



SECOND IMPACT STUDY

Human Science Research Council

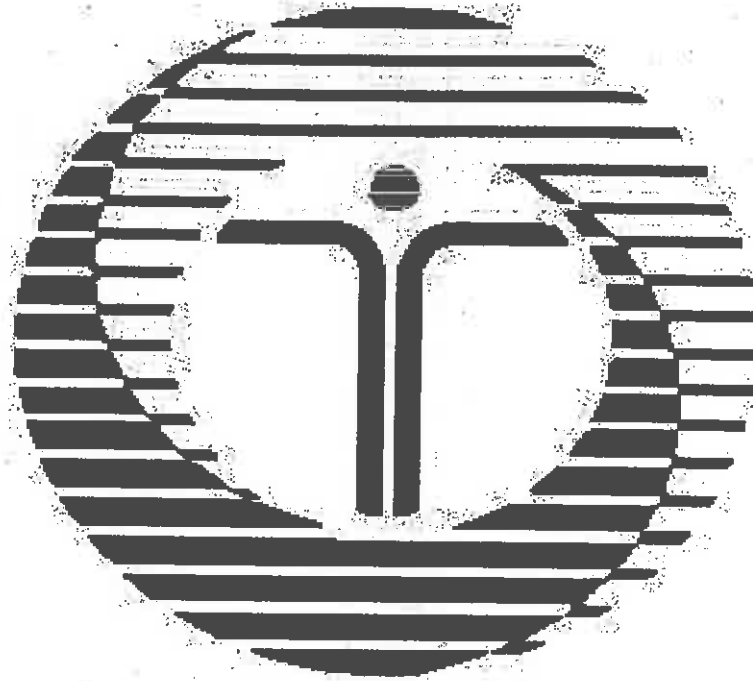
Monitoring and Evaluation of
DANIDA Support to Education and Skills Development
(SESD) Programme

**MTHASHANA COLLEGE
KWAZULU NATAL**

March 2004

HSRC RESEARCH OUTPUTS

3274



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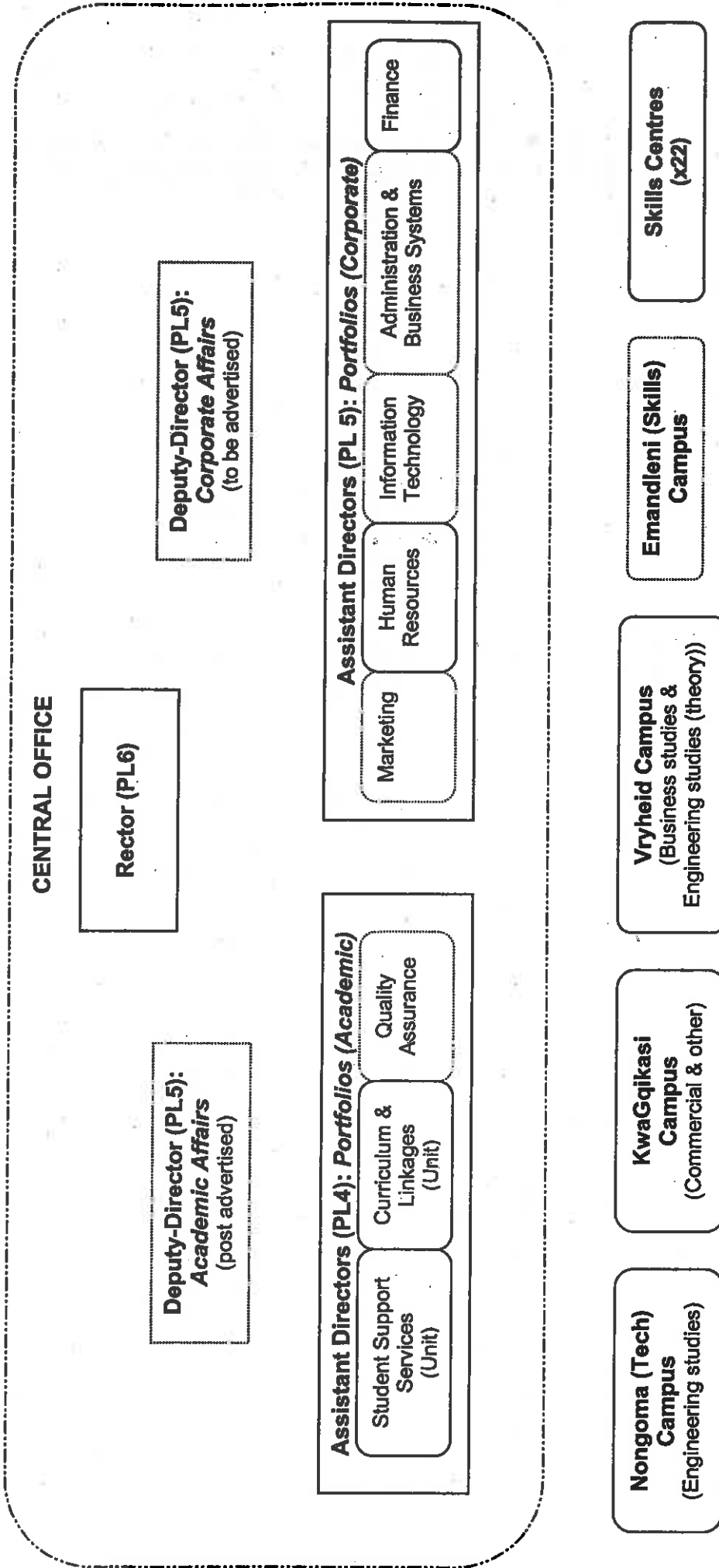
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1. ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE

The following diagramme represents the researcher's attempt at conveying the college's structural organisation.



Comments:

1. The three governance structures – College Council, Academic Board and Student Representative Council (SRC) – were not included in the diagramme.
2. The rector's office support staff complement comprises the following posts (which have all been filled):
 - personal assistant
 - secretary
 - budget monitor
3. Two of the portfolios have achieved 'unit' status (SESD-funded) with the appointment of managers, as per advertised posts – 'linkages & curriculum' and 'student support services'. (The 'governance & management' and 'infrastructure & utilities' portfolio committees do not appear in the diagramme since their 'organisational structure' status is not clear to the researcher – it is assumed that they constitute 'internally-nominated' structures and do not resort under assistant-directors?). The Skills, LSEN, and SESD coordinators report to the manager of the linkages and curriculum unit and their respective areas of functioning could therefore be viewed as constituting sub-units of that unit.
4. The two previously con-joined Nongoma campuses have split towards 'independent' status – Nongoma (Technical) campus (previously referred to as Campus A) and KwaGqikasi campus (previously Campus B). The previous (overall) campus manager now heads Nongoma campus whilst the head of the linkages & curriculum unit has been appointed acting-campus manager of KwaGqikasi campus till the end of March, at which time the central office staff currently based at KwaGqikasi campus (to implement pilot programmes and develop infrastructure in support of these programmes) will be withdrawn to central office. A new appointment will therefore have to be made.
5. In order to satisfy the requirements of the PFMA, the Finance desk is to be structured into the following sections:
 - accounts
 - procurement
 - transport
6. Measures envisaged towards developing and strengthening the portfolios, as well as the priorities in this regard, will be discussed in section 3 below.

2. CURRICULUM PROFILE

Range and Level of College Provision

2.1 Art – Music

N/A

2.2 Business Studies

TYPE	TITLE AND LEVEL	DURATION	CAMPUS or DELIVERY SITE
2.2.1 Formal DoE Programmes (NATED)	Marketing Management N4-N6. Management Assistant N4-N6	6 months "	Vryheid Vryheid
	Human Resource Management N4-N6 Public Relations N4-N6 Business Management N4-N6	6 months " "	KwaKwaGqikasizi KwaKwaGqikasizi KwaKwaGqikasizi
	Computer N4-N6 (evening classes)	6 months	Vryheid
	NSC (N3)	1 year	Vryheid & KwaKwaGqikasizi
	NIC (N2)		Vryheid
2.2.2 Programmes offered in partnership with higher education institutions	N/A		
2.2.3 SETA-accredited qualifications and skills programmes (not 'ships)	N/A		

2.2.4 Learnerships	N/A			
2.2.5 Short courses (not accredited; not assessed)	Pastel		6 weeks	Vryheid
2.2.6 Subjects offered in schools	Biology English Geography		1 year 1 year 1 year	Vryheid Vryheid Vryheid
2.2.7 Other	N/A			

2.3 Educare-Social Services

N/A

2.4 Engineering Studies

TYPE	TITLE AND LEVEL	DURATION	CAMPUS / DELIVERY SITE
2.4.1 Formal DoE programmes (NATED)	Mechanical Engineering	Trimester	Nongoma & Vryheid
	Electrical Engineering	Trimester	Nongoma & Vryheid
	Civil	Trimester	Nongoma
2.4.2 Programmes offered in partnership with higher education institutions	N/A		

2.4.3 SETA-accredited qualifications and skills programmes (not I'ships)	N/A			
2.4.4 Learnerships	N/A			
2.4.5 Short courses (not accredited; not assessed)	Building: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bricklaying • block laying • block making Motor Vehicle Maintenance Workshops: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • welding • motor mechanics • electrical 	1 year " " 1 year 13 weeks " " " "	Emandleni Emandleni Nongoma " " " "	
2.4.6 Subjects offered in schools	Maths Science	1 year 1 year	Vryheid Vryheid	
2.4.7 Other	N/A			

5. General Education

TYPE	TITLE AND LEVEL	DURATION	CAMPUS / DELIVERY SITE
2.5.1 Formal DoE programmes (NATED)	N/A		
2.5.2 Programmes offered in partnership with higher education institutions	N/A		
2.5.3 SETA-accredited qualifications and	N/A		

skills programmes (not I'ships)				
2.5.4 Learnerships	N/A			
2.5.5 Short courses (not accredited; not assessed)	Personal Development Life Skills	1 year 1 year	Emandleni Emandleni	
2.5.6 Subjects offered in schools	N/A			
2.5.7 Other	N/A			

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

TYPE	TITLE AND LEVEL	DURATION	CAMPUS / DELIVERY SITE
2.6.1 Formal DoE programmes (nated)	N/A		
2.6.2 Programmes offered in partnership with higher education institutions	N/A		
2.6.3 Seta-accredited qualifications and skills programmes (not I'ships)	N/A		
2.6.4 Learnerships	N/A		
2.6.5 Short courses (not accredited; not assessed)	Sewing	20 Days	Skills Centres: Hlobane Vryheid (Skills Centre) Mountain View

"	"	3 Months	Babanango Masicebisane Isiphosethu Sishwili Inkanyiso
"	Cooking / Baking Horticulture Agronomy Live Stock Production Poultry Production Piggery Farm Development	1 Year 1 Year " " " "	Phinda Emandleni Emandleni Emandleni Emandleni Emandleni Emandleni
"	Beadwork	2 Months 2 Months	Ubombo Vryheid (Skills Centre)
2.6.6 Subjects offered in schools	N/A		
2.6.7 Other	N/A		

7. Other short courses (not related to any of the above fields)

N/A

Responses to key curriculum-related questions:

1. *Which of the above programmes or courses have an established reputation in the community or the geographical area served by the college; therefore attracting students on the basis of a perception of quality educational provision?*

Marketing Management – Vryheid
 Management Assistant – Vryheid
 Business Management – KwakwaGqikasizi
 Human Resource Management – KwakwaGqikasizi
 Mechanical Engineering – Nongoma & Vryheid

Electrical Engineering – Nongoma & Vryheid

2. Which of the above programmes or courses are new or relatively new and still working towards establishing a strong reputation?
N/A

3. Which of the above programmes/courses attract the largest number of students?
Marketing Management – Vryheid
Management Assistant – Vryheid
Business Management – KwaKwaGqikasizi
Human Resource Management – KwaKwaGqikasizi
Electrical Engineering – Vryheid & Nongoma
Mechanical Engineering – Vryheid & Nongoma

4. Which of the above programmes/courses attract the smallest number of students?
Public Relations – KwaKwaGqikasizi
Management Assistant – KwaKwaGqikasizi
Civil Engineering - Nongoma

5. Which programmes/courses offer the greatest potential for growth?
Sewing
Agriculture

6. Which of the above programmes/courses generate the most income for the college?
Management Assistant
Marketing Management
Business Management
Mechanical Engineering
Electrical Engineering

7. Which of the above programmes/courses generate the least income for the college (can be offered only through cross-subsidisation)?
Public Relations
Civil Engineering

8. Which of the above programmes/courses were introduced at the request of employers, or other groups in the community?

Pastel
Computer Classes (in evenings)

9. Which of the above programmes/courses were introduced at the request of local government, provincial government or national government departments?

N/A

10. Which of the above programmes/courses were introduced at the request of or with the support of local or international funders?

P.L.A.T.O.

To be introduced in the second part of the year:

- Tourism (Catering / Hospitality)
- ABET
- Accredited sewing courses

11. Any other comment?

N/A ?

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

3.1 The merger process and knowledge sharing

3.1.1 Post-merger developments

It is immediately evident that, compared to six months ago, Mthashana has settled into its merged-entity status and has started functioning as an integrated whole at strategic, governance, management, organisational (development) and operational levels. As a result, the college appears far more focussed in pursuing its strategic objectives (within the context of the new FET landscape and aligned to government's broader strategic, policy and legislative frameworks and imperatives for socio-economic development at national, provincial, regional and local levels). But this strong sense of knowing/understanding 'what it is (supposed to be)', 'where it is going' and, more critically, 'how it is going to get there' as a merged entity, did not come about per chance. Various inter-linked interventions, processes, and developments could be viewed as contributing to this fundamental shift in Mthashana's structural dynamics and functioning in the period under review in this report (September 2003 – March 2004).

First and foremost of these, as perceived by the researcher, is the integrative and directional impact stemming from clarity and purposefulness associated with the rector's 'visioning' of strategic objectives and associated model for Mthashana, which as a 'rural FET college' has to service a region characterised by severe economically-depressed conditions and, consequently, alarmingly high unemployment and poverty indices. (In addition, Mthashana constitutes the only education and training institution in the region). As indicated in the previous report, this strategic focus attaches priority status to the upgrading and/or establishment of skills centres to bring them 'into the fold' – as equal partners to campuses in the merged entity's organisational and management structure frameworks – in order to provide skills development opportunities to the previously grossly neglected communities in the remote corners of the region, like the Jozini municipal district bordering Mozambique. It is furthermore envisaged that the skills centres (community venue-based or school-based) are to be grouped into clusters (in fact, sub-clusters within clusters) centring on 'nodal points' comprising the major skills centres (or 'campuses') in a particular geographical area. This vision-aligned declaration of intent is found to indeed be in the process of 'becoming', being fuelled by the rector's own commitment and infectious enthusiasm, which appears to have spread throughout most of the institution. For example, since the previous impact study, the actioning of this intent has already resulted in the 'auditing' of all 22 skills centres, followed by structural, management and (needs-based) programme planning and development, which is currently underway (coordinated by the central office-based linkages and curriculum unit, its skills and LSEN sub-units in particular).

Significant and fundamental central office-strengthening initiatives and developments have also occurred in support of the centralization and coordination of integrated college management and functioning and programme delivery. For example -

- Since the establishment of a physically separate central office structure in mid-2003 following the rector's appointment it has relocated four times. (It will be remembered that during the time of the acting-rector central office was based at Vryheid campus, a situation which generated all kinds of tensions within the institution). This structural unsettledness, in the area of (tele-) communications infrastructure in particular, has been compromising central office's administrative and coordinating functioning in various ways. The locating of the current premises, lease negotiations (including the option to buy) as well as the possible acquisition of the adjoining parking area, occurred with college council assistance. Ironically, this 'migratory' nature of central office's structural history, and council involvement in resolving it, could be viewed as having had 'positive fall-out' in that closer leadership-council relations have been forged in the process, with an associated reduction in the 'remoteness' in these relations which was evident, to some degree, at the previous visit.

- It will be remembered from the previous report that the centralization and coordination of core college functions constitute a critical aspect of the rector's originally conceived strategic vision for structural and operational integration of the merged institution. This has now gained impetus and substance with some of the portfolios or 'desks' becoming more established and functioning at higher levels. (Eight portfolios were listed in the organisational profile in section 1, two of which have acquired 'unit' status as opposed to committee status). The approach towards establishing these structures are characterised by sound planning and development mechanisms and processes to ensure system integrity and operational efficacy. Structural, systems and staff capacity building needs and requirements are first assessed, which provide the basis for the subsequent planning, design, implementation and follow-up (monitoring and mentoring) strategies and interventions. A case in point concerns the finance desk, which was identified for priority development.
 - As a first step a detailed audit and analysis of systems and staff capacity (knowledge and skills) was conducted at all the college sites by the contracted Danida-funded financial consultant (a Dr Zitha from Pretoria).
 - Based on these findings as well as input solicited from management and finance personnel, a customised training programme was developed which targeted all personnel directly and indirectly involved with finance or who require at least a 'working knowledge' of financial policy, systems and procedures. (One campus manager, for example, also attended the course, which was in progress at the time of the researcher's visit).
 - Follow-up visits by the consultant have been scheduled for providing assistance and mentorship to the finance staff tasked with policy development, systems implementation and administration.

Similar developmental and capacity-building interventions are planned for the remaining portfolios, with human resources being next in line (training for relevant staff involving all sites has been scheduled for 6-7 March). These interventions are particularly critical in the light of the HR implications associated with the incorporation of Emandleni, which is already in progress (as will be described below). It is foreseen that the bulk of the administrative staff of the HR unit will be made up of redeployed personnel from this site. It is envisaged, furthermore, that seven of the eight portfolios will be up and running by June, with the support and assistance from Danida in particular. Towards this end ongoing contact / communication is reportedly occurring between the rector and the SESD programme's provincial technical assistant (PTA).

- In an additional development with regard to the functioning of portfolios, a measure was introduced in terms of which council representatives would serve on the committees in order to enhance feedback to council about college functioning in those particular areas. Informed decision-making is thereby enhanced, which in turn strengthens council's governance role.
- Whilst systems development has thus started occurring in priority areas in a 'structural sense', associated formal policy development has not occurred in the same measure, though initial processes in this regard are underway in the case of the finance portfolio. However, systematic policy development interventions, with the support of SESD programme interventions are in the pipeline as part of the strategic plan review processes.
- With all the key administrative and coordination functions becoming centralised, campus managers are, by implication, being 'freed-up'. This development has been strategised by the rector to get the campus managers to re-focus on and engage with their primary educational role – to 'manage' all the various aspects of the college's education and training function, as pertaining to a particular site, and also to ensure that all structures and mechanisms in support of these operational objectives are in place and strengthened. Furthermore, such a narrowing-down of roles, responsibilities and accountability will make it easier for management to assess progress and performance.

Judging from the above it could be said that these ongoing processes and interventions towards establishing and strengthening the portfolios have indeed been contributing, in a cumulative sense, to the integration of the merged institution at all levels and areas of its structural dynamics and functioning.

Staying with this theme of merger-related institutional restructuring and (structural) integration, major developments have occurred or are in the process of occurring (either by strategic design or by 'default') in relation to the restructuring and integration/consolidation of college sites.

- It was noted in the comments following the organisational profile that the two Nongoma campuses have effectively become two independently managed and functioning units. It is deemed necessary at this point to briefly try and convey a context (historical, strategic and structural) to these developments, at KwaGqikasi in particular.

KwaGqikasi was established as a (community) college of education about 12 years ago, as an initiative by the king towards socio-economic development/uplifting of this severely deprived area. However, it closed down after a few years and its once imposing and impressive infrastructure fell into a bad state of neglect, aggravated by theft and vandalism (as described in the baseline report). About three years ago (at the time of the merger) Nongoma (ex-technical college – engineering studies & workshops constituting its 'core business') established a Business Studies department at this site. These two sites were previously referred to as Nongoma A and B campuses respectively. In January this year, the (overall) manager of the two sites reverted back to heading campus A (now being referred to as Nongoma campus), with the central office-based linkages and curriculum unit head taking over the reigns at campus B (now KwaGqikasi campus) in an acting capacity till the end of March 2004.

These developments are strategically driven (in part, at least, from what could be gathered) in that college management decided to use KwaGqikasi as a base for developing and piloting programmes – accredited skills programmes and learnerships aimed at skills development among students and the community at large, as well as programmes in support of academic, social, health (physical and psychological), etc. needs of students. (At the same time the campus' infrastructure and facilities would be revived and developed in support of such programmes. It is envisaged that the piloted programmes would then form the basis for programme development and implementation at the other college sites, with guidance and support from the relevant portfolio units. Towards these ends the head of Mthashana's linkages and curriculum unit (previously a lecturer in Business Studies at Vryheid campus) came to conduct community needs analysis research in the Nongoma area in December 2003. In January the (newly established) linkages & curriculum and student support services units were deployed (from central office) to this site for a period of three months (till the end of March). It was also at this time that the linkages and curriculum unit head, previously a lecturer in business studies at Vryheid campus, took over as acting campus manager of KwaGqikasi. She comes across as a highly dynamic and hugely capable person and leader/manager, not least because she speaks Zulu fluently, and has a very easy way (though assertive when required) with staff at all levels. She is very excited about the potential this campus offers for partnership-based skills development initiatives involving a wide range of 'clients' in the surrounding area: (The findings of the community needs analysis and ensuing programming developments, as well as community linkages/partnerships building will be taken up in sub-section 3.3 and learner/student support services programme developments in sub-section 3.9).

- The proposed incorporation (unsolicited) of Emandleni, a 'youth training centre' or 'skills campus' situated outside Ulundi, was referred to earlier. (In the previous impact study report management's concerns were noted with regard to political sensitivities as well as the financial implications for Mthashana of this incorporation since Emandleni resorted under the premier's office.) Although the official date for incorporation is April 1, processes are already underway towards redeploying excess staff to other sites, including central office, where they will be given new roles and capacitated accordingly. (It has a staff complement of 75). All in all though, the addition of this site is viewed as a positive development since Emandleni perfectly fits the bill of becoming a 'nodal point' (as noted above) of a geographically defined skills centre cluster. In the meantime, however, questions have been raised about the legality of Emandleni's incorporation in view of the fact that it is not a declared FET institution (which is a requirement for merging). This matter was raised at the last full council meeting on 19 February and is currently being pursued at ministerial level.

- It was noted earlier that audit was conducted of all 22 skills centres with regard to programme planning and development and infrastructure development (including management structure development).

It could therefore be said that the above developments signify that overall institutional restructuring/integration has by and large been achieved – as the basis for pursuing the institution's refocused vision and associated strategic objectives towards socio-economic development in the region.

3.1.2 Communication and knowledge sharing

The impact of the above-mentioned developments on communication and information sharing, at both vertical and horizontal levels within the institution should be fairly evident. For example,

- Communication across college sites has improved due to the portfolios becoming more established and therefore functioning at higher levels. At this time, however, it would appear that feedback is not yet what it should be in order to keep everyone informed about the latest college developments. Constraints in this regard appear to be to inadequate representation on the portfolio committees due to staff being overstretched and therefore reluctant to commit to additional roles and responsibilities.
- Whereas communication previously tended to be quite informal, it now is becoming more formalised through the centralized HR function. For example, all incoming information and communiqués, like changes in dates of training courses/workshops, have to be submitted to the HR section by the various programme coordinators from where it will then be disseminated to campuses. Junior managers on the whole are very well informed about all college developments.
- The lack of formulated policy at this time, as noted above, is to some extent compensated for through the consolidation of the various portfolios or function areas and resultant 'implicit' policy development with regard to finance (payment of accounts or the use of credit/petrol cards), transport, dealings with service providers. The rector will send memoranda to staff members in cases where such implicit policy is not adhered to. Standardized templates have now been developed and are being introduced.
- Information sharing between council and the college has been enhanced through the allocation of representatives to the portfolio committees, noted in sub-section 3.1.1 above. The governance and management portfolio committee fulfils a critical role in filtering and regulating information sharing between college functional units and council's executive committee by ensuring the latter structure does not become burdened with 'house-keeping' issues and decision-making. In addition, the 'ritualised' informal exchange of information between the rector and council chair is being maintained. (It will be remembered from the previous reports that this takes the form of weekly 'topping-up sessions' – to keep the council chair abreast of important developments which may need immediate attention or follow-up action.)
- Formal communication and information sharing between central office and campus managements is still not adequate due, primarily, to the rector's very intense away-from-office schedule and the inadequate telecommunication infrastructure, with particular reference to central office and the two Nongoma sites (the coming on-stream of the college IT network still seems to be some way off). The appointment of a personal assistant to the rector signifies an important development and compensatory measure in this regard but, although being very keen, the incumbent still needs time to settle into his role, grow in confidence and appreciation of the nature of the college's (staff) dynamics.
- Blockages in the flow of information from campus managers to lower-down constituencies remain a concern. At one campus staff continue to question the 'truthfulness' of information passed on to them as well as bemoaning the lack of depth of information conveyed to them (as opposed to being fed 'rhetoric'). As was previously the case, this state of affairs is evidenced by the relatively low level of informed-ness about the practical implications for the college, as well as developments and initiatives at college level in relation to the 'new implementation'. Such lack of informed-ness is particularly evident among Business Studies lecturers and student representatives at this particular site. A further example, which attests

to such shortcomings in information exchange at this campus, is the ignorance among student representatives about the purpose/nature of Plato, the introduction of which is imminent. However, the official launch of the 'new' college in April (at KwaGqikasi) campus should go some way towards informing and up-dating all stakeholders about the institution's refocused strategic objectives and the current status of structural and operational developments in pursuit of these.

- Another factor which continues to undermine communication/information exchange at this site – and, for that matter, motivational levels among staff in general – concerns the strained relations between the campus manager and staff (and students). The situation is perceived as having deteriorated significantly since the researcher's last visit and constitutes a major source of concern.

Information sharing between the pDoE and the college, by means of various established mechanisms and structures reported on previously, continues to be experienced as informative and supportive – both in terms of developments within the broader FET arena as well as at the level of 'practical' college management and functioning. (It was noted that the 'appreciation-value' of this support increases manifold when compared to the lack or shortcomings in this respect, as experienced by FET colleges in some of the other provinces). However, some previously articulated shortcomings continue to impact on college functioning and programme delivery, with particular reference to reported shortcomings around planning, coordination and communication between the pDoE, external agencies (SESD and CCF programme interventions) and the college concerning training schedules. (Internal college communication has also been fingered as contributing to this state of affairs.) At campus level the impact of these are exacerbated further by the ongoing critical staff problems in relation to staff shortages, part time posts, job insecurity, etc. – resulting in existing staff being severely overstretched due to the multiple roles they have to fulfil. One campus manager in particular is loath to release staff to attend training courses under these conditions and students at this campus have also reportedly been protesting about staff absence from classes.

Communication and knowledge sharing with external stakeholders, partners, etc. has increased substantially, largely as a result of the activities of the linkages and curriculum unit personnel (to be reported on in more depth in sub-section 3.3 below), with particular reference to relationship/partnership building with local communities (needs surveys and analysis) and government departments and structures (information gathering and analysis towards learnership/skills programme development and implementation). Problems pertaining to communication and support are still being encountered with some SETAs. The ETDP SETA and THETA appear to be the most forthcoming. However, lack of support from some SETAs is reportedly compensated for through access to certain NGOs, representatives of which are made contact with at SESD workshops and meetings. Since the SETAs are contacted directly, Umalusi does not seem to play a significant role in this regard. On the whole, therefore, adequate information is available to the college with regard to programme development towards learnership/skills programme implementation. (These aspects will be addressed in more depth in sub-sections 3.2 and 3.3 below.) Finally, very positive and cooperative relations appear to have been forged between key college personnel and the SESD provincial technical advisor (PTA). By all accounts the PTA is very approachable and assists with information, problem-solving etc., and is being experienced as 'open-minded'/visionary with regard to requests for financial assistance with programme/projects and and/or infrastructure development.

3.2 SAQA / NQF

No significant change and developments have occurred at the level of implementation of formal/accredited skills development programmes (learnerships and skills programmes). Engagement with these structures, including various SETAs and Umalusi (to a limited extent), continues to comprise information gathering (at increased levels) towards programme development and workshop accreditation in line with the niche areas identified for the college, as reported previously. (Some of these developments will be described in more detail in sub-section 3.3 below). Funds have been approved in a renewed thrust to upgrade and customise

workshops, buildings and other facilities for accreditation purposes. These processes have reportedly been frustrated in the past due to insufficient support and guidance from certain SETAs.

An issue related to the above challenges associated with learnership/skills programme development and implementation concerns the formalisation (unit standard-alignment and accreditation) of the hands-on informal courses/programmes which presently constitute the 'full diet' at some sites (skills centres), of which Emandleni would serve as the most notable example. (Please see the 'curriculum profile' in sub-section 3.2 above). College management has attached high-priority status to the required interventions to ensure that learners at these sites who want to pursue their studies at a higher level can be accommodated in future (brought into the FET stream).

As far as expertise building with regard to the implementation of learnerships/skills programmes is concerned (assessor, moderator and verifier training), the college seems to be lagging behind with regard to national targets, Vryheid campus in particular – only five staff members have fully completed assessor training to date (not to mention mentor and verifier training).

3.3 Linkages and relationship building

Major developments have occurred in this domain in a very short space of time, which are due mainly to the activities of the linkages and curriculum unit, including its two sub-units (skills unit and LSEN unit). The following initiatives constitute the nature and status of the main developments at this time:

3.3.1 Initiatives of the linkages and curriculum unit

- As noted above, the unit head has been deployed at KwaGqikasi campus till the end of March (during which time she will also act as campus head) to institute pilot programmes / projects – for college students and the broader community – and revive and develop the campus' infrastructure and facilities accordingly. Such programmes/projects would then form the basis for programme implementation at the other sites under this guidance and support from this unit as well as the student support services unit. It was also noted that these developments were preceded by community-needs research conducted in this area in December 2003. In the course of this survey very negative perceptions about the campus were reportedly encountered among community members and local community leaders expressed their outrage at the state of affairs at KwaGqikasi and demanded that action be taken to restore/improve the infrastructure and programme delivery at this site. The fact that the local community had no access to this site was also bemoaned. (A departmental delegation also reportedly visited the campus.)

Work has already progressed quite far towards customizing some of the vacant rooms/office space towards the establishment of an Adult Centre, as the facility where community extension programmes will be offered. The different venues have all been painted out, power points for sewing machines are in place, and a lecture room has been fully kitted out. The initial programme offerings will focus on literacy, sewing and business skills training on an after hours basis to people from the surrounding community. In consultation with the literacy training provider (ACAT), an integrated approach has been decided on in terms of which all learners will be exposed to all three components in a sequential way, i.e.

- i. literacy training (ABET at level 1 literacy)
- ii. skills component (e.g. sewing)
- iii. entrepreneurial/business skills training

Learners will be encouraged to start small businesses upon completion of these components (in groups or collectives of three to four persons) – linked to one of the flats units on the campus grounds and with support and guidance from the skills unit. (There are 12 such flats units on campus, as described in the baseline report.)

- In a related sense, the linkages and curriculum unit head was recently approached to provide such literacy, communications and business skills training to small-scale farmers in partnership with an 'entrepreneurship promotor'. This person has an established Section 21 company through which produce is marketed, the current focus being on live chicken production (for which he will provide training and oversee production). A memorandum of understanding is currently awaited towards this end.
- Contact has been established with the retired hospital superintendent (originally from the United Kingdom) who is extensively involved with HIV/Aids work in the area. She is currently busy collecting data from households in surrounding communities through the use of a network of 'foot soldiers' going from household-to-household. It has been agreed to make one of the units of flats on campus available as an office to this project for data analysis purposes. Training will be provided to project staff as required.
- Another of the flats units is going to be converted into a bed-&-breakfast establishment and will be run by (successive groups of) students on a learnership to be offered in hospitality and tourism. Towards this end relevant unit standards have been accessed (through electronic searching of the THETA website) and 'unpacked' in support of programme planning and development. Revenue raised will be ploughed back into the college for further developmental initiatives. In a related development, the huge kitchen, which is in a terrible state of disrepair, is being refurbished with the assistance of a very cooperative public works department official (who originally installed all the equipment). Together with the adjoining cafeteria (currently used as a venue for examinations), these facilities will be staffed by students on a planned learnership in catering.
- Initial links towards partnership building have been established with art teachers at the Indonza Craft Centre in neighbouring Ulundi (about a 45-minute drive), in terms of which their students will come to KwaGqikasi for training in communication and business skills.
- Hospitals are also being targeted for outreach programmes and is viewed as a huge 'market' for future expansion. For example, the local Nongoma hospital has around one thousand employees. Computer training, communication skills, labour relations and conflict resolution comprise the priority areas identified for programme delivery, which will be aimed at nursing, administrative and security staff. The nursing training facility will also be similarly targeted.

This unit's head paid tribute to the PTA's positive attitude and approachability with regard to possible sponsorship of certain aspects of these and future initiatives.

3.3.2 Initiatives of the skills (sub-)unit

This unit forms a sub-unit of the linkages and curriculum unit and is headed by the skills coordinator. The focus of this unit's work relates to the coordination of skills development programmes at either the college-linked skills centres in the region or at the campuses. The skills centres are at different levels of infrastructural development and operational functioning. As noted in sub-section 3.1, all 22 skills centres have been 'audited' of late. Partnership negotiations are currently underway with the Jozini district municipal authority about programmes in organic farming, Aids orphans and aftercare. At this time the exact nature and extent of the partnership and programme activities still need to be finalised through the adoption of a formal position paper.

3.3.3 Initiatives of the LSEN unit

The LSEN Unit, as noted in section 1, supports the work of both the skills unit (70% of LSEN activity) and the student support services unit (30%) with regard to programmes for learners with special educational needs. Current linkage or partnership building initiatives include the following:

- Proposed programmes for mentally recovering patients at Nquthu hospital (between Mondlo and Dundee). The initial focus will be on organic farming and beadwork. The unit will provide a tutor and material on a contract basis and about 18 learners in the 25-30 years age group will be involved. At this time feedback on the proposed programmes is still awaited from the supervisor of the psychiatric department.

- Programmes envisaged for the physically challenged (all ages) and Aids orphans in the Umbobo district (near Kosi Bay).
- Negotiations are about to take place about programmes for the physically challenged in farming and beadwork in the Cezwana area.

Planning for these programmes also involves liaising with the government departments of Social Work, Education and Health. The unit head has reportedly submitted proposal to Mr Langa with regard a building for Aids orphans.

3.3.4 Initiatives of the student support services unit

(These will be considered in sub-section 3.9 below.)

The above initiatives towards community extension programmes clearly demonstrate the refocused strategic vision 'in action' and represent a dramatic departure from previous perspectives which, in the absence of major business and industry activity in the region, were very limited in 'seeing' the possibilities for linkage and partnership building towards joint ventures between the two Nongoma sites and potential external partners and/or clients. Now the sky appears to be the limit in terms of possibilities and the only limiting factor would be the extent to which these sites can accommodate external demand for programme delivery – both in terms of planning and coordination as well as resources. In addition to the above skills development opportunities and other forms of support these initiatives provide (even in their early stages), they also provide or represent something(s) more:

- As emerged/emerging 'by-products' they provide critical pointers with regard to the college's (overall) programmatic evolution/development. For example: Having reflected on the above developments around (community needs/linkages-driven) programme planning and implementation, it has become clear to the linkages and curriculum head that, as far as the route forward is concerned, the college will need to focus on skills programmes to a greater extent than on learnerships. In addition, the critically important role of and urgent need for recognition of prior learning (RPL) implementation have been appreciated afresh.
- But these developments also represent something additional at a higher level, at the level of (moral) principle. Over and above the *actual* skills (training) opportunities and facilities being offered to the broad community, one could also point to the *fact* that and the *way* in which such offerings are being made. In this sense, KwaGqikasi is being handed back to the community by virtue of offering it or 'allowing' it to be (re-)claimed. This brings one back to the 'original' starting point of it all: the re-viewed strategic vision of the rector, which is informed by a 'sanctioned' socio-economic development framework and associated imperatives. But these, in turn, are underpinned at a deeper level by universal moral principles which demand, amongst other things (but most fundamentally), that the dignity of every person be respected, protected and indeed be promoted through creating conditions and opportunities towards enabling/empowering every person to participate fully in all the different spheres of society – exactly what the above initiatives are in support of.

3.4 Strategic planning processes

Due to all the constraints (as experienced by all colleges) which impinged on and to a certain extent compromised the strategic planning exercise which occurred around September 2003, for instance, the tight timeframe which made broad stakeholder consultation and participation impossible, the need for a realistic review towards operationalizing and 'quantifying' the strategic objectives was appreciated at the time. But that does not mean that the strategic plan so derived is of no practical use to the college until such a time that a comprehensive review will be conducted. (A review of the strategic plan is scheduled for the end of March when all the central office staff members would have returned from the sites where pilot programmes were being initiated.) In the meantime, however, the rector issued a directive to campus managers whereby planning and progress reporting have to be aligned to the fundamentals of the strategic plan, a measure introduced to ensure that awareness of the institution's refocused strategic vision and

objectives as initially conceived by leadership (and captured in the previous report and referred to in sub-section 3.1 above) remain fore-grounded and guide operational functioning.

(But these strategic conceptions could also be viewed as providing a source of both *containment* and motivation during this difficult time of fundamental institutional restructuring and associated pressure on individual staff members – by appreciating the *need* for the institution of having to go through a painful process of restructuring in order to become more receptive of and responsive to the long-neglected socio-economic developmental needs.)

The next phase at this level of institutional processes will comprise the development of policy and procedures by management and portfolio committee members towards implementation / operationalization of strategic planning. Also reportedly on the cards are the development of realistic formal job descriptions and a skills audit to ensure selective, highly specific and streamlined training interventions for targeted personnel (e.g. finance) in future. (As opposed to earlier training interventions which are perceived as being more 'exposure-orientated' in nature and intent.) Gratefulness was expressed by college management for the ongoing support, like coaching and mentoring, being received through SESD programme towards these ends and, in particular, the expertise level, attitude ('patient and constructive') and approach ('keeping inputs accessible / relevant and practical') of the contracted facilitator.

3.5 Capacity building of college council and academic board

Capacity building interventions of council still occur on an ongoing basis. As already noted in sub-section 3.1, council appears to have become more involved with overall college functioning, for example, problem-solving – over and above its primary role as decision-making body in support of governance. It was also noted that closer links have been forged with college management through councillor involvement in college-council sub-structures, which enhances information sharing and communication.

The status concerning the academic board appears not to have changed, i.e. it is still not a properly constituted and functioning structure – with obvious implications for capacity building intervention – and previous campus academic committees largely continue as before with greater or lesser degrees of effectiveness. Getting this structure up and running constitutes a priority for the council chair.

(These and other issues pertaining to these two college bodies will be expanded on in section 4 below).

3.6 Capacity building of management

College/campus management capacity building interventions are continuing and at this time represent a building-on and deepening of the broad-based foundation established during 2003. It was noted earlier that the centralization of all the administrative college functions like transport, payments, skills centres coordination, HR, has relieved campus management personnel of significant 'house keeping chores'. They are now being required to focus on the hands-on management of their campuses in support of their primary function, i.e. managing teaching and learning. The alignment of operational plans with the strategic plan and quality control (the supervision of quality management system development) would constitute two such focus areas.

By means of reviewing the impact of management capacity building interventions to date, college leadership pointed out the critical need for such interventions to also focus on 'attitudinal and personality issues', over and above skills development.

3.7 Professional development of staff

No major SESD interventions have occurred in the period under review. These will commence again from March onwards. In an overall sense it is significant to report that whereas previously

staff, in general, did not really know 'what they were improving for' a definite or immediate sense has now emerged about what is expected of colleges in line with the changing FET landscape and the new and varied roles FET colleges have to play. However, the institutional constraints discussed previously continue to undermine the implementation of newly acquired skill, methodology etc. For example, lecturers simply do not have the time (nor extra energy) for developing unit standard-based programmes as a result of current working conditions and other circumstantial factors. It is also felt that subject knowledge development should receive more attention.

Of note is the rector's philosophy of 'exploiting' staff members' 'primary interests' and expertise, which more often than not get buried due to the narrow confines of the posts which define their official roles and responsibilities or which are not necessarily relevant to the jobs they applied for. The effect of this approach has been dramatic in rekindling previous inclinations or promoting newly re-discovered 'passions', as evidenced by the high levels of enthusiasm and commitment among central office-based staff, who often perform tasks outside their formal job description as well as across portfolios. Campus managers have a lot to gain by adopting a similar approach and investing time and energy in establishing such an 'alternative' interests-based skills profile of their staff. But then, again, it is not simply a matter of matching someone to a particular skill or expertise. It has very much to do with how a particular person is approached and the spirit in which it occurs – it can otherwise easily be abused.

3.8 Academic competence in maths, science and technology

Overall it is felt that as far as 'rural college needs' are concerned, with particular reference to mathematics and science (i.e. limited numbers of higher level mathematics and science students (N4-N6) compared to urban/metropolitan colleges), these can, by and large, be accommodated in terms of staff expertise levels. However, these 'fortunes' remain delicately balanced in view the high turnover in good maths and science teachers (in part time positions) brought about by the ongoing moratorium. Highly experienced personnel are hesitant in taking up teaching posts under such unsure conditions, with some reportedly having vacated their posts in recent months. This state of affairs, as noted in the previous report, raises the dilemma as to whether it is worth investing in such personnel by sending them on training courses. Another factor raised as compromising the drawing of quality and dynamic maths and science teachers relates to the perceived 'unattractiveness' of the rural conditions pertaining to the college. As far as the established 'old school' maths and science teachers are concerned, it was pointed out that they tend to be more 'hands-on' and therefore not 'maths and science orientated'.

It was noted in the previous report that management and staff have more and more started appreciating the extent to which the overall low level of proficiency in English among students undermines their performance in academic subjects – maths and science in particular – and, consequently, their attitudinal/motivational levels. A plea was made for maths- and science-orientated language development programmes, ABET-style. It could be assumed that the coming on stream of the Plato laboratories / facilities may go some length in addressing these needs. In fact, great joy and relief have been expressed in various quarters about the remedial and interventionist power of Plato towards these ends – once fully implemented throughout the college.

3.9 Learner support services

The appointment of a suitably (highly) qualified, motivated and innovative manager (who holds a Masters degree in student support administration from the University of Texas) to establish and develop the Learner Support Services Unit represents a major shift in this area of college functioning, enhanced by the fact that this unit deals directly with students. It was noted in sub-section 3.1 that this unit is currently developing and piloting programmes (including the required infrastructure) at KwaGqikasi campus, for subsequent implementation at the other sites, as is the case with the linkages and curriculum unit. At this early stage in this unit's development and functioning the focus is (still) essentially on HIV/Aids programmes, including referral, and policy

development. Guidance and counselling still needs to be addressed and towards these ends a (multi-disciplined) 'Wellness Centre' is to be established at the campus, signifying a major development in this area of support and service delivery. However, a critical challenge envisaged by the unit head in this respect is going to involve the breaking down of cultural bias against 'public' acknowledgement of emotional/psychological and medical conditions and problems, and associated fear/anxiety about being victimised or rendered an outcast.

As far as learner support services are experienced and viewed from the students, the general consensus appears to be that the HIV/Aids programmes have had a significant impact as far as awareness-raising is concerned. However, support, service provision and facilities which are either lacking or deemed highly inadequate include –

- Bursary schemes
- Access to buildings or venues and facilities for disabled students
- public transport in the case of Vryheid students (the campus is situated in a residential area where taxis do not operate)
- Libraries/resource centres. (Of particular relevance is the high degree of frustration which surrounds the fact that an established resource centre (stocked and staffed) is standing virtually idle at KwaGqikasi campus. It belongs to the DoE was established as a teaching resource for teachers at surrounding schools but is hardly used. It is out of bounds for Mthashana staff and students. Although it has been stocked for education support purposes there would seem no reason why it cannot be further developed to also cater, at least to some extent, for KwaGqikasi students and staff and thus play a dual role)
- Student room / study facilities
- Seating facilities for break-times and/or cafeterias
- Internet facilities (no access)
- Toilets (too few).

Relations between staff and students appear to on the whole positive. Access to computers is also noted as a positive aspect, but a high level of frustration was conveyed about such access only being available to Business Studies students. The low level of informed-ness among students – stemming from obvious inadequate levels of communication and information sharing at this time – about overall college developments (with particular reference to central office), about learnerships/skills programmes and the college's future role in this regard, and about what, exactly, Plato would offer them once it becomes operational (at Vryheid campus). At KwaGqikasi campus *great* joy and appreciation have been expressed in relation to this dramatic intervention / means of support.

3.10 Budgeting

Various developments have occurred in the period under review in this area of the college's structural functioning. With the establishment of a budgeting committee, the budgeting process has now become participatory process – campus budgets internally 'debated' before being presented to budgetary committee for integration into the college budget. Budgetary control has been enhanced with the appointment of a budget monitor to the rector's office to coordinate and check on budgeting protocols, allocations etc. on the rector's behalf. Accountability is further guaranteed through an internal auditor who operates 'independently'. The long-overdue template has now been developed and income statements are provided.

These developments constitute a major improvement on the highly unsatisfactory state of affairs which still existed at the time of the previous visit. However, at one campus lecturers indicated that campus management still does not provide feedback on their requests (which appear to be simply ignored).

In sub-section 3.1, reference was also made of the training course in finance, which took place at central office at the beginning of March and that follow-up monitoring and support activities have been scheduled by the consultant to assist with system implementation. It was also noted that

the finance portfolio staff are targeted for additional more in-depth training – an indication of the urgency of getting the finance desk up and running.

4. SECOND FORMATIVE IMPACT RATING

Introduction

With (ongoing) impact assessment of this nature continuity in respondent feedback is at a premium. Once again such continuity was, by and large, maintained but the configuration of the focus groups had to be adapted in most cases due to the confluence of various factors operating and impacting on the scheduling at the time. The primary change in this regard is the split towards 'independent' status of the two conjoined Nongoma campuses. Whereas combined focus groups were previously conducted for these two sites as representative of 'Nongoma' as a whole, they were now conducted separately.

The focus groups were composed as follows:

- **'Council'**
Whereas previously this focus group was referred to as 'college management' and comprised the rector and one representative each of council and the academic board, only the council chairperson participated (the same person who participated on the two previous occasions) since the rector could not be available on the day for both the (lengthy) individual interview and focus group. An academic board member was also not available, which may be due to the fact that the make-up of this structure is being reviewed.
- **'Nongoma campus'**
Management (2 acting-HODs and 1 senior lecturer) and staff (3 lecturers) were mixed. The campus manager had to attend a meeting at the pDoE on the day and could therefore not participate.
- **'KwaGqikasi campus'**
Also a mixed management (1 acting HOD) and staff (2 lecturers) group. The previous management corps of the combined two-campus structure used to be loaded 'in favour' of Campus A (now Nongoma). KwaGqikasi's management corps has been further denuded by redeployment of staff to central office (before the 'split' occurred). The acting campus manager could not attend as she had to go to the pDoE (Ulundi) to sort out HR-related matters.
- **'Vryheid management' & 'Vryheid lecturers'**
Both groups comprised the same respondents as before, by and large.
- **Note:**
The researcher also conducted individual interviews with relevant central office staff members in portfolio positions –
 Manager: Linkages and Curriculum Unit
 SESD coordinator
 Skills coordinator
 LSEN coordinator
 Manager: Student Support Services

Vision and Mission

1. Practices guided by a clear institutional vision

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										3
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										4
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

College management: 6; KwaGqikasi campus: 5; Nongoma campus: 5; Vryheid management: 4; Vryheid lecturers: 4.

Comment on overall rating

It was mentioned in section 3.1 that college/campus initiatives and developments are closely aligned to and driven by the strategic vision (and objectives), with particular reference to developing/upgrading of skills centres, community outreach and programme innovation (away from the old rigid programme offerings). In other words, the main thrust of college development and activity, as contained in the strategic vision and plan, is to make the college increasingly responsive to the education and training needs of the communities it serves.

However, awareness of the overall vision (and the purposefulness derived from it) still varies considerably among college constituencies. At campus management level a definite increase in awareness is evident which stems largely from the fact that the strategic plan has become more operationalised (to a certain degree), as indicated in sub-section 3.5. Awareness at staff level remains confined to those lecturers who participated in the drafting of the strategic plan towards the end of 2003, whilst it also remains unchanged in the student population.

So whilst no dramatic increase in awareness is evident is foreseen that this situation is going to change dramatically in the months to come as a result certain scheduled events, like the upcoming strategic plan review (in which all stakeholders will be involved) as well as the college launch.

2. Inculcation of a value system throughout the institution

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										3
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										3
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

College management: 6; KwaGqikasi campus: 4; Nongoma campus: 4; Vryheid management: 5; Vryheid lecturers: 3.

Comment on overall rating

At this time the values which underpin, guide and 'contain' college functioning and experience – whether at strategic, operational or relations levels – are not really appreciated and shared by the all college stakeholders, though awareness of the value system does appear to have increased to some extent, as became evident once interviewees started discussing it! It is clear that these values are not really thought about or reflected on and their influence on attitudes and behaviour is therefore limited, which is probably partly due to their 'implicit nature'.

Tensions and conflict between management and staff, at one campus in particular, still occurs but this is more as a result of personality factors.

Leadership and Management

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

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										4
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										4
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

College management: 6; KwaGqikasi campus: 4; Nongoma campus: 5; Vryheid management: 5; Vryheid lecturers: 4.

Comment on overall rating

Compared to a certain degree of 'remoteness' which seems to have existed between college leadership and council at the time of the previous visit to the college, a definite shift has occurred in this regard. These two constituencies have 'come closer' to each other, as is evident from council's higher level of engagement in college matters like 'institutional problem-solving, over and above its primary governance role of being the supreme decision-making body. For example, assisting (through the Infrastructure portfolio committee) with finding and negotiating a lease (with an option to buy) for the premises presently occupied by central office. This enhancement in engagement as well as communication and information flows is perceived as being largely due to

- the introduction of a measure whereby councilors are represented on portfolio committees (this measure is not yet operating optimally since such representation does not yet appear to be in place across all portfolios)
- the high commitment levels of (all?) external council members
- the close relationship between and sustained contact between the council chair and central office (as noted previously)

However, at lecturer, support staff and student levels council's 'invisibility' still persists, both in terms of physical presence and feedback/communication. (One would assume that this state of affairs would change when the college launch takes place.)

At this time no real change has occurred in relation to Academic Board functioning – it would appear that it still exists in name only and that existing campus academic committees continue to perform this function to greater or lesser degrees of effectiveness). However, at the last council meeting the chair referred to the FET Act stipulations with regard the make-up and functioning of academic boards, which can be construed as an indication of intent to resolve the persisting shortcomings around this critical institutional structure. Academic Board capacity building interventions are reportedly scheduled in the future.

The SRCs of the different sites have not managed to meet collectively this year and last year only one such meeting took place. The distance factor comprises one factor contributing to this state of affairs.

Significant developments are expected by the next visit.

4. Effective institutional leadership

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING							6			
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

College council: 7; KwaGqikasi campus: 7; Nongoma campus: 7; Vryheid management: 6; Vryheid lecturers: 6.

Comment on overall rating

The leadership qualities and capacities attributed to the institutional leader in the previous report, for instance his grounded perspective on the FET 'big picture' and, accordingly, his vision and proposals for Mthashana's strategic re-focusing and positioning (already formulated soon after being appointed), as well as integrating high level philosophical reflection with pragmatism, have now become manifest – as evidenced by the major developments which have subsequently occurred in various areas of college structure and functioning described in section 3..

5. Effective management systems

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										4
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										4
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
Council: 6; KwaGqikasi campus: 5; Nongoma campus: 5; Vryheid management: 5; Vryheid lecturers: 4.										
<u>Comment on overall rating</u>										
Some degree of improvement has occurred since, by all accounts, information is 'more forthcoming' and the quality, accuracy and currency of information would appear to have improved as well. (Formal) policy and systems development are still in progress and significant developments are reportedly foreseen in months to come – with SESD Programme support. This also applies to focused training of targeted (portfolio) staff, as occurred recently in the case of finance staff.										
As was the case previously, the fact that the (integrated) college IT network (Coltech) is not yet on-stream could be viewed as a constraint to information processing, access and distribution.										

Knowledge Sharing

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

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										7
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										5
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
Council: 7; KwaGqikasi campus: 5; Nongoma campus: 6; Vryheid management: 5; Vryheid lecturers: 4.										
<u>Comment on overall rating</u>										
An insufficient degree of coordination and planning between the pDoE, SESD and the college concerning training schedules continues to impact on campus programmes, exacerbated by persistent staff shortages. As reported previously, information sharing between the pDoE and the college (by means of various channels and mechanisms) is experienced as supportive.										
At college level, the flow of information between council and central office appears to have improved significantly – linked to a higher degree of involvement of councilors with college affairs (as mentioned under characteristic 3). Formal communication between central office and campus managements is still not adequate due, primarily, to the rector's very intense away-from-office schedule and the inadequate telecommunication infrastructure (with particular reference to central office and the two Nongoma sites). The appointment of a personal assistant to the rector signifies an important development in this regard but the incumbent still needs time to settle into his role, grow in confidence and appreciation of the nature of the college's (staff) dynamics. The flow of information from campus managers remains a concern since blockages still occur and at one campus staff continue to question the 'truthfulness' of information passed on to them in some instances. That information/knowledge is not passed on to lower level constituencies at campus level on a sustained basis was highlighted in interviews with lecturers (primarily those in Business Studies) and student representatives as their relatively low level of informed-ness (as opposed to 'rhetoric') about the new FET landscape as well as the implications for and college developments and initiatives in this regard yet again came to the fore. Also, Vryheid campus student representatives are still ignorant about the purpose/nature of Plato, the introduction of which is imminent.										

Compared to the status of and problems/challenges associated with vertical information flow and knowledge sharing previously, the situation would not appear to have improved in any significant measure. (It would now appear that the baseline rating was unrealistically high).

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

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING											3
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING											4
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	
Council: 6; KwaGqikasi campus: 5; Nongoma campus: 6; Vryheid management: 5; Vryheid lecturers: 4.											
<u>Comment on overall rating</u>											
At an inter-college level, various existing structures continue to support communication and knowledge sharing, for example the college council forum (CCF) and Best Practice forum. Increased communication and relationship building with other colleges, such as Umfolozi and Mobeni, has reportedly been developing around networking and materials. However, such initiatives would appear to be undertaken on an individual lecturer basis.											
The 'novelty value' with regard to contact and networking among Mthashana campuses (reported previously), which came about as a result of (mainly) SESD interventions, appears to have worn off to a certain extent. Consequently, inter-campus contact and cooperation has largely become confined to – but compensated for to a significant degree – by the activities of the portfolio committees.											

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	
Council: 6; KwaGqikasi campus: 5; Nongoma campus: 7; Vryheid management: 6; Vryheid lecturers: 5.											
<u>Comment on overall rating</u>											
Major progress is evident with regard to integrated centralised (i.e. coordinated at central office level) community outreach by means of research and information dissemination to ensure needs-driven programmes are developed and implemented (in the future), as described in section 3. At this time, however, such initiatives are still limited to the activities of the linkages and curriculum unit (at the KwaGqikasi campus and surrounds), inclusive of the skills and ELSN coordinators. As reported in section 3, the marketing portfolio's integrated strategies and initiatives will only commence in April.											
It is therefore felt that, despite the dramatic progress achieved in this area of college functioning, such activity is not yet sufficiently broad-based (inclusive of all communities) to warrant 'strong' categorization. However, such status will most assuredly have been achieved by the time of the next impact study – considering what has been achieved over the last few months, as a start!											

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
Council: 6; KwaGqikasi campus: 5; Nongoma campus: 6; Vryheid management: 5; Vryheid lecturers: 6.										
<u>Comment on overall rating</u>										
As reported in section 3 and elsewhere, the finance portfolio or desk has been accorded 'priority status' with regard to staffing, training, policy and procedures to ensure the establishment of budgeting, monitoring and credit control systems – aligned to prescribed requirements. Significant improvement in the systems is already being reported, for example										
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the processing of requisitions and orders • the development of new (standardized) templates • the participative and consultative nature of the newly instituted budget committee meetings. 										
The Vryheid campus manager stated that the campus does not have enough money for 2004 and that expenditure will therefore have to be significantly cut. A reason given for this state of affairs developing relates to the fact that student registration fees at this site have not been raised in three years (for the sake of achieving parity throughout the college), resulting in a proportional decline in revenue over this period.										
Lectures at Vryheid campus indicated that they still do not get feedback on their budgetary requests (as was reported during previous interviews as well).										

10. Adequate infrastructure

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										3
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										3
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
Council: 4; KwaGqikasi campus: 6; Nongoma campus: 3; Vryheid management: 4; Vryheid lecturers: 2.										
<u>Comment on overall rating</u>										
At the level of physical infrastructure the major constraints described in the baseline report remain unresolved and continue to compromise and undermine the college's programme planning and delivery – lack of workshops at the Vryheid campus, redundant equipment in Nongoma campus workshops and lack of laboratory equipment for the teaching of science (and the obvious implications for accreditation), the critical lack of libraries/resource centres in support of teaching and learning, the various shortcomings pertaining to facilities for students (educational, administrative, accommodation, transport, social and recreational, sport), etc. However, developments have occurred in some areas, most notably –										
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dramatic refurbishing, upgrading and development of /establishment of infrastructure and facilities (a work-in-progress) at KwaGqikasi campus under the guidance and drive of the Linkages and Curriculum Unit manager (who also doubles up as acting campus manager), supported by (departmental) funding for this purpose which has been lying dormant for about two years. • infrastructural development of central office • Plato facilities 										

In the domain of administrative infrastructure the situation is equally grave. The untenable state of affairs with regard to staff shortages and part time lecturers in temporary posts, which prevailed at the time of the previous impact assessment, appears to have worsened as a result of further (working-conditions-related) resignations and, ironically, redeployment of key personnel to central office (whose posts may not be filled). This resulted in remaining lecturers having become even more over-extended, for example, Vryheid lecturers indicated that all lecturing staff members operate at maximum hours because of portfolio committees (7:45 – 15:45, followed by evening classes from 17:30). Also, lecturers are becoming reluctant, under these circumstances, to take on the additional responsibilities and duties associated with the portfolio committees. (Staff shortages and associated conditions also extend to support staff).

11. Enhanced human resource capacity

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										4
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										5
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
College council: 6; KwaGqikasi campus: 6; Nongoma campus: 6; Vryheid management: 6; Vryheid lecturers: 4.										
Comment on overall rating										
This area continues to develop steadily as a result of ongoing human resource development interventions. With regard to assessor training, however (not to mention moderator and verifier training), Vryheid campus is seriously lagging behind – only five staff members have completed their training, leaving between 15 and 20 lecturers having to meet the deadline at the end of April (?!). The releasing of staff, under the conditions noted earlier would appear to be a major contributing factor in this regard.										
It would appear that an in-depth systematic skills audit of staff has not yet been conducted and, as a result, nominations for course attendance continue to occur on a fairly arbitrary basis. It also has the effect that staff expertise is not being optimally managed. For example, a person in a particular post (for instance, someone with an MBA being appointed in a teaching post) may have expertise and skill in other areas as well, which will not be utilized if that person's contribution is only confined to the parameters of the post in which appointed. These matters were also raised in the previous report. (In view of the HR portfolio being next in line for development, these and other matters have a good chance of being addressed in months to come.)										

12. Quality Assurance System

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										4
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										4
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
College council: 5; KwaGqikasi campus: 4; Nongoma campus: 5; Vryheid management: 4; Vryheid lecturers: 4.										
Comment on overall rating:										
No change in status of this college function area is reported and the previous observations and comments therefore still apply – campuses continuing with past practices under their respective academic committees. (It should be noted, though, that the QA Portfolio has been earmarked for urgent establishment and development, as described in sub-section 3.1)										

Responsiveness

13. Good relationships with business

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										3
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										4
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
Council: 5; KwaGqikasi campus: 5; Nongoma campus: 4; Vryheid management: 5; Vryheid lecturers: 4.										
<p><u>Comment on overall rating:</u> Though the linkages and curriculum unit head has embarked on building relationships with various (potential) clients/partners in the Nongoma-Ulundi area, these initiatives are still in process and no tangible developments have therefore occurred on the ground. (Such initiatives will be given further impetus with the marketing portfolio coming on stream after April.)</p>										

14. Good relationships with local communities

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										5
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										6
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
Council: 6; KwaGqikasi campus: 6; Nongoma campus: 5; Vryheid management: 6; Vryheid lecturers: 5.										
<p><u>Comment on overall rating:</u> The highly impressive initiatives and activities, in a very short time-span, of the linkages and curriculum unit (and its sub-units) towards relationship- and partnership building, needs research and programming with regard to local communities were described in sub-section 3.3. Accordingly, it is indeed tempting to accord 'strong' category status to this area of college functioning – compared to the basis on which a 'high / strong emerging' rating was allocated previously. However, since these recent developments represent 'the shape of things to come' and since they are largely confined to the Nongoma area, it was decided to keep the rating at its current level because developments planned (building on this foundation as well as expanding into other areas) for the months to follow will push the rating high into the 'strong' category status. (By implication, then, the previously allocated rating of '6' can be viewed as being too high – a '5' rating would have been more representative, in retrospect.)</p>										

15. Good relationships with other state bodies

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										4
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										5
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

Council: 6; KwaGqikasi campus: 5; Nongoma campus: 4; Vryheid management: 5; Vryheid lecturers: 4.

Comment on overall rating:

College activity in this area was largely covered in sub-sections 3.2 and 3.3, with reference to SAQA, SETAs, UMALUSI, local authorities, government institutions like hospitals, etc. Since much of this activity is 'process-related' with regard to partnership development and/or programme planning and development (invariably involving electronic accessing of websites and the downloading of required information), it was decided to keep the rating the same at this time. (As in the case of the previous two characteristics, a foundation has been laid for significant expansion in initiatives and activity in months to come.)

16. The development, provision and evaluation of learnership programmes

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING											2
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING											3
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	

Council: 4; KwaGqikasi campus: 3; Nongoma campus: 3; Vryheid management: 3; Vryheid lecturers: 2.

Comment on overall rating:

No real progress has been recorded at the level of implementation – endeavours continued to focus on research (community needs) and information gathering (accessing unit standards) towards programme development, as described in sub-section 3.2. Concurrent developments focused on related infrastructure development at KwaGqikasi (primarily) and Nongoma campuses in support of learnership implementation.

Significant developments are envisaged in months to come, for example, the planned hospitality learnership at KwaGqikasi campus. At this time, however, it is felt that a 'categorical leap' is not warranted.

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

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING											3
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING											3
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	

Council: 3; KwaGqikasi campus: 3; Nongoma campus: 3; Vryheid management: 4; Vryheid lecturers: 3.

Comment on overall rating:

The 'model' which is emerging at KwaGqikasi campus with regard to *planned* short courses and skills programmes described in sub-section 3.3 represents a major shift towards incorporating entrepreneurship and self-employment components into programming – as opposed to these aspects only being addressed as part of the formal Business Studies curriculum, which was the case until now. As in the case of the previous characteristic, these developments point the way to major changes in the foreseeable future, but at this time the status quo essentially remains unchanged due to the 'in-process' status of these developments. (The envisaged 'bake-for-profit' entrepreneurial programme to have been instituted at Vryheid campus was abandoned because the proposed venue is instead being turned into a classroom – a further example of how the critical infrastructural constraints undermine programme delivery.)

Developments in this area are awaited with keen interest.

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

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING											5
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	
Council: 6; KwaGqikasi campus: 5; Nongoma campus: 3; Vryheid management: 5; Vryheid lecturers: 4.											
Comment on overall rating: As in the past, computer skills training comprise the basis of the campus based programmes in this regard whereas the skills centres focus essentially on sewing at this time. The dramatic developments in this area as a result of the initiative of the linkages and curriculum unit at KwaGqikasi campus and the LSEN unit cannot yet be considered for rating purposes since virtually all these programmes/courses are still in planning and development phases.											

Teaching and Learning

19. Functioning curriculum development processes

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING											4
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING											5
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	
Council: 6; KwaGqikasi campus: 5; Nongoma campus: 5; Vryheid management: 6; Vryheid lecturers: 4.											
Comment on overall rating: As will be evident by now, significant developments are in the pipeline in this area of college functioning. At this time, though, the status quo remains.											

20. Quality curricular delivery

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING											5
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING											6
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	

Council: 6; KwaGqikasi campus: 4; Nongoma campus: 5; Vryheid management: 6; Vryheid lecturers: 5.

Comment on overall rating:

Based on the college's structural dynamics at this time, as conveyed in section 3, a sense emerges that the quality of teaching and learning, overall, has dropped since that last impact study was conducted. But the reason does not lie at the door of staff expertise or commitment – it is the result of a confluence of a variety of factors, the main ones relating to the critical shortcomings with regard to infrastructure and staffing described above. Consequently, lecturers are under severe (unbearable in some cases) pressure because of the demands made on them and the multiple roles many have to perform as compensatory measures.

New approaches and methodologies are not being implemented and the overall focus remains on results, with exceptions in the cases of some individual lecturers. The engineering department at Vryheid has reportedly become more OBE-orientated.

21. Well-functioning staff development processes

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										3
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										4
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

Council: 6; KwaGqikasi campus: 6; Nongoma campus: 5; Vryheid management: 5; Vryheid lecturers: 4.

Comment on overall rating:

Staff development interventions and processes occur on an ongoing basis but the prevailing circumstances and conditions at campuses are hampering implementation of acquired shifts in approaches to teaching and methodology. (These and other aspects pertaining to and impacting on staff development have been noted above and in section 3.)

However, despite these constraints and frustrations, a marked ('tangible') shift is evident among staff of what these staff development processes are about or in support of, together with a greater degree confidence about embracing the 'unknown'.

Learner Support

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

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										6
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										4
No evidence	Weak Characteristic			Emerging Characteristic			Strong Characteristic			
No academic support programme in place	Learners obtain academic support on an <i>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

Council: 6; KwaGqikasi campus: 4; Nongoma campus: 4; Vryheid management: 6; Vryheid lecturers: 4.

Comment on overall rating:

Overall, the status quo appears to remain unchanged. It could even be viewed as having declined to some extent, both at the level of systemic support (e.g. ABET language development programmes Vryheid campus have been terminated), as well as at the level of support offered on an individual basis due to the increased pressures on staff members noted above. The establishment of the SSS unit and the coming on stream of Plato represent major change in this regard but implementation is still in the early stages. The critical need for language development in support of teaching and learning was once again highlighted.

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

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										4
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										4
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
Council: 6; KwaGqikasi campus: 5; Nongoma campus: 5; Vryheid management: 6; Vryheid lecturers: 4.										
Comment on overall rating:										
The newly established student support services unit's (coordinated) activities in this area were noted in section 3. However, most of these are still in the planning phase and their impact will only become manifest in months to follow. Among the priority areas identified are interventions aimed at anti-stigmatizing HIV/Aids status and counselor training. Policy is still not in place.										

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

COLLEGE BASELINE RATING										5
FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT STUDY RATING										5
No evidence	Weak Characteristic			Emerging Characteristic			Strong Characteristic			
No guidance or counselling	Some input given to learners by campus or outside people on <i>ad hoc</i> 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
Council: 6; KwaGqikasi campus: 4; Nongoma campus: 4; Vryheid management:6; Vryheid lecturers: 4.										
Comment on overall rating:										
Initiatives by the SSS and ELSN units are still in discussion and planning stages, for example the proposed wellness centre that is to be established at KwaGqikasi campus. The sense was gained that, at this time, the overall status of delivery in these areas has actually declined. For example, the dedicated counselor (senior lecturer) at Vryheid campus is absolutely overstretched due to the acute staffing problems at this site (she has to teach again this semester).										

5. OVERALL ASSESSMENT

5.1 Comparative ratings (baseline, first and second impact studies)

The following symbols or keys appearing in the 'dimensions and characteristics' column denote change in status of characteristics over the last six months (2nd vs 1st impact studies):

* No change in status

> Improvement in status

< Decline in status.

	DIMENSIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS	BASILINE RATING	1 ST IMPACT RATING	2 ND IMPACT RATING
	Vision and mission			
1.	Practices guided by a clear institutional vision >	3	4	5
2.	Inculcation of a value system throughout the institution >	3	3	4
	Leadership and management			
3.	Well-functioning systems of governance, including college councils and academic boards >	4	4	5
4.	Effective institutional leadership >	6	6	7
5.	Effective management systems >	4	4	5
	Knowledge sharing			
6.	Effective vertical knowledge sharing and learning in the FET system *	7	5	5
7.	Effective horizontal knowledge sharing and learning in the FET system >	3	4	5
8.	Effective external knowledge sharing and learning in the FET system >	4	5	6
	Institutional health			
9.	The establishment and maintenance of financial health >	4	5	6
10.	Adequate infrastructure >	3	3	4
11.	Enhanced human resource capacity >	4	5	6
12.	Quality assurance system *	4	4	4
	Responsiveness			
13.	Good relationships with business *	3	4	4
14.	Good relationships with local communities *	5	6	6
15.	Good relationships with other state bodies *	4	5	5
16.	The development, provision and evaluation of learnership programmes *	2	3	3
17.	The development, provision and evaluation of programmes for the development of small and micro enterprises (SME) *	3	3	3
18.	The development, provision and evaluation of short courses/ skills programmes *	5	5	5
	Teaching and learning			
19.	Functioning curriculum development processes *	4	5	5
20.	Quality curricular delivery <	5	6	4
21.	Well-functioning staff development processes >	3	4	5
	Learner support			
22.	The development, implementation and evaluation of academic support programmes *	6	4	4
23.	The development, implementation and evaluation of HIV/AIDS support programmes >	4	4	5
24.	The development, implementation and evaluation of guidance and counselling systems <	5	5	4

The ratings on 10 characteristics remained unchanged (as opposed to 11 at the first impact study); the ratings on 12 characteristics (50%) have improved (as opposed to 11 at the first impact study), and the ratings on two characteristics dropped (as was the case at the first impact study).

At a strictly statistical or quantitative level it would appear that the overall status of the structural dynamics of the college has not significantly changed compared to six months ago in spite of all the developments described in section 3! It is therefore vitally important that the above ratings-based picture be contextualised to reflect the 'true' situation. The following aspects should be noted in this regard:

- It should be remembered that the final judgement call in rating allocation rests with the researcher, based on overall evidence gathered and perceptions formed through interviews conducted (individuals and groups) with all college/campus stakeholders, campus tours, classroom observation, observations and perceptions in general, etc. Such decisions about ratings, therefore, do involve a subjective element on the part of the researcher and is the reason why each rating has to be motivated or justified (and why 'researcher continuity' is critical).
- Another critical aspect concerns the 'inherent' or embedded dynamics and patterns that emerge in a study of this nature – 'automatic review' or revisiting of earlier positions and perspectives occur as the study progresses. Within this context, it can be said that the baseline study ratings, generally, represented a slightly 'inflated' perspective because of the newness of the experience (of being 'evaluated'), which leads to unconscious responses to convey a positive picture of the college/campus as a 'first impression'. A more institutional-critical ('honest soul-searching') perspective tends to develop progressively with time and ratings tend to 'drop', not because the status of a particular college aspect *actually* declined, but because ratings become more realistic and balanced. But this occurs within a changing institutional landscape governed by merger-related restructuring and other internal and external factors and circumstances. In some instances things get worse in order to get better!
- It should be remembered that the ratings do not reflect 'in-process' developments (leading up to the implementation of programmes, systems, policy, etc.) because they are not tangible and therefore not 'measurable' in terms of the instrument (rating scale) used. As such they do not convey the complete and nuanced picture of Mthashana's overall growth and development at this time.

5.2 Key findings

The previous sections provide a measure of the current status of progress and developments at Mthashana College for FET at this time of the second formative SESD impact study – within the framework of the seven 'structural functioning' dimensions and associated characteristics, 24 in all, which provide the focus of the investigation. What remains to be done is to capture the key achievements and challenges to have emerged in an overall sense.

Key challenges

Starting with the merger and restructuring processes, it is evident that unresolved core issues continue to frustrate and undermine overall college functioning in various areas and at different levels. Most obvious would be:

- The continued moratorium on permanent appointments adds additional burdens on college and campus managements as well staff further down.
- Critical institutional shortcomings with regard to infrastructure and facilities which impact on absolutely all areas of college development and functioning and could be regarded in some ways as the single most critical constraint at this time.

But there is not much college management can do about these issues – external intervention/support (pDoE and development agencies) is deemed essential. On the other hand, many of the areas in which lack of progress or development was recorded previously continue to

remain a challenge (the reasons were discussed in Section 4 and will not be repeated here), for example –

- Systems development and implementation (policy and procedures), with particular reference to quality assurance and staff appraisal (as part of staff ongoing development processes in general).
- Programme and curriculum development and implementation / delivery and related accreditation of workshops and other facilities.
- Campus management – staff (and) student relations, at the one campus in particular.
- Specific areas of academic support programmes, for instance guidance and counselling.

Key achievements

It is clear that, in spite of the constraints and circumstances which continue to frustrate and limit Mthashana's overall development and functioning, progress has occurred in various areas of structural development and functioning. For example:

- Governance
- Leadership
- Refocusing of strategic vision, objectives and plans
- Knowledge sharing/learning and linkages (across the college and in relation to external bodies, structures and constituencies)
- Establishment and development of portfolios (central integration coordination of core functions) and associated systems development
- Programme planning and development

Conclusion:

In concluding this evaluation, it is perhaps a good time to reflect, in an overall 'historical' sense, on the merger process and associated impact of the SESD programme interventions, with reference to the perspective of a close 'observer' – the SESD coordinator at Mthashana. The SESD programme interventions are viewed as having manifestly contributed to the merger process and associated institutional development and functioning (directly and indirectly) in many different ways. For example –

- nothing reportedly happened after the cluster of colleges was first declared a merged institution – until SESD interventions started occurring
- providing the college with a renewed focus on community needs and make it more responsive in this regard, as evidenced by the current initiatives of the central-office-based linkages and curriculum unit (and sub-units). For example, the research into community skills needs, the establishment of linkages, the piloting of ABET programmes and short courses, and the planning and preparations towards learnership implementation.
- providing direction and guidance to management and governing structures
- promoting the coming together of lecturers of the different sites through workshops and resultant sharing in experiences and thereby promoting a unified culture among staff of the merged institution – despite the negativity and resistance which prevailed at the start of the merger process.
- Providing not only training but also logistical support (e.g. S&T).
- rekindling 'original passion' for teaching among individual lecturers (which in many instances became forgotten due to the constraints and pressures operating at campuses).
- making the DoE more aware of / interested in the workings and growth of FET colleges, which resulted in closer ties being forged (as evidenced in regular meetings etc.) This has reportedly had a knock-on effect with regard the 'visibility' of the college in relations between colleges and external constituencies (potential partners) – local government, hospitals and government departments.

It could therefore be said that the role and impact of the SESD programme (as one of the key support agencies) up till now enabled the merged institution to establish itself and start operating as a merged entity and re-position itself as a dynamic and responsive provider within the new FET landscape. A solid and focussed start has been made and the researcher has a strong

sense that significant progress in various areas of college development and functioning is going to be evident in six months time, in spite of the challenges and constraints faced at this time.

-oOo-