accounts.

This situation is aggravated by the administrators' lack of computer and basic recording skills. The situation requires systematic and sustained capacity development with all levels of that campus' administration.

The past six months have been characterised by the following management priorities:

- making the college's new system of policies and procedures work,
- implementing new measures to meet the college's priority objectives, and
- a technically efficient and standardised approach to accountability within the college.

Despite having achieved much in all these respects, the exhaustion and disillusionment of key senior staff suggests that the unfreezing of management posts and the provision of support staff for the CEO are imperatives which the department would be short-sighted to ignore. Further, there are indications that a change to a more person-centred and democratic management approach is required.

3.7 Professional development of staff

In recent months the following professional training has been provided to Orbit educators:

- Assessor,
- Verifier/moderator,
- Recognition of Prior Learning, and
- Curriculum Development.

The CEO reported that in recent months the timing and spread of the SESD programme has improved and the quality of the service providers is much better.

The positive impact of the DANIDA-supported professional development in the SESD programme priority areas such as the establishment of effective learner support units on each

campus, is already evident. Most of the learner support staff have achieved much in a short time and this has resulted in increased job satisfaction for these educators.

Recent DANIDA-supported training in science and technological subjects which require students to link theoretical to practical knowledge, also received positive reports. During this training several educators were exposed to outcomes based learning and teaching methods for the first time. A science educator said, 'I am so excited. Its already working.'

Many educators' feel that the much recent (non-DANIDA) provision of generic professional courses has been too indiscriminate and repetitive to justify their absences from the classroom. The general sentiment is summed up by the comment: 'What could have been a good thing is starting to be a burden and to affect the public perception of the college.'

The following were identified as areas of professional practice which require further staff development:

- subject specific curriculum development and non-transmission approaches to teaching and learning,
- seminars on subject-related trends in the work place,
- seminars on the latest unit standards
- information technology and intensive mentoring in the administration of the DB2000 system on certain campuses.

3.8 Academic competence in maths, science and technology

The NATED syllabi are still seen as the main obstacle to a better and more integrated approach to teaching and learning in mathematics, science and technology. In addition, the need to modernise most workshop equipment and to familiarise staff with its operation in order to bring certain technological and service courses into line with SETA requirements and the world of work, remains.

Besides the OBE training in mathematics, science and technology which was mentioned under section 3.7, the introduction of the DANIDA-funded PLATO computer-based learning system for mathematics has brought an exciting new dimension to the teaching and learning of mathematics at the college. The researcher observed a PLATO laboratory session and spoke to a pilot class of students as well as to two educators who had been trained as PLATO facilitators. The overall response was very positive and the students were particularly pleased with the self-paced and rapid feedback elements of the programme. The researcher was the only person present who found the Americanisms (such as the use of the dollar instead of the rand currency) off-putting.

3.9 Learner support services

As was noted above, the development of learner support services on each campus is an area where there has been real, although uneven, progress since the first impact study. All campuses now have learner support units which deal with a broad spectrum of support for students. The following is a list of examples of student problems which have been dealt with by one of the more proactive learner support counselors so far this year:

- Two students with learning problems were counseled and individual tutoring was arranged for them.
- A student who was thrown out of his house was assisted with finding somewhere to stay.
- Financial assistance was found for several students who were on the verge of leaving the college because of a lack of funds.
- A few students with familial problems were referred to a social worker for assistance and/or referral to appropriate community-based agencies.

In addition, all entry level students are being monitored and given academic assistance as required

The highly regarded (DANIDA-supported) HIV/AIDS awareness training has had a continued impact in removing much of the stigma from AIDS. This openness has enabled a few infected students to declare their status and to seek advice on how best to live with the disease. In addition, each campus has a plan of AIDS awareness events for the year.

3.10 Budgeting

As was pointed out above, the financial management capacity of campus managements is very uneven. As a result, the CEO regards budgeting as the greatest current challenge. The internal auditing process still continues because reconciliation on one of the campuses (which has no proper records) is proving to be a very difficult task. Further, the lack of realistic figures for 2003 makes budgeting for the upcoming financial year extremely difficult.

Financial training is a priority area for management capacity development. The CEO said that she would like the managers to get to the level where they can all read a trial balance.

Because of the lack of financial support from the province for the central office, the four campuses have had to reduce their budgets for 2004 in order to fund that office and to cover the CEO's expenses.

4. SECOND FORMATIVE IMPACT RATING

During this visit it was evident that the Orbit respondents were rating the college more strictly than was the case during the first impact study six months ago. At that time the staff were delighted to have a competent and well informed CEO to lead the merger process. Under her guidance the campuses were pulling together and an impressive framework of plans and procedures were being put in place. The majority of staff were, therefore, influenced by the rapid rate at which the college appeared to be developing.

Since then, however, staff morale has suffered because the first, and possibly hardest, period of implementation of the college's ambitious programme has resulted in:

- more centralised control and a corresponding reduction in both campus and individual autonomy;
- increased workloads because of a range of new strategic tasks, a busy programme of staff training, and fewer personnel as a result of several posts being frozen by the department; an
- reduced support and/or acknowledgement from the heavily committed college leadership and management and even less support from the FET division in the department.

In addition, the implementation of the new framework of policies and procedures together with certain training courses have given all college staff a better understanding of the depth and breadth of the changes which need to be implemented as well as better insight into the complex FET environment. This has also exposed several capacity deficits within the college and this has made certain members of the management and the staff defensive.

The researcher was aware of the effect of these circumstances on the focus groups' ratings. Her view is that the first impact ratings reflected the rapid progress made at Orbit after the Baseline Study while the second impact ratings are a more realistic appraisal of the college's current position in the light of the enormous transformation project which it faces.

The approach adopted below was to take the respondent's reasons for their ratings into account before awarding a rating for each dimension, which reflects these reasons as well as the researcher's observations and information about the college as a whole.

It should be noted that apart from the CEO, there are no Orbit College management employees in the central office. The management committee members undertake a variety of specialist tasks and senior educators from each of the campuses are called upon to assist the CEO with specific college projects as required.

Time pressures resulted in the interviews with the CEO and the Odi and Brits campus heads following the format of the CEO/Rector research instrument and specific ratings were only discussed when a respondent reflected that a particular dimension or indicator had been rated either too high or too low during the first impact study.

Vision and Mission

1. Practices guided by a clear institutional vision

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										2
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										6
No evidence	Weak Characteristic			Emerging Characteristic			Strong Characteristic			
No Vision or Mission statement	Mission and Vision developed, but have no strong influence on practice			Some shared vision, with some influence on practice, but not shared by all staff			Staff and management share a common vision. This informs their practice.			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<p>Odi management : 8; Odi staff: 7; Brits management: 6; Brits staff: 6</p> <p>The college mission statement is prominently displayed in public meeting areas as well as in most classrooms and workshops on both campuses. Further, those staff who had previously expressed a sense of alienation from the process of developing an institutional vision for Orbit now speak with acceptance and understanding of the institutional vision and mission. They attribute this change to the "constant reference" to the college mission during campus activities and at college events such as the recent graduation ceremony. Educators also appear to have a better grasp of how the college and campus strategic plans relate to the Orbit mission.</p> <p>The difference between the ratings of the two campuses reflects the degree to which the staff of each campus thinks that the mission statement informs current practice. At Brits there is agreement that staff have undergone "a change in mind". However, respondents express the concern that the general commitment to the new college vision cannot be realised while there are so many staff in acting positions and "there are two systems" of programmes being implemented. Odi staff felt that although most courses and programmes are unchanged, there has been significant progress in new undertakings such as marketing.</p> <p>The researcher's choice of a single rating increase from 'emergent' to 'strong' is based on a the noticeable shift in all respondents' awareness of how the college mission should inform their practice. Further, the public relations, business and community outreach strategies which have already been initiated suggest that certain key areas of implementation are being undertaken albeit unevenly across the college.</p>										

2. Inculcation of a value system throughout the institution

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										2
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										5
No evidence	Weak Characteristic			Emerging Characteristic			Strong Characteristic			
No cohesive value system in operation	Value system exists but not shared by everyone so that value conflict occurs			Increasing cohesion around a common set of values, although conflict sometimes occurs			Staff, management and learners share common values and act in accordance with these values			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<p>Odi management: 5; Odi staff: 5; Brits management: 5; Brits staff: 6</p> <p>The Brits staff members score this dimension one rating higher than all other groups on the basis of their shared commitment to working for the best interests of students through teamwork and accountability to parents. Such cohesion of values reflects their history of good results and a shared campus culture which is probably more easily achieved on the relatively small campus.</p> <p>The researcher's rating reflects her agreement with the other respondents. It is based on the recognition</p>										

that although the majority of college staff continue to get to know each other through shared training and college activities and have embraced certain common professional values, progress in this dimension remains too uneven to justify a change in college rating from that of the first impact study when it was characterized as "in progress".

Overall the respondents cited more positive than negative examples of staff and student representatives giving expression to shared college values. The student representatives were particularly emphatic about their commonalities and their willingness to confront and "work through" differences as and when these arise. This was underlined by staff and student respondents who spoke of the impressive teamwork evident in the activities of the SRC during events such as student-run inter-campus sports days.

Examples of sharing and co-operation among the college management and staff include various college-wide working groups, the ongoing exchange of ideas and approaches to learner support, and the sharing of practical solutions to financial and administrative challenges. In addition, a significant number of staff on all campuses have demonstrated a willingness to take on additional tasks and responsibilities without any reward.

There are certain individual staff who are said to undermine this growing cohesion. They have either become despondent as a result of their increased work loads (without any acknowledgement and without confirmation of their posts) or they are threatened by the changes which are being instituted in their working environments. In one group it was suggested that a few individuals who perceive their jobs to be under threat might be deliberately undermining their colleagues' efforts to make the campus operations more efficient and transparent.

Leadership and Management

3. Well-functioning systems of governance, including college councils and academic boards

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										2
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										5
No evidence	Weak Characteristic			Emerging Characteristic			Strong Characteristic			
No functioning system of governance	Some representative structures in place, but mostly in name only. Weak or uneven participation and minimal effectiveness as decision-making bodies. No clear demarcation between governance and operational management roles and responsibilities			Representative structures in place and starting to operate effectively, but participation still uneven. Demarcation between governance and operational management roles and responsibilities require further clarification			All representatives fully integrated and involved in governance. Effective decision-making, with clear demarcation between governance and operational management roles and responsibilities			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Odi management: 5; Odi staff: 4; Brits management: 7; Brits staff: 3

The divergence of ratings between the different respondent groups in respect of this indicator reflects the different levels of knowledge of the process involved in the appointment of the members of the new Section 9 college council. Those furthest from the process felt the greatest frustration and expressed this as impatience with a lack of communication and transparency.

The delays are a result of the official process taking longer than any of the college management anticipated. At the time of the mid-March research visit, the new council members' letters of appointment were still being held up at the office of the MEC. The new council was due to meet for the first time a week later.

By all accounts, the previous council had undergone DANIDA supported training in their roles and responsibilities. Members of both the council and the academic board were said to have operated effectively until the council was dissolved to make way for the Section 9 appointees.

The academic committees are still functioning. For the first time an academic board member has developed a common college examination time-table and the subject committees have prepared common examination papers. These innovations are proving to be challenging because of the different teaching schedules and classroom contact time as a result of delays and staff shortages on certain campuses. The

practical problems caused by the differences between campuses adds to educator frustrations with the academic board and contributes to their low college rating on this dimension.

Despite expressing some regret at the waste of time and effort in ensuring that the previously college council had been well versed in the requirements for effective governance, all the management respondents, including the outgoing chairperson of council (who is also an appointee to the new council), are pleased with the composition of the new council. All these respondents said that the new appointees will bring business, community and educational contacts and expertise to college governance.

The first impact study rating of 5 is retained. While acknowledging the real frustrations experienced by staff and the duplication of efforts required to orientate the new council, the researcher's view is that these are not a reflection of weakened college governance as such. An unchanged rating reflects that the college is in much the same position in respect of governance as it was six months ago.

4. Effective institutional leadership

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										4
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										6
No evidence	Weak Characteristic			Emerging Characteristic			Strong Characteristic			
No leadership system in operation	Weak institutional leadership, with general lack of understanding of national and provincial policies. Little or no democratic participation and shared decision-making			Institutional leadership growing in strength and clarity of purpose. Continual building of culture of democratic participation and shared decision-making			Strong institutional leadership, with clear understanding of national and provincial policies. Culture of democratic participation and shared decision-making			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Odi management: 5; Odi staff: 4; Brits management: 5; Brits staff: 3

All Orbit respondent groups rate the college leadership lower than was the case during the first impact study. This reversal is unsurprising given that the college has progressed quite quickly from the planning and structural development phase to having to deal with the daily challenges of implementation. In the past two months these pressures have been exacerbated by the unrelenting demands on senior staff's time for attendance at provincial training workshops. Several respondents suggested that the compulsory training overload had come about because the responsible DoE official was desperately trying to spend a (non-DANIDA) "discretionary fund" for FET training before the end of the current financial year.

As a result of both the external demands on the leadership's time and the current stage of the college's multi-faceted development, the college leadership is currently 'driving' as opposed to 'leading' the implementation process. In the absence of any corporate staff to whom she can delegate certain college functions, the CEO relies heavily on the management committee and senior staff to carry out college level tasks. The majority of these staff are temporarily filling positions above their official campus post (and pay) levels and are becoming burnt out and demoralised.

Both campus managements' single rating point reduction since the first impact visit reflects their concern about not being able to spend sufficient time on leading their own staff through the difficult change processes. One management group said, "At campus level the absence of senior staff is a disaster. The working environment is confusing and we are failing to deliver." The other campus management said that the imperative to meet the leadership's requirements for the college meant that decision making had ceased to be consultative and as a result the implementation process had become "very autocratic".

The negative rating swing is greatest among the educators. Most, but not all, educators characterised the college leadership style as "top down" and "by instruction". From their perspective the leadership is responsible for lower staff morale, long absences of senior staff from campus, and the knock on effect of this which, they say, impacts on the reduction of time and attention given to the core business of teaching and learning.

Certain staff complained of being generally unacknowledged and unappreciated by the college leadership. Some added that middle management is being incapacitated by the college leadership's unrealistically high expectations of them and of what they can achieved in a short time.

A rating drop of one point to 5 reflects the researcher's sense that although the Orbit leadership has lost

some of its support, the expectations expressed by staff are unrealistic at this stage. The college leadership has maintained its strength and direction under extremely difficult circumstances and without any help from the provincial department.

It is evident that during the past six months the culture of participation and shared decision-making has suffered and the need for the leadership to acknowledge all levels of staff's contributions has been largely overlooked. On balance, however, the researcher concurs with an educator who reflected on the rapid progress made in several spheres of college life and said "there is a time for instructing and a time for consulting". Nevertheless, the leadership should guard against allowing significant numbers of college staff to become alienated from the common project of meeting Orbit's strategic objectives.

5. Effective management systems

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										4
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										5
No evidence	Weak Characteristic			Emerging Characteristic			Strong Characteristic			
No management information system	Management information systems (MIS) exist or are being developed, but are not operational. Decisions are often taken without adequate access to information			Some planning and decision-making informed by up-to-date management information, but not yet fully operational at all levels			Up-to-date management information systems inform planning and decision making at all levels			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Odi management: 4; Odi staff: 3; Brits management: 4; Brits staff: 4										
<p>Since the DANIDA-supported process of putting whole college management systems in place, Orbit has developed standardised operational and human resources procedures. In addition, comprehensive and accessible financial and HR manuals have been developed by reputable accounting and labour relations consultants and campus management groups report that these have already proved their worth by removing many areas of operational uncertainty.</p> <p>Unfortunately, the implementation of the DB 2000 information management system has proved to be a disappointment. The general view of the system is that it is inadequate for several of the college and campus database requirements. Educators confirm that they still have to keep and/or generate various types of student lists and records themselves.</p> <p>The Odi campus experience with information management is exacerbated by the absence of adequate IT capacity among its administration staff. Certain of the former homeland "Manpower clerks" are under-qualified and are reluctant to use computers. They are said to resist all capacity building opportunities offered to them and are thought to be "marking time till retirement or being offered a [severance] package". In effect, these staff cause a block to effective administration and management of information. The Odi management is attempting to work round this problem by giving several senior business studies students practical work opportunities in the college administration. It is too soon to assess the success of this strategy.</p> <p>The problems experienced with the information system underlie the researcher's decision to return this rating to the college baseline level of 4.</p>										

Knowledge Sharing

6. Effective vertical knowledge sharing and learning in the FET system

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										3
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										3
No evidence	Weak Characteristic			Emerging Characteristic			Strong Characteristic			
No sharing and learning between national DoE, provincial DoE, college and campus	Limited flow of information between levels of the FET system. Miscommunication occurs or information arrives too late for effective action			Reasonable communication flows between levels of the FET system, but room for further improvement			Effective upward and downward flow of communication, which enhances performance at all levels of the FET system.			

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Odi management: 5; Odi staff: 4; Brits management: 3; Brits staff: 4										
Vertical communication within Orbit has improved. All college members are familiar with the correct procedures and the only complaints are about information which is sometimes held up at campus management level because of the managers busyness and frequent absences from campus.										
Staff have also adjusted to having all communication with the Education Department being routed through the CEO's office. Several educators expressed relief that they no longer have to try to extract information from departmental officials.										
The fact that the recently appointed PTA is based at Orbit means that he is accessible to the college leadership and it is hoped that he will be able to facilitate the flow of information between the college and the Department.										
There has been some, albeit limited, improvement in communication within the FET system as a whole. This is partly ascribable to more college staff understanding how the qualification framework and processes work as a result of their participation in capacity development initiatives such as the assessor training and partly to the strengthening and development of certain of the relevant SETAs. The researcher's rating increase of one point from 'weak' to 'emerging' reflects this improvement.										
The NW provincial DoE has no FET directorate and its skeleton FET staff is still unable to cope with all the requirements of the emergent FET system. The DoE is, therefore, regarded by all Orbit staff as the main information and communication blockage within the system. In addition, the college staff report that instructions from the department continue to arrive at the last possible minute and a group of educators said that they still found that when they needed information about the system "private help is still stronger than public help".										
The other major source of communication frustration within the system is said to be with the FET colleges' ETQA, Umalusi. Educators complain that this alliance's failure to address college accreditation and related issues is holding them back while private colleges which offer similar courses and are in competition with Orbit are being accredited at a rapid rate.										

7. *Effective horizontal knowledge sharing and learning in the FET system*

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										4
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										6
No evidence	Weak Characteristic			Emerging Characteristic			Strong Characteristic			
No sharing and learning between campuses and colleges, in and across provinces	Minimal sharing and learning between campuses and colleges, in and across provinces - mostly a case of 'each to their own'			Emerging culture of sharing and learning between campuses and colleges, in and across provinces. Co-operation rather than competition becoming more evident.			Optimal sharing and learning between campuses and colleges, in and across provinces - to the mutual benefit of all			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Odi management: 5; Odi staff: 5; Brits management: 4; Brits staff: 7										
There is more routine communication and sharing between all managers and staff across the college than was previously the case. However, the original enthusiasm expressed by the majority of Orbit staff about having regular formal and informal contact with colleagues on the other campuses has abated as the novelty has worn off and staff shortages and increased work loads have begun to impact on everyone's time. In addition, certain educator respondents expressed frustration with the unevenness of the contributions to inter-campus communication and working groups. They suggested that several educators from one of the campuses in particular, contributed little to working co-operatively. They complained that these educators "think it is enough to just turn up" and seldom carried out the tasks given to them.										
The FET colleges in the North West Province continue to receive their training together and staff use the informal times at workshops to share learning and consult with each other. The North West CEOs, in particular, have come to know each other well and are able to caucus around common problems. Nevertheless, certain management respondents reported that information sharing and co-operation does not remove the element of competition between colleges.										

The college continues to look for good practices more widely within the FET system. For example, the Brits staff rated this dimension as 'strong' because, since the last impact visit, certain of the staff visited a college in the Western Cape to investigate the feasibility of establishing an Orbit SME hive. In addition, the implementation of a system of specialist portfolios on each campus has given the persons responsible for undertakings such as marketing, learnerships and student support, the time and the authority to investigate practices across the system.

As is the case across several of the evaluation dimensions, the researcher found that the Orbit staff's comments about horizontal communication revealed that their expectations have grown since the first evaluation visit. This probably accounts for a slight drop in three of the group ratings. The researcher's sense is that some progress has taken place, but it has been too uneven to justify a rating change from the upper end of the 'emergent' scale.

8. Effective external knowledge sharing and learning in the FET system

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										4
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										5
No evidence	Weak Characteristic			Emerging Characteristic			Strong Characteristic			
No effort made to keep business and community stakeholders up-to-date about developments in FET, to market services, or obtain feedback	Flow of information between FET college/campus sporadic and <i>ad hoc</i> . Business and community stakeholders derive little benefit from having a college/campus in the vicinity – although some exceptions. Limited marketing.			Increasing emphasis on knowledge and information sharing between college/campus and wider community. Results not yet optimal but dissemination and feedback loops improving			Ongoing communication with and feedback from external stakeholders. College/campus perceived to actively seek suggestions, value stakeholder contributions and, in their turn disseminate knowledge and information on a regular basis, including active marketing of services			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Odi management: 4; Odi staff: 6; Brits management: 5; Brits staff: 4

Since the first impact study, the general staff awareness of the imperative to market Orbit college and its programmes has become both deeper and more widespread. The college brand is more visible, has been given exposure in the local press, and is gradually becoming known in the towns of Rustenburg and Brits. This may be one of the reasons for the 30% increase in enrolment at Rustenburg since 2003. In addition, the concern expressed last year that the college name evokes negative associations with 'fly-by-night' private colleges, was not mentioned during this visit.

The situation in the peri-urban sprawl of Odi is more challenging because the campus is not visible to by-passers and the Odi management group estimates that about 80% of the community "haven't a clue about us". In addition, staff report that enrolments are down.

In order to remedy this situation, the campus marketing person has recently initiated a programme of school visits and pamphlet distribution throughout the surrounding community. She also reported that the campus was known to certain businesses which were sponsoring Odi students' studies. These businesses are, however, not new campus partners.

External knowledge sharing and advocacy with local business organisations such as the 'Klein Sakekamer' and large enterprises such as the large new Bridgestone-Firestone tyre factory is strong in Brits. Examples of the benefits arising from these linkages with the Brits business community are:

- the ease with which business students from Brits are placed with enterprises upon leaving the college and
- the speed with which the tyre company identified the college for training its Japanese staff in English and the use of certain computer packages.

Unfortunately, Brits staff members feel that the potential of several of its former partnerships with provincial and local government departments has been exhausted. They also report that in recent months advocacy and information sharing has been neglected because of time pressures.

Overall, the college has made some progress in advocacy and relationship building with the business community. However, because of staff workloads, there has been little community outreach and FET information sharing in the community at large. The rating remains at the previous 'mid-emergent' level of 5.

Institutional Health

9. The establishment and maintenance of financial health

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										4
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										5
No evidence	Weak Characteristic			Emerging Characteristic			Strong Characteristic			
College/Campus in weak financial situation, with no strategy in place to improve the situation	College/campus in weak financial situation, but starting to remedy the situation. Budgeting, monitoring and credit control still ineffective			Financial situation not yet stable, but improving steadily. Budgeting, monitoring and credit control systems in place - not yet fully effective			Healthy financial scenario established and maintained			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<p>Odi management: 6; Odi staff: 5; Brits management: 5; Brits staff: 6</p> <p>Certain individual respondents suggested that, with hindsight, the first impact rating of 5 was too high and that 5 is a more accurate reflection of the current situation which includes new financial procedures and controls.</p> <p>Over the past six months Orbit has continued to engage Price Waterhouse Coopers, the firm which assisted the college with the development of sound financial policies, to produce a comprehensive financial manual and to undertake some capacity building in its use. Respondent groups cited this development as well as the introduction of better financial controls and internet banking, as real advances in the financial administration of the college.</p> <p>The primary reason for this dimension remaining at an emergent level is that it has become apparent that the financial administration on one of the campuses has been very weak for many years. This campus lacks capacity in fee administration, lacks proper financial systems and oversight has been inadequate. An audit of the campus' books was being undertaken at the time of the researcher's visit.</p> <p>As an interim measure, the acting campus head and acting deputy have moved two Business Studies educators who are knowledgeable about accounting and financial administration, into the campus financial section. These educators are undertaking the reorganisation of the fee administration process and are instituting more effective recording and control measures. They are also being assisted by neighbouring campus head and a few senior business students who are checking all student accounts.</p>										

10. Adequate infrastructure

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										7
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										7
No evidence	Weak Characteristic			Emerging Characteristic			Strong Characteristic			
Inadequate capacity in terms of physical and administrative infrastructure	Physical and administrative infrastructure not geared for innovation and expansion. Drastic improvement required.			Physical and administrative infrastructure allows some scope for innovation and expansion - further improvement required			Well-developed physical and administrative infrastructure - in line with current and anticipated expansion			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<p>Odi management: 4; Odi staff: 4; Brits management: 8; Brits staff: 7</p> <p>The overall college infrastructure was good at the time of the merger and has been further improved on three of the campuses. However, the researcher's decision to reduce the rating by one point from a strong characteristic is based on the situation at Odi where the lack of maintenance to the expensive infrastructure since the time it was built is now causing problems.</p> <p>Since the first impact visit, the Odi campus management has adapted some wasted space in the administration building to provide small offices for staff with new portfolios such as student support and marketing. A computer room has also been converted to a fully equipped DANIDA-funded PLATO mathematics and communications laboratory. However, there is still no infrastructural provision for independent reading or study by students and one of the large teaching rooms is unusable because of</p>										

damage as a result of a collapsed ceiling. In addition, shortly before the latest research visit, the ceiling in a computer laboratory collapsed and that was also out of commission at the time of the visit. The campus roofs and ceilings are unusual structures and are expensive to repair. Staff fear that their deterioration may prove dangerous.

The Brits building programme has been completed. The attractive campus no longer has any asbestos classrooms and one of the buildings has been transformed into a students' centre which includes a general student resource cum workroom, a student support office, the SRC office with two computers for general student use, and a privately run tuck shop. The administration block is well resourced and the DANIDA-funded computer-based learning laboratory is a highly valued complement to the campus' other much used computer laboratories. The only infrastructural concern on Brits campus is that certain classrooms are too small for increased learner numbers.

By all accounts the Rustenburg and Temba campuses have good infrastructures. The Temba buildings have recently been repainted and there was some building taking place on the Rustenburg campus where student numbers have increased.

11. Enhanced human resource capacity

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										4
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										6
No evidence	Weak Characteristic			Emerging Characteristic			Strong Characteristic			
Human resource capacity totally inadequate	Some expertise, but not adequate. Intensive effort required to build capacity			College/Campus staff mostly have the expertise required, but further enhancement required. Capacity still uneven			All college/campus staff have the necessary expertise to perform their roles. Ongoing capacity enhancement.			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Odi management: 4; Odi staff: 5; Brits management: 6; Brits staff: 7

Despite the increased provision of training over the past six months, there is a strong view that the capacity of Orbit staff, particularly administrative staff, remains too uneven to justify a rating increase. In addition, since they have become more aware of the practical implications of the college development project, the Odi respondents have become sensitised to the campus' capacity development needs especially in operational management and administration. This explains their lower ratings.

The different respondents agreed that the senior staff have gained much capacity from DANIDA and other provincial training courses, but that there is a danger of "overtraining" without allowing sufficient time for the implementation of new learning. The assessor training for all educators and the more recent verification course were said to have advanced the general educational capacity of the college to implement the new FET system. Unfortunately, several educators said that some of this training was repeating what had been covered elsewhere and others said that they had taken a great deal of their own time to prepare portfolios for a training service provider and they had received no feedback on these. One group expressed increased frustration with having to deliver NATED courses since their assessor training. They said, "The new system is much more relevant, we can't wait to get on with it."

Learner support and HIV/Aids training is still referred to as a capacity building highlight while the more recent PLATO facilitator training received by two Odi educators was also greatly appreciated.

There is a general view that at this stage of the college's development, less centralised and more carefully targeted and/or workplace based training would be much more effective. Several respondents find some of the compulsory workshops too time-consuming and repetitive while others would appreciate a more on-the-job and intensive approach. An educator group also raised the issue of certification and/or recognition for training.

All educators expressed the desire for more specialised training in their specific areas of the curriculum. A science educator who reported that she had had recently attended DANIDA supported training in OBE said, "I was so excited I just began the very next day and the students responded immediately."

The college policy is to encourage and give some financial assistance to staff who wish to improve their

qualifications. However, a group of educators reported that few of the insufficiently skilled individuals are interested in using these opportunities. Another staff group complained that they were not permitted to attend "private" seminars in their specialist areas.

12. Quality Assurance System

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										3
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										3
No evidence	Weak Characteristic			Emerging Characteristic			Strong Characteristic			
No QA system in place	QA system in process of being developed, but benefits still poorly understood			QA system developed, but not fully implemented. Still some reservations about benefits			QA system fully operational. Understood and accepted by all. Impacts positively on performance			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<p>Odi management: 3; Odi staff: 3; Brits management: 3; Brits staff: 3</p> <p>The quality assurance situation at ORBIT remains unchanged. Learner results are still the only measure used. The rating of 3 signifies the college's formal commitment to implementing a quality assurance system as well as the respondents' understanding and appreciation of the benefits that this will bring.</p>										

Responsiveness

13. Good relationships with business

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										3
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										5
No evidence	Weak Characteristic			Emerging Characteristic			Strong Characteristic			
No relationships with business	Minimal/ad hoc partnerships. Stronger focus on relationship building required			Increasing focus on relationship building to establish partnerships which are mutually beneficial			Formal and Informal partnerships, with mutual use of resources and benefits to all partners			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<p>Odi management: 5; Odi staff: 4; Brits management: 6; Brits staff: 6</p> <p>A single rating point increase since the first impact study reflects the degree of seriousness with which all Orbit stakeholders speak of the need to develop meaningful relationships with business. There is widespread recognition that the college's survival depends on each campus being able to align its delivery of programmes and short courses with the requirements of business in the region. Each campus has a staff person whose portfolio includes refining and implementing a campus plan for establishing new partnerships with local enterprises.</p> <p>Odi educators said that "the plans are there, but [the responsible person] has to teach". They said that they have found that companies which employ parents of Orbit students are most receptive to approaches from the campus, but the only new relationship reported was with the Marconi information technology group. This group was said to be assisting with improved internet provision.</p> <p>One of the research campuses has good relationships with the local Chamber of Commerce and the 'Klein Sakekamer'. Several members of these organisations have sponsored individual students and they have also helped to place students on completion of their studies. In addition, the campus head is well known to the businesses leaders in the town and is able to call on them for assistance when a student has financial problems.</p> <p>Staff of both campuses report that the majority of commercial enterprises have little understanding of FET and even less interest in engaging in sustained social responsibility programmes. This year, Brits campus' most productive relationship with business has been the provision of short courses in communications</p>										

and computer studies to many staff of the new Bridgestone-Firestone tyre factory. This model of providing short courses to meet the needs of a specific enterprises is also being explored with ABSA.

The college heads expect certain new council appointees, such as a human resources manager from a large platinum mine, to advise Orbit in its drive to develop better linkages with business. A few respondents expressed the hope that council members can also assist with the development of effective strategies for the introduction of learnerships.

14. Good relationships with local communities

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										4
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										5
No evidence	Weak Characteristic			Emerging Characteristic			Strong Characteristic			
No relationships with local communities	Minimal/ad hoc community contact. Little attempt to build relations with poor or disadvantaged sectors of the community			Expansion of community contact to include both advantaged and disadvantaged sectors. Increase in efforts to build relationships			Wide-ranging community support with college/campus an integral part of community activities			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Odi management: 3; Odi staff: 5; Brits management: 7; Brits staff: 5										
Over the past six months there have been little progress in respect of systematic Orbit college initiatives in community outreach and relationship building. The college still continues to provide short courses in areas of general community interest such as computers and Setswana but everyone agrees that more could be done to build new community partnerships.										
The focus groups on both research campuses suggested that the relationship between the college and parents continued to improve and one group pointed to the successful college graduation ceremony as an important public relations exercise in this respect. In addition, several respondents suggested that the Brits campus was particularly 'parent friendly' while the Temba campus has responded to a poor community's needs by providing short courses in ABE.										
On the whole, however, the Odi staff group summed the general situation up as: "There is awareness, but the situation is one of stagnation because of all the other things we have had to do".										

15. Good relationships with other state bodies

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										3
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										4
No evidence	Weak Characteristic			Emerging Characteristic			Strong Characteristic			
No relationships with other state bodies	Some informal contact/discussions but strong partnerships still to be developed			Increase in partnership building, but not yet well-established at all levels			Active partnership building and collaboration at local, provincial and national level			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Odi management: 5; Odi staff: 4; Brits management: 5; Brits staff: 4										
Both staff groups felt that there had been little progress in establishing productive relationships with state bodies. They said that Orbit's existing relationships with local government and the provincial departments of Transport, Social Services Arts and Culture and Health were no longer producing significant numbers of short course learners.										
Nevertheless, the researcher agrees with the two management groups that since the Orbit has given one of the staff the task of improving and coordinating communication with state bodies, there has been some, albeit limited progress. For example, the groundwork has been done to develop a relationship with the Departments of Labour and Correctional Services although neither relationship has resulted in any training contracts. In addition, the Brits management reported that the college is investigating the potential for establishing a relationship with the provincial tourism authorities.										
Odi management report that the engineering department's links with Merseta were stronger than ever and the building and construction staff members have also managed to establish a relationship with the										

Construction SETA. Unfortunately Orbit is struggling to keep pace with the Services SETA because of the constant changes to unity standards and the Textile and Clothing SETA is insufficiently established for partnership building.

16. The development, provision and evaluation of learnership programmes

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										4
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										5
No evidence	Weak Characteristic			Emerging Characteristic			Strong Characteristic			
No involvement in learnerships	Some informal contact/discussions on possible learnerships			Some implementation of learnerships, but still in the early stages			Significant implementation of learnerships. A major focus area with ongoing evaluation as part of the process			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<p>Odi management: 3; Odi staff: 5; Brits management: 6; Brits staff: 3</p> <p>The researcher has returned the Orbit rating for learnership programmes to the baseline 'low emergent' rating of 4. The reason for this is that although each campus has a staff person whose portfolio is to research and make recommendations for the implementation of learnerships, these staff have not been relieved of their teaching duties. A staff person who had been given the Odi learnership portfolio recently resigned to join a SETA. Another learnership coordinator said, "We are reaching out to inform the community and are gathering lots of information. We are still talking and there's lots of work to be done."</p> <p>The Rustenburg campus is holding discussions with mining companies about the possibility of that campus offering the basic courses for mining learnerships.</p> <p>Finally, the college has still to be accredited before any learnerships can be implemented.</p>										

7. The development, provision and evaluation of programmes for the development of small and micro enterprises (SME)

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										5
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										6
No evidence	Weak Characteristic			Emerging Characteristic			Strong Characteristic			
No SME provision	Learners have some exposure to principles of entrepreneurship and SME development, but limited links between theory and practice. Staff members have limited expertise in this area.			Entrepreneurship and preparation for self-employment receiving increasing attention. Staff expertise being developed and entrepreneurship included in a range of programmes			Wide range of opportunities in place to prepare learners and community members for self-employment. Entrepreneurship an integral part of all programmes, with strong links between theory and practice			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<p>Odi management: 3; Odi staff: 6; Brits management: 6; Brits staff: 5</p> <p>The SME programme rating returns to the baseline level of 5 despite each campus having a SME programme coordinator. The reason for the slight reduction is that SMEs are discussed with less enthusiasm and appear to be receiving less attention, than was the case six months ago.</p> <p>The college has done much groundwork. For example, delegates from the Brits campus investigated the feasibility of building a SME business hive to give students practical experience. In addition, college staff on all four campuses continue to teach courses of relevance to small business and to encourage students to plan stalls for markets and a local show. Unfortunately, Brits staff report that the students show little enthusiasm for entrepreneurship. The Odi staff report that it has not undertaken any recent initiatives in this area and suggested that the Temba staff is more active in encouraging small business development.</p> <p>Orbit has started to raise money for a fund which will enable students to apply for micro enterprise start-up grants.</p>										

18. The development, provision and evaluation of short courses/ skills programmes

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										4
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										5
No evidence	Weak Characteristic			Emerging Characteristic			Strong Characteristic			
No short courses	Some informal discussions on possibility of running short courses. Range of needs and possible take-up still to be established			Some short courses introduced but further enhancement required to establish reputation as a provider			Wide range of short courses available. Strategy in place to respond to needs as they arise. Good provider reputation established			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Odi management: 4; Odi staff: 5; Brits management: 5; Brits staff: 5										
<p>The rating for short courses remains at the first impact level of 5. Although there is general agreement that there is a demand, especially in middle-class communities, for short courses in subjects such as computer literacy and programmes such as Publisher and PowerPoint, college personnel are too busy to undertake additional provision. A Brits staff person reported that she was tired, but would be offering short computer courses during the vacation "because there is no other time – we don't have the personnel". The Odi management group said that staff were developing short courses in computers, clothing and hair care, but so far there are few enrolments.</p>										

Teaching and Learning

19. Functioning curriculum development processes

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										3
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										4
No evidence	Weak Characteristic			Emerging Characteristic			Strong Characteristic			
Curriculum static – same as always	Ad hoc revision of curriculum. Little innovation and limited staff expertise			Increasing focus on curriculum development, but expertise still being developed. NQF requirements still a challenge			Ongoing curriculum improvement and adaptation, linked to regular evaluation. NQF requirements actively addressed			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Odi management: 4; Odi staff: 5; Brits management: 5; Brits staff: 4										
<p>The rating score for curriculum development remains at 4. The majority of lecturers cite the department's decision to retain the NATED programmes and examinations as well as a lack of time for 'core business' as the greatest constraints to positive change in teaching and learning.</p> <p>Since their assessor and verifier training courses, educators have become more aware of the advantages of a unit standard approach and several respondents said that they were anxious to change to more globally relevant curricula and assessment methods. The general commitment to curriculum change reflects the respondents desire to shed syllabi and textbooks which several business studies educators described as 'embarrassing'.</p> <p>Odi staff reported that Merseta had assisted certain staff to make curriculum changes in practical engineering programmes such as air conditioning. The latter programme was said to be the first Odi programme to be registered with the SETA. Besides the technological subjects, Orbit skills-based and service programmes such as hair care are in the process of being adapted to the unit standard approach.</p> <p>A science educator who attended a recent DANIDA-supported course in OBE reported that this had enabled her to change her approach to curriculum development and delivery despite the current constraints. This supports educators' widely expressed need for training to be more subject specific.</p>										

20. Quality curricular delivery

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										4
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										5
No evidence	Weak Characteristic			Emerging Characteristic			Strong Characteristic			
Poor quality learning and teaching. No links between theory and practice and no attempt to produce well-rounded learners	Weak reputation as a provider. Emphasis on improving examination results, with little attention paid to quality of teaching and learning. Holistic learner development not regarded as important.			Quality of teaching and learning receiving increased attention - focus not only on examination results. Holistic learner development encouraged. Relation between theory and practice receiving attention			Quality of teaching and learning a major focus. Strong links between theory and practice and holistic approach to learner development. Enrichment activities in place. Good reputation as a provider			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<p>Odi management: 4; Odi staff: 5; Brits management: 3; Brits staff: 5</p> <p>DANIDA -sponsored initiatives in areas such as learner support and mathematics, science and technology appear to be having a positive influence on certain educators' teaching practice. However, these early gains in the quality of curriculum delivery are overshadowed by the widespread feeling that learning has suffered because of the frequent absence of educators from the classroom. In addition, several educators expressed the concern that the college results will be negatively affected by fewer contact hours. These factors account for the researcher's decision to return Orbit's rating to the baseline level of 4.</p> <p>A range of respondent's reported that the overload of ill-timed provincial training and the resultant absence of senior staff from campuses is impacting negatively on the core business of the college. For example, all Brits respondents remarked that because the campus has a small staff, there have been times in the past three months when a third of the educators have been off campus at the same time. Brits management as well as the educators on both campuses remarked that this was affecting student attendance and work discipline. A respondent summed up the situation by saying, "[The] atmosphere has deteriorated and students have become lax about their work". In addition, several parents have complained to management because their children choose to stay at home rather than do unsupervised work when educators are away. A learner focus group also complained of frequent staff absences and suggested that certain staff exploit the situation by arriving late and by missing more classes than is absolutely necessary.</p>										

21. Well-functioning staff development processes

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										3
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										5
No evidence	Weak Characteristic			Emerging Characteristic			Strong Characteristic			
No staff development process in place	Weak staff development and appraisal processes. Staff trained on an <i>ad hoc</i> basis, with limited opportunity to express their needs. Staff often inadequately prepared for new implementation			Increased focus on staff development and appraisal. System for on systematic review of needs still being put in place. Staff mostly prepared for new implementation,			Ongoing staff development and appraisal an integral part of institutional activity. Staff confident that they will be trained on new processes before they are implemented			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<p>Odi management: 3; Odi staff: 3; Brits management: 3; Brits staff: 6</p> <p>Staff development drops from a mid-emergent rating of 5 to the baseline rating of 3. The Brits staff was the only group which rated this higher than for the first impact study. This is in recognition of both the amount of training which has been delivered in the past few months and also the educators' sense of readiness for the implementation of a new system of FET programmes. Nevertheless, in common with all other respondents, the Brits educators said that the Orbit staff development is 'weak on appraisal and [as a result] the skills development plan is not based on the staff's strengths and weaknesses'.</p> <p>All respondents complained of the province's indiscriminate force-feeding of 'one-size-fits-all' staff development in order to use up the 'conditional grant' before the end of the financial year. Several people suggested that with better planning, staff development courses could have taken place during the periods of the November 2003 college examinations and the 2004 learner registrations when educators could have given the courses their full attention without being concerned about missing vital contact hours with their students.</p>										

Another, less widespread, complaint about the externally driven and largely compulsory capacity building process which is being implemented at Orbit is that no recognition of prior learning is applied to the sending of college representatives on courses. As a result, certain staff are frustrated by having to endure repetition of what they know "until everyone has exactly the same kit".

Learner Support

22. The development, implementation and evaluation of academic support programmes

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										2
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										5
No evidence	Weak Characteristic			Emerging Characteristic			Strong Characteristic			
No academic support programme in place	Learners obtain academic support on <i>an ad hoc</i> basis			Educators provide support to individuals. Bridging courses introduced			Dedicated person and a functioning academic support policy in place			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Odi management: 4; Odi staff: 3; Brits management: 9; Brits staff: 7										
<p>There was the greatest spread of group ratings on this indicator. The Odi respondent groups rated it as weak to emerging while both Brits groups rated it as strong. The researcher's 6, at the upper end of the emergent scale, recognises that this is an area of the college's development in which significant progress has been made since the baseline study. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each campus has a dedicated learner support person in his /her own office. This person is responsible for the application of the Orbit learner support policy on each campus through individual counseling and assistance as well as the implementation of group academic development strategies; • The learner support officers have the backing of the college leadership. They have also received good quality training for their tasks. • The learner support officers on each campus are in regular contact with each other and are said to co-operate more productively than any other inter-campus working group; • The provision of DANIDA-funded computers for use in dedicated academic development laboratories has expanded the potential for differentiated, self paced learning on either the PLATO mathematics and communications system (at Odi) or as a reading and writing laboratory (as is planned for Brits). <p>Despite this progress, the awareness of these implementation measures across all of the college respondents was too uneven to give Orbit a strong student support rating at this stage. It seems that the fact that the original Odi learner support officer left the college and has only recently been replaced by another educator has slowed down the implementation of academic support on that campus.</p>										

23. The development, implementation and evaluation of HIV/AIDS support programmes

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										2
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										7
No evidence	Weak Characteristic			Emerging Characteristic			Strong Characteristic			
No HIV/ Aids policy	Some input given to learners by campus or outside people on <i>ad hoc</i> basis			Educators provide information and support to individuals on request			Dedicated person and a functioning HIV/Aids policy in place			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Odi management: 6; Odi staff: 5; Brits management: 7; Brits staff: 7.										
The student support officers on each Orbit campus have been trained in HIV/Aids counseling and are also										

responsible for implementing the college HIV/Aids policy. Each campus has an annual plan which includes campus activities and awareness days. All respondents report that there is more openness about, and less stigma attached to Aids than was the case at the time of the baseline study.

As was the case in relation to academic support for students, the researcher has reduced the college rating from 7 to 6 because respondents' comments suggested an unevenness of implementation of the HIV/Aids policy across the college and a lack of any new initiatives since the first impact study visit to Orbit.

24. The development, implementation and evaluation of guidance and counselling systems

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										2
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										6
No evidence	Weak Characteristic			Emerging Characteristic			Strong Characteristic			
No guidance or counselling	Some input given to learners by campus or outside people on ad hoc basis			Educators provide some individual guidance and counselling on request			Dedicated person and functioning guidance and counselling system in place			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Odi management: 2; Odi staff:1; Brits management: 7; Brits staff: 7										
Both Odi respondent groups rated this as the weakest aspect of student support on that campus.										
Staff representatives from each campus have received training in guidance and counseling, but as with the other aspects of student support, progress across different campuses has been too uneven to justify a rating increase into the 'strong' scale. The respondent groups at Odi said that there has been no individual student counseling by a trained campus staff person since the original student support officer left.										
Brits has a dedicated counselor who has an open door policy and a roster for individual guidance and counseling. She reports that several agencies in the town have assisted her when a student has required help with problems at home or in the community.										

5. OVERALL ASSESSMENT

The past six months have marked Orbit's first phase of implementation as a merged college in a new FET landscape. Predictably, implementation of the ambitious college strategic plan has brought several of the college's weaknesses and capacity deficits to the fore. It has also highlighted the college's strengths and capacity to move forward while under extreme pressure from staff shortages and without any support from the provincial department.

Apart from the progress in relation to the evaluation indicators which were discussed in the previous sections, significant, albeit uneven, progress was especially evident in:
 the manner in which educators have embraced the changes to the FET curricula and express the desire to replace familiar NATED programmes with the new system,
 the positive responses of students to the innovations which are being introduced on their campuses,
 the widespread awareness of the need for every facet of college provision to be responsive to the needs of business and the community, and
 a significant turn-around in understanding that all aspects of provision to students needs to shift from a fairly rigid teacher-centred or institutional approach to a learner-centred approach.

The main challenge over the next six months is going to be to sustain the forward momentum of the college while ensuring that the weakest members do not get left behind and the strongest members are not held back and thus become disillusioned. Already three of the most proactive and dynamic staff have left the college for better opportunities in the FET system. A more

differentiated and person-centred management approach and more carefully targeted capacity development may help in these respects.

As far as the SESD programme objectives are concerned, the following should be taken into account:

- There is a need for the planners to ensure that SESD programme is not undermined by poorly conceived and planned interventions on the part of the department and other training programmes.
- The SESD programme should continue to recognise that training is not a panacea for all college development ills and that workshops are not necessarily the most appropriate or effective training approach for many of the current capacity development requirements.
- SESD might consider asking its training service providers to follow-up their courses with support visits to campuses. This should help to optimise and sustain the transfer of learning.

The following two tables give the ratings for the Orbit baseline study followed by the first and second impact ratings.

Table 1: Average ratings

Average baseline rating	Average 1 st impact rating	Average 2 nd impact rating
3.4	5.2	5.0

Table 2: All ratings

	DIMENSIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS	BASELINE RATING	1ST IMPACT RATING	2ND IMPACT RATING
	Vision and mission	Weak	Emerging	Emerging to strong
1.	Practices guided by a clear institutional vision	2	6	7
2.	Inculcation of a value system throughout the institution	2	5	5
	Leadership and management	Weak to emerging	Emerging	Emerging
3.	Well-functioning systems of governance, including college councils and academic boards	2	5	5
4.	Effective institutional leadership	4	6	5
5.	Effective management systems	4	5	4
	Knowledge sharing	Weak to emerging	Weak to emerging	Emerging
6.	Effective vertical knowledge sharing and learning in the FET system	3	3	4
7.	Effective horizontal knowledge sharing and learning in the FET system	4	6	6
8.	Effective external knowledge sharing and learning in the FET system	4	5	5
	Institutional health	Weak to emerging	Weak to strong	Weak to emerging
9.	The establishment and maintenance of financial health	4	5	5
10.	Adequate infrastructure	7	7	6
11.	Enhanced human resource capacity	4	6	6
12.	Quality assurance system	0	3	3
	Responsiveness	Weak to	Emerging	Emerging

		emerging		
13.	Good relationships with business	3	5	6
14.	Good relationships with local communities	4	5	5
15.	Good relationships with other state bodies	3	4	5
16.	The development, provision and evaluation of learnership programmes	4	5	4
17.	The development, provision and evaluation of programmes for the development of small and micro enterprises (SME)	5	6	5
18.	The development, provision and evaluation of short courses/ skills programmes	4	5	5
	Teaching and learning	Weak to emerging	Emerging	Weak to emerging
19.	Functioning curriculum development processes	3	4	4
20.	Quality curricular delivery	4	5	4
21.	Well-functioning staff development processes	3	5	3
	Learner support	Weak	Emerging to strong	Emerging
22.	The development, implementation and evaluation of academic support programmes	2	5	6
23.	The development, implementation and evaluation of HIV/AIDS support programmes	2	7	6
24.	The development, implementation and evaluation of guidance and counselling systems	2	6	6

Since the first impact study 5 ratings have improved, 11 have remained the same and 8 have gone down.

The dimensions which improved in aggregate were:

- Vision & Mission and
- Knowledge Sharing.

Dimensions with the same aggregate ratings were:

- Responsiveness and
- Learner Support

Despite considerable progress in Learner Support on certain campuses, the unevenness of this across the whole college kept the aggregate for that dimension at the same level.

Dimensions with the lower aggregate ratings were:

- Leadership and Management
- Institutional Health
- Teaching and Learning

The drop in the latter dimension reflects the effects of educators being taken out of classrooms rather than a drop in professional standards.