

Building FET College responsiveness: The role of Linkages and Programmes Units

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BUILDING FET COLLEGE RESPONSIVENESS: THE ROLE OF LINKAGES AND PROGRAMMES UNITS

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
ASGISA	Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa
BANKSETA	Banking Sector Education and Training Authority
BPO	Business Process Outsourcing
CBO	Community Based Organisations
CCC	College Curriculum Committee
CCT	College of Cape Town
CETA	Construction Education Training Authority
CHIETA	Chemical Industries Education and Training Authority
CoE	Centres of Excellence
CTFL	Clothing, Textiles, Footwear and Leather Seta
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DoE	Department of Education
DoL	Department of Labour
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
ESDLE	Employment and Skills Development Lead Employers
ESETA	Energy Sector Education and Training Authority
ETDP	Education and Training Seta
ETQA	Education and Training Quality Assurers
FASSET	Seta for Finance, Accounting, Management Consulting and other Financial Services
FET	Further Education and Training
FIETA	Forest Industries Education and Training Authority
FOODBEV	Food and Beverage Manufacturing Industry Education and Training Authority
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
GDPR	Regional Gross Domestic Product
GET	General Education and Training
HE	Higher Education

HoD	Head of Department
HRD	Human Resource Development
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
HWSETA	Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority
IDP	Integrated Development Planning
INSETA	Insurance Sector Education and Training Authority
ISSETT	Information Systems, Electronics and Telecommunications Technologies Sector Education and Training Authority
JIPSA	Joint Initiative on Priority Skills Acquisition
LED	Local Economic Development
LGWSETA	Local Government Water and Related Services Sector Education and Training Authority
LPU	Linkages and Programmes Unit
MAPP	Media, Advertising, Publishing and Packaging Sector Education and Training Authority
MERSETA	Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Sector Education and Training Authority
MQA	Mining Qualifications Authority
NATED	National Technical Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
OG&CM	Oil Gas and Chemical Manufacturing
PAETA	Primary Agriculture Education and Training Authority
POSLEC	Police, Private Security, Legal, Correctional Services and Justice Sector Education and Training Authority
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
PSETA	Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority
SASSETA/DIDTETA	Safety and Security Sector Education and Training Authority
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SESD	Support to Education and Skills Development
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority

SETASA	Sector Education and Training Authority for Secondary Agriculture
SIMSA	Simulated Enterprises in SA
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
SMME	Small, medium and micro enterprise
SSU	Student Support Unit
TETA	Transport Education and Training Authority
THETHA	Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Education and Training Authority
VET	Vocational Education and Training
WCED	Western Cape Education Department
W&R SETA	Wholesale and Retail Sector Education and Training Authority

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research report focuses on the role and establishment of Linkages and Programme Units (LPUs) in three FET colleges in South Africa. The LPU project forms part of the 'Support to Education and Skills Development' (SESD) programme funded by the Danish Government through their development agency, DANIDA. The programme seeks to increase the employability of male and female youth and adults through supporting the delivery of practical and labour market oriented education and skills training provided mainly within the further education and training (FET) band. Seven FET colleges were selected in 2003 for participation in SESD, three of whom make up the primary focus of this study. They are the College of Cape Town, South Cape College with its head office in George, and Mthashana College in rural KwaZulu Natal.

The core research question posed in this study has been to examine the role that LPUs play within the FET college sector in creating new business opportunities and initiating and maintaining relationships with external stakeholders, particularly within the world of work, but also with local community organisations and local government. The fieldwork for the study was conducted in August 2004 when the LPUs were being set up. The intention then was to focus on the start-up processes, and more specifically, the organisational arrangements chosen in each of the three colleges to launch LPUs and build external relationships. More generally, the study seeks to identify what can be learnt from this experience that may be applicable to the contexts of other colleges in South Africa that have yet to travel the road of establishing LPUs.

THE UNDERLYING LOGIC OF 'RESPONSIVENESS'

The report begins by exploring the meaning of concepts such as 'responsiveness' and 'employability' – two key objectives of the SESD project. The ensuing analysis in Chapter One suggests that there are two primary determinants of 'responsiveness' in South Africa:

- It is a response by the educational sector to *changes in the labour market* brought about by South Africa's greater incorporation within the global economy. These changes have brought with them new education and training demands – for example, the need for a highly skilled labour force able to employ the new technologies and add value to existing goods and services. Enterprises require entire labour forces that are sufficiently skilled to adapt to unpredictable and volatile global product markets and rapid technological change. They require broad problem-solving skills to anticipate flaws in production. The broad capabilities now in demand include: problem-solving, the motivation to work and the capacity to continue learning. Included also are literacy and numeracy skills, the ability to read and follow simple

instructions, convey messages accurately, understand simple diagrams, perform basic calculations and have knowledge of such matters as wages and social security.

- It is also a response from educational institutions in the post-1994 South Africa to calls from government that all stakeholders and social institutions *contribute to the social transformation of South African society* currently characterised by high levels of poverty, inequality and unemployment. The core components of the state's programme of transformation include: growing the formal economy through targeted sectoral policies; building stronger linkages between the formal and informal economies; increasing social and economic infrastructure investment; encouraging labour intensive production methods; promoting the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP); and reforming the public sector so that it is capable of delivering on all of these socio-economic promises. FET colleges are expected to contribute to each of these components of socio-economic change.

The research findings of this report show that colleges have indeed responded to these pressures, particularly to the calls from government, and there is now a discernible shift (although still in its infancy) away from traditional and increasingly outdated education-based ('National Education' or 'NATED') curricula towards programmes that are more demand-driven and responsive to client needs. The curricula forms these responses have taken have varied greatly with a wide array of new 'programmes' on offer in the college sector: sectoral support strategies in targeted niche areas such as Bio-fuels, Tourism, Agri-processing, Chemicals, Metals Beneficiation and the Crafts industry; venture creation initiatives; Small and medium enterprises (SMEs); entrepreneurial and self-employment training; training of the unemployed, for example, in schemes such as the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP); training for infrastructural development, especially in the construction sector; training of local government employees; training of participants in the work of community-based organizations; short courses customised to industry's needs; learnerships; business incubators; and training programmes linked to regional and local economic development initiatives.

A MULTIPLICITY OF RESPONSES

In responding to all of these demands, colleges have not acted uniformly. FET colleges are in fact very diverse institutions, both between institutions and within institutions. The analysis in this research report suggests that there are at least three determining factors which shape the routes chosen by colleges in establishing LPUs and building relationships with external clients and partners. These are:

- The historical and external socio-economic factors which shape the evolution of college identity
- The distinctive internal organisational ecology of the college

- The current curricula resources of colleges and the curricula needs of external stakeholders

Differing combinations of these determining factors in each of the college cases studies has produced three diverse routes to building external relationships. Chapter Two, Three and Four examine each of the three determining factors in detail, as summed up in Table 1 below.

Table 1: The determining factors behind three differing LPU routes

	College of Cape Town	South Cape College	Mthashana College
Historical and external socio-economic factors shaping the evolution of college identity:			
Core identity of college	Big city urban college	Small town, peri-urban college	Deep rural college
Size	Large 15 000 learners	Medium 3 647 learners	Medium 3 218 learners
Majority population of students	46% African 41% Coloured 10% White	52% Coloured 26% African 21% White	92% African
Levels of unemployment in neighbouring communities	Medium	Medium	High
Distinctive organisational ecology of the college:			
Organisational ecology	LPU integrated within existing organisational infrastructure	LPU a separate business unit and not directly linked to existing organisational structures	LPU reports directly to CEO because organisational ecology is too weak to play host to it.
Role of CEO	The CEO does not lead the LPU on a daily basis Academic staff and management structures run the LPU	Mixed; As a separate unit, LPU reports directly to the Deputy CEO (Business Development), but academic staff and management structures of the college do play a role.	The CEO plays a very central role in starting up and leading the LPU
Core LPU strategy	Revisioning	Mixed mode	Envisioning
The current curricula resources of colleges and the curricula needs of external stakeholders:			
Presence of external stakeholders	Several urban-based partners available	Several small town based partners available	Few partners The college is trying to develop rural partners amongst community based organisations and local government

Origin of new income	From business	From business	From the public sector
Core sectoral/occupational focus	72% of enrolments are in Engineering College also has a Wholesale and Retail focus	College has strong links with the Oil and Gas industry which is the largest employer in the region College also emphasizes local government development within the larger Eden Municipality	Declining subsistence agriculture and mining sector Shift to skills programmes that aim to develop local communities
Development of learnership curricula	Integrated with the development of NATED curricula	Outsourced to external consultants NATED curriculum development separate	College has de-emphasised learnerships in favour of short-course skills programmes
Culminating LPU route:			
LPU route	Devolved	Detached/Separate	Centrist

9 A Quantitative mapping of socio-economic factors that shape college institutional identity

This research report argues strongly that in planning for LPUs, it is crucial that colleges undertake a process of 'intelligence gathering' as a way of describing the context in which they operate and provide educational services. Such 'intelligence gathering' is a crucial component of institutional planning and strategic management. Chapter Two suggests that quantitative data to be collected should include at least the following set of 8 core socio-economic and educational indicators: provincial population by race; urban or rural location; employment and unemployment by race, age and sector; participation in the informal economy by race and sector; college distinctions by size; college enrolment by province, age and race; programme diversity and finally, the employment destinations of graduates. Comparing and contrasting colleges on the basis of these eight variables will highlight the complex institutional diversity that exists both between and within each of the colleges.

For example, as Table 1 indicates, the College of Cape Town is by far one of the largest FET colleges in South Africa, with just under 15 000 learners. It is city-based and urban in character. This is in sharp contrast to Mthashana College, which is medium sized (only 3 218 learners) and is located in the deep rural countryside of KwaZulu Natal. Mthashana is surrounded by an impoverished African community who have few opportunities for gainful employment. Returning to the College of Cape Town, it is clear the college has a largely Engineering Studies focus, feeding trained employees into the manufacturing sector of industrialized Cape Town. The College of Cape Town also has a growing 'Wholesale and Retail' focus. South Cape College, on the other hand, has a strong Oil and Gas focus given

that Petro SA in Mossel Bay is the largest employer in the region. South Cape College is also prioritizing the training of local government personnel in all of the small towns of the Eden Municipality.

Mthashana has no decisive sectoral focus, with subsistence agriculture and mining in decline in the region. As a consequence, Mthashana College has shifted its focus to short course skills programmes for community development and the generation of sustainable livelihoods. It is clear that socio-economic context shapes the evolution of college institutional identity in South Africa in very powerful ways. Therefore, policies aimed at setting up units such as LPUs need to take these factors into consideration in their start-up and development strategies.

Distinctive organisational ecologies

Two main approaches are evident in the way in which LPUs were started within the three college case studies, described in Chapter Three. Their essential ideal-type characteristics are summarized in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Two ideal-type approaches to building external linkages

Revisioning	Envisioning
This entails the consolidation of prior experience in building external linkages, but doing so in new and reinvigorated ways through an LPU	This entails evolving an entirely new vision for the college in relation to its role in the neighbouring community It requires starting from scratch to build external linkages
There is embedded expertise: this approach can rely on well-established internal management and academic staff structures that are sufficiently capacitated to take on the challenges of a LPU	Limited embedded expertise on building external relations exists within the college
Established links to industry and business exist which provide valuable prior experience for the college	Few external links exist; in certain colleges, historical linkages are now obsolete because of the decline in certain economic sectors such as mining
LPUs inserted into and integrated within these managerial structures	The LPU evolves separately given the absence of effective managerial and academic staff structures; the LPU reports directly to the CEO
The college has strong 1st tier central leadership but the day-to-day activities of the LPU are devolved to effective 2nd, 3rd and 4th tier guidance and participation.	The LPU is strongly driven by the CEO who has to play a dynamic 'en-visioning' role to launch the LPU project successfully.
'Devolved' model	'Centrist' model

The first approach evident in our case studies is a *revisioning* strategy whereby colleges use the experience and expertise of academic staff or the available infrastructure of particular campuses as the core foundation for the establishment of their LPUs. In such colleges there invariably exists a wide range of relationships with business and the idea is to transfer and embed these previous experiences of 'what works' within the operation of the newly established LPU. The challenge for such colleges is to continue doing what they previously did best, while also engaging with new opportunities and challenges.

Colleges that adopt the revisioning approach invariably have senior management structures that are already quite formalised, with each senior management member being designated defined roles and responsibilities. LPU managers rarely consult directly with or report to the CEO/Rector. Rather, they report to members of senior management staff whose portfolios normally include overseeing the LPUs. In such cases LPUs generally operate from central offices and are part of structures and processes that are formalized and longstanding.

The second approach is called *envisioning*, best described as colleges that have had to start from scratch with the establishment of their LPUs and in their interaction with external partners. This approach is mostly characterized by colleges with limited or no formal relationships with industries and business, colleges that have had to completely reconceptualise the ways in which they engage with their local environments. Alternatively, they are colleges where previous relationships with industrial or business partners have disintegrated due to changes in the economic structure of the surrounding regions. In cases where colleges for instance had strong links previously to the mining industry and can no longer look to this sector for student enrolments or funding, such colleges would have had to completely rethink the ways in which they engage with their local labour markets and how they use their resources to best serve their various external communities.

These differing organisational strategies are very evident in our three case studies. For example, within the Mthashana College structure, the LPU is located at the central office and the LPU manager works closely with, and directly under, the college Rector. The Rector and the LPU manager regularly brainstorm new possibilities and discuss the various requirements needed to put prospective programmes in place. They also hold regular meetings with the rest of the members of the management staff to discuss how to follow up and put into place the 'fruits' of their discussions and plans. This is a very centralized form of management where the college Rector plays a central role in shaping interactions with external partners.

The College of Cape Town (CCT), on the other hand, has a management structure that can be characterised as deeply centralized, but which also operates in complex ways to include a large number of participants in key decision making activities. The centralized structure thus

These differing organisational ecologies – ‘devolved’, ‘centrist’ or a mix of both – arise from a college’s specific historical trajectory, the effectiveness of its management structures, the extent to which academic staff have participated in college governance and the role played by the CEO as the ‘champion’ of the LPU in building external linkages.

Responding to the curriculum needs of external clients

Our research has also shown that organisational ecology has a powerful impact on the curriculum design and development process, explored in Chapter Four. There are essentially three ways in which colleges develop curricula to meet the needs of external stakeholders. These ways are quite fluid and colleges often develop a mixture of all three. They are:

1. *Customising training to directly meet external client needs*
2. *Building on existing strengths*
3. *Specialising in ‘niche’ markets*

The first approach is most evident in the South Cape College case study. This college focuses on providing two routes to each qualification that it offers: namely, the standard NQF-aligned college programme route and the learnership route, with the key difference between the two qualification routes being in the make-up of the various programmes. In that respect, standard NQF-aligned programmes consist of 50% theory and 50% practice, while learnerships consist of 30% theory and 70% practice. By packaging the two qualifications into short courses and skills programmes, the college hopes to attract students that seek to follow ‘traditional’ routes to qualification as well as students that seek alternative career pathways that nevertheless fit in with their specific social and work needs. In terms of its primary focus on servicing the demands of as many ‘consumers’ as possible, the college has sought to establish its LPU in ways that can best exploit external demands as they arise.

The second approach is best exemplified by the College of Cape Town, although the college has adopted elements of the first and third approaches as well. The core focus of the College of Cape Town has been to build on its reputation for providing quality, relevant programmes and good service delivery. The college generally has quite effective systems of recruitment and student selection, and in recent years has focused on how best to upgrade and improve provision.

The college has recognized, however, the need to offer a broader range of programmes. It has thus engaged with learnership delivery as a way of including more work-relevant programmes. The LPU is seen as a crucial vehicle in this regard, not only to assist the college

in developing and implementing learnerships but also in ensuring that where such programmes are provided they are integrated into existing college processes.

The third approach is most evident in the Mthashana College case study. Mthashana College does not have the luxury of effective student recruitment systems or a steady stream of 'consumers' that it can adapt its programme delivery to. A prominent feature of the area surrounding Mthashana College is the lack of any significant industry or big employers. This has forced the college and the LPU to completely rethink the ways in which it provides programmes and how it understands the needs of the key target markets. In recent times the college has increasingly looked to incorporating more skills centres into the college set-up as a way of providing short-course skills programmes that target the key skill needs of surrounding communities.

Problems with learnerships

Similarly, the three colleges have differing approaches to, and success with learnerships, described in Chapter Five. A number of problems common to learnerships were raised by respondents at all colleges. The first has to do with employers' reservations, in that they are not yet convinced of the value of learnerships and that colleges can provide the necessary skills. Relatedly, there is a problem with overly bureaucratic SETA processes to become recognised and accredited. Learnerships have very specific requirements that are quite different to setting up standard NATED programmes, because SETAs require large amounts of documentation to monitor, report and invoice.

However, the most serious problem with learnerships as it affects FET colleges is the trend toward outsourcing of its curriculum design, programme management and teaching activities. For example, the current strategy of the South Cape College is to circumvent many of the problems associated with learnership delivery by employing outside contract staff on a temporary basis to serve as Project Managers and trainers on learnership programmes. Full-time and permanently employed lecturers are used solely to teach standard college programmes. The main concern is that college educators play little meaningful role in the learnership process, and that a significant part of college funds is spent on training outside personnel. The work of the LPU was not sufficiently integrated into the college and the knowledge and experience developed was at risk of being lost to the college.

The over-reliance on contract staff and the acquisition of externally produced learning materials severely limited the growth of institutional capacity and if unregulated, threaten the quality and therefore the educational underpinnings of college education.

DIVERSITY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY

A number of issues are identified in the concluding chapter that would benefit from new forms of policy intervention or departmental encouragement and support. Amongst these, three issues stand out.

Tracer Studies

It has become impossible to comment on issues such as responsiveness, employability and college effectiveness if there is no data on the actual destinations of graduates from FET colleges, particularly those cohorts that have benefited from initiatives such as the SESD programme. Also needed are Employer Satisfaction Surveys. There is now some urgency that these sorts of studies be undertaken, both at a national/regional level, but more importantly, as a routine procedure annually in each college.

Quantitative mapping

Chapters Two and Three have shown how important it is for colleges to develop a sense of their socio-economic context and demographic location via a set of measurable indicators. This will require inputs from education management information systems at the national, provincial and local levels. The methodology to do such mapping, and the need for standardisation across colleges, are issues that will need to be addressed. However, without increasing levels of information flow of high quality, the LPUs will not be able to build upon their initial achievements.

Recognising diversity

The case for recognising diverse LPU routes is made strongly in the report, but the extent to which the LPUs and the FET college sector engage with diverse 'segments' needs attention. The report identified at least four distinct 'segments' within the FET sector, each requiring specific policy mechanisms and instruments. These are:

- *Articulation with higher education.* This segment received minimal attention in this study, although the College of Cape Town has committed itself to strengthening its articulation with higher education. Colleges will not fulfill their full potential in being responsive to the larger economic project in South Africa if they fail to build pathways with higher education.

- *The formal (or first) economy*, that sector of the national economy that is naturally served by many of the large well-resourced, urban-based colleges such as the College of Cape Town. These colleges need to be more effectively incorporated within regional and local economic development strategies that target particular economic sectors for growth. These FET colleges are critical in the production of intermediate skills for new economic initiatives.
- *The second economy*, which thrives in both South Africa's urban and rural settings, and which is a far more difficult context for colleges to work in. A key point made earlier in this regard is that SME training strategies for the informal sector need to be more effectively 'joined-up' with wider economic development and industrial policy interventions at the national, regional and local levels, which seek to develop a SME sector. These include ongoing infrastructural support, start-up capital and continuing access to credit, business and management skills, and a certain 'market savviness' about the sector. Again, colleges need to join the more established economic agencies and SME networks of government to make their distinctive contribution.
- *The rural economy*, which is characterised by remoteness, lack of infrastructural resources, weak local government and the absence of formal sector jobs. Colleges operating in relation to this segment will need to rely far more on public sector initiatives such as investments in infrastructural development, EPWP schemes, local government development and the new emphases on industries such as indigenous crafts and eco-tourism.

In short, we need to recognise the highly skewed political economy underpinning FET colleges, and the highly differentiated college landscape that results, far more assertively. That colleges are diverse is not a weakness, but an asset. Their socio-economic contexts are very diverse, and therefore, colleges will have to do very different things in their unique contexts to make any kind of impact. FET policy and its key levers, which currently view colleges as homogenous entities, are likely to be more effective if they engage directly with these diverse South African contextual realities.

Chapter 1

BACKGROUND AND NATIONAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

FET colleges urgently need to develop the capacity to offer greater support to learners, innovative partnerships with business, industry and communities, and an even more responsive and flexible curriculum. Minister of Education, Kader Asmal, 2002.

BACKGROUND TO THE SESD INITIATIVE

The Support to Education and Skills Development (SESD) programme was initiated by the Danish government in 2002 for the development of education and training in South Africa. Through its international development agency, DANIDA, and in partnership with the national Department of Education, the Department of Labour and three provincial Departments of Education, the SESD programme aimed to increase the employability of male and female youth and adults through supporting the delivery of practical and labour market oriented education and skills training, provided mainly within the further education and training (FET) band.

The SESD programme supported seven merged colleges in three provincial clusters: two FET colleges each in the Western Cape and KwaZulu Natal and all three FET colleges in the North West Province.

The SESD programme aimed to meet two specific objectives. They were articulated as follows:

- The institutional and financial sustainability of the FET colleges in general, and the targeted provincial clusters in particular, will be enhanced through the establishment of a supportive and conducive enabling environment, which will also serve to advance the objectives of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

- The FET colleges in general, and the targeted clusters in particular, directly supported to deliver quality programmes responsive to the needs of the world of work including the small and micro enterprise (SME) sector, in accordance with the needs of the society at large

The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) was commissioned by DANIDA to undertake a baseline evaluation of the participating colleges in February 2003, as well as four formative impact assessments every six months between February 2003 and February 2005, and finally, a summative impact assessment of the SEDS First Phase in October 2005. The HSRC developed an evaluation schema of seven dimensions against which progress and success in the participating colleges would be measured. Within each dimension, a number of characteristics were identified that provided the basis for the assessment of 'impact'. Over the three years of the evaluation cycle, changes occurring in the rating of each dimension and its related characteristics were tracked, to indicate the developmental trajectory of each SEDS-supported college. Table 1.1 below shows the 'whole organisation' approach that was followed by the HSRC.

Table 1.1: Seven dimensions used in the impact assessment of seven SEDS-funded colleges

Dimensions	Outcomes	Characteristics
<i>Values and Vision</i>	A strong vision and a lived set of values drive colleges' transformation processes towards fulfilling their developmental mission.	Practices guided by a clear institutional vision Inculcation of a value system throughout the institution
<i>Leadership and Management</i>	Strategic leadership, supported by effective management and governance systems, operationalises the transformed vision of the FET college system.	Well-functioning systems of governance, including college councils and academic boards Effective institutional leadership Effective management systems
<i>Knowledge Sharing</i>	College and system performance enhanced through better flows of knowledge horizontally and vertically within the system, as well as with external stakeholders.	Effective vertical knowledge sharing and learning in the FET system Effective horizontal knowledge sharing and learning in the FET system Effective external knowledge sharing and learning in the FET system
<i>Institutional Health</i>	The financial health and physical infrastructure of colleges contribute to their proper functioning in supporting employability.	The establishment and maintenance of financial health Adequate infrastructure Enhanced human resource capacity Quality assurance system
<i>Responsiveness</i>	Employability enhanced through colleges' greater responsiveness to the needs of learners, their communities and the labour market.	Good relationships with business Good relationships with local communities Good relationships with other state

		bodies The development, provision and evaluation of learnership programmes The development, provision and evaluation of SMME programmes The development, provision and evaluation of short courses/ skills programmes
<i>Teaching and Learning</i>	A culture of learning promotes both employability and personal development. Strong systems of curriculum development, classroom pedagogy and staff development support quality learning.	Functioning curriculum development processes Quality curricular delivery Well-functioning staff development processes
<i>Learner Support</i>	Learner support systems improve labour market and life outcomes through support to learners' health, learning and insertion into the labour market.	The development, implementation and evaluation of academic support programmes The development, implementation and evaluation of HIV/AIDS awareness interventions The development, implementation and evaluation of guidance and counselling systems

Some of the trends identified in the summative impact assessment will be presented later in this text, particularly those concerned with Dimension 5 on 'Responsiveness'.

THE LINKAGES AND PROGRAMMES UNIT PROJECT

Since its initiation in 2002, the SESD Programme has contributed to the piloting of a number of 'models of practice' in areas that it is hoped will inform subsequent institutional development in the sector as a whole. The study on which this report is based investigated one such area of 'practice', namely the role that Linkages and Programme Units (LPUs) play within the FET college sector in creating new business and initiating and maintaining relationships with their external environments, particularly the world of work.

The proposed role of Linkages and Programmes Units in SESD supported colleges

LPUs are one of three specialised structures (the others being Student Support Units and Marketing and Communication Units) that the SESD Programme has funded since 2002. LPUs were established to provide the SESD-funded colleges with a formal mechanism to engage with the needs of their external partners, both for in-service training of the currently employed and the training of those who are yet to enter the labour market.

SESD funding entailed the bankrolling of LPU staff salaries (2-3 staff members) on a sliding scale over the three years, as well as paying for the establishment of the initial working infrastructure in each of the seven college LPUs (buying of computers, desks, stationery and other support requirements). The key functions of LPUs have been described by participating colleges as:

- Linking up with businesses, communities and industries to identify the core skill requirements of external partners
- Conducting research on the kinds of programmes and partnerships needed, and on the kinds of programmes that would subsequently be needed
- Providing a key link with bodies such as Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) and Education and Training Quality Assurers (ETQAs)
- Supporting departments within colleges in the development of learning programmes and learning materials
- Devising a staff development programme for staff members who are involved in developing these new programmes
- Establishing and maintaining a database about programmes, staff development needs, student take-up, and student and staff placement in industry
- Interacting with student support services within colleges to track students and confirm placement rates (LPU, 2004)

The key focus of the LPU is to manage the external environments of colleges, forge external partnerships, and then initiate processes within colleges around programme development, to secure relevant staff inputs and involvement to sustain new programmes. LPUs are thus the main interface between colleges, their external stakeholders and college role-players, and are expected to be pivotal to the growth and success of individual colleges.

A key purpose in overseeing the effective establishment and management of external partnerships is to generate new business for colleges, especially around the learnership system. It is expected that the availability of learnership programmes will burgeon over the next few years, informed by the skills and training needs of particular sectors highlighted by employers, training providers, and Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs). It is also expected that learnerships will displace a number of 'traditional' programmes within current college offerings.

In this regard, LPUs have the added responsibility, alongside securing employer buy-in and formalizing links between employers and students through learnership agreements, to commit employers to programmes that have broader ambitions for the student than simply providing them with the specific competences for their immediate job.

The case study methodology

The intention of the study was to document the establishment of LPUs in SESD supported colleges, in order to inform their potential contribution to FET colleges across the sector. The most appropriate method was thus to conduct comparative case studies of existing practice. Case studies explored the functioning of the LPUs, the external environment with which they interact, the organisational structures and institutional capacity within which they are located, and their relationship with programme development and delivery.

This report draws on three of the empirical case studies that were conducted in two provinces, Western Cape and KwaZulu Natal¹. Researchers visited colleges and interviewed a wide range of institutional role-players:

- Leadership figures, such as the Directors of FET in the Department of Education in each province, the SESD Provincial Technical Adviser in each province, the CEO of each college and the Chairperson of the college council
- Senior college staff interviewed at each college included the Deputy CEO in charge of Academic Affairs, the Academic Head, two Campus Managers and the college Programme Managers based at each campus
- The LPU staff interviewed included the Managers and Assistant Managers and all association staff members in place at the time
- The managers of the Student Support Services Unit and college Business Centres, where they existed

The report presents key trends and issues highlighted through a comparative analysis of the LPUs at three colleges, located in very different socio-economic environments, with very different internal organisational arrangements. The linkages and programmes they set up in response are thus distinct. The following section will lay a foundation for the comparative analysis by exploring the concept of 'responsiveness' that lies at the heart of the SESD programme.

THE NEW EMPHASIS ON 'RESPONSIVENESS'

At the core of the SESD programme and more explicitly represented in the LPU project, is the desire to make FET colleges more 'responsive' to external needs. Dimension 5 of the seven criteria used by the HSRC to evaluate the impact of the SESD initiative is focused on the issue of 'responsiveness'. Its specific characteristics include:

¹ Case studies of the SESD colleges in the North West province were not included in the study, as the LPUs were in the process of being established at the time of the empirical study.

Table 1.2: Impact assessment dimension 5: Responsiveness

Outcome	Characteristics
Employability enhanced through greater responsiveness of colleges to the needs of learners, their communities and the labour market	Good relationships with business Good relationships with local communities Good relationships with other state bodies The development, provision and evaluation of learnership programmes The development, provision and evaluation of SMME programmes The development, provision and evaluation of short courses/skills programmes

The SESD programme and its LPU project do not provide an explicit theoretical explanation for their promotion of responsiveness (or 'employability', another term used interchangeably with the idea of 'responsiveness'). The next sections attempt to illuminate briefly the underlying logic and educational meaning of these key concepts, in the FET sector and in the South African socio-economic development project.

The underlying logic of 'responsiveness'

The increased emphasis on concepts such as 'responsiveness' and 'employability' arise from the demands placed on modern society by globalisation. Writers on globalisation and its implications for education, such as Castells (1996), Brown, Green and Lauder (2001), Scott (1995) and Gibbons et al (1994) all describe globalisation as the outcome of three simultaneous developments in the advanced economies of the world: the demise of Fordist production regimes and the onset of global economic crisis in the mid-1970s; the advent of information technology in the early 1980s, and in particular its facilitation of the internationalisation of finance capital; and the rise of innovative forms of work organisation in the early 1980s, often referred to as high skill, high value-added manufacturing. The new economic system that emerged from these three developments is characterised by high-quality export manufacture aimed at specific consumer niche markets. Innovation is at the heart of this new system – the ability to continuously reinvent products and add value to existing designs through reconfiguring new information and knowledge about product and process.

All of the above developments brought with them new education and training demands – for example, the need for a highly skilled labour force able to employ the new technologies and add value to existing goods and services. However, it is not merely specialised skills that are needed; more well-rounded and diverse skill competencies are in demand. Enterprises require entire labour forces that are sufficiently skilled to adapt to unpredictable and volatile global product markets and rapid technological change. They require broad

problem-solving skills to anticipate flaws in production. Workers need to understand how the new technologies can be optimally applied, how the entire production process unfolds, how the environmental context shapes the execution of tasks, and how unexpected factors arise. It is the ability to retool and respond quickly to rapidly changing market conditions that is highly valued.

Globalisation has also resulted in a bias towards skills intensity in production with growth in skilled and highly skilled jobs and decreased employment in semi-skilled and unskilled work. The labour absorption capacity of many national economies (including South Africa) has been growing at a slower pace than the annual increase in the supply of new entrants into the labour market.

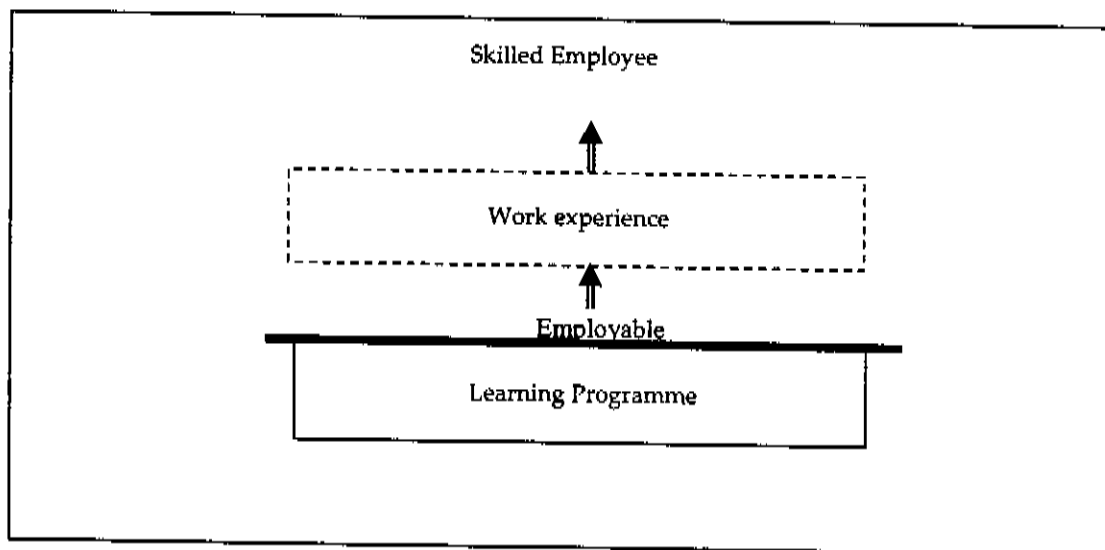
'Responsiveness' has been the education sector's response to these developments. Brown and Lauder (1996) make the critical point that instead of guaranteeing 'employment' (as in the past with the welfare state in the United Kingdom and Continental Europe), the role of the state now is to invest in education and training to enable workers to become fully 'employable'. They have made a critical distinction between the goal of employment, where skills are linked to specific occupations and economic trajectories, and employability, where the focus is on skills formation to develop a highly educated workforce that is equipped for greater occupational mobility and flexible work patterns.

Gamble views employability as a direct response to the changes in the labour market, where labour supply outstrips demand. Governments are giving their education and training systems the task of making everyone employable, without a direct relation between the education and training provided and the number of jobs and/or opportunities for self-employment that are available. Furthermore, global trends towards a decline in formal apprenticeships and casualisation of labour are resulting in enterprises down-scaling or even abolishing their internal training departments. Business enterprises are increasingly looking to public education and training institutions to equip students with both the theoretical and practical competences that make their knowledge and skills immediately useful when they enter the labour market, as well as providing them with a basis for further study and training at a later stage (HSRC, 2006).

Kruss has developed a useful analytical framework for identifying the dramatic shifts that have taken place in the articulation between the education system and the labour market. Although she is writing about responsiveness in the context of South African Higher Education, her general argument is applicable to the FET college sector. Kruss argues that the role of institutions in providing for education in the past was to ensure that the majority of graduates were employable on leaving the institution. The university-based degree

programme, for example, provided a general formative grounding in a broad disciplinary base, to prepare educated citizens (Kruss, 2004).

Figure 1.1: Employability model with indirect link to workplace



Source: Kruss, 2004

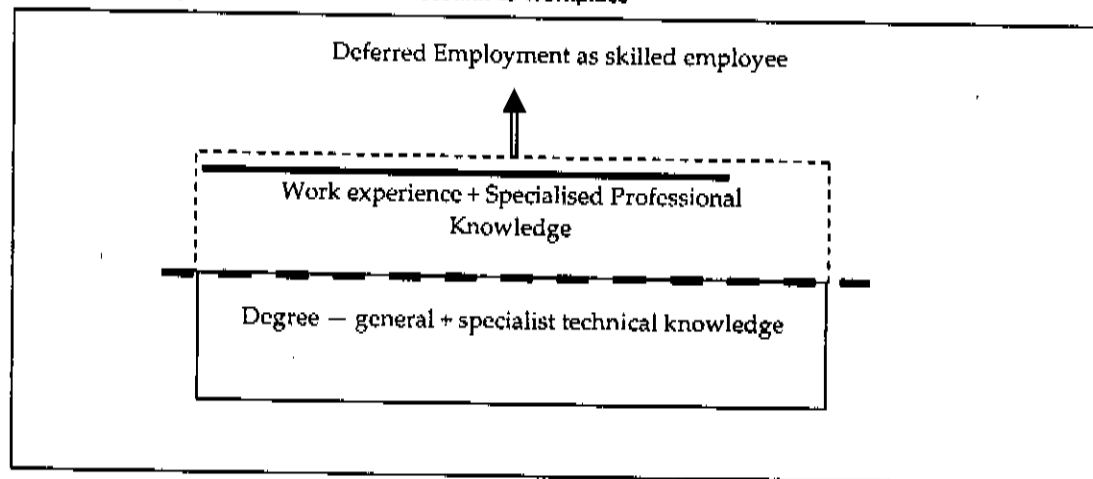
Note the solid line on completion of the degree or diploma in Figure 1.1, which represents the end point of formal education and training. A degree prepared graduates *indirectly* for employability. This model assumed that graduates would proceed immediately upon qualifying to the workplace, to a job. Work experience and occupational specialization were the preserve of employers in the labour market, who would build on the general foundation laid by education institutions to develop the requisite specialised skills, knowledge and dispositions to produce skilled employees (Kruss, 2004).

The model underpinning professional and graduate education in the universities was one of *employment*, with an indirect link to the labour market. That is, Higher Education indirectly prepared graduates with general and specialist technical knowledge for professional employment, which was completed by professional associations in co-operation with employers in the workplace.

Once a graduate had a degree, professional specialized knowledge was provided through mentored work experience, controlled, regulated and accredited by professional associations, in their capacity as statutory bodies. The employer focused on providing the specialised practice and experiential knowledge required. Only then, was the graduate professionally 'ready' for the labour market. Employment in the occupational role was virtually guaranteed with the achievement of the professional qualification (Kruss, 2004).

The model is graphically represented in Figure 1.2. Note the perforated line between the degree and work experience, which represents that formal education and training and accreditation were only completed after the professional work-place based training.

Figure 1.2: Employment model with indirect link to workplace

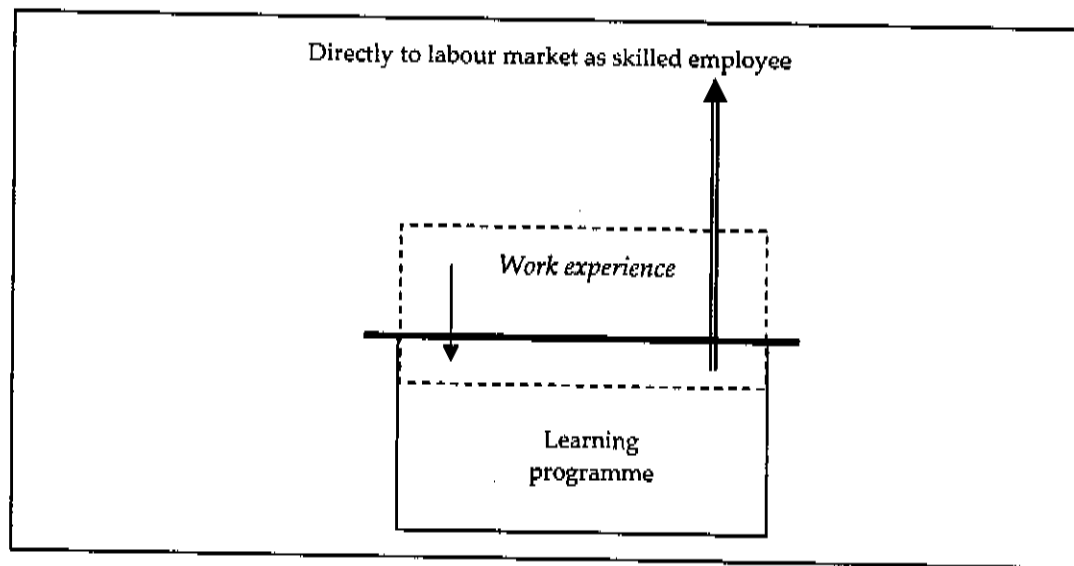


Source: Kruss, 2004

The education institution is responsible for preparing graduates indirectly for deferred employment pending specialization (Kruss, 2004).

More recent labour market conditions reveal a new model of the link between Higher Education and the labour market that underpins the expectations of responsiveness of two key constituencies, the private and public sectors. This model is graphically presented in Figure 1.3. The major implication of Kruss's analysis here is that experiential knowledge and tacit skills are now drawn *downwards* – from the workplace back into the educational institution – as a component of the learning programme, ensuring that the graduate is employable and can proceed directly to the labour market as a skilled employee (Kruss, 2004).

Figure 1.3: Employability model with direct link to workplace



Source: Kruss, 2004

Kruss argues that the public and private sectors no longer expect higher education to prepare young people *indirectly* for employability in general degree courses. They now expect higher education to ensure that the majority of graduates are employable in a new sense, that they are *directly* prepared to become skilled employees, with the kind of high level skills and tacit knowledge needed for employability in a changing labour market.

Kruss's underlying logic, so effectively developed for Higher Education, is equally applicable to the South African FET college sector. In short, education institutions now need to develop the general high level 'soft skills' that were tacitly developed through workplace experience in the past. Many of these skills, like management and leadership or 'conflict resolution' were developed experientially through processes in the workplace (Kruss, 2004). The notion of 'responsiveness' today requires that many of these workplace skills and experiential knowledge are pulled 'downwards' from the workplace into the educational institution as a central requirement of diplomas, to become integral to the task of education institutions and a core component of learning programmes.

Driving this process of internalising the acquisition of workplace skills and experiential/tacit knowledge is the claim by employers (private and public) that many young people, particularly from historically disadvantaged schools, complete their education without the requisite tacit knowledge, skills and dispositions. Hence, the concern of public and private sector employers now is that education institutions themselves should provide such 'soft skills' training so that graduates are directly prepared to enter the workplace.

Gamble (2003) in a study of FET college curriculum responsiveness, concurs with the 'employability' model developed by Kruss. She argues that, the message sent out from employers was that mechanisation and automation of production, administration and service activities would progressively reduce the need for 'specific' skills required in traditional occupations. Any consistent strategy of modernisation and economic growth should focus above all on the development of general education. In this way sufficient potential talent would be tapped to meet the rapidly expanding need for highly qualified labour. A longer period of initial schooling would also promote the acquisition of sufficient 'general skills' to enable young people to cope with lifelong flexibility and mobility (Gamble, 2003). Medway concurs:

Workers in modern industry have to adapt their working methods to a diversity of different production requirements and the continual renewal of technology ... The introduction of new technologies fails where the provision of equipment is not matched by dissemination of know-how. Whereas traditional technical education produced cohorts of specialists competent in specific production processes, many employer bodies now call for a whole workforce with a level of general education, which will ensure adaptability and the ability to benefit from frequent retraining. This general education should include broad and transferable technological abilities (Medway, 1993).

The 'generic skills', 'core skills' or 'soft skills' being referred to in the above discussion include: problem-solving, the motivation to work and the capacity to continue learning. They also include literacy and numeracy, the ability to read and follow simple instructions, convey messages accurately, understand simple diagrams, perform basic calculations and have knowledge of such matters as wages, social security, work books and trade unions (Sultana, 1997).

OTHER DETERMINANTS OF RESPONSIVENESS: THE NATIONAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROJECT

'Responsiveness' is not merely an educational response as described above. It is also a necessary response from educational institutions in the post-1994 South Africa to calls from government that all stakeholders and social institutions contribute to the social transformation of a society currently characterised by high levels of extreme poverty, inequality and unemployment. There are enormous pressures on FET colleges to make their own distinctive contribution to this governmental call. In addition to their educational responsibilities, colleges are now expected to assimilate a wide array of socio-economic programmes into their strategic thinking and institutional missions. They are being called upon to be 'responsive' to the state's larger national economic project. The next section will highlight some of the key ingredients of this state programme for socio-economic change.

Government's economic programme of action

Although government has made significant strides since 1994 with respect to certain economic policies such as macroeconomic stabilisation and growing exports, there are other, more pressing problems that have in fact amplified since Apartheid, unemployment being the most serious amongst them. The social division between those who have benefited from post-Apartheid's democratic dispensation and those who have not has become a major theme driving President Mbeki's second term of office, from mid-2004 until mid-2009. It has led to a comprehensive review of existing government policies and the presentation of a new package of socio-economic instruments that seek to address the problems on both sides of South Africa's great social divide. Government has begun to reinterpret and consolidate all of its interventions around a single priority focus, which in President Mbeki's words, comprises the dilution of the 'first economy-second economy' divide:

At the core of our response to all these challenges is the struggle against poverty and underdevelopment, which rests on three pillars. These are:

- encouraging the growth and development of the First Economy, increasing its possibility to create jobs
- implementing our programme to address the challenges of the Second Economy
- building a social security net to meet the objective of poverty alleviation (Mbeki, 2004)

These three pillars now constitute the primary thrust of government policy in the year 2006 and beyond. The core components of this new integrated package of reforms include promoting the idea of a developmental state; building stronger linkages between the formal and informal economies; increasing social and economic infrastructure investment; encouraging labour intensive production methods; promoting the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP); and reforming the public sector so that it is capable of delivering on these socio-economic promises. Each of these will be considered in turn.

A developmental state

The period 2002-2005 reflects a watershed moment in South Africa's post-Apartheid history. Having established macroeconomic stability based largely on the orthodox measures of fiscal discipline imposed on the first economy, and having realised the depth of structural inequalities between the first and second economies, government has resorted to a more interventionist role aimed at resolving the problems of joblessness and poverty. The concept of a 'developmental state' is a core element in government's programmatic armoury.

'State steering' is a key component of the idea of a developmental state. At the heart of many government policies is a strong emphasis on state co-ordination that will strategically 'steer' the system via a regulatory framework of legislation, financial incentives, reporting and monitoring requirements. Much of this steering requires high levels of management information, state planning and cross-departmental co-ordination. Some of these features of governance are already in place in government, for example, through the 'cluster' system that is used to establish cross-sectoral state coordination across several cognate government departments. Chang (1994) lists several benefits that arise as a result of this type of state coordination of the economy:

- *Targeting winners.* This has entailed the adoption of a 'targeted' approach to economic planning. The focus is on which manufacturing products can best capture comparative advantage in the global economy. Sectoral targeting policies are therefore aimed at developing particular niche industries to 'achieve outcomes that are perceived by the state to be efficient for the economy as a whole' (Chang, 1998)
- *Visioning.* The state can perform other economic coordinating roles such as 'visioning' - providing a broad vision of the future of the economy 'along which a voluntary coordination of activities could be achieved through private agents' (Chang, 1998)

At the core of the idea of the development state is the notion of state steering of the economy to higher levels of economic success through mostly industrial policies and the expansion of targeted economic sectors such as, in the South African case, public infrastructural development, business process outsourcing (BPO), bio-fuels, tourism, agro-processing, chemicals and metal beneficiation. These are the core priorities of many provincial 'Growth and Development Strategies' as well as the 'Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa' (ASGISA), a strategic economic initiative launched by government in July 2005 to work together with business and labour to overcome six major blockages to a higher and more sustainable economic growth rate.

One of those six blockages is the skills crisis facing South Africa. The Joint Initiative on Priority Skills Acquisition (JIPSA), a project of ASGISA, comprises representatives from government, business, labour and civil society who will work together to assist in solving the skills crisis in a limited set of high profile interventions. The FET colleges are viewed as a key state agency in this regard.

Building Stronger Linkages between the Formal and Informal Economies

Devey et al (2006) estimate that about 25% of those working in South Africa are engaged in informal work (including subsistence agriculture and domestic work). Most people in the informal sector eke out a meagre living on the margins of the formal economy earning

extremely low incomes. Economic activities are tenuous at best, with small informal businesses surviving today but gone tomorrow.

Altman (2005) argues that a sustainable growth and employment trajectory will only arise where the formal and informal sectors grow hand-in-hand. If the informal sector grows faster than the formal sector, it may be an indication of displacement, representing a vicious circle, with falling incomes. If both the formal sector and informal sector are growing, it may indicate a virtuous circle, where rising incomes from the formal sector result in increased expenditure on goods and services provided by the informal sector (Altman, 2005). President Mbeki has expanded on the need to build these linkages through what he has termed 'resource transfers'. These resources include education and training, capital for business development and the construction of the necessary social and economic infrastructure, marketing information and appropriate technology, and the ways and means to ensure higher levels of safety and security for both persons and property (Mbeki, 2003).

Increasing Infrastructural Investment

Government is also placing emphasis on increased infrastructural investment. Government's *Towards a Ten Year Review* document acknowledges that government investment in the late 1990s was constrained by tight fiscal policies in pursuit of macro-economic stability whilst parastatal investment was constrained by the restructuring of state-owned enterprises. Since 1999, government investment expenditure has begun to grow, with the allocation to capital expenditure rising from 5.3% to 9.3% of total government expenditure. This trend is expected to continue as the investment capabilities of provincial and local government are strengthened (PCAS, 2003).

Significant commitment to infrastructural development was obtained from business, labour and government delegations attending the Growth and Development Summit in June 2003. The government submission to the Summit argued that the social partners (government, labour and business) needed to commit to reducing input costs. This is because the competitive advantage that underpins investment in industry and job creation depends in part on input costs, pricing and quality of raw materials, transport, energy, communications, research and technology development, and other aspects of the business environment (Department of Labour, 2003).

President Mbeki has built on all of these Growth and Development Summit themes in his recent policy announcements, committing government to work with its social partners to raise the rate of investment in the first economy; roll out a detailed investment plan for state-owned enterprises; reduce the cost of doing business in South Africa through restructuring of ports and lowering the costs of moving imports and exports; improve and expand the production of cheap energy supplies across the country; increase the freight capacity of the

rail corporation Spoornet by 30% over the next 5 years; opening up the Coega Industrial Development Zone in the Eastern Cape by September 2005; and begin construction of the King Shaka International Airport and freight terminal in Durban.

Encouraging Labour-Intensive Production Methods

A policy lever closely linked to the issues discussed above is the encouragement of labour-intensive production methods. Altman & Mayer (2003) argue that the promotion of non-traded goods and services, such as housing construction and public works, have long been a part of South African economic policy documents since 1990. Housing and social infrastructure development, in particular, are seen to stimulate construction and provide essential assets to households that could be used as the basis for other small business development.

Promoting the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP)

The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) has become one of government's primary levers for creating employment opportunities and work experience for people in the second economy. The programme started on a small scale in 1998 but has subsequently grown. It is a nation-wide programme that aims to draw significant numbers of the unemployed into productive employment, so that workers can gain skills while they are gainfully employed, and increase their capacity to earn an income once they leave the programme. The EPWP is targeting one million unemployed people in the next 5 years.

The centre-piece of the EPWP is a large-scale programme using labour-intensive methods to upgrade rural and municipal roads, municipal pipelines, storm water drains and paving as well as fencing of roads, community water supply and sanitation, maintenance of government buildings, housing, schools and clinics, rail and port infrastructure, and electrification infrastructure.

CONCLUSION

It has been shown that 'responsiveness' in the South African context has two influential determinants, the one largely educational, the other a response to a call to action to participate in government's overarching campaign to help alleviate poverty, unemployment and ignorance over the next decade and to promote economic growth. These pressures have had profound affects on FET colleges over the past five years. Although still in its infancy, there is a clear shift away from traditional and increasingly outdated education-based ('National Education' or 'NATED') curricula towards programmes that are more demand-driven, responsive to client needs, outcome-based and National Qualifications Framework (NQF)-aligned. The foci of these new programmes include:

- Sectoral support strategies in targeted economic sectors such as bio-fuels, tourism, agri-processing, chemicals, metals beneficiation and the crafts industry
- College-industry partnerships
- Venture creation initiatives
- SMME training
- Entrepreneurial training
- Self-employment training
- Training of the unemployed
- Training of beneficiaries of the Expanded Public Works Programme
- Training for infrastructural development especially in the construction sector
- Training of local government employees
- Training of participants in the work of community-based organisations
- Short courses customized to industry's needs
- Learnerships
- Business/production incubators
- Training programmes linked to local economic development initiatives

The report will consider the contribution of the LPUs in relation to both the educational and socio-economic drive for greater FET college curriculum 'responsiveness'.

The structure of the report

Chapter Two will locate each of the three case study colleges in relation to the national context, and to their provincial and local contexts. Their geographical location and the surrounding social conditions shape the way colleges are able to respond to initiatives such as the LPU project.

Chapter Three demonstrates the distinct organisational ecology and dynamics in the three colleges, that shape the ways in which they have set up the LPUs. It begins to develop a model of three different 'routes' to establishing and operating LPUs.

Chapter Four builds on this analysis of a high degree of diversity between the colleges, and their different organisational ecologies, to understand the kinds of programme provision and delivery each emphasises, in order to enhance 'responsiveness'.

Chapter Five focuses on colleges' experience of learnerships, as a mechanism specifically designed to enhance responsiveness and external links. This adds a further layer of complexity to the model of differing routes, and points to a set of problems with which colleges need to engage in relation to the learnerships.

Finally, Chapter Six draws conclusions from the comparative analysis, to inform the development and implementation of ongoing policy steering mechanisms. It argues that colleges are not homogenous, and that they do not respond to national calls for responsiveness in a uniform way. It identifies a number of strategic issues for intervention that can take this diversity into account and assist colleges in building on their achievements.

Chapter 2

A DIVERSE SYSTEM: FET COLLEGE LOCATION AND CONTEXT

Chapter One has shown how there are pressures on colleges to be responsive both to the new educational requirements of a globalising economy, but also, to play a role in support of government's new socio-economic programmes. In responding to these demands colleges do not and cannot act uniformly. Colleges are very diverse institutions, both because of their divided histories, but also because of their distinct geographic locations, clientele, size and academic strengths. These very different underpinning social conditions shape the manner in which colleges can operate in their differing locales. Initiatives such as the SESD programme and the LPU project, therefore, need to acquire a fine-grained understanding of the specific social conditions that underpin each of the participating colleges and their distinct sites. Each site is unique and will require a differentiated set of strategies if the SESD and LPU project is to succeed. Chapter Two cannot provide such a fine-grained analysis of the social conditions of each college and each of its campuses. However, it will demonstrate a method for undertaking an environmental scan to inform such an analysis, and it will locate each college in relation to national and provincial trends.

KEY MEASURES OF DIVERSITY

There are several determinants that are likely to set FET colleges apart from each other. Measures are required as **indicators of diversity** so that appropriate strategies can be devised by FET colleges in relating to their specific external environments. Ideally, environmental scans or audits of external conditions should be regularly done and updated by FET colleges so as to inform their policies with regards to external relations. Such an approach is more important for FET colleges than for universities (which are considered national rather than local resources) and schools (which are uniformly regulated to provide the same underpinning general education to all children). The success of a FET college is largely determined by its adaptation to the needs of its neighbouring environment.

Table 2.1 begins the process of setting up such an environmental scan by proposing a set of 8 key indicators that each college should attempt to address in its own locale, as a way of describing the context within which it needs to provide educational services.

Table 2.1: A key set of indicators for defining college neighbourhoods

No	Key Indicator
SOCIO-ECONOMIC INDICATORS	
1	Provincial population by race
2	Urban or rural location
3	Employment and unemployment by race, age and sector
4	Participation in the informal economy by race and sector
EDUCATIONAL INDICATORS	
5	College distinctions by size
6	College enrolment by province, age and race
7	Programme diversity
8	Employment destination of graduates

The following chapters will show that this kind of 'intelligence gathering' is a crucial component of institutional planning and strategic management. It defines the context within which an institution can begin to pursue its goals and objectives. It describes important parts of the wider economic arena in which 'demand' for skills is generated and articulated. This chapter will briefly provide this data at a national level, after which micro-level data available for each of the three colleges will be considered.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Provincial population by race

South Africa has a population of 46.8 million people. Table 2.2 below suggests that the distribution of this population is highly skewed nationally, with Africans constituting the majority population in Limpopo, North West and Mpumalanga. The population distribution in the Western Cape province stands in stark contrast to that of KwaZulu Natal.

Table 2.2: Breakdown of the South African population by province and race

	Total population	African	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White
W Cape	4 645 600	24%	56%	1%	19%
E Cape	7 039 300	88%	7%	0%	5%
N Cape	902 300	34%	52%	0%	13%
Free State	2 953 100	83%	3%	1%	13%
KZN	9 651 100	86%	1%	8%	5%
NW	3 823 900	92%	2%	0%	6%
Gauteng	9 018 000	74%	4%	3%	18%
Mpumalanga	3 219 900	92%	1%	1%	7%
Limpopo	5 635 000	98%	0%	0%	2%
Overall	46 888 200	79%	9%	2%	9%

Source: Woolard & Woolard, 2006

HSRC Research Report

Urban/rural divide

There is a significant rural-urban divide with distinctive racial characteristics. Rural areas are characterized by lower levels of service delivery and access to services (including education) as well as lower job prospects.

Table 2.3: Percentage of the population which is urban, by province

Province	Percentage
W Cape	88%
E Cape	31%
N Cape	71%
Free State	67%
KZN	45%
NW	35%
Gauteng	96%
Mpumalanga	39%
Limpopo	13%
Overall	54%

Source: Woolard & Woolard, 2006

Table 2.3 clearly shows that Gauteng and the Western Cape are highly urbanized while KwaZulu Natal and North West, on the other hand are strongly rural in character.

It can be seen in Table 2.4 that while Africans constitute 94% of the rural population, they form only 66% of the urban population. In contrast Coloureds and Whites comprise just 3% and 2% of the rural population but 13% and 16% of the urban population. 45% of Africans live in urban areas, against 82% of Coloureds, 89% of Whites and 97% of Indians/Asians (Woolard & Woolard, 2006).

Table 2.4: Percentage of urban and rural population by race

	African	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	Total
urban	66%	13%	4%	16%	100%
rural	94%	3%	0%	2%	100%
of total population	79%	9%	3%	9%	100%

Source: Woolard, 2006

The most powerful effect of the urban-rural divide in South Africa is the skewed distribution of access to key infrastructural resources. As is evident in Table 2.5, there is still a huge gap

in access to resources between urban and rural residents of this country. This divide conditions a highly differentiated access to education and training as well, because poor communities without electricity, water and effective telecommunications are very likely to receive an impoverished education and training from nearby institutions restricted by the same lack of access to resources.

Table 2.5: The percentage of South Africans who have access to services and facilities, 2004

	African	Coloured	Indian	White	Overall
URBAN SOUTH AFRICA					
Formal housing	75%	93%	97%	100%	83%
Piped water on site	89%	97%	100%	100%	92%
Mains electricity	86%	95%	100%	100%	90%
Electricity for cooking	71%	92%	99%	99%	80%
Flush, chemical or pit toilet on site	89%	96%	99%	100%	93%
Telephone (including cell phone)	55%	68%	86%	94%	66%
RURAL SOUTH AFRICA					
Formal housing	62%	95%	100%	100%	64%
Piped water on site	40%	83%	100%	99%	43%
Mains electricity	65%	72%	100%	98%	66%
Electricity for cooking	25%	61%	85%	92%	29%
Flush, chemical or pit toilet on site	75%	74%	100%	99%	76%
Telephone (including cell phone)	37%	25%	92%	98%	39%

Source: Woolard & Woolard, 2006

Employment trends

Aggregate employment in the period 1995 – 2005 increased from 9.5 million in 1995 to 12.3 million in 2005, translating into a growth in employment of 29% over the period. The economy, in the aggregate, has been creating jobs rather than shedding them (Bhorat & Oosthuizen, 2006).

Table 2.6: Employment, unemployment and labour force trends: 1995-2005

Category	1995 (Oct) (‘000s)	2005 (Sep) (‘000s)	Change		Target Growth Rate	Employment Absorption Rate
			Absolute (‘000s)	Per cent		
Broad Definition Estimates						
Employment	9 515	12 301	2 786	29.28	66.69	43.90
Unemployment (broad)	4 239	7 800	3 561	84.01		
Labour Force	13 754	20 100	6 346	46.14		
Official Definition Estimates						
Employment	9 515	12 301	2 786	29.28	55.08	53.16
Unemployment (narrow)	2 032	4 487	2 455	120.82		
Labour Force	11 547	16 788	5 241	45.39		

Source: Bhorat & Oosthuizen, 2006

However, the employment picture over the past decade has not been entirely rosy. Employment growth has been increasing at a rate slower than the ability of the labour market to absorb new entrants. As Bhorat and Oosthuizen (2006) note, despite the increase in employment by 2.8 million, the labour force expanded by just over twice this amount, resulting in about 6.3 million new entrants into the labour market. The consequence of a rise in participation rates in excess of employment growth has been a significant expansion in the numbers of unemployed individuals. The unemployment total now peaks at just under 8 million people (using the broad definition).

In addition, employment growth has been uneven across sectors, with substantial growth in the tertiary sectors, but with significant contraction in the primary sector. Bhorat and Oosthuizen report that secondary sector employment, in contrast, grew by 40% over the period, equivalent to an average annual rate of 4%. This indicates somewhat of a turnaround in this sector. The largest number of jobs was created in the Construction sector, where employment more than doubled from 446 000 to 934 000, an increase of around 500 000 jobs. Employment in Manufacturing also expanded, by around 275 000 jobs, equivalent to a rate lower than the overall national employment growth rate (Bhorat & Oosthuizen, 2006)

Table 2.7: Employment expansion by sector, 1995-2005

	Total Employment		Change	% Change	Share of Employment	
	1995	2005			1995	2005
<i>Primary Sectors</i>	1 828 081	1 335 970	-492 111	-26.92	0.19	0.11
Agriculture, Hunting, Forestry and Fishing	1 235 081	924 893	-310 188	-25.11	0.13	0.08

Mining and Quarrying	593 000	411 077	-181 923	-30.68	0.06	0.03
<i>Secondary Sectors</i>	<i>1 957 997</i>	<i>2 741 233</i>	<i>783 236</i>	<i>40.00</i>	<i>0.20</i>	<i>0.22</i>
Manufacturing	1 430 518	1 706 458	275 940	19.29	0.15	0.14
Electricity, Gas and Water Supply	83 256	99 804	16 548	19.88	0.01	0.01
Construction	444 223	934 971	490 748	110.47	0.05	0.08
<i>Tertiary Sectors</i>	<i>5 660 133</i>	<i>8 195 118</i>	<i>2 534 985</i>	<i>44.79</i>	<i>0.59</i>	<i>0.67</i>
Wholesale and Retail Trade	1 663 341	3 024 281	1 360 940	81.82	0.17	0.25
Transport, Storage and Communication	473 834	615 743	141 909	29.95	0.05	0.05
Financial Intermediation, Insurance, Real Estate and Business Services	578 555	1 295 584	717 029	123.93	0.06	0.11
Community, Social and Personal Services	2 145 035	2 192 255	47 220	2.20	0.22	0.18
Private Households	799 368	1 067 256	267 888	33.51	0.08	0.09
<i>Other and Unspecified</i>	<i>111 009</i>	<i>28 514</i>	<i>-82 495</i>	<i>-74.31</i>	<i>0.01</i>	<i>0.00</i>
Total	9 557 220	12 300 835	2 743 615	28.71	1.00	1.00

Source: Borat & Oosthuizen, 2006

Participation in the informal economy by race and sector

One of the implications of high levels of unemployment in South Africa over the past decade has been the growth of the informal economy. Close to a quarter of the total African population of economically active adults work in this sector. Some 88% of all informal sector workers are African (Devey et al, 2006).

Table 2.8 shows the distribution of informal workers by economic sector. A significant proportion (48%) of informal workers were employed in Wholesale and Retail activities. In 2003, the Construction and Manufacturing sectors (second and third respectively) still employ a significant number of informal workers. Whilst the number of workers in the other sectors has been decreasing or constant, the number in Community, Social, and Personal Services and Private households has increased. As Devey et al (2006) point out, compared to other developing countries, informal work in the Manufacturing sector in South Africa, about 10% of informal workers, continues to be very low.

Table 2.8: Number and percentage of informal workers by economic sector, 2001-2003

Economic sector	Sept 03	
	Number	%
Wholesale/retail	909 551	48.0
Construction	258 851	13.7
Manufacturing	198 248	10.5
Community, social, personal services	176 163	9.3
Private households	154 735	8.2
Transport, storage, communication	120 051	6.3
Financial	74 203	3.9
Mining and quarrying	2 362	0.1
Electricity, gas, water	1 914	0.1
Total	1 896 078	100

Source: Devey et al, 2006

Socio-economic differentiation and college location

The point of these socio-economic indicators is to highlight the number of axes of differentiation that can arise in relation to a college, depending on location. Colleges inserted in rural settings in highly populated provinces with high unemployment rates and a growing informal sector will be very different in terms of their evolving institutional identity compared to urban-based colleges in wealthy provinces with established manufacturing sectors and higher levels of employment in the formal economy. This socio-economic diversity becomes amplified by the educational dimensions of college identity such as size, age of learners and programmatic mix. The discussion now turns to these educational indicators.

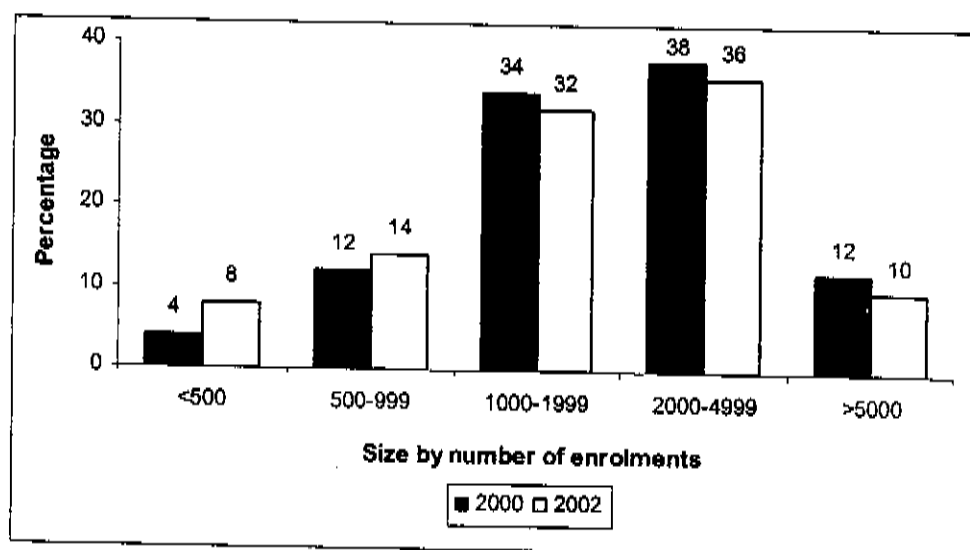
EDUCATION INDICATORS

College distinctions by size

One of the main imperatives of the restructuring and merger process of 2002 was to create fewer yet larger college entities. Figure 2.1 shows that less than half of all institutions (46%) had exceeded the 1000 FTE mark, including 10% that had reached the over-5000 FTE vision. Given this, Akoojee, McGrath and Visser (2006) suggest that, to some extent, the goal of '...large multi-site colleges...to achieve a critical mass that will bring about economies of scale and scope' (Department of Education, 2001: 16) is being realised, although the vision of very large colleges has perhaps been over optimistic. Figure 2.1 shows that from 2000, there

has been an increase in smaller sized institutions (a doubling of those with under-500 FTEs and a slight increase in those with less than 1 000 FTEs).

Figure 2.1: Percentages of colleges by size, 2000 and 2002



Source: Akoojee, McGrath & Visser, 2006

Enrolment data suggests that while the sector grew in the period 2000 to 2002, the growth in headcount enrolments outstripped growth in full-time equivalents (FTEs). Table 2.9 shows that in the period 2000 to 2002 headcount enrolments increased by 20%, but FTEs increased by only 4%.

Table 2.9: Enrolment growth: FTEs and headcounts

Year	FTEs		Headcount	
	Number	Growth	Number	Growth
1998	122 740		302 550	
2000	138 712	13%	337 300	11%
2002	143 918	4%	406 143	20%
Growth over period 1998 to 2002		17%		34%

Source: Akoojee, McGrath & Visser, 2006

Similarly, FTE enrolment growth fluctuated unevenly between provinces between 2000 and 2002. Provinces such as Limpopo and KwaZulu Natal witnessed rapid growth in the period, whereas FTE enrolments decreased significantly in North West, Eastern Cape and Free State between 2000 and 2002. The Western Cape colleges remained stable, while KwaZulu Natal experienced modest growth.

Table 2.10: Changes in enrolment by province (2000-2002)

Province	FTE enrolment for:		Percentage Growth
	2000	2002	
Eastern Cape	15 873	13 489	-15%
Free State	11 474	9 792	-15%
Gauteng	43 486	47 163	8%
KwaZulu Natal	19 121	22 744	19%
Limpopo	8 671	13 098	51%
Mpumalanga	7 294	7 655	5%
North West	12 851	9 382	-27%
Northern Cape	3 023	3 123	3%
Western Cape	16 919	17 463	3%
Total	138 712	143 913	4%

Source: Akoojee, McGrath & Visser, 2006

These shifts suggest that the larger headcount enrolment growth (as opposed to FTE growth) in the period discussed is the product of growth in part-time learners. This reflects on the way colleges have interpreted the call for greater responsiveness, evident in increased numbers of 'mature' learners and the provision of customized short courses aimed at attracting such part-time learners (Akoojee, McGrath & Visser, 2006).

College enrolment by age and race

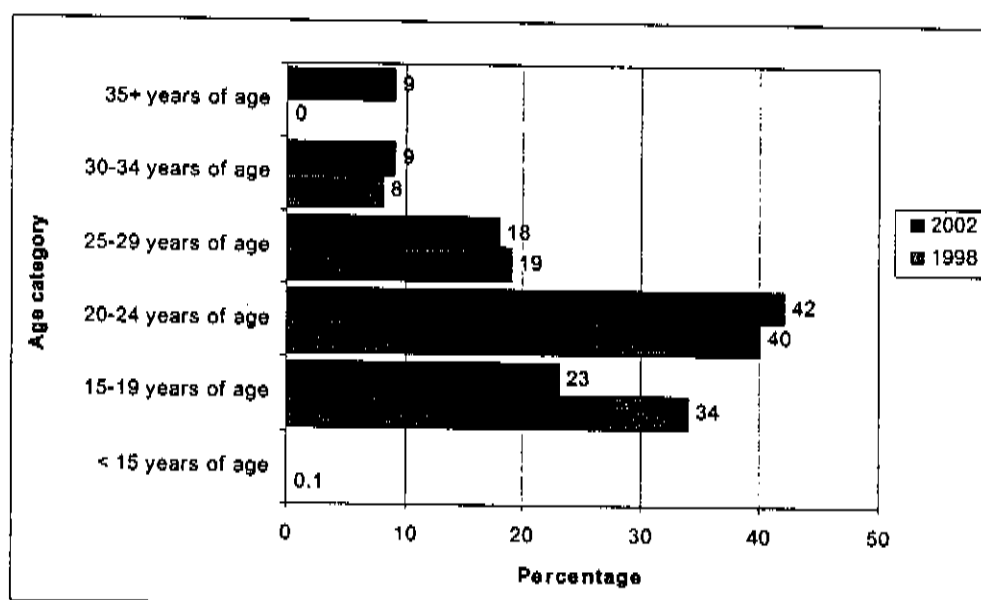
African enrolment in 2002 was by far the largest category at 74% (or 302 177 learners). White learners comprised 16% of enrolments with 64 614 learners. Coloured and Indian learners comprised 7% (29 904) and 2% (9 448) respectively.

The age profile of learners participating in the FET college sector is revealing, with small although significant shifts occurring between 2000 and 2002. Powell and Hall (2004) report that participation rates in the age-cohort 15-29 have improved from 1.13% to 2.7% between 1998 and 2002. While participation rates are directly related to increased enrolment, racial differences persist. White learners still have a higher participation rate (3.6%) than their African counterparts (2.6%).

Figure 2.2 shows an increase in the over-35 age cohort in public FET from 0% to 9%. The proportion of 15-19 year students declined proportionately from 34% in 2000 to 23% in 2002. Clearly, while FET colleges still cater for the younger post-school student component, there has been a marked increase in more mature students, which indicates either a widening of

programme offerings by colleges that cater specifically for this age-cohort or a concerted effort by colleges to recruit more mature learners in their efforts to become more responsive.

Figure 2.2: Age profile of FET college students 1998-2002



Source: Powell & Hall, 2002

Programme diversity

Traditionally, colleges have offered NATED programmes, those that are accredited by the Department of Education, but increasingly, they have been encouraged to develop their own programmes in response to local and regional education and training demands.

There has been an increase in Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) enrolments in non-NATED programmes, some 145% since 1998, to contribute a total of 14% of all FTE enrolments in 2002 (Department of Education, 2004).

Table 2.11 reflects FTE enrolments by each of the six broad Vocational Fields offered in the FET colleges. It is evident that the traditional fields of Engineering and Business Studies continue to dominate, with 45% of the total FTE enrolments, a further 7% in the Utility Industries and a small 1% in the fields of Art and Music, General Education and Educare/Social Services. It is notable that non-NATED programmes cluster in the new, 'soft' fields such as General Education, Art and Music, Utility Industries and Educare/Social Services.

Table 2.11: FET college enrolments, 2002

	Further Education				Post N3 Level				TOTAL
	NATED	Percentage of Total	NON-NATED	Percentage of Total	NATED	Percentage of Total	NON-NATED	Percentage of Total	
Art and Music	562	35.75%	333	21.18%	344	21.88%	333	21.18%	1 572
Business Studies	27 525	42.30%	1 149	1.77%	33 934	52.15%	2 462	3.78%	65 070
Educare/ Social Services	411	31.00%	92	6.94%	603	45.48%	220	16.59%	1 326
Engineering	41 567	64.22%	9 877	15.26%	12 885	19.91%	396	0.61%	64 725
General Education	223	12.78%	1 328	76.10%	0	0.00%	194	11.12%	1 745
Utility Industries	3 036	32.04%	2 769	29.22%	2 830	29.87%	840	8.87%	9 475
NATIONAL TOTAL	73 324	50.95%	15 548	10.80%	50 596	35.16%	4 445	3.09%	143 913

Source: Department of Labour, 2005

The FET/Post N3 divide

In 2001, the Department of Education encouraged colleges to focus provision on the FET band (N1-N3) rather than the Post-N3 levels (located at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework):

Colleges will be allowed to offer programmes at Level 5 of the NQF.... They will be allowed to offer such programmes in collaboration with higher education institutions. Such programmes will be designed to ensure that there is effective articulation in respect of learning outcomes and the transfer of credits. While FET Colleges will be allowed to offer programmes at Level 5, such programmes will not be allowed to constitute more than 10% of their programme offerings. Colleges will also be required to demonstrate that they are fulfilling their core mission as FET providers, and that there is a genuine demand for such programmes. They will also have to prove that they have the necessary institutional capacity in the form of suitably qualified staff and appropriate infrastructure. Programmes offered at this level by public FET colleges will be subject to the planning, funding and quality assurance mechanisms of the higher education system (Department of Education, 2001).

The restriction on Post-N3 delivery to 10% of provision was very limiting. One of the effects of this decision has been the reduction in the provision of Post-N3 courses since 2001. Post-

N3 provision has been reduced from 57% in 1998 to 38% in 2002. This development poses problems today for those colleges that have the ability to build stronger articulation pathways between the FET colleges and higher education, particularly the new universities of technology.

Non-NATED provisioning

Overall, 24% of all enrolments in 2002 were in non-NATED programmes. This figure, however, is not consistent across all age cohorts. There was a significant increase in the number of non-NATED enrolments in the over-30 age cohort (average of 45%) as compared to younger counterparts (an average of 21%) (Table 2.12).

Table 2.12: Proportion of NATED and non-NATED enrolments by age for 2002

Age group	Percentage distribution	
	NATED	NON-NATED
15 – 19 years	81%	19%
20 – 24 years	82%	18%
25 – 29 years	74%	26%
Average 15 – 29 years	79%	21%
30 – 34 years	62%	38%
35 – 40 years	51%	49%
41 years and older	53%	47%
Average 30 years and older	55%	45%
All ages	76%	24%

Source: Akoojee, McGrath & Visser, 2006

Provision of non-NATED programmes to more mature learners may suggest that colleges are responding in new and more appropriate ways to the needs of this new clientele (Akoojee, McGrath & Visser, 2006).

Employment destinations of graduates

A major problem faced by the colleges over the past decade has been their poor placement rates (see Kraak & Hall 1999). In a national HSRC tracer study of FET college graduates in 2002, it was found that employment prospects remained very low, even after graduates attain additional vocational qualifications to supplement those already achieved through school matriculation. Only 33.6% of FET college students found employment after

graduation, with 69.7% of African graduates unemployed but only 24.2% of White graduates unemployed. More significantly, 35% of graduates were continuing with their studies at the time of the HSRC survey – 70% of who continued with technical college studies (Cosser et al, 2003). It is unclear, however, whether improved college qualifications will lead to better chances of employment or whether this high level of continuing education is merely a strategy to avoid the inevitability of unemployment.

Other than the Cosser et al (2003) study, and a few unpublished single institutional studies, there is no reliable data on destination pathways of college graduates after they leave colleges. Such data is urgently required to allow colleges to adapt their teaching programmes and external linkages appropriately and timeously.

Institutional differentiation

As is evident from the 8 indicators described in Table 2.1 above, there are multiple ways in which colleges located in different parts of South Africa are shaped and evolve. Colleges may be shaped by particular combinations of the following variables:

- a college's historical genesis during the Apartheid period
- its location in differing provinces, rich or poor
- its insertion within communities of varying social class composition
- its urban or rural character
- the varying employment levels of the industrial sectors that comprise the economic neighbourhood of the college
- differing levels of unemployment and participation in the informal economy
- distinctions which arise out of varying institutional size, learner age and occupational status (out-of-school youth, working adults, unemployed citizens)
- diversity in programme offerings
- differing success levels in the placement rates of graduating college students

All of these factors play a crucial role in the construction over time of a college identity and development trajectory, all of which shape its effectiveness and ability to respond to calls for greater 'responsiveness'. With this macro overview in mind, we now introduce the three SESD-supported FET colleges that form the empirical basis of this study, each having a very different location within the South African college landscape.

LOCALITY ONE: THE COLLEGE OF CAPE TOWN, WESTERN CAPE

Employment and sectoral growth in the Western Cape

In line with national trends, and in contrast to many other provinces, the Western Cape has exhibited strong economic growth performance over the past few years. The Provincial Growth and Development Strategy, *iKhapa Elihlumayo*, recognises the gains of macro-economic stabilization, but focuses on addressing high levels of unemployment and poverty, with a vision for 'shared growth and integrated development' (Western Cape Provincial Treasury, 2006).

A broad overview of trends in sectoral employment in the Western Cape between 1995 and 2004 shows the highest number of employed in General Government Services (+1 500 000), with Community, Social and Personal services in second place (+1 200 000), and Financial and Business services in third place (+1 000 000). Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing, a traditional area of strength in the province, now employs the lowest number of people (+200 000). This is in line with trends in economic sector development, with Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing contributing the least (4.5%), and General Government Services contributing the most (44.4%), to provincial GDP (Regional Gross Domestic Product).

In terms of growth in sectors, between 1995 and 2004, the highest average annual growth rates were recorded in the Transport and Communication (6%) sector, with Wholesale & Retail Trade growing at 5.1%, Financial and Business Services (4.5%) and Electricity, Gas and Water at 3.8%. All other sectors were recorded to have grown at a lower rate than the provincial average of 3.2%.

The *Western Cape: Provincial Economic Review and Outlook 2006* argues that the province's economy has traditionally been 'broad based', and the process of knowledge intensification must therefore 'include people and firms in low- and medium-skill- and low- and medium-technology-intensive activities' (Western Cape Provincial Treasury, 2006: 21). This emphasizes the importance of, and promotes the need for, colleges to provide medium and low skill training. The pursuit of industrial competitiveness in the Western Cape, it is proposed, should be based on the enhancement of knowledge intensity, which would promote employment across the entire skill spectrum.

The province's growth engine is the Cape Town metropolitan area, which generates 76.6% of the total GDP, and is home to 3.3 million people (64% of the provincial population). Cape Town's economy is well-diversified and sophisticated, attracting considerable investment. It

is a significant international business and leisure tourism destination, which has driven growth in the service sectors of the economy.

However, the economic performance has not yet been sufficient to address the challenges of unemployment and poverty, in particular, for young people with low and medium education levels. One critical indicator is that 35% of the unemployed in Cape Town in 2001 were between 15 and 24 years old, another is that 49% of this age group is unemployed (as opposed to 19.5% for the workforce as whole) and 80% of the unemployed have not completed secondary schooling (Western Cape Provincial Treasury, 2006: 247). This creates specific challenges for Cape Town College.

There are two further economic growth regions in the Western Cape – the Saldanha-Vredenburg node, and of significance for this study, the Eden node. The Eden district is well-endowed with rich natural resources, a strong highly diversified economy, and is the third-largest district in the province. It includes Mossel Bay, George, Knysna and Oudtshoorn, and is the environment in which South Cape College is located. The region's geography results in different climates, and in turn, very different economic activities, tourism opportunities, demographic trends and service delivery challenges in the local districts and municipalities. Thus, for instance, Oudtshoorn grew at a slower average annual rate of 1.57% relative to George at 3%, the municipality in which most jobs were created, and which contributed 35% of growth in the district in 2004 (Western Cape Provincial Treasury, 2006: 256). The Provincial Review points out a major skills challenge in the district:

The structural change in the Eden economy, away from Agriculture and Community, Social and Personal Services to higher-end sectors such as Financial and Business Services, Transport and Communication and Wholesale and Retail trade, brings a sharp re-skilling challenge for the local economy. While some of these sectors offer opportunities for lower-skilled job opportunities combined with higher-end technologies, further growth would depend on sufficient skills at the higher end being available to innovate, create and manage firms (Western Cape Provincial Treasury, 2006: 258).

These are amongst the factors that South Cape College will need to take into account in its environmental scan. The following sections will consider each of the Western Cape case study colleges at micro-level.

The College of Cape Town

The College of Cape Town (CCT) consists of nine campuses (or what the college prefers to refer to as centres of excellence) which are spread out across the central and southern escarpments of Cape Town and the Cape Flats.

Table 2.13: College of Cape Town campuses

Campus
Athlone Campus
City Campus
Crawford Campus
Gardens Campus
Guguletu Campus
Pinelands Campus
Salt River Campus
Thornton Campus
Wynberg Campus

The management team of the College of Cape Town is located at its central offices in (south east) Pinelands. These premises are logistically of equal distance to all of the nine campuses spread out across Cape Town and the Cape Flats.

The City campus is the largest of the nine campuses and provides tuition mainly in Business and General Studies. The latter include Crafts, Design, Interior, Hospitality, Information Technology, Hair Care and Cosmetology, and Travel and Tourism. The Pinelands campus only offers Engineering programmes and accounts for more than 50% of all Engineering provision in the college. The rest of Engineering provision is provided at the Athlone, Crawford, Thornton and Guguletu campuses.

The Guguletu campus also provides courses in Jewellery, Art and Design, Hospitality, Tourism, and Crafts. The Crawford campus provides courses in Engineering, Business Studies and Utility Studies, whilst the Athlone and Thornton campuses specialize in Engineering provision and Horticulture. The Gardens campus concentrates on Educare and ECD provision, and the Wynberg campus specializes in Hair Care and Cosmetology. The Salt River campus houses the Simulated Enterprises in South Africa (SIMSA) Project.

The College of Cape Town is located in the heart of an urban environment. This gives the college considerably more leverage than, for instance, Mthashana College in KwaZulu Natal,

both in terms of access to employers and industries and with regard to the numbers of students that seek to enroll at the college. Generally, the college campuses are all infrastructurally well-resourced and enjoy adequate financial support. College respondents note that:

The main aim of the College of Cape Town is to provide high quality education and training that offers a wide range of learning options. In doing so, the college seeks to equip students with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes, values and competencies that will allow them to access life-long learning opportunities and thereby ensure that they become economically productive members of society (Interview with academic manager).

Indeed, respondents note that the key challenge since 2001 has been to get the balance of college provision right: between maintaining and consolidating the older programmes with a good track record, and developing new programmes that respond to broader provincial and regional economic priorities. In recent years the college has strategically and structurally re-aligned itself to respond to the challenges, demands and requirements associated with the new and unfolding FET landscape, and focused on developing demand-led programmes that are more attuned to the needs and requirements of emerging economic sectors in the Western Cape.

More specifically, the college has embarked on a process of structural development and adapted its various structures, systems, and facilities in ways that, it hopes, will successfully support the operationalisation of the new programme-based model. At the same time it has also sought to consolidate the systems that underpin its 'historical provisioning' (NATED streams), given that there remains a demand for this kind of provision in the region.

In that respect it is notable that the core business of the college remains Engineering Studies (which remains mostly NATED-based), with about 10 385 of the total headcount of 14 450 students in 2004. This has provided the college with some rather particular challenges, some of which are:

- Employers and business partners in Engineering fields remain sceptical about and quite resistant to changes that have been made around artisanal training
- Tools and workshops in Engineering are very expensive, both in terms of start-up and maintenance
- Students remain concerned that the college will struggle to provide them with a whole qualification in four years, since many unit standards based courses have not been developed yet. It is noteworthy in this regard that only 20% of Engineering courses at the college had become unit standard-based by 2004

Table 2.14 shows the very large student enrolments at College of Cape Town. It had a stable FTE enrolment between 2004 and 2005, although the total headcount enrolment fluctuated erratically between a low of just under 12 000 and a high of just under 15 000. Other notable points about the college are that 73% of the 14 450 headcounts are male, 6 018 are Coloured and 5 397 are African. The college employed 494 staff members in 2005.

Table 2.14: Student head and FTE counts

	March 2004	March 2005	September 2005
Total headcount	14 450	11 972	13 441
Total FTEs	4 562	4 044	4882

A distinctive feature is that Coloured and White enrolments are relatively high (41% and 10% respectively) as compared with the norm in the rest of the country – a reflection of the unique composition of the population of the Western Cape.

Table 2.15: Racial composition of learners at College of Cape Town, 2005

Year	African	Coloured	Indian	White
2005	46%	41%	3%	10%

LOCALITY TWO: SOUTH CAPE COLLEGE IN GEORGE, WESTERN CAPE

South Cape College consists of a central office (in an office complex in the town of George) and five separate campuses, namely Outeniqua, George, Tembalethu Skills Centre, Oudtshoorn, and Mossel Bay (see Table 2.16). The college's catchment area is the largest of all the FET colleges in the Western Cape and stretches from Plettenberg Bay in the east, to Laingsburg and Heidelberg in the west, and to Beaufort West in the north. Three of the college campuses (Outeniqua, George, and the Tembalethu Skills Centre) are in or near the town of George. The Oudtshoorn campus is located in the town of Oudtshoorn, which is about 65 kilometers inland from George, and the Mossel Bay campus is approximately 60 kilometers up the coast from George in the town of Mossel Bay. South Cape College has also established a skills centre in the town of Beaufort West, which is approximately 250 kilometers inland from George. Beaufort West is the most impoverished of the college's catchment area, with very little (to nil) employment opportunity.

Table 2.16: Number and location of college sites, 2005

Number of campuses in 2005
College Campuses, 2005
Mossel Bay
George
Outeniqua
Thembalethu
Skills Centre
Oudtshoorn
Beaufort West
Plettenberg Bay

Since 2003, the college has expanded its curriculum to include a range of different kinds of programmes – including NATED, learnerships, full SETA-accredited qualifications and skills programmes – in most vocational fields and in new areas. Programmes accredited by higher education institutions are found in Business Studies, Engineering Studies, Utility Studies, Agriculture and Furniture Production, while SETA-accredited qualifications are offered in Business, ECD and Utility Study fields. Learnerships are provided in every field in which the college is active, as is the case for skills programmes, except for ECD.

South Cape College is a medium-sized college with a headcount of 3 647 students and a staff complement of 218 in 2005. The bulk of students are Coloured (52%) with near equivalent representation of African and White learners at 26.4% and 20.9% respectively (Table 2.17). Table 2.18 provides enrolment data showing strong growth in FTEs, between 2002 and 2005.

Table 2.17: Enrolment profile by race at South Cape College, 2005

Year	African	Coloured	Indian	White
2005	26.4	52.02	0.55	20.9

Table 2.18: Student enrolments at South Cape College by headcount and FTEs

	2002	2004	2005
Total headcount	4 361	4 448	3 647
Total FTEs	1 691.8	2 050	2 440.13

LOCALITY THREE: MTHASHANA COLLEGE, RURAL KWAZULU NATAL

Employment and sectoral growth in KwaZulu Natal

The provincial profile of KwaZulu Natal differs significantly from the Western Cape. According to the *HRD Profile of KZN, 2004*, the province provided jobs for 2.2 million people, comprising 18.8% of the South African job market. The private formal sector is the largest employer (51%), followed by the informal sector (21.3%), the public sector (17%), and domestic workers (10.3%). Although a third of the population resides in eThekweni, 43.6% of job opportunities are in the metropole.

When considering employment in this province, one cannot disregard the impact of AIDS, as the province has the highest HIV/AIDS prevalence in South Africa (36.5%), and as may be expected, prevalence levels are higher for lower-skilled and less well-paid workers than for higher-skilled and better-paid workers. It is important that colleges in this province prioritise the establishment of a comprehensive HIV/AIDS support programme, in order to have any significant impact on the upskilling of its people.

Wholesale and Retail Trade, Services, and Manufacturing are the dominant economic sectors. In the primary sector there has been a shift from unskilled to semi-skilled employment, and in the secondary and tertiary sectors, a shift to skilled employment. In terms of growth, the primary sector (Agriculture and Hunting; Forestry and Logging; Fishing and the operation of fish farms; and mining and quarrying) accounted for 4% of total economic output in 2003, and 11.6% of all job opportunities in KZN in 2003. The secondary sector (Manufacturing; Electricity and Water Supply; and Construction) accounted for 35% of total economic output, and 23.5% of job opportunities in KZN in 2003. The tertiary sector (Trade; Transport; Finance; and Community Services), accounted for 61% of total economic output, and 64.7% of all job opportunities in KZN in 2003. Also, this sector recorded the strongest growth between 1996 and 2003, at an average annual growth rate of 2.9%, largely attributed to growth in the Finance and Transport-related industries. The percentage of industrial organisations expecting growth in employment is highest in the craft and related workers category (28.6%), with the lowest growth expectations in the operations and production workers category (8.3%).

Relative to the Western Cape, there is a far greater percentage of the population with no formal schooling (5.7% in the Western Cape, 21.9% in KZN in 2001), although at the higher qualifications end there is less disparity. Thus in 2001, 19.8% of the KZN population aged 20 years or more had Grade 12 and 6.9% had above Grade 12 as their highest level of education,

in comparison with 20.4% Grade 12 and 8.4% above Grade 12 in the Western Cape (HSRC, 2005).

In this province, colleges will have to concentrate on upskilling, specifically from low- to medium skill, while taking into account the possible demand to arise from the need for replacement in these two skills categories, as a result of HIV/Aids. Moreover, there are survey reports that industry perceives a gap between enterprise needs and the output of the FET college system, which is seen to be of varying quality in this province, producing graduates with skills that are too general for industry application (HSRC, 2005).

The local environment of Mthashana College

The area that serves as the key catchment area for Mthashana College in northern KwaZulu Natal has a traditionally rural population and a very low population density of about 1.4 million people. In this area only about 40-45% of the economically active population is employed, compared to the provincial average of 61%. Besides being characterised by quite high levels of unemployment, a significant proportion of people in the region (about 36%) have also not had any formal schooling, with 7% having Grade 4 as their highest level of education and only 5% with Grade 12 as their highest education level. People with Grade 12 and a diploma as a highest qualification constitute only 0.5% of the population in the area. Given these low educational levels and the fact that the biggest proportion of the population in KwaZulu Natal are very young (especially in the 10-14 age group), Mthashana College is faced with quite significant challenges in attracting students to the institution.

Agricultural occupations tend to predominate in the Mthashana College catchment area. From interviews in this study (and also research visits in other SESD-funded projects), participants note that the youth seem to be increasingly moving to urban areas to get away from agriculture-dominated employment and because they feel that more opportunities await them in urban centres.

On the whole participants observe though, that youth (and their parents) in the area have come to regard vocational education and training as 'the best way forward', as witnessed by the increasing numbers of learners who are leaving school and applying at Mthashana College upon completion of Grade 9.

This has meant that the college has had to have a dual strategy. On the one hand, it attempts to keep students from leaving the area, by setting up bursary schemes, structuring their fees to accommodate poor students, marketing existing programmes more effectively and highlighting the high rate of qualification achievement in the area. On the other hand, the

college attempts to develop programmes that are more pertinent to the needs of students who are leaving school to enroll at the college.

Added to this, campuses like Nongoma and KwaGqikazi are being pressed to deal with other kinds of 'social needs' of students. It was noted that there are many students enrolling at campuses like Nongoma and KwaGqikazi who are not from the area, but ironically from urban centres. Participants note that many students from urban centres, especially those that do not have adequate schooling or qualifications to secure jobs, are being sent to rural KwaZulu Natal, both to acquire certification that is thought to be more expensive and difficult to attain in urban areas, and because some parents seem to think that they can resolve their children's 'disciplinary and other social problems' by sending them to an institution in a rural and 'more traditional' area.

Since 2000 there has also been a dramatic economic decline in the region surrounding Mthashana College. Virtually all of the coalmines have closed down, leaving behind communities that originally came into being to support mining infrastructures and operations. Established chain stores like Woolworths and Pick-'n-Pay have closed their branches in the region. This has severely dented already-low employment levels. While the decline of recent years has had the 'positive' spin-off of galvanising local communities to increasingly focus on skills development and entrepreneurship opportunities, the continuing economic decline has provided the college with almost insurmountable obstacles as it focuses on providing different kinds of employment-related programmes.

The Rector of Mthashana College describes the college's situation in the following way:

From 2003 so-called risk colleges – small 'deep rural' colleges operating in severely depressed socio-economic regions with alarmingly high unemployment (70+%) and poverty indices (total qualifications level for the region is around 4% and illiteracy levels stand at 40%) – had to become increasingly cognizant of the government's national and regional intervention strategies and associated funding for developmental initiatives, like the Rural Development and Presidential Initiative strategies. However, the high levels of ignorance generally among stakeholders and the consequent lack of buy-in and commitment represented major constraints for institutional growth and development, as well as the associated capacity to respond to the particular realities of the region. Many of the programmes that Mthashana offered were not relevant anymore with respect to this new FET dispensation and the associated implications for programme development and implementation. In that sense, the college had become somewhat irrelevant in terms of how it needed to respond, as an FET provider, to the needs of the area/region it served.

However, in recent years the college has dramatically refocused and repositioned its programme provisions to respond to the particular deep rural characteristics and realities of the region. The driving principle that now binds college programme delivery is poverty alleviation, aligned in particular to the niche areas of tourism, agriculture and forestry. The college now mainly focuses on empowering communities through sustainable skills and personal and entrepreneurial development initiatives and interventions (Interview with Rector, August 2004).

Mthashana College was formally constituted in December 2001, merging two ex-technical colleges and an ex-college of education. The total number of students at Mthashana in 2002 was 3 218 with 92% of students African. Given the closeness of the Nongoma campus to the KwaGqikazi ex-college of education, the two campuses operated from 2001 as one campus, with the Nongoma campus called Nongoma A and the KwaGqikazi site called Nongoma B (with one campus manager). The Vryheid campus provides Business Studies and Engineering Studies, while the two Nongoma campuses provide Engineering Studies, training in workshops, and Utility and General Studies. The three campuses serve as the main sites of delivery of the college. In recent times however the college has sought to incorporate skills centres into the college set-up to comprise up to 9-11 campuses, by absorbing skills centres in the region by the end of 2005.

Table 2.19: Number of sites of Mthashana College

Number of campuses in 2005
College campuses, 2005
KwaGqikazi
Nongoma
Vryheid
Emandleni
Babanango
Skill Centres, 2005
Maputa
Mebazwana
Nkandla
Nqutu
Pongola
St Augustine
TOTAL: 11 sites

In many other regions, skills centres are incorporated into the college, but are treated mostly as financial, though necessary, burdens. The intention of Mthashana College is rather to convert and upgrade skills centres into skills development campuses, and make them the

backbone of the college. One example of this is the addition of the Emandleni skills campus (previously a youth training centre). The Emandleni campus offers short and focused programmes in Farming/Agriculture as well as in Engineering areas like Motor Mechanics. While the campus does not presently generate any income and thus is a significant financial burden on the college, the goal is to streamline the operations of the campus and its staff and then to link campus programme provision more directly to the immediate skills and social needs of local communities.

CONCLUSION: THE IMPORTANCE OF RECOGNISING INSTITUTIONAL 'DIVERSITY'

Perhaps the most important observation that can be made when comparing the three SESD-supported colleges is the complex institutional diversity within and between each of the colleges, in relation to their environment and social conditions. Table 2.20 captures key axes of differentiation between the three colleges.

Table 2.20: Key indicators of difference between 3 FET colleges

	College of Cape Town	South Cape College	Mthashana College
Core identity of college	Big city urban college	Small town, peri-urban college	Deep rural college
Size	Large 15 000 learners	Medium 3 647 learners	Medium 3 218 learners
Majority population of students	46% African 41% Coloured 10% White	52% Coloured 26% African 21% White	92% African
Levels of unemployment in neighbouring communities	Medium	Medium	High

These institutions are clearly not homogenous. The analysis in this chapter demonstrates that they are located in very different environments and face distinct economic, social and skills demands and challenges. It therefore suggests that it will be critical to recognize the diversity and distinctiveness of each college, in the formation of institutional mechanisms such as the LPU initiative. Chapter Three will proceed to compare the process of establishing an LPU in relation to the internal organizational ecology of each of the three colleges, but continually bearing these diverse contexts in mind.

Chapter 3

THE INTERNAL ORGANISATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS NEEDED TO SUPPORT LINKAGES

The discussion now turns to the core focus of this research project – that is, to understand the organisational dynamics required to establish LPUs effectively. The study seeks to identify what can be learnt from the experience of the three SESD-supported colleges and generalised to the contexts of other colleges in South Africa that have yet to travel the road of establishing LPUs, or similar structures.

To do this, Chapter Three first examines the comparative literature to see what can be learnt from international experience in this regard. The discussion then moves to consider the process of establishing an LPU at the three colleges. Lastly, the chapter evaluates the organisational dynamics required in diverse contexts.

THE UK COLLEGE EXPERIENCE: FOUR KEY PRINCIPLES

Waring (1999), writing about colleges in the United Kingdom (UK) context, notes that every FET college in the contemporary period needs an armoury of methods to gather reliable intelligence about external environments. This includes knowing the kinds of economic markets they serve and those they might potentially serve, as well as the social, economic and political contexts in which they operate. He notes that FET colleges further need 'management systems that ensure that the knowledge that is gained is effectively disseminated within the institution, so that the services colleges provide grow out of a sound understanding of local student and business needs' (Waring, 1999: 181).

According to Waring (1999), the ways in which FET colleges in the UK go about 'responding' to their external environments, and the operational mechanisms they use to manage this, are determined by:

- The extent and ability of colleges to 'sense' and serve the changing needs of relevant external environments

- The kinds of formal internal college processes available (especially around the development of programmes) that determine the ways in which institutions meet the needs and demands of the various college stakeholders

From the UK literature it is evident that for FET colleges to successfully 'respond' to external environments, they require either specialized units or some form of formal management structure that bring together these two functions. Colleges that successfully 'respond' to their external environments have been found to adopt four basic organisational procedures, namely:

- Institutional planning and intelligence gathering
- Designing programmes that meet external client needs
- Ensuring college staff buy-in
- Developing flexible and collaborative internal college processes and structures (Foskett, 1999)

These four organisational procedures are explored in more detail below. Importantly, the procedures inevitably intersect and overlap, and thus, they should not be treated as independent or separate processes.

Institutional planning and intelligence gathering

Institutional planning is essential for the linking of an institution's vision with its day-to-day activities. Foskett and Hemsley-Brown (1999) outline seven key steps in this process:

- Identify the strategic position of the institution
- Identify the principal target audiences
- For each, identify the aims of the relationships in the context of the institution's mission
- Plan the institutional systems to 'manage' the specific relationships and communications in the context of the institution's strategic position, and identify the resources (human and financial) that can be applied to this component of external relations management
- Plan the specific communication tactics to achieve the aims
- Implement the tactics
- Monitor, evaluate and review the implementation of the plan

Strategic management is essentially about an institution taking responsibility for its future long term development and direction. In that respect, Foskett (1999) notes that strategic thinking is long term, reflective, conceptual and creative. It emphasises the identification of opportunities in response to a continuous scanning of external environments, and then initiates thinking into how to achieve an institution's vision.

This involves collecting sufficient 'intelligence' and data to be able to make reasoned judgements about future trends, scenarios and patterns. Foskett (1999: 39) asserts that 'sensing this component of the external environment is often highly subjective and requires astute political judgement'. He notes that this 'subjectivity' can be moderated however by involving a large number of participants from inside the college in the strategic planning consultative process.

More importantly, the involvement of college staff simultaneously assists in turning institutional strategies into practice. This includes the establishment of appropriate institutional systems, acquiring and applying the relevant resources, operating the systems, and measuring their effect.

Designing programmes that meet external client needs

Bush (1999) asserts that the most important stage in college interaction with external environments in the UK is developing a sound understanding of what colleges seek to achieve via relationships with external groups. He observes that colleges interpret the needs of their external environments based on many contingent factors and then determine what they can provide. The three strategies identified below generally describe the ways in which colleges interact with external groups in the UK. Importantly, the three strategies are not mutually exclusive, and colleges often adopt one or a mix of the strategies at any one time.

1. Specialising in 'niche' markets. Colleges more often than not engage with their external environments in ways that allow them to decide which demands should be met and which not. In so doing, some colleges compete for and secure additional or alternative sources of funding that allow them to concentrate on particular segments of the student market in which they wish to operate. This might involve specialization in specific programmes (e.g Engineering Studies), specific markets (e.g 16-19 year olds) or specialist niches (e.g jewellery design). Importantly, through adopting a 'specialisation' or niche market via outside funding, colleges are able to reduce the impact that rapid changes in their external environments have on college operation.

2. Customising training to directly meet external client needs. Less successful or financially-strapped colleges often simply orient themselves to serving the needs of their external markets. They do so by co-opting external groups into the institution and establishing formal collaboration. Their approach is to identify the various goods and services that the external environment desires and to provide programmes that satisfy these demands. The result is that almost every aspect of the institution's operation (from strategic planning to 'front-of-house activities') has to be geared towards developing programmes that serve the demands of the external client (Foskett, 1999).
3. Building on existing strengths. Some colleges are less predisposed to meeting the constantly changing demands of external environments and are confident about the kinds of programmes that they can or want to provide. In this strategy, colleges focus on reminding external groups about their key strengths and socializing these groups to accept and embrace the already established norms, values and foci of their institutions. Foskett (1999) notes that such institutions often call attention to the particular 'goods' or 'services' that they have expertise in by highlighting their good practice and successful student completion of programmes. A key feature of this strategy is the ability of colleges to market themselves effectively, and to brand the kinds of programmes that they best provide successfully. Colleges thus have to both know what their core values and strategies are, and then be able to 'sell' them effectively (Bush, 1999).

Based on their specific micro conditions, Foskett (1998) asserts that individual colleges often adopt one or more of these three strategies, and then adapt their institutional planning accordingly. He notes that an important prerequisite, alongside the effective monitoring of the differing demands of external environments, is dependable internal college processes. These include good strategic institutional planning and flexible college management structures.

Ensuring college staff buy-in

It is clear that the interplay between internal institutional processes and external environments cannot be dominated by a small management group inside the college. It is neither something that only senior managers can do on their own nor can it be delegated to junior colleagues. The entire process requires co-ordination by senior management and the participation of each and every member of the institution (Foskett, 1999).

Furthermore, effective external relation management requires significant 'internal marketing' to ensure that all staff members always know what is expected of them. Good

internal marketing achieves two objectives. It shares the institutional vision with those that are meant to actualize it at the various sites, and it draws staff members into consultative interactions that lead to practical engagement with the necessary internal processes.

Indeed, ordinary members of staff are the chief role players within the process of engaging with external environments (particularly with industries and business), since their activities and continuous participation ultimately define both the 'quality' of what their institutions provide and the effectiveness of partnerships between individual colleges and external stakeholders (Foskett, 1999).

Developing flexible and collaborative internal college processes and structures

For effective relationships with external partners, colleges require formal institutional mechanisms that bring together college principals, staff at different levels, and relevant curricula regulatory bodies who then collectively discuss the development of college programmes. The main purpose of establishing these formal institutional mechanisms is to initiate processes that maintain sustainable linkages, and the development of materials and programmes that are relevant to the needs of all external partners.

The ways in which the three case study colleges have adopted these four key organisational procedures, and their approaches to building more responsive relationships with the external environment, through setting up formal LPUs, is the focus of the following sections. The LPU structure and integration into college strategic planning and management at each college will be examined in turn.

THE COLLEGE OF CAPE TOWN: BUILDING UPON PRIOR EXPERIENCE

When faced with the challenge of setting up a LPU in 2003, the College of Cape Town was fortunate in being able to build upon prior experience. This was based on an internal audit of institutional capacity and facilities undertaken at the City Campus in 2001, which led to the establishment of a R&D department, and which in turn also led to the establishment of a Business Centre at the City Campus. The mandate of the R&D department was to create partnerships with industry (facilitate staff and student placement and job shadowing) and to identify skills development facilitators within companies, who would begin to identify their company needs. Respondents noted that in the period 2001 to 2003, the R&D department and the Business Centre were quite successful in getting 'the campus to think differently' about external partners. With the formation of the LPU in 2003, the new unit took over all the activities of the previous R&D department, whilst it was determined that the Business Centre should focus predominantly on small and micro enterprise (SME) programme

delivery. The Business Centre seeks to offer skills programmes as well as business advice to the New Venture Creation project. In that respect, the college seeks to offer prospective entrepreneurs its experiences from the Simulated Enterprise in South Africa (SIMSA) project housed at the Salt River campus.

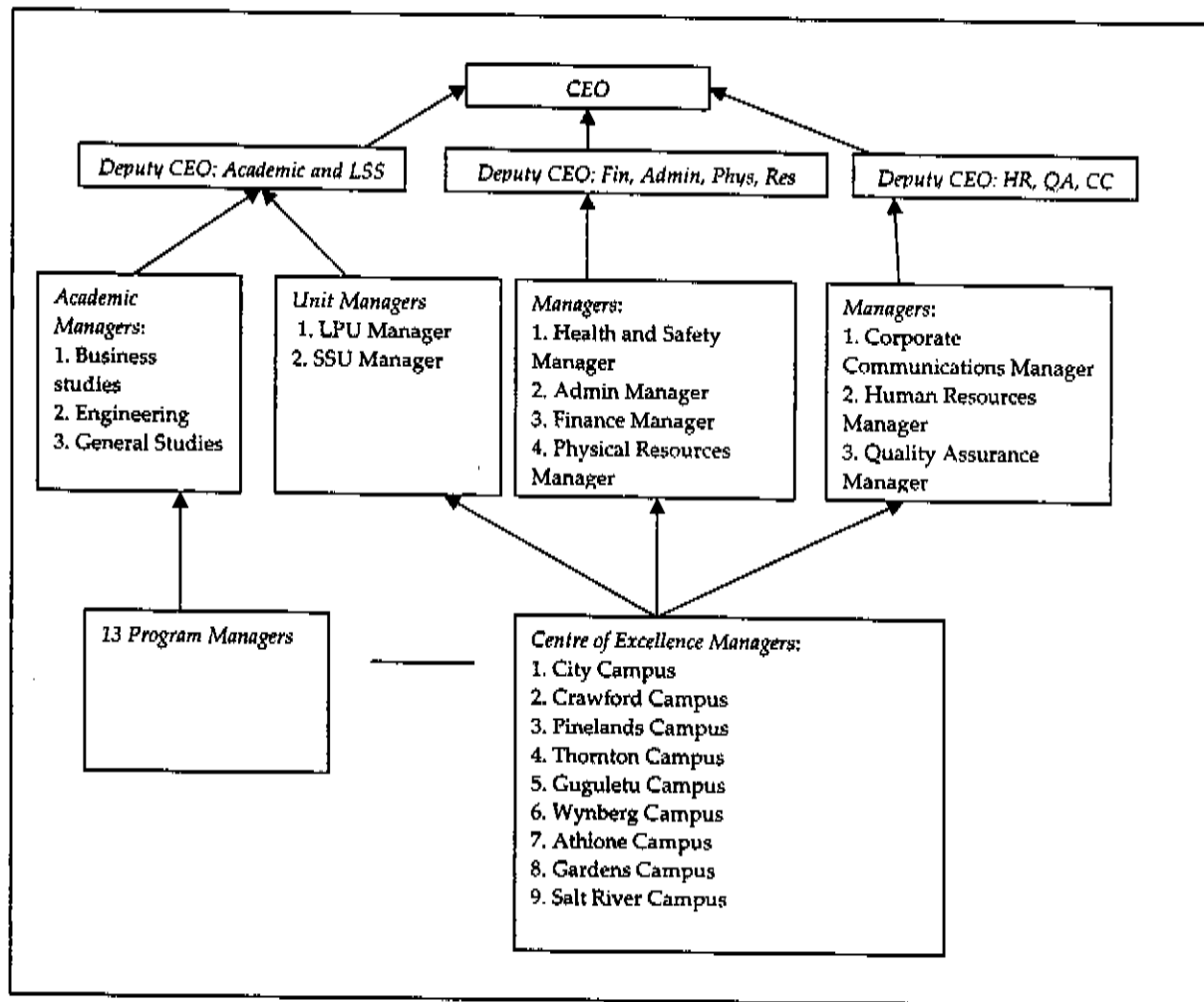
Such links with the SME sector have significantly shaped the college's recent strategic focus on SME development issues. For example, the college has established within the General Studies department its own hairdressing salons, an incubator for furniture manufacturing with four attached SMEs, and a jewellery incubator. The SME involvement has also led to small companies becoming increasingly involved in learnerships linked to the Engineering Studies section. Compared to past links with the SME sector, these processes represent a significant shift in focus for the college.

Notably, the processes that have occurred at the City Campus site from 2002 have taken place alongside the structural redevelopment and adaptation of the newly merged college systems and facilities associated with the merger process. These changes were deemed necessary to operationalise a more programme-based model of curriculum provisioning.

Setting up the LPU as part of the college infrastructure

Figure 3.1 below represents the core management structure of the College of Cape Town. The figure illustrates the main structural relationships between the college's functional areas. All functions related to programme delivery – academic affairs, LPU and Student Support Unit (SSU) - fall under the responsibility of the Deputy-CEO for Academic Affairs, whose primary responsibility is overseeing the delivery of the college's curriculum.

Figure 3.1: Organisational structure of College of Cape Town



The Deputy-CEO of Academic Affairs is solely in charge of curriculum issues, and has three Academic Managers that oversee the three main college academic disciplines of General Studies, Business Studies and Engineering Studies. They in turn manage their portfolios through 13 programme managers who identify, determine and co-ordinate curriculum provision and development at the nine college campuses. Campus Managers are not directly involved in the curriculum issues of their campuses, but rather serve as the key administrators and overseers at their respective sites.

The Deputy CEO in charge of Academic Affairs is also responsible for the Linkages and Programme Unit and the Student Support Services Unit. The functions of these units are directly linked and intermeshed with that of the Academic Managers and the programme managers. The managers of the LPU and SSU thus report directly to the Deputy CEO of Academic Affairs, and work closely with Academic Managers and Programme Managers.

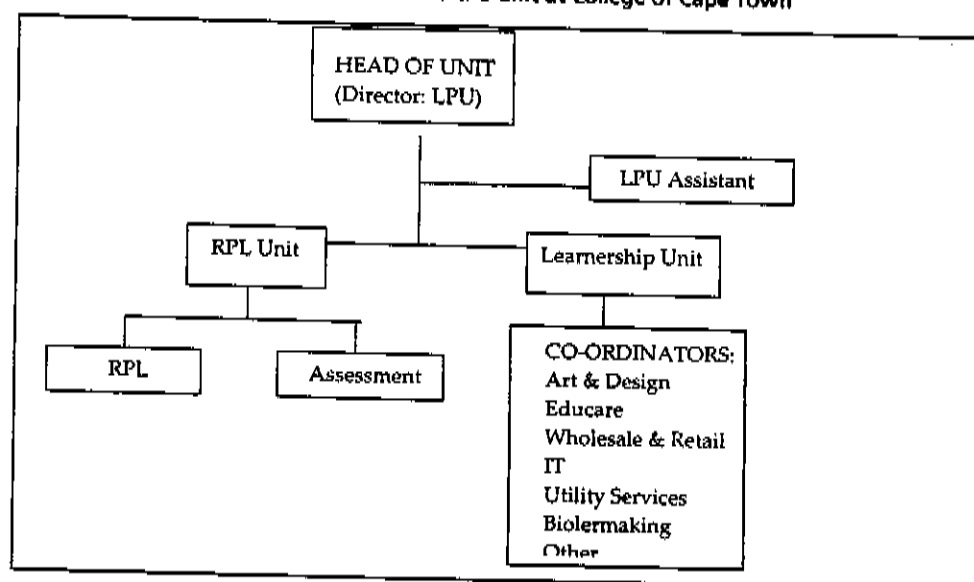
The vision of the LPU is to serve the college in ways that lead to a system of high quality, responsive, flexible, and co-ordinated FET, as well as GET (i.e ABET programmes) provision and certain HE provision. Towards this end the declared mission of the LPU is 'to operate an effective and efficient research and development service that is focused on the needs of society (and that of the college) for learning programmes, to support departments in the college with the development of learning programmes and learning material and, lastly, to build a complete database of statistics concerning the college' (Cape Town College organisational document).

The main function of the LPU is to focus on establishing relationships with external partners (like business, industry, SETAs, government departments), and to facilitate and co-ordinate programme research and development within academic departments (including the alignment of programmes and the accreditation of such programmes and associated facilities). The LPU is normally the first port of call and interface when the 'external world' contacts the college.

The LPU microstructure

The current microstructure for the LPU is illustrated in Figure 3.2 below. It comprises a Director, a Deputy-Director, a 'Recognition of Prior Learning' (RPL) staff member, a learnership staff member and an administrator.

Figure 3.2: Organisational structure of the LPU unit at College of Cape Town



The actual implementation of a learning programme comprises a highly interactive, multi-level and multi-dimensional process. It involves the college being approached with specific requests from industry, business, government departments or associated structures or from

the community for specific training interventions. Alternatively the LPU links up with these external partners through advertisements in newspapers and in the media. The LPU Manager, Learnership Sub-Unit Manager and Managers of the academic departments then coordinate, support and guide a host of functions, like internal-external liaising, assisting with programme planning and budgeting, tendering, and arranging the placement of learners.

This management team then designates planning, organising and coordinating of programme implementation within a particular discipline or subject area, like Electrical Engineering, to a programme manager. This process includes all college programme providers and occurs across all the nine college campuses to ensure quality and uniform programme delivery.

Arranging the necessary internal processes and programmes

The primary function of the College of Cape Town LPU is to:

- Identify demand 'out there' in order to determine learnership opportunities and to facilitate the required link with prospective clients who have expressed the need for such offerings
- Prepare proposals to secure business for the college via its provisioning, for example, learnerships and skills programmes
- Conduct research on opportunities and respond to advertisements (e.g. expressions of interest or requests for tenders) in the media to ascertain the exact requirements involved in order to establish the degree of feasibility
- Link up with, build and sustain partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders and role players either in response to expressed need for the provision of learning programmes or to elicit demand by virtue of enhancing the college's visibility as a provider
- Engage with SETAs and initiate learnerships and skills programmes in consultation with SETAs. In this regard the LPU acting-manager noted in 2004 that 'you make a better impact if SETAs know what you can provide since they then recommend you as a "preferred provider"'

The success of the LPU will depend on how it fulfills its responsibilities and integrates them into the processes of programme development. These responsibilities are discussed below:

- Determining the demands of external partners
- Developing programmes

- Accessing programme materials

Determining the demands of external partners

The college has effective systems of recruitment and student selection. This is helped considerably by the fact that businesses, communities and municipal structures are keen to access most college provision (many are 'repeat customers'). Moreover, many students who previously studied on NATED courses return for further training, to enrol for NQF-aligned courses. More than anything, the reputation of the college serves as the single most important recruitment mechanism for the college:

This state of affairs is also partly attributable to a 'new culture' among the college's clientele: a clientele that no longer simply accepts whatever provision is provided for students but demands good service delivery and quality programmes. As such, all college programmes are to be 'NQF'd' over the next year (Interview with programme manager, August 2004).

This process is easier to achieve in the Business Studies and General Studies departments, where developments are already underway. Changes enacted thus far by the college have been closely guided by the systems and procedures followed by the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) with regard to programme alignment and approval. About 80% of General Studies programmes, for instance, are NQF-aligned.

It is far more difficult to 'convert' Engineering Studies courses. The difficulty does not lie with the actual curriculum conversion task but rather with the attitudes of employers and industries who are believed to be 'relatively comfortable' with the present system of Engineering programme provision (Interview with programme manager, August 2004). Academic staff members assert that simply rewriting Engineering programmes in unit standard format to offer them as outcomes-based NQF qualifications will not necessarily lead to employers sending their staff to the college more readily. They suggest that many industries and employers are skeptical about the quality of 'converted' programmes and have often reminded the college that 'being NQF-aligned does not mean programmes will make students more employable' (Interview with academic manager, August 2004).

Developing the project

This concern undoubtedly informed the ways in which the college has recently revamped its Engineering Studies courses. A working committee was first tasked with investigating how to set up a generic Engineering qualification. This was then researched and the perspectives

of different role-players gleaned. The committee worked closely with the WCED's College Curriculum Committee (CCC), which helped them with programme development issues, as well as with college staff members who worked on the required materials.

Accessing programme materials

The majority of programme materials are developed by external providers. While college staff do play an active 'consultative' role in materials development, it is envisaged that programme material development will continue to be 'outsourced' for the foreseeable future.

Importantly, the college has developed processes that staff members use when approached to provide a programme. This process starts either with specific requests from business, industries or municipal and government departments for training interventions or from LPU scanning of prospective interventions that the college could provide. The first task once an intervention is identified is determining the viability of providing such a programme. Part of this process is finding out if relevant and suitable learning materials are available and whether they conform both to the needs of 'clients' and to more general metropolitan and regional skills development priorities. Staff members also have to ascertain whether some materials can be customized or adapted for college purposes.

Often, learning materials are acquired as 'packaged' SETA-registered programmes and then customized by college staff members through adding or adaptation. SETAs have been actively involved in the materials development process as many believe that this has been the main 'stumbling block' in the provision of new, demand-led college programmes. Where such 'packaged' programmes are not available, the college outsources the development of the programme materials to external providers. Notably, while many college staff members have the required expertise to develop their own programme material, their expertise invariably cannot be used because they are already overstretched in their current teaching duties and responsibilities.

All learnerships within the College of Cape Town are channelled through and overseen by the LPU. From the initialization of a learnership, through the programme identification analysis conducted by the LPU, to assessing employer/workplace requirements and their implications for provisioning, to inducting role players and clarifying their roles and responsibilities, to identifying the logistics of workplace training and which party will handle the administration thereof, to getting the programme approved via established academic management processes, to programme development, final approval within the college, final approval from the WCED, and then by the relevant SETA, the LPU plays perhaps the single most significant role within the college.

Significantly, the functioning of the LPU at Cape Town College is embedded within the everyday functioning of the college, and it does not operate as a separate entity.

SOUTH CAPE COLLEGE: A NEW SEPARATE STRUCTURE

The South Cape College has seven strategic goals, linked to each of its key performance areas. One of these, *curriculum, modes of delivery and the world of work*, is chiefly concerned with curriculum development and innovation within the college and is conceptualized in the following way:

A relevant, quality accredited curriculum comprises qualifications and courses that satisfy the needs of business, industry, community and learners, and is made available to clients through various and multiple modes of delivery to ensure maximum accessibility.

In order to achieve this, curriculum development and innovation is divided into three broad areas of work: *teaching and learning*, *programmes and new business*, and *partnership development*. The objectives under *teaching and learning* focus on establishing policies, procedures, systems and structures to support the delivery of the college's curriculum. This is the area of work which falls under the Academic Vice-Rector and includes objectives that focus on developing a structure for programme managers; establishing advisory committees; developing assessment, RPL and moderation policies; increasing access through establishing outreach centres; implementing a tutorial system; obtaining feedback from learners through surveys and evaluations; and staff development and placement in the workplace.

The other two areas of work – *programmes and new business* and *partnerships* – are the responsibility of the LPU. The LPU is meant to:

- Develop and implement new programmes, contribute to college growth through increasing learner numbers in new programmes, keep abreast with market information, changes in legislation, and available funding, and communicate with internal and external stakeholders
- Increase and improve the college's links with its external partners and ensure that these are functional and well maintained
- The LPU is responsible for generating all new college business (especially in the area of learnerships), doing research, developing new college programmes (including learnerships, NQF full qualifications, and skills programmes), and overseeing the establishment and management of partnerships

The college describes its LPU as a professional and viable team of leaders, responding to the FET needs of the community and the business sector through the development and delivery of programmes that are accessible and equitable (Interview with college CEO).

Importantly, the LPU is responsible for the delivery of all of the college's learnership programmes, whether from college campuses, workplaces, or other sites of delivery, which it mainly oversees via external contract trainers and Project Managers. Thus, although based at the central office, the LPU operates *as a completely separate campus* within the college and employs and manages its own staff.

Furthermore, as the college's primary link with its external environment, the LPU not only generates business for the college and determines the viability of new business opportunities, but also frames the ways in which the campuses interact with their individual local environments. When faced with prospective partnerships in their local area, campus managers are expected to inform the LPU of new opportunities, which follows up to determine viability for the college.

What pre-existed and informed the establishment of the LPU

Prior to the establishment of the LPU no similar structure existed within the college. There was no central coordination of partnership development nor were there programme maintenance processes in place. Each campus simply took responsibility for the partnerships they initiated at campus level. There was limited capacity and experience in the college to undertake research toward partnership and programme development. Programme development and change also occurred mainly at campus level. In 2002 attempts were made to establish a college curriculum committee to plan the overall college curriculum, but these were generally unsuccessful. However, these processes did usher in a mindset of NQF-aligned programme development and learnership introduction within the college.

The Oudtshoorn campus was particularly successful in engaging with and introducing NQF-aligned programmes and learnerships. The skills development facilitator focused on bringing in SETA business and coordinated the development and delivery of new programmes. In addition, many members of staff put significant effort into transforming the campus's curriculum and materials development. Another campus innovation was to establish an advisory committee which included external role players that assisted the campus in formulating and quality assuring its programmes.

From April 2002 South Cape College decided that learnership co-ordination was a key college function. It did so in order to formulate a unified college approach to learnership development and to harness and spread the existing experience and knowledge about skills development across the campuses. It was also an attempt to co-ordinate the submission of proposals to SETAs more effectively, after it was found that campuses were submitting competing proposals to the same SETAs to do the same work and access the same funding.

The college subsequently established a central learnership management committee to oversee the process of tendering for new learnership projects and to develop policies and procedures within the college. Given that learnerships were regarded as the key way to generate funds and for the future success and sustainability of the campuses, these processes came to shape the ways in which the LPU was established within the college.

The LPU started out in 2004 with three staff members – the college learnership coordinator took on the role of acting LPU manager, the Oudtshoorn skills development facilitator was appointed as the LPU developer and accreditation manager, and an external person was appointed as LPU implementer. The LPU team comprised the experience and expertise of the main campus staff members who had previously generated funds and developed new programmes.

Setting up an LPU as part of the college infrastructure

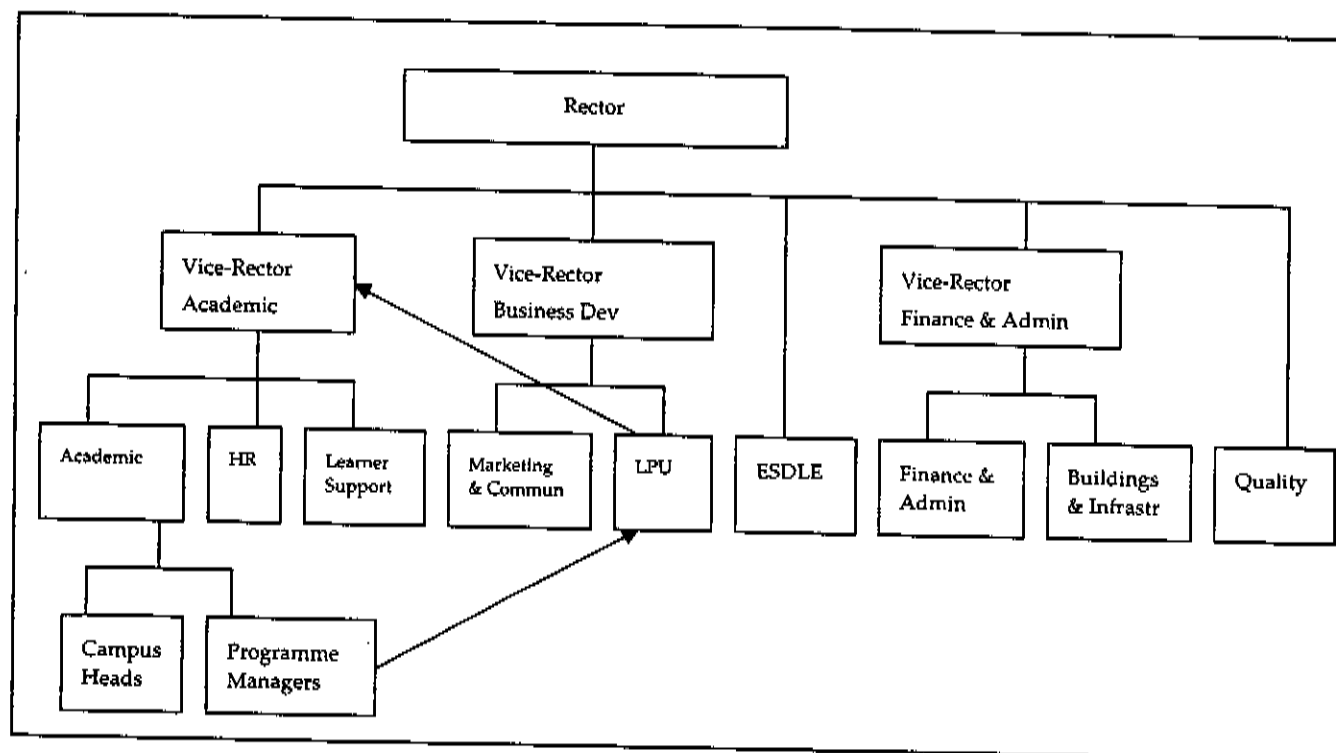
Figure 3.3 below reflects the management structure of South Cape College. The figure illustrates the main structural relationships between the college's functional areas. All functions related to programme delivery – academic affairs, human resources and learner support – fall under the responsibility of the Academic Vice-Rector whose primary responsibility is overseeing the delivery of the college's curriculum. Campuses, as the primary sites of programme delivery, fall under the authority of the Academic Vice-Rector.

At the same time, each campus has a programme manager that co-ordinates programme development and delivery across campuses and liaises with SETAs about quality assurance and other such matters. The five positions are divided between Business Studies (2), Engineering Studies and Agriculture (1), ECD, ABET and ETDP (1) and Hospitality, Tourism and Hair Care (1). Programme managers work directly under the LPU, but have a direct reporting line to the Academic Vice-Rector. They report to the Academic Vice-Rector alongside the five campus managers and the LPU manager.

The LPU manager however mainly reports directly to the Vice-Rector of business development, given that the business development arm is responsible for marketing the

college, bringing in new business, developing new programmes, and increasing the college's student numbers.

Figure 3.3: Organisational structure of South Cape College

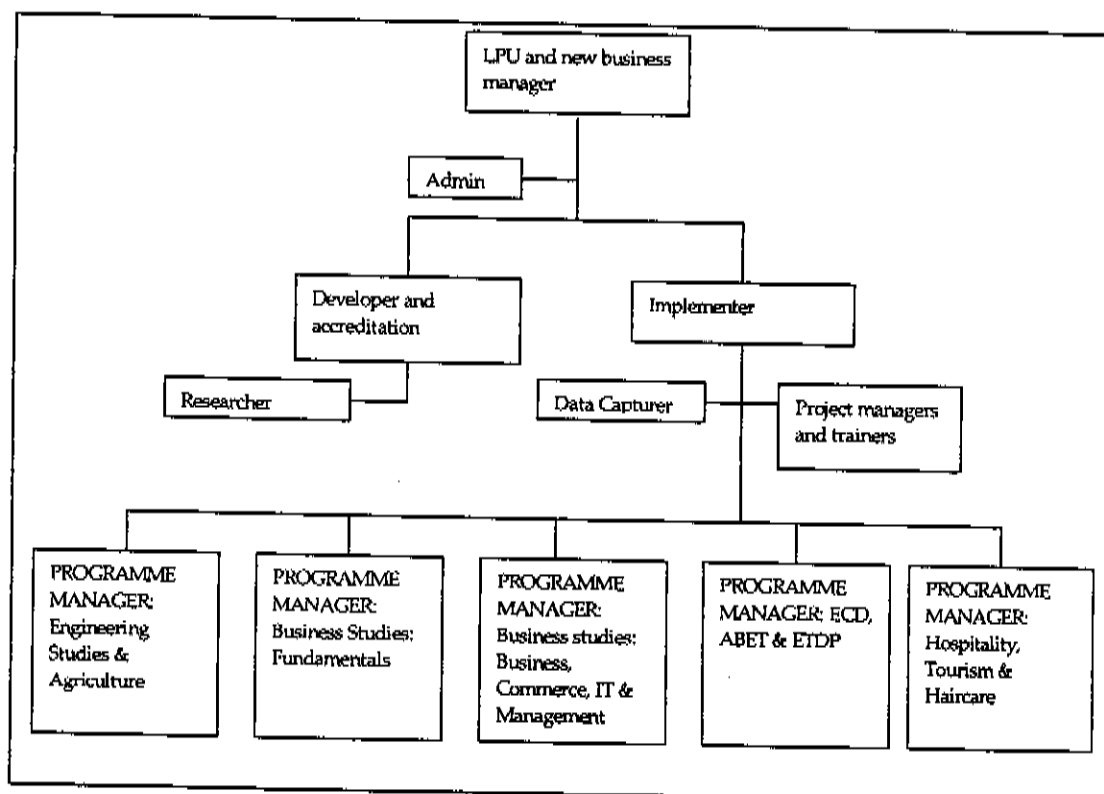


The LPU microstructure

The current microstructure for the LPU at South Cape College is illustrated in Figure 3.4 below. The unit is headed by a Manager who is employed at post-level 4. Below this position are two post-level 3 positions – the developer and accreditation manager, and the implementer. A researcher supports the developer and accreditation manager, while a data capturer and numerous Project Managers and trainers work under the implementer.

Programme managers are included in the LPU microstructure (Figure 3.4) to reflect their relationship with the LPU in terms of the implementation of learnerships, rather than their line of reporting. The college's programmes are grouped into five areas, each of which will be headed by a programme manager whose primary responsibility is to ensure that the programmes delivered across campuses in their area meet quality requirements. In order to ensure continuity, programme managers are the main point of contact between the college and SETAs in connection with site, programme and staff accreditation.

Figure 3.4: South Cape College's LPU microstructure



Campus Heads oversee the implementation of standard college programmes, short courses and skills programmes at campus level, while the LPU implementer oversees the implementation of all learnerships at campuses and at other sites. Campus heads and the LPU implementer collaborate with the programme managers in the implementation of college programmes.

Ascertaining local demand through market research

Until the establishment of the LPU, the college did not have a component dedicated to the task of conducting market research to identify community and employer demand. Individual college staff did however conduct some desktop research, accessing mostly secondary research sources such as national, provincial, and sector skills development plans, municipal integrated development plans, local economic development plans, and reports from organisations like Wesgro. The information drawn from these sources informed strategic planning, programme planning and the development of project proposals and tenders. The college also drew important insights on regional demand from its contact with SETAs, employer organisations (like chambers of commerce), municipal Integrated Development Planning forums, and leading employers.

In the current microstructure, the LPU and new business manager are directly responsible for generating new business and carrying out research to determine local demand. The

manager is supported by the LPU researcher whose main task is to research programme development and to inform college understandings of local demand.

The college often calls upon the perspectives of the programme managers and their understandings of demand as pertains to their disciplines. In that regard, ascertaining local demand is both a LPU and campus level activity and requires significant co-ordination and discussion between LPU staff and campus staff.

Developing and managing partnerships

Although partnerships are central to South Cape College's overall strategy, in the past there was not one cohesive college-driven partnership-development strategy and approach. Partnerships were developed at campus level by campus heads, HoDs and senior lecturers as the need arose or as opportunities presented themselves. Campuses also tended to be territorial in relation to their own partners and generally resisted central coordination of their partnerships for fear that they would lose this funding for their own campus. Campuses were concerned that the central office would not be able to adequately maintain the partnerships that they had struggled and worked hard to establish.

The current LPU strategy is to coordinate and manage college partnerships centrally, but also to keep campuses involved in their development and maintenance. This is built on the notion that partnerships are generally quite personal and based on trust, and that the 'relationship element' in partnerships needs to be nurtured by the individuals that initiated them. Each campus is expected to continue to develop and maintain partnerships and to support the delivery of programmes once the LPU has followed up on the partnership opportunities provided by campus staff.

Importantly, given that learnership implementation is the core function of the LPU, all partnerships that lead to learnership delivery are the direct responsibility of the LPU. The LPU is expected to develop procedures within the college structure that frame the ways in which all partnership agreements and contracts are formulated, especially for those that lead to the development of learnerships. This task is the responsibility of the implementation manager.

Programme development

South Cape College hopes to provide two routes to each qualification it provides – the standard NQF-aligned college programme route and the learnership route. The difference between the two qualification routes lies in the composition of the programme. Standard NQF-aligned college programmes consist of 50% theory and 50% practice while learnerships consist of 30% theory and 70% practice/workplace training. Each qualification is packaged into short courses and skill programmes, according to the demand.

The LPU is expected to oversee programme development, to monitor the approval process for all new programmes (including learnerships and skills programmes), and ensure that each new programme with its supporting materials is in place for delivery. Indeed, a vital part of the process of determining the viability of any project or programme is to establish if a qualification or the learning materials already exists for the project/programme and then to determine how to go about establishing it. This task of overseeing programme development is the responsibility of the LPU developer and accreditation manager.

The curriculum for each new programme is constructed from available qualifications, unit standards and materials. Close collaboration between the LPU, Academic Vice-Rector and programme managers is thus necessary. The programme development process begins with a search for relevant qualifications or unit standards that could possibly form the basis of the new programme. This includes trying to place the new programme into a career path that specifies entry requirements and the paths of study that could follow. Research is then undertaken to identify suitable learning materials. Once this is complete, a submission is made to the Western Cape Education Department and (perhaps) a relevant SETA in order to gain programme approval and site accreditation. If necessary the business plan is also submitted to a donor organisation to obtain funding for programme development or for equipment to ensure that the delivery site meets SETA or departmental accreditation requirements.

An internal college reference group, which includes the Academic Vice-Rector, the relevant programme manager and college lecturers with appropriate subject expertise, is then set up to advise the development and delivery of each new programme. For each new programme the reference committee does an assessment to determine what training, resources and infrastructure is needed for delivery. This reference group is expected to include external stakeholder expertise in the future. The establishment of reference and advisory committees is the responsibility of the Academic Vice-Rector and serves as an important point of contact between the LPU and the Academic Vice-Rector.

The LPU also plays an important role in ensuring that programmes that have already been developed remain updated, and where necessary, the LPU supports the process of revision and updating.

Learning materials development

The LPU oversees the process of developing learning materials. Although South Cape College does have some internal expertise in materials development, it does not regard the development of programme materials as one of its core functions. The college considers this to be too time-consuming and does not expect lecturers to participate in developing new learning materials as a part of their normal duties.

Instead, when the opportunity arises to deliver a new programme, the LPU identifies suitable materials that are already available for use or that can be easily adapted. This is one of the primary tasks of the LPU researcher. Should learning materials not be available, or should the materials still require significant adaptation, the LPU decides on the financial viability of hiring contract staff. In most cases, if funding is not available or cannot be obtained to develop the necessary materials, the college would more than likely not proceed with the delivery of the planned programme.

Should the college decide to go ahead and develop or adapt the materials, this process is overseen by the LPU programme developer and accreditation manager (in collaboration with the reference committee established to oversee the development and delivery of the new programme). One or more material writers would normally be hired to work on the project on a contract-basis, and report to the LPU programme developer and accreditation manager.

Once a programme and its supporting materials have been developed, it is handed over to the Academic Vice-Rector who oversees its implementation within the college, in collaboration with the programme managers, campus heads and LPU implementer (for learnership implementation) and in line with college policy and procedures and the quality requirements of SETAs, the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) and UMALUSI (the quality assurer for the FET band).

Notably, college lecturers provide input into the process of developing new programmes and materials, mainly through their involvement in reference committees. Sometimes some college lecturers are temporarily released from their core teaching responsibilities to focus full-time on materials development for a limited period of time. Some even have the option

of applying to work on materials development on a contract basis outside of their normal duties during holidays or after hours and on weekends.

Role of external groups in programme and materials development

The Western Cape Education Department's College Curriculum Committee (CCC) presently plays a very important role in coordinating and supporting the development and introduction of NQF-aligned programmes in Western Cape colleges. The CCC is currently co-ordinating a process whereby each college in the Western Cape is tasked with the responsibility of developing particular qualifications. South Cape College has, for instance, been awarded R1.6 million to develop five programmes and their supporting materials – Electrical Engineering, Motor and Diesel Mechanic, Furniture Production, Craft Bread Production, and Storemanship.

The South Cape College LPU manager and quality manager currently serve on the WCED CCC and also co-ordinate the inputs of key college staff members who are drawn into the CCC reference groups to give input on the development of the curriculum and materials for new qualifications.

The establishment of the South Cape College LPU has been hailed by staff members as a very positive development. There is a general view that the LPU has already begun to provide for the college to market itself more effectively, to generate new business, and to introduce new programmes. The LPU has been commended for the 'excellent job done bringing in learnerships' for the college, 'especially with so few people'. Senior management and the college council are fully supportive of the LPU and feel that it will play an even more significant role in generating new business and partnerships for the college in the future, and thereby contribute to the college's growth and sustainability.

MTHASHANA COLLEGE: PROGRAMME INNOVATION FROM THE CENTRE

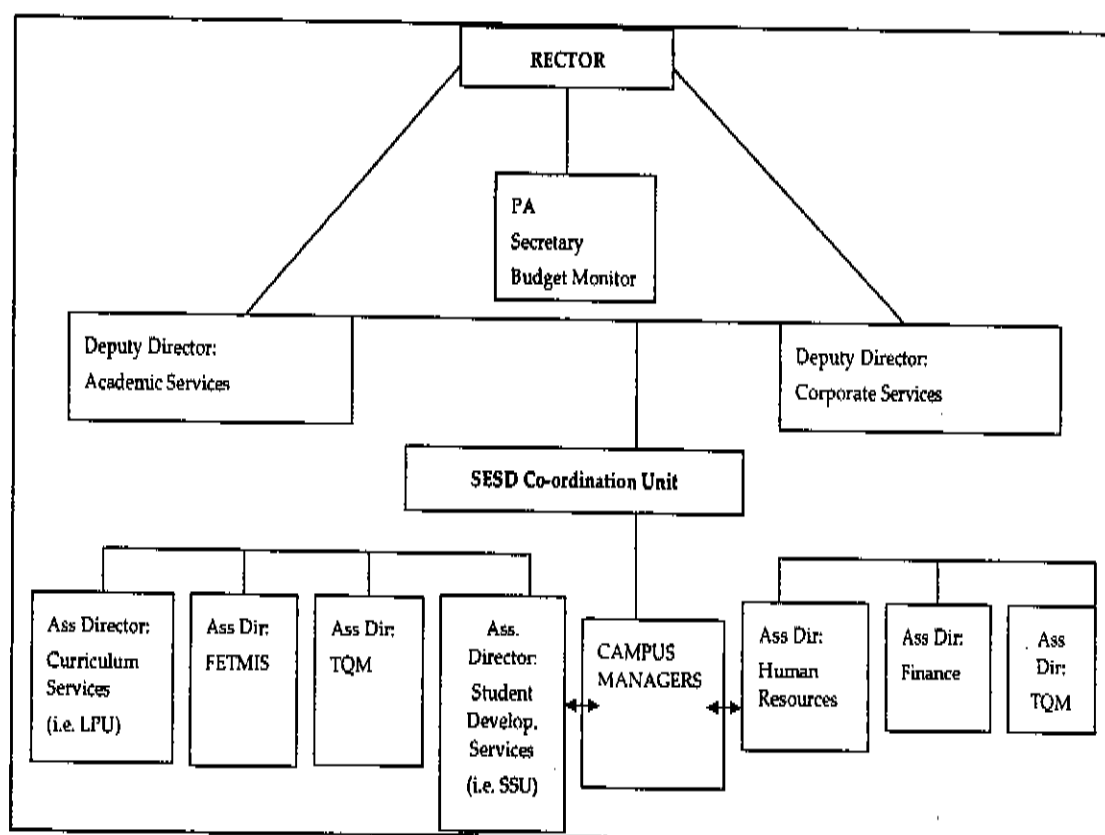
When the LPU at Mthashana College was first set up in 2003, its key operational functions were defined as follows:

- It was expected to introduce NQF-aligned unit-standard based programmes at the college and to assist staff members to move away from NATED mindsets and focus on programmes in key niche areas
- It needed to develop or acquire 'programme packages' that support programmes in the key niche areas of agriculture, forestry and tourism

- It needed to identify and prepare campuses and skills centres for the delivery of these programmes
- Lastly, it was expected to link up with SETAs about where to source unit standards for programmes, and to engage with the providers that offer programme development services

Figure 3.5 provides a map of the organisational structure at Mthashana. The LPU serves as the main vehicle by which the college develops and facilitates programme innovation, with all the important decisions with regard to the ways in which the college links up with external partners being made collectively by the college Rector and the LPU Manager.

Figure 3.5: Organisational structure of Mthashana College



The Rector and LPU Manager are the ones that brainstorm new possibilities and discuss the requirements needed to put prospective programmes into place. They also meet regularly (at the college central office) with the HR manager, other specialized unit managers, campus managers and senior college staff members. At these meetings they discuss the links that the LPU has set up and how to follow up on contacts made with external partners. The meetings are meant to assess the validity, viability and sustainability of suggested or envisaged programmes.

Developing the necessary internal college processes and college programmes

All external requests for programme provisioning are channeled through the LPU, after which members of the LPU contact campus managers and staff members to discuss the infrastructural capacity and whether it is practical to provide such programmes. College programmes are thus mostly initiated by the LPU and managed from the central office. Once it is started at central office, programme initiation is passed on and subsequently managed at the respective campuses.

Problems faced by the LPU

Campus managers have played quite significant roles in programme development and delivery at their sites. It was noted that notwithstanding this involvement in both management issues and programme development, the LPU invariably has to check on the progress of projects and associated problems. It was suggested that this is often linked to the lack of capacity at the campus level, with staff members not providing, or unable to provide, adequate information on programming matters and problems.

Staff capacity at the LPU is extremely limited. Current LPU staff members are expected to service vast geographical areas. Consequently they spend the bulk of their days 'on the road' sourcing external partners. Yet they are also expected to fulfill other college responsibilities like overseeing the marketing and communications portfolio (there was no MCU manager in place at the time the research was conducted), and the upgrading of college infrastructure at campuses and skills centres, to ensure proper programme development. The latter task would normally be fulfilled by a General Administration and Infrastructure Portfolio Unit, but the unit has no staff members as yet.

Indeed, the expansion of linkages and partnership-building initiatives is currently seriously compromised by totally unrealistic funding and resourcing regimes. Units such as LPUs in areas like Mthashana will only really start performing once they get more staff members and once college staff members in general are properly capacitated to fulfill their tasks.

In addition, high poverty levels in the region result in students being unable to afford the high fees needed to enroll in skills programmes and learnerships. This causes the college to depend quite heavily on the departmental funding associated with NATED programme provisioning, and discourages the large-scale introduction of new 'demand-led' programmes.

THE DIFFERING RESPONSES OF SOUTH AFRICAN FET COLLEGES

Two main approaches are evident in the way in which LPUs were started, in the case studies of three colleges. The essential 'ideal-type' characteristics of each approach to building external linkages are summarized in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: Two Ideal-type approaches to building external linkages

REVISIONING	ENVISIONING
This entails the consolidation of prior experience in building external linkages, but doing so in new and reinvigorated ways through an LPU	This entails evolving an entirely new vision for the college in relation to its role in the neighbouring community It requires starting from scratch to build external linkages
There is embedded expertise: this approach can rely on well-established internal management and staff structures that are sufficiently capacitated to take on the challenges of a LPU	No or limited embedded expertise on building external relations exists within the college
Established links to industry and business exist which provide valuable prior experience for the college	Few external links exist; in certain colleges, historical linkages are now obsolete because of the decline in certain economic sectors such as mining
LPUs are inserted into and integrated within these managerial structures	The LPU evolves separately given the absence of effective managerial and staff structures; the LPU reports directly to the CEO
College has strong 1st tier central leadership but the day-to-day activities of the LPU are devolved to effective 2nd, 3rd and 4th tier guidance and participation	The LPU is strongly driven by the CEO who has to play a dynamic 'en-visioning' role to launch the LPU project successfully
'Devolved' model	'Centrist' model

The first approach evident in our case studies is a *re-visioning* strategy. Colleges use the experience and expertise of staff or the available infrastructure of particular campuses as the core foundation for the establishment of their LPUs. In such colleges there invariably already exist a wide range of relationships with industry or business (though mostly not formalized) and the idea is to transfer and embed these experiences of 'what works', within the operation of the newly established LPU. Further features of colleges that focus on 're-visioning' what they did in the past are established college student populations, stable staff complements, and functioning relationships with a diverse group of external partners around each of their campuses. The challenge for such colleges is to continue doing what they previously did best, while also engaging with new opportunities and challenges linked to changing socio-economic environments.

Colleges that adopt the 're-visioning' approach invariably have senior management structures that are formalised, with each senior management member designated defined

roles and responsibilities. LPU managers rarely consult directly with or report to the CEO/Rector. Rather, they report to members of senior management staff whose portfolios normally include overseeing the LPU. In such cases LPUs generally operate from central offices and are part of structures and processes that are formalized and well-established.

Importantly, 're-visioning' LPUs such as those described above partake in key strategic management processes at the central offices without 'leading the way' in shaping relationships with external partners. That role is fulfilled primarily by the college's senior management structures that determine and formulate college approaches and implementation of its programme delivery and its external partnerships. Notably, the success of the operations of LPUs hinge on the extent to which the college management systems and infrastructures 'work'. The presence of a formalized institutional human resource capacity is a key element within this approach.

The second approach is called *envisioning*, best described as colleges that have had to start from scratch with the establishment of their LPUs and in their interaction with external partners. This approach is mostly characterized by colleges with limited or no formal relationships with industries and business, colleges that have had to completely reconceptualise the ways in which they engage with their local environments. Alternatively, they are colleges where previous relationships with industrial or business partners have disintegrated due to changes in the economic structure of the surrounding regions. For instance, there are cases where colleges had strong links to the mining industry, but can no longer look to this sector for student enrolments or funding. Such colleges would have to completely rethink the ways in which they engage with their local labour markets and how they use their resources to best serve their external communities.

In this scenario, colleges often are not able to call upon the specific expertise or experience of staff members (though many of their overall skills can be adapted for the new situation), nor can they necessarily build on existing college infrastructure or ongoing relationships with external partners.

In South Africa the majority of colleges affected by the absence of surrounding industries or businesses, or those that have most felt the impact of dramatic changes in regional economic conditions, are situated in rural areas or in mining towns, or around townships. Common characteristics of such colleges are fairly low student numbers, small staff complements and under-resourced educational infrastructure.

These kinds of institutional environments often mean that college structures are fairly close-knit, with a core but very small senior staff team. Managers of specialized units like LPUs

would in most cases report directly to the CEO/Rector of the college, are often given the power to make their own on-the-spot decisions, and also have 'easier' access (in terms of fewer college structures) to other parts of the management system. Moreover, in colleges that 'start from scratch', the success of specialized units is generally dependent on dynamic individuals that 'make things happen'. Such individuals also have to fulfill a number of tasks within the college set-up which means that they often overwork and burn-out quickly. Should they leave the college's employ however, they are generally irreplaceable.

This ideal-type dual categorization, of course, does not fully explain the three college LPU cases. This is because there is a third way, a combination of both ideal-types – that is, combining both the 'en-visioning' and 'revisioning' tendencies in one institution. The next section explores these routes further.

Differing location and role for the three LPUs

The three case studies show that LPUs are located quite differently within the organisational structures of each of the three colleges, notwithstanding the fact that the general format of the three college organograms looks strikingly similar. The key differences between the structural form taken up by the three LPUs are shaped by the following factors:

- *Organisational ecology.* The extent to which they have a solid organisational structure comprising deputy-CEOs, campus managers, programme managers and academic heads all working effectively with each other.
- *A 'centralizing' or 'devolving' tendency.* This depends largely on the extent to which the CEO needs to be the champion of a new vision for the college, which then drives the LPU. This may be because of historical changes affecting the college or the weaknesses of internal structures. Alternatively, in colleges with a sound organizational ecology, the tasks of the LPU, once founded, can be effectively devolved and integrated within the activities of lower tiers of college management.
- *Presence of external stakeholders* who help to make the LPU a reality, for example, SETAs, industry, community based organisations, local government structures and universities of technology. In the absence of these stakeholders, successful LPUs will be difficult to achieve.
- *The source of new income for colleges.* Is it to come largely from the private sector, or is the public purse still required to fund new initiatives like the alleviation of poverty and unemployment in rural communities?

The three LPUs under study arise out of very different combinations of these core elements. Table 3.2 sketches the different development 'routes' shaping the establishment and present

functioning of the LPU in the three colleges. Note that these internal college factors are now added to the external determinants identified in Chapter Two, to reflect the interaction of contextual and organizational factors.

Table 3.2: The determining factors behind three differing LPU routes

	College of Cape Town	South Cape College	Mthashana
Core identity of college	Big city urban college	Small town, peri-urban college	Deep rural college
Size	Large 15 000 learners	Medium 3 647 learners	Medium 3 218 learners
Majority population of students	46% African 41% Coloured 10% White	52% Coloured 26% African 21% White	92% African
Levels of unemployment in neighbouring communities	Medium	Medium	High
Core LPU strategy	Revisioning	Mixed mode	Envisioning
Organisational ecology	LPU 'devolved' and integrated within an existing effective organisational infrastructure	LPU 'detached' and separate from existing organisational structures LPU a separate business unit	LPU reports directly to CEO because organisational ecology is too weak to play host to it. A 'centrist' model
Role of CEO	The CEO does not lead the LPU on a daily basis; devolved. Staff and management structures run the LPU	Mixed; As a separate unit, LPU reports directly to Deputy CEO (New Business), but staff and management structures of the college do play a role.	The CEO plays a very central role in starting up and leading the LPU
Presence of external stakeholders	Several urban-based partners available	Several small town based partners available	Few partners Trying to develop rural partners amongst CBOs and local government
Origin of new income	From business	From business	From the public sector

However, the Rector participates in little of the actual programme implementation once the LPU has initiated a partnership or received an external request for programme provisioning. After the LPU has contacted the campus managers to determine infrastructural capacity and

viability, campus managers take on the main responsibility for the development of programmes. While the LPU does get to monitor the progress of projects and the main problems and challenges, it is the campus managers that determine successful (or unsuccessful) implementation. Should the campus managers not follow through on 'new links', there is virtually nothing that the LPU can do.

Mthashana's management structure can be characterized as strongly centralized. However, the fact that programmes are implemented in a relatively decentralized way means that key central planning decisions can be vetoed at the campus level. In terms of the overall college, campus managers thus play a key role in determining practice at the local level.

The College of Cape Town (CCT), on the other hand, has a management structure that can be characterised as deeply centralized, but which operates in complex ways to include a large number of participants in key decision making activities. The centralized structure thus does not mean that staff members located at various levels of the college structure and at different sites cannot play important roles in the running of the college.

With regard to the LPU, college management regards the specialized structure as an important way of linking central management processes to campus level developments, as well as playing a key role in curriculum development. In that respect, the college CEO and senior management staff have sought to insert the LPU into the college organogram in ways that include the unit in important strategic planning processes at central office and at the same time making it take charge of key curriculum developments at the campus level.

The LPU is included within the college management structure at the third tier management level. The first management tier is the office of the CEO. The second tier consists of three Deputy CEOs, while the third tier consists of staff that report directly to the Deputy CEOs and who are normally managers in their respective units – including the LPU. The fourth management tier consists of the campus managers and the Program Managers. Unlike Mthashana College, the campus managers at the College of Cape Town do not participate intensively in the daily central management of the college. They mainly manage the environs of their respective campuses and leave the running of the college to staff based at central office.

Given the formalized management structure within CCT, the LPU manager rarely interacts with the college CEO. Rather, the LPU manager communicates with the Deputy CEO and the four academic heads on a daily basis. The LPU manager also rarely interacts with campus managers, other than confirming key infrastructural and human resource issues at individual campus levels.

Thus, while decision making and management structures appear to be tightly centralized within the college, associated processes are diffused across the various levels of the management structure. This means that on a daily basis a significant amount of discussion takes place around decision making, and typically include a wide array of staff members that have no management portfolios or responsibilities.

Indeed, the centralized nature of the College of Cape Town's management structure may be due mainly to the size of the institution and its large staff complement. Tight planning and close management vigilance are deemed important requisites for managing a large institution that operates across eight quite different sites.

What may better explain the centralized nature of the college management structure however is the desire, alongside the generation of 'new business', to organize the college's curriculum planning and development from the central office. The academic heads of the core disciplinary college provisions are located at central office and interact on a daily basis with members of the LPU in formulating and reorganizing old and new programmes. They engage with senior management on how to develop new programmes (or re-organise old ones) and how to provide them across the various campus sites. They also interact with the LPU on a daily basis about new programme opportunities and identify redundant or unpopular programmes. In this respect, the LPU plays an important role in identifying new opportunities that emerge outside the college 'walls'. Once programmes are approved at the central office level, the LPU communicates with programme managers based at campuses, who formulate, troubleshoot and implement the approved programmes. This means that programmes are planned, shaped, and put into motion through a complex process that starts with the CEO and senior management, and ends with campus staff.

This emphasis on the LPU playing a central role in curriculum development is quite different from what happens at South Cape College. At South Cape College, the LPU operates largely as an 'extra campus' from where the college generates new business, develops new programmes, and plans the increase of its student numbers.

While the LPU is a vital part of the curriculum development process, the unit does not play as centralized a role within the South Cape college management structure as with CCT. Also, while all functions associated with new programme delivery fall under the responsibility of the Academic Vice-Rector, the ways in which delivery is organized is quite different to CCT.

Firstly, all campuses, as the primary sites of programme delivery, fall under the direct authority of the Vice-Rector for academic affairs. Secondly, there is a program manager at each of the five campuses who co-ordinates programme development and delivery across

campuses and liaises with SETAs about quality assurance and other such matters. Thirdly, program managers report to the Academic Vice-Rector alongside the five campus managers and also the LPU manager. They also work directly with the LPU in terms of developing and implementing new programmes. Fourthly and perhaps most importantly, the LPU manager reports directly to the Vice-Rector of business development, given that the business development arm is responsible for marketing the college, bringing in new business, developing new programmes, and increasing the college's student numbers. The main task of the LPU is to bring in new business and generate income for the college.

The LPU thus plays a dual role within the college management structure and adopts a relatively 'decentralised' role that allows it to tone down its engagement in strategic planning processes and in curriculum development. While the LPU often assists in coordinating planning and strategic interventions at the college sites, it does so mainly in an advisory capacity. The idea of a de-linked LPU is to co-ordinate and manage college partnerships from one site (and operate it like a campus), but also to ensure that individual campuses remain actively involved in the development and maintenance of partnerships associated with their sites.

Identifying diverse routes in college practice

From the description of the organizational forms of the three LPUs, it is evident that individual colleges integrate the LPU within their management structure in different ways, mainly based on their understanding of their ideal role. College of Cape Town emphasises its role in curriculum development, while South Cape emphasises its role in generating new business for the college, and Mthashana emphasises its role in advancing skills development initiatives.

An important part of the establishment of a LPU is thus determining where and how to locate the unit within the college management structure. The analysis of a 're-visioning' and an 'envisioning' ideal-type allows us to identify the diverse routes taken by the three colleges in practice. Moreover, the analysis highlights the strengths and weaknesses of adopting a 'centrist' or a 'devolved' or a 'mixed' approach to organizing the functions of the LPU, but shows how these routes are shaped by the external environment and the organizational ecology of each college.

Chapter 4

PROGRAMME PROVISIONING TO MEET EXTERNAL DEMAND

Chapter Two has emphasized the high degree of diversity between colleges and the impact this has on the establishment and role of the LPUs. In addition, in Chapter Three we have seen how each LPU is located in a different organisational ecology, with differential effects on LPUs and the way in which programmes are generated and offered to external clients.

Chapter Four will now examine college curriculum responses to external client needs. It will highlight programmes developed by the three college cases to meet the needs of external clients, and assess the role played by the LPUs in promoting these linkages.

The discussion will highlight a wide array of new programmes on offer by the college sector to meet both the demands of responsiveness as an educational prerogative, but also, to respond to the calls from government seeking support in its fight against unemployment, poverty and ignorance.

PROGRAMME PROVISIONING AT THE COLLEGE OF CAPE TOWN

The central focus and strategy of the College of Cape Town is to become the preferred provider of education and training in the Western Cape and to develop quality programmes that nurture the skills of students in ways that serve the skills development needs of the province. Broadening access is also a critical focus area, and finds expression in the nature and scope of programming and delivery modes currently being developed. The college seeks to emphasise provisioning for the 'second-chance learning market', namely those learners who have not yet finished Grade 12. The college already has about 600 students that are currently enrolled to finish Grade 12 at its City campus.

Respondents generally note that the revamped academic planning and programme development process have created a fresh and innovative provisioning dispensation that

will assist the college in meeting the demands of emerging markets in the region. They suggest that this, alongside the continued demand for its historical provision of Engineering and Business Studies courses, has favourably positioned the college to be 'a preferred provider' in the province.

Respondents voice concern however, that the ways in which these new structures and systems have been instituted within the college may have not yet sufficiently challenged the mindsets associated with NATED programme delivery. This view was summed up in the claim of one programme manager:

The revamped systems and structures that emerged after the merger process are essentially entrenching the NATED programme delivery ethos because lecturers simply don't know what they are trying to achieve. There still isn't a clear and bold academic vision and associated structures that lecturers can understand and buy into (Interview with programme manager).

Nevertheless, there are indications that a definite shift in orientation is taking root. A new system of learning, where students are placed in companies for a defined period, is starting to be preferred over the more conventional system of students first completing theoretical training and then attempting to find employment for workplace experience.

Since 2001 the college has grappled with how to engage as a collective with the external partners of the institutions that constitute the college. By the time the LPU was established in late 2003 the college already had some experience of the difficulties and challenges, and generally kept abreast of economic development priorities in the province. The establishment of the LPU built on and expanded this experience and set up processes to consolidate understandings of these demands. The areas below describe the kinds of programmes that the college currently seeks to focus on, based on recent strategic planning and research (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: New 'niche' areas of provision which the College of Cape Town seeks to develop

Sector	Niche areas
Primary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture, including aqua-culture with the associated value chains • Fishing and marine-culture
Manufacturing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clothing and Textiles and the leather industry • Metals and Engineering (including boat building and ship repair) • Oil and Gas • Furniture • Cultural Industries (including crafts & jewellery)
Service industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism • Call Centres and foreign business process outsourcing centres • Information and communication technology (ICT) • Film industry

All of these foci are in fact the key components of the Western Cape's industrial policy as reflected in its provincial *Micro Economic Development Strategy*, and form part of national government's *National Micro Economic Strategy*, all aimed at building future economic growth in the province. Hence, it is clear that the college sector is trying to align with provincial and national socio-economic priorities.

Partnerships with external clients

The College of Cape Town has an established network of relationships with a wide range of partners, some of which go back many years.

Links with government

Relations with government are spread across departments and related structures. Within the Western Cape Education Department, the College Curriculum Committee (CCC) has come to play a critical role in assisting colleges to grapple with processes around curriculum development and in encouraging co-operation between the nine colleges in the province. The provincial FET Directorate plays a very active role in assisting colleges to engage with and understand the particular roles of FET Colleges within the overall provincial landscape. Close links with the CCC and WCED represent important 'partners' for the College of Cape Town, in terms of fulfilling its mandate of working with groupings outside the college.

The college also interacts regularly with the Department of Labour (DoL) and associated structures, like SAQA and the SETAs, with regard to policy and legislation, and around NQF-related issues to do with programming/qualifications, registration and accreditation.

For example, the division of General Studies, which currently has the widest range of non-NATED offerings, engages regularly with the ETDP SETA, THETA, FoodBev, MQA, MAPPP, FIETA, Services SETA, and PAETA. The SHACKAWAY Project (with a projected value of R3.7 million) is a further example of the kinds of partnerships that the college is presently securing. The partnership is between the College of Cape Town, the SHACKAWAY Building Skills Ltd, the Department of Labour, and the Department of Housing in the Western Cape. The Business Centre based at City Campus also has close links to W&R SETA around the roll-out of their SME programmes in the Western Cape.

Links with higher education

The college remains focused on providing courses within the higher education band. It is envisaged that programmes will continue to be offered up to NQF Level 5. The ongoing maintenance of linkages with higher education institutions is therefore necessary to ensure career-pathing opportunities for students. N4-6 courses will not be referred to as such anymore, but will be replaced with NQF qualifications. Articulation with the HE sector occurs essentially through linkages with Universities of Technology, for example, a 'generic' diploma in Engineering at NQF Level 5, under the auspices of the Engineering Council of South Africa. A 'Wholesale and Retail' learnership is also being offered in conjunction with the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

Links with community

The college has a number of partnerships with NGOs and community organisations, particular those focused on early childhood development, HIV/Aids and skills training initiatives. The Guguletu campus plays a prominent role in these initiatives.

Importantly, the College of Cape Town does not have many partnerships with private providers, other than those linked to the outsourcing of learning materials development.

The college has also started a Fundamentals Department that oversees the provision of fundamentals courses in all departments. The initial focus is on numeracy and literacy interventions in the Engineering Studies department, with external provisioning of these courses to NGOs envisaged in the near future. In this regard, the Educare Department has already provided fundamentals courses to about 300 students (from NGOs and private companies) outside the college. It is envisaged that the Fundamentals Department will become a fully-fledged business enterprise within the college, able to generate significant income.

Links with business

The college has extensive linkages and partnerships with the private sector around aspects of workplace education and training, like job shadowing and placement of students and staff. Most of these are in the college's traditional programme focus areas - Hair Care, Cosmetology, Jewellery Design and Making, Furniture Making, Wholesale & Retail, and a range of Engineering fields. Companies that have longstanding links with the college are Wunders, Edutel, Foschini and Truworhs. It is notable that most partnership-building initiatives start off in informal ways, and remain dependent on 'individual contacts' even as partnerships become more formally established over time. Rarely do linkages or partnerships become 'formalised' through documents like legal contracts, simply because the college is relatively confident that their provision is of the quality that partners will continually renew their links.

The following are some of the offerings that the college has identified for greater focus from 2005:

- Domestic worker training
- Hair care
- Services SETA programmes
- Crafts
- Wholesale and Retail - to go the 'skills programme' route
- Food & Beverages – increased focus on baking
- New Venture Creation Schemes
- CETA – it is envisaged that the college will be commissioned to conduct significant training on the infrastructure development projects of the Western Cape
- Graphic design
- Learnerships with the ISSET SETA
- Film industry – to become more involved in auxiliary services such as catering, cosmetics and hair care
- Education and training around fundamentals has been targeted as an area of significant growth in the future, and is already being conducted with two plastics companies

The College of Cape Town has invariably focused on its main strengths when it comes to planning its programmes. Respondents note that college staff is generally quite confident about their ability to 'read the local markets' and about the high quality of the college programmes that they provide. They claim that, alongside the 'astute' development of new programmes, the 'better branding' of established programmes will generally ensure that

students continue to enroll at the college. Respondents acknowledged though, that the college will need to provide a far greater mix of NQF-aligned programmes, skills programmes, and learnerships.

PROGRAMME PROVISIONING AT SOUTH CAPE COLLEGE

Rather than simply advertising and offering a pre-determined curriculum, South Cape College is committed to what it refers to as 'responsive delivery', that is, programme provision that matches local employer and community demand, and that leads to the filling of jobs that improve the lives of all in the region. The main focus of the college is on producing students that 'fully satisfy the needs of employers in the region' and so enable 'communities to be productive' (Interview with CEO). Given the high levels of unemployment in some of the areas serviced by South Cape College, this focus is understandable. What is also evident from the many new skills programmes being offered at the various college campuses is the focus on helping students 'put bread on their tables'.

South Cape College is nonetheless well aware that programmes have to be financially viable and sustainable if the college is to survive. The college regularly tests the marketplace before it embarks on developing new programmes. In interviews with the College Rector he noted that:

Partnerships are crucial to South Cape College's programme development and delivery strategy. Our strategic plan highlights the fact that our task is so enormous that it is impossible to go it alone in the region. We are thus joining forces with all role players (in the local catchment areas) that can meaningfully contribute to the knowledge and skill needs of the respective businesses, industries and communities. In forming partnerships we are pooling our knowledge, skills, resources, finances and experience to the benefit of the communities that we serve.

The 50 partnerships listed by the college include a variety of short-term and long-term relationships. Included amongst the college partners are local businesses and industries, local government, provincial government departments, the Department of Labour (DoL), higher education institutions, local schools and Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs). Notably, most of these partnerships are informal. Some of the partnerships are concerned with the college providing a service – like training – for which it is paid, while others involve employers taking on college learners for work experience, or the college hiring the infrastructure of another organisation – like a school – to provide training. There are also partnerships with organisations like SETAs and higher education institutions that provide the college with accreditation. Some partnerships have to do with funding relationships. These involve donor organisations providing funding toward the

development of a service or the establishment of infrastructure. Notable among many of the recent relationships is the focus on introducing NQF-aligned programmes and learnerships.

In many of the partnerships the college has sought:

- *To make use of outside resources and facilities.* For example, the college uses schools as sites for their training. PetroSA has provided buildings for training linked to the Mossel Bay campus, while the Beaufort West campus has been established at a community centre in the town, in partnership with several state departments.
- *To provide training for business/industry/government employees.* Many government and company employees are registered for courses (NATED and NQF full qualifications) offered part-time at college campuses or for skills programmes and learnerships that are offered either at college campuses or at employees' places of work. One example is 38 employees from PetroSA that are registered for NATED programmes at the Mossel Bay campus.
- *To provide SETA accredited skills programmes and learnerships.* South Cape College is collaborating with a number of SETAs to provide SETA-related courses at its campuses.
- *To provide training for unemployed people and thereby develop skills and assist in job creation.* This is an important focus of the college's skills centres. Examples include retrenched SANDF soldiers that have been retrained to use their acquired skills to access jobs, and unemployed local residents who, with the support of the Department of Labour, have been trained to build houses.
- *To develop curriculum and learning materials.* The college has initiated many partnerships whereby outside providers assist in developing new programmes and learning materials. Oudtshoorn campus for instance has worked closely with a number of SETA's and higher education institutions to introduce the NQF-aligned programmes and learnerships it now offers. The college's involvement in the WCED's College Curriculum Committee (CCC) has increased its overall collaboration with provincial and national education departments, as well as with other associated FET colleges, in curriculum and materials development.
- *To place college students in real work situations to gain work experience.* The college has focused on placing students in real work situations. For example, early childhood development students have been placed in pre-primary schools and crèches, while tourism students have been placed at a local tourism bureau.
- *To provide college courses as a seventh Grade 12 subject to school students.* South Cape College provides 'computer practice' and 'entrepreneurship' at more than fifteen schools in the George area.
- *To provide access to higher education programmes.* The college has partnerships with a number of Universities of Technology and Universities to provide life-skills and

career preparation programmes, as well as bridging programmes. It also offers programmes like Grade R teacher training and their facilities are used for degree programmes in the arts, commerce and science disciplines (BA, BCom and BSc degrees).

As is evident, the key focus of South Cape College is developing joint ventures with outside partners. The college considers some partnerships - with the Department of Labour, PetroSA, local government and the SETAs - to be more strategic to its growth than others, and critical to future sustainability. A closer examination of the college's relationship with these partners reveals that:

- PetroSA is the largest employer in the college's catchment area
- District and local municipalities play a critical role in regional development and are linked to a vast network of people, organisations and resources
- SETAs are central to all learnership initiation and delivery. Better relationships with SETAs are deemed vital to the ongoing development of learnerships in the region
- The Department of Labour has appointed South Cape College to serve as one of its key 'Employment and Skills Development Lead Employers' (ESDLEs) (an explanation of the role of this agency is provided below)

Using school facilities

South Cape College has significant partnerships with schools and ABET centres. These partnerships have normally been established in areas where the college does not have its own venues or facilities. By so doing, South Cape College has been able to expand delivery and provide training across its catchment area according to demand and without having to establish new delivery sites every time a demand is identified. One successful example is the recent delivery of a Furniture-making learnership at a local high school (Dysselsdorp High School), a partnership that also generated crucial income for the school.

PetroSA

The college currently has a non-formal partnership with PetroSA that began when the company (then called Moss Gas) provided the buildings that currently house the Mossel Bay campus. Over the years, PetroSA employees participated in NATED programmes at the Mossel Bay campus and the company also provided bursaries and practical training to the campus' college students. Informed by its regular skills audits, PetroSA has determined that it will look to South Cape College to provide additional training for its staff in the future and

that it will seek to formalize many of the previous links between the college and the company.

Importantly, PetroSA has its own on-site training 'Centre of Excellence' (CoE) through which it provides welding, pipefitting, rigging, electrical and instrument training to its permanent staff members. However, having determined that upgrading its CoE is perhaps not the most cost-efficient or effective way of providing future training for its staff, PetroSA has approached South Cape College to provide key training components. The content of the training provision will need to suit the specific needs of PetroSA and its employees.

South Cape College is also keen to use PetroSA's training facilities to establish skills components that it would otherwise not be able to provide at its campuses. The Mossel Bay campus is keen to establish a welding programme (alongside Electrical, Autotronics, Motor Mechanic, Electronic and Hand Skills training) and to use the welding equipment and other training facilities at PetroSA's CoE to offer this course in the future.

A further instance of future close collaboration between South Cape College and PetroSA is linked to an OG&CM (Oil, Gas and Chemical Manufacturing) industries project. This project is undertaken in collaboration with the CHIETA and the Shutdown Network Forum. Taking account of shutdown and turnaround, as well as clean fuels projects, it has been determined that there will be a skills shortage of 6 000 workers in the OG&CM industries by 2010. To address this problem, the OG&CM project has developed a learnership that aims to accommodate 1 000 learners per year for six years. The Shutdown Network Forum (as the ESDLE for the project) will receive funding from the CHIETA to oversee the process of hiring training providers and placing trainees with employers for workplace training. Five regional training providers have been appointed to recruit learners and provide the theoretical training for the learnership in cooperation with other training providers in the region.

The PetroSA Centre of Excellence has been earmarked as one of the five successful training providers, and it has indicated that it will explore using South Cape College to provide the training for some or all of the parts of the learnership. At this stage it has had discussions with the college about using the college's Skills Centre to provide training for shutdown welders. A key problem though is that the skills centre is not yet providing SETA approved programmes (its programmes carry South Cape College certificates and were approved by the old training boards) and is not accredited by the MERSETA or CHIETA. To circumvent this problem, the Centre of Excellence has indicated that it will provide the college with training materials and allow the college to use the CoE's accreditation to provide the required training and assessment.

PetroSA also has links with South Cape College through a company representative that serves on the college's governing council. The Technical Training (and CoE) Manager of PetroSA has been invited to serve on the college's new advisory committee that oversees the development of engineering and agriculture programmes.

Local government and the Eden District Municipality

South Cape College has fairly strong relationships with the district and local municipalities in its catchment area, through which it has provided training to municipal staff and training on local government supported community projects. Until recently, however, each campus has worked with its own local municipality and there has been little coordination between the different training initiatives that have been provided. It is expected that the college will bring together partnerships with the municipalities and develop a more coordinated approach to its work with local government in the future.

It is intended that the college arrange a seat on each Integrated Development Planning (IDP) Board in the region and that this will enable the college to keep track of regional development initiatives (note that Oudtshoorn campus already has a seat on the local IDP board).

The need to introduce learnerships has facilitated more coordinated approaches across the different municipalities. Municipalities have become aware that South Cape College can serve as an important conduit to the outside world of training, through its courses, materials and links to external sources of funding (SETAs and DoL), and a key connection to municipalities and businesses in other areas.

The college has developed a particularly close relationship with the Eden District Municipality, which established a project section in 2003 to oversee training and development. Prior to the establishment of the project section, municipality training was not conducted on a regular basis. Via a closer relationship with the college however, the Eden District municipality expects not only to develop its own staff, but also drive key community development priorities.

Respondents observe that many of the college's programmes will have to be revised if it is to serve the municipality's core training needs. The municipality regards the introduction of learnerships as an important way of reconceptualising college training provision and aligning training programmes to key skills needs in the region. Examples of learnerships that are currently being implemented are an early childhood development (ECD) learnership

that started in August 2004 and a local economic development (LED) learnership that started in September 2004. The ECD learnership targets the staff of private crèches within the areas serviced by the municipality, while the LED learnership includes municipal employees and unemployed people. Both ECD and LED are key IDP priorities in the region.

Employment and Skills Development Lead Employers (ESDLEs)

Twenty one pilot Employment and Skills Development Lead Employers (ESDLE agencies) were launched by the Minister of Labour in May 2004 with the aim of ensuring that a large number of unemployed people, especially in rural areas, would be trained and placed in small and medium enterprises. The concept of an ESDLE originates from Australia. Their main function is based on the recognition that small employers cannot afford apprentices or learnerships. The agency idea is also a response to the widespread complaint by small employers that the administrative obligations associated with learnerships are too onerous, and that they are therefore discouraged from taking on learners. ESDLEs then become the lead employer and take over the administrative and cost burdens associated with skills training. In short, they take on the responsibilities to recruit, employ and train and coordinate the rotation of previously unemployed learners on a learnership amongst small employers (Mdladlana, 2004).

Ten of these agencies are Sectoral ESDLE Pilots. They are intermediate bodies that will operate nationally, across provincial boundaries, within the scope of a single sector (coinciding with the scope of the SETA). The SETAs will be encouraging smaller employers in their sector to take on learners with the assistance of 'their' ESDLE. SETAs will fund the administrative costs of the ESDLEs, as well as provide individual learnership grants for a specified number of learners (Mdladlana, 2004).

Eleven of these agencies are Provincial ESDLEs. They will operate within a single province with a strong rural emphasis, and will incorporate a range of small employers from a wide spectrum of sectors, which happen to be located within that particular province. The Department of Labour committed a total of R90 million under the National Skills Fund towards their administrative costs (Mdladlana, 2004).

Significantly for South Cape College, it has been appointed as a provincial ESDLE. The ESDLE presently comprises a Manager (a college staff member who was previously the college learnership coordinator), two placement officers (who are responsible for recruiting learners and SME employers), and an administration and logistics coordinator (who arranges training venues, transport for learners, and handles SETA invoicing). South Cape College is set to serve as the lead provider for the ESDLE during the pilot phase, for which

the ESDLE will pay the college for training provided to students on its learnerships. The college currently has 16 learnerships across 10 SETAs with a total number of 355 students.

PROGRAMME PROVISIONING AT MTHASHANA COLLEGE

As noted in Chapter Two, the main feature of the area surrounding Mthashana College is the lack of any significant industry and large employers. The only industries of note are the taxi industry (which is not something the college can provide major programmes for) and farming (which remains largely inaccessible to the poor in the region). Tourism and Forestry remain the two most viable sectors in terms of employment activity.

Besides responding to these provincial dynamics, the college decided to focus on upgrading its 'skills campuses' and to use them to provide short skills development programmes for communities located in the isolated corners of the region. The idea is to sequence provisioning, starting with literacy training (ABET level 1), then concentrate on particular skills development (e.g. Sewing, Beadwork, Motor Mechanics), and to follow that up with business or entrepreneurial skills training. The intended foci are programmes in areas like sewing, garment making, beadwork, poultry farming, and organic vegetable growing. Other prospective areas of provisioning are Welding, Motor Mechanics, Motor Body Repairs and Electrical work.

Indeed, by concentrating on programme provisioning that predominantly serves the skill training needs of the deep-rural communities scattered across the vast region surrounding Mthashana College, the institution is set to completely re-arrange its traditional offerings and orient itself to a different student population. At this time the college is carrying the operational costs (tutors and materials) of the skills centres and is funding the initial infrastructural development. The short courses are being NQF-aligned and will comprise mostly unit standard-based short courses/skills programmes and some learnerships. In terms of the college's expected focus on skills training for the informal sector, literacy and entrepreneurship components have been incorporated to promote the emphasis on self-employment in the region.

Presently, most partnerships occur in relation to meeting the demands of community-based organisations (CBOs), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and government departments. For example, all hospitals in the region were approached as part of a needs analysis exercise and asked what kinds of programmes they would support. The college also conducted a number of experiments to get a better idea of the kinds of needs emerging in the region. In this regard, in early 2004 the college embarked on a relationship-building and programme provisioning initiative at the KwaGqikazi campus. It kickstarted this process by locating the college's Linkages and Programme Unit at the KwaGqikazi campus to oversee

new campus programmes based on the needs of that area. The LPU staff conducted a needs survey in the area and went door-to-door visiting prospective partners and asking them about their main requirements. This 'conscious' pursuing of partners was deemed necessary since the college had previously done no marketing or publicity of college offerings nor had it previously included employers' perspectives on the region's needs in its planning.

The above notwithstanding, it is notable that formal NATED programmes continue to comprise 80% of programme delivery at Mthashana College. Campuses like Vryheid and Nongoma remain focused on providing courses in Business Management, Marketing Management, Public Relations and Human Resources Development, and Engineering courses like Motor Mechanics, Electrical Engineering and Plumbing.

Given the absence of potential employers where students can be interned during their studies, the college has begun to look at 'becoming an employer'. It has set up a pilot Business Unit at the Vryheid campus, where the intention is to:

- Generate income for the campus and to manage present links with employers and other external partners
- To double up as an employer by allowing for the workplace placement of students
- To market the agricultural processes inherent within programme delivery and the kinds of end-products produced, like pineapple-based goods, bacon making and livestock feeding

It is proposed that college Business Units will be able to focus on:

- *Internships* for exit-level students who have successfully completed N6 Marketing Management or N6 Marketing Assistant. This involves practical preparation for work placement and acquiring the skills and experience of working with the public.
- Enhancing the *marketing function* of the college including establishing an 'employment agency' or 'girl Friday' service for the marketing and future placement of students. This involves students preparing and printing brochures, designing and typing forms for enrolment/registration of incoming college students, developing college business cards, preparing and printing prospectus and related documents, and making adverts and posters.
- Enhancing the *administrative functions* of the campus. Management Assistant students are expected to assist the Student Affairs Office at the Vryheid campus with preparing the files of new enrolments, preparing information packs for new students, and photocopying documents for students' private needs. These services are charged at a competitive price.

- Using the 'Simulation Centre' within the Business Unit for the *practical assessment* of all Business Studies students, where they are tested according to their practical application of theoretical aspects like filing, faxing, invoicing, and developing innovative business plans.
- Providing *business services* to the community at reasonable and competitive rates.
- *Training and re-training* students who qualified several years ago. This involves the students completing new practical components on an after-hours basis, that include using new and updated technologies.
- *Initiating awareness-raising campaigns* within the community. For example, effecting anti-littering awareness among students by establishing a 'recycling station', which can lead to money-generating projects in areas where students live.
- *Entrepreneurship*. Practical training for students in how to establish businesses (co-operatives) within their local areas and communities, in order to promote sustainable self-employment and employment opportunities for others. The idea is also to assist students in learning how to acquire start-up funding and to monitor and advise students.

Though focusing predominantly on the needs of Business Studies students at present, the idea is also, in the near future, to introduce programmes that include the business plan development and communication skills needs of Engineering students in the workings of Business Units. Notably, the bulk of Vryheid campus provision continues to be academically-orientated (NATED), with previous Vryheid skills programmes/learnership offerings provided through a skills centre that falls directly under the Business Unit at the institution. This skills centre, although on the same site, is considered to be completely separate from the Vryheid campus. This suggests a symbolic and physical partitioning of skills programmes from NATED courses, linked to specific delivery sites.

Partnerships with external clients

The LPU is meant to play a critical role within the college infrastructure to introduce and oversee skills programmes that respond to the needs of northern KwaZulu Natal communities. It operates as the main interface between the needs of internal and external role players and stakeholders in the region and the development of needs-driven or demand-led curriculum development and programme provision. With the college's strategic plan emphasizing meeting the skill needs of local communities, programme provisioning has become much more dependent on partnerships with community-based organizations, NGOs and government departments and municipalities. Some of these partnerships are described below.

HIV/Aids research project (KwaGqikazi Campus)

The college initiated contact with the retired hospital superintendent, Dr Amy Glover, who is extensively involved with HIV/Aids work in the area. Dr Glover is currently collecting data from households in surrounding communities through a network of 'foot soldiers'. Dr Glover has agreed to employ Mthashana College to train her project staff in interview techniques, data collection skills, and computer and communication skills. In return the college will renovate one of its residence units on KwaGqikazi campus and make it available as an office for the project, where project staff can collate and analyse their data. The campus will then collaborate with Dr Glover on furthering community extension programmes around HIV/Aids.

Entrepreneurship partnership project with the Nongoma municipality

In recent years, local economic development (LED) studies have noted that there is a serious shortage of skills in the Nongoma area. In response, the provincial department of Local Government has allocated a one-million rand grant over three years (2004-2006) to the Nongoma municipality, towards SME development among the unemployed in the region. Phase One of the project includes skills programmes, formally registered (unit standard-based), in sewing/clothing production and in carpentry for the locally unemployed youth. Ninety six youths were selected by the municipality through a ward representative system. Mthashana College will provide learnerships in clothing production at the KwaGqikazi campus and carpentry at the Nongoma campus. Once students have completed their training, they will do the practical part of their learnerships at the local municipality. The project will establish a facility within the municipality, and also provide the equipment that students will need to train appropriately in carpentry and clothing production at the municipal site. Phase Two will consist of students learning how to start their own businesses through entrepreneurial skills training. Students are expected to be closely monitored. Five SETAs are involved in the initiative, though no formal partnership agreement has yet been signed between the college and the local government department. In the interim, 55 students are currently enrolled in the basic computer and communication enhancement programme (PLATO). This is aimed at providing them with skills that they can use in their prospective studies.

Organic Green Beans Project

The college has initiated a community agricultural project in the Jozini municipal area in one of the most far-flung 'deep rural' corners of the area served by the college (bordering on Mozambique). The project is aimed at equipping the community with agricultural skills that will help them become 'job creators' and help reduce the very high levels of poverty in the area. Towards this end the college has teamed up with the Jozini municipality to form a partnership with BioSwiss Industries (Pty) Ltd. The company specializes in the processing of organically-produced green beans for the export market, and has already set up a factory in the Hlobane area (ex-coal mine village) outside Vryheid. The municipality will provide the

land for the project (which has already been flattened) while the college will incur the expense of fencing the land. The labour required to work the land will be provided by the students. The seeds are imported from the Netherlands, with BioSwiss staff conducting the training.

After being trained in organic farming and entrepreneurship, students will form co-operatives and start their own organic farms. Once the project is up and running the college intends to approach Primary Agriculture Sector Education Training Authority (PAETA) to further fund the project, focusing on the unemployed in the region. The significant advantage in the project is that BioSwiss provides a 'ready-made market' for the goods produced on the land.

Tourism-hospitality learnership

The Vryheid municipality has developed a multi-million rand 'tourist facility' outside Vryheid overlooking a large dam, with the view of leasing it. The facility consists of six thatched rondavels, a huge reception area, a conference facility, a restaurant and adjoining kitchen, an amphitheatre, and two outbuildings. The college LPU was initially very keen on using the facility to pilot learnerships in tourism and hospitality. The infrastructure lends itself to training in B&B, on-site craft production, conferencing and hosting. A proposal has been presented to the local municipality for the college to run the facility (located on a busy tourist route) as a business whilst also doubling up as a training facility for learnerships in Tourism, Hospitality, Marketing, Reception-admin, and Event Management.

The college has also started a similar initiative at the KwaGqikazi campus where it has converted one of its residential units into a bed-&-breakfast establishment. The facility is set to be run by successive groups of students enrolled on a learnership in Hospitality and Tourism and the college expects to plough all revenues earned back into further college developmental initiatives. In a related development, the kitchen and adjoining cafeteria at the residential unit is expected to be renovated for a planned learnership in catering.

THE DISTINCTIVE ROLE OF THE LPUS

The ways in which colleges organise the functioning of LPUs within their management structure are often shaped by the kinds of programme delivery that they prioritise, based on what they seek to achieve via relationships with external groups in their neighbouring environment. It was noted in Chapter Three that there are three ways of interacting with external environments that colleges seem to follow internationally. These ways are often

quite fluid and colleges can develop a mixture of all three (Bush, 1999). The three approaches are:

1. Customising training to meet external client needs
2. Building on existing strengths
3. Specialising in 'niche' markets

The first approach is most evident in the South Cape College case study, though not strictly so. South Cape College focuses on providing two routes to each qualification that it provides, namely the standard NQF-aligned college programme route and the learnership route, with the key difference in the composition of the programme. Standard NQF-aligned programmes consist of 50% theory and 50% practice, while learnerships consist of 30% theory and 70% practice. By packaging the two qualifications into short courses and skills programmes, the college hopes to attract students that seek to follow 'traditional' routes to qualification as well as students that seek alternative career pathways that nevertheless fit in with their specific social and work needs. In terms of its primary focus on servicing the demands of as many 'consumers' as possible, the college has sought to establish its LPU (and consequently, the ways in which it frames programme delivery within the college) in ways that can best exploit external demands as they arise.

The second approach is best exemplified by the College of Cape Town, although the college has adopted elements of the first and third approaches as well. The core focus of the College of Cape Town has been to build on its reputation for providing quality and relevant programmes and good service delivery. The college generally has effective systems of recruitment and student selection, and in recent years has focused on how best to upgrade and improve their programmes.

The college has recognized the need to offer a broader range of programmes. It has thus engaged with learnership delivery as a way of including more work-relevant programmes. The LPU is seen as a crucial vehicle in this regard, not only to assist the college in developing and implementing learnerships but also in ensuring that where such programmes are provided they are integrated into, and become part of, existing college processes of programme development.

Differentiated modes of delivery, while deemed important, are understood mainly as a way of improving service delivery and providing an upgraded range of quality programmes. The college acknowledges that differentiated provision holds significant potential for enhanced income generation. However, it asserts that the ways in which the college provides new programmes, and the way it uses its LPU, must conform to the college priority of developing an integrated and quality curriculum delivery system.

The third approach is most evident in the Mthashana College case study. Mthashana College does not have the luxury of effective student recruitment systems or a steady stream of 'consumers' for whom it can adapt its programme delivery. The lack of significant employers has forced the college and the LPU to completely rethink the ways in which they provide programmes, and how they understand the needs of the target markets. In recent times, the college has increasingly focused on incorporating skills centres into the college set-up, as a way of providing programmes that target the key skill needs of surrounding communities.

One example of such a skills centre is the Emandleni skills campus (previously a youth training centre) in northern KZN. The Emandleni campus offers short and focused programmes in Farming/Agriculture as well as in Engineering areas like Motor Mechanics. By focusing on differentiated forms of provision through its 'skills campuses' the college hopes to impact upon the basic skills of members of communities located in the isolated corners of the Mthashana region.

It is clear that the three colleges under review are responding to calls to link their programmes more directly to the needs of external clients and communities, and to equip learners with a more appropriate set of skills to make them employable. These developments are beginning to usher in an entirely new repertoire of programmes on offer at South African FET colleges, most important amongst them, learnerships.

The discussion now shifts to a critical evaluation of learnerships, the flagship programme of the Department of Labour's National Skills Development Strategy. Whilst much of the learnership initiative has the potential to benefit the learner, college, external partner, and economy, there are problems emerging in our college case studies, which may trigger an eroding of the general education foundation at colleges, as the demands of the market begin to dominate. The Chapter Five will interrogate these issues.

Chapter 5

LPUS AND LEARNERSHIPS

INTRODUCTION: LEARNERSHIPS

Learnerships are the centrepiece of government's new National Skills Development Strategy. Government expects to massively expand enterprise training in South Africa through learnerships. Learnerships are seen as an important mechanism to improve the quality of education and training and to prepare learners for the world of work. They are designed to increase learners' chances of either securing employment in formal jobs or creating the basis for self-employment through relevant skills development and entrepreneurial training.

The *Green Paper of 1997* and the *Skills Development Act of 1998* define learnerships as having a three-fold purpose. Firstly, they are aimed at providing workplace learning in a more structured and systematic form, where formalised learning is provided by an accredited education and training provider. Secondly, they seek to link structured learning to multiple sites of work experience. Learnership agreements need to be drawn up between the employer, education and training provider and learner to specify the conditions of employment and practical work experience, and the times when the learner will be released to attend training classes. Thirdly, this training and practical work experience must culminate in a nationally recognised qualification (Kraak, 2004).

These features differ markedly from the previous apprenticeship system, which had very loose requirements regarding the linkage between theoretical training and work experience. The main differences between learnerships and apprenticeships are the following:

- Learnerships are demand-led and are offered in response to social or economic needs that are more broadly based than formal sector needs alone
- Learnerships appeal to a wider range of learners including the pre-employed, un-employed, and currently-employed
- Learnerships are more diverse than apprenticeships and expand the economic boundaries of sectors beyond formal enterprises

- Learnerships have a differing curriculum content to apprenticeships and aim to integrate theoretical education and skills training by ensuring that theoretical tuition cannot be provided without practical experience (Kraak, 2004)

Reports on the growth of learnerships across the country have been scarce. Those reports that have been published have not provided national coverage but have focused on specific sectors, for example, the case of Smith et al (2005) who reviewed learnerships in the Finances Sector.

In the *State of Skills 2005* report published by the Department of Labour in September 2005, it was reported that by March 2004, a total of 69 306 learnerships were registered. Most were previously unemployed and under the age of 35. This number had reached 72 908 learnerships by August 2004 – a figure very close to the target set by the Department of Labour of 80 000 by March 2005 (Department of Labour, 2005). Table 5.1 reflects the Department's most recent data on learnership enrolments nationally.

Table 5.1: Learnerships enrolments nationwide, March 2006

	Learnerships						
	Black		People with disabilities		White		
SETA	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Total
FASSET	803	737	0	0	1 314	1 148	4 002
BANKSETA	872	1 127	44	28	29	16	2 116
CHIETA	1 687	732	56	8	401	53	2 937
CTFL	891	1 333	0	0	8	0	2 232
CETA	1 611	744	9	5	105	4	2 478
SASSETA/DIDTETA	48	54	0	0	0	0	102
ETDPSETA	946	3 674	0	30	58	279	4 987
ESETA	749	506	70	9	68	15	1 417
FOODBEV	1 573	2 470	23	2	43	14	4 125
FIETA	1 009	300	30	3	23	1	1 366
HWSETA	2 739	2 737	17	220	1 476	1 036	8 225
ISETT	3 434	2 882	255	109	35	16	6 731
INSETA	263	381	7	4	14	20	689
LGWSETA	359	409	6	13	2	2	791
MAPPP	18	3	0	0	3	1	25
MQA	965	245	5	1	335	24	1 575
MERSETA	2 808	1 303	143	14	44	21	4 333
POSLEC	787	643	0	0	19	13	1 462
PAETA	1 084	1 240	24	13	4	1	2 366
PSETA	0	5	0	0	0	0	5

SETASA	669	513	0	0	42	18	1 242
SERVICES	4 136	7 159	274	199	661	363	12 792
THETA	2 206	4 384	1	5	145	116	6 857
TETA	2 686	1 036	18	28	110	80	3 958
W&RSETA	2 098	2 656	36	39	120	108	5 057
TOTAL	34 441	37 273	1 018	730	5 059	3 349	81 870

Source: Personal communication, Department of Labour, March 2006

Table 5.2 below shows the number of learnership programmes registered by NQF Level. The total number of programmes registered at Level 5 and below is 619 and those registered at Level 6 and above totals 47. With regard to aggregate numbers of learnerships, it is evident that the largest number of learners engaged in learnerships are those at Level 4 with 19 414 learners.

Table 5.2: Summary of registered and active learnerships and number of learners

	Total	L1	L2	L3	L4	L5	L6	L7	L8
No of learnerships registered	666	31	143	160	203	113	23	20	4
No of active learnerships	335	22	94	77	100	48	13	8	1
No of learners	62 115	3 765	12 125	5 702	19 414	4 700	2 548	13 826	0

Source: Department of Labour, 2005

The Department of Education reported that by the end of 2005, the 50 FET colleges had established 172 agreements with the 25 SETAs. Many of these would be around learnership provision. The three FET colleges under focus in this report had established some 23 linkages with SETAs by 2005 (Table 5.3).

Table 5.3: Number of linkage agreements signed between 3 colleges and SETAs, 2005

Institutions	CHIETA	CETA	ETDP	FOOD BEV	FIETA	LGSETA	MAPPP	MERSETA	AGRISETA	SERVICES	THETA	TETA	W&R SETA	Total
Mthashana								X	X			X	X	4
South Cape	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X		10
Cape Town	X	X		X	X		X	X		X	X	X		9

Source: Personal communication, Department of Education, March 2006

Chapter Five attempts to unravel the nature of those 23 agreements and the learnership programmes they include at the 3 colleges, particularly to examine the manner in which LPUs have facilitated these learnership developments. The chapter concludes by raising several problems that have emerged in the new thrust towards learnership provision at FET colleges in South Africa, and identifies challenges they pose for LPUs.

THE LEARNERSHIP EXPERIENCE AT CAPE TOWN COLLEGE

The strategy of the College of Cape Town with regard to learnership provision contrasts starkly with the system used at the South Cape College. At the College of Cape Town learnerships are an intrinsic part of programme offerings and are integrated into the college provisioning system. This essentially means that the bulk of learnership delivery is provided by college staff, and few outside contract workers are involved.

Within the College of Cape Town, the LPU performs all the functions of setting up a learnership, embedded within the everyday functioning of the college. It does not operate as a separate entity as at South Cape College. Staff members play a critical role in the learnership development process. Not only do they do the bulk of delivery, but they also play an important role in determining, customizing or adapting the kinds of materials that are used.

Table 5.4: Current Learnership programmes on offer at Cape Town College, 2004

Learnership	NQF level	Certifying SETA
Motor Vehicle Maintenance	2 – 5	MERSETA
Refrigeration, Air Condition & Ventilation	2 – 3	MERSETA
Manufacturing, Engineering & Related Activities	1	MERSETA
ECD	5	ETDP
Bakery	2	FoodBev
Furniture Making: Furniture, Wood Finishing and Cabinet Making	2	FIETA
Craft Production: Ceramics & Textiles	2	MAPPP
Jewellery (Design & Manufacturing)	3	MQA
Ladies Hairdressing	4	Services
Tourism Event Support	4	THETA
Certificate in W&R	2&4	W&R
National Diploma in ECD	5	ETDP
Jewellery design	3	MQA
Upholstery	2	FIETA
Refrigeration	2	MERSETA
Boiler making	2	MERSETA

Security	2	POLSET
Bavarian motor project	2	MERSETA
Manufacturing, engineering and related activities	1	MERSETA
Certificate in New Venture Creation	4	Services
Certificate in Craft	2	MAPPP
Certificate in Craft (Bread and Flour Confectionary)	2	FoodBev
Certificate in Wood Machining/Cabinet	2	FIETA
Certificate in Upholstery	2	FIETA

Using curriculum materials developed externally

Cape Town college, as is the case with the two other colleges in this study, relies on learning materials acquired from SETAs as 'packaged' and registered programmes, customized for college use by participants from within the college and from relevant SETAs. This is aimed both to improve the success rate of new programmes and to develop staff capacity within the college in relation to learnerships and skills programmes.

In designing learnerships, staff members follow basically the same procedures associated with 'normal' programmes, with a few important additions. Most notable is the presence of learnership co-ordinators (linked to the LPU) that are responsible for interfacing between the companies and the college at ground level and who carry the administrative load around programme implementation.

However, given the difficulties in starting up learnerships and the overall college focus on 'branding' its existing full-course programmes, the college has sought to include learnerships in particular ways. Essentially, learnerships are viewed as a way of generating funds and resolving the programme and funding needs of a particular student target group. By way of including more work-relevant programmes, the college has located learnership delivery at targeted sites or campuses. The idea is to develop niche markets at such campuses and to market these newly developed programmes as a way of including students that would not normally be able to attend or afford to enrol at the college. One problem with this approach is that while learnerships are 'marketed' as flexible, shorter, and more focused, they may often also be regarded by the public as inferior programmes which will not enable access into the kinds of employment learners seek or desire.

THE LEARNERSHIP EXPERIENCE AT SOUTH CAPE COLLEGE

As noted in Chapter 4, the main aim of the LPU at South Cape College is to bring in new business, mainly in the form of learnerships and skills programmes. South Cape College works with a range of SETAs to this end. In particular, its formal provider contract with the PAETA serves as a useful example of college-SETA learnership delivery. The college has been working with the PAETA for three years on the implementation of learnerships starting with the NQF Level 1 Agriculture learnership in the Oudtshoorn area. One group of students is accommodated at the Oudtshoorn Experimental Farm and another group at five different farms in the Langkloof.

Learnerships in Agriculture and Horticulture are also provided through the George campus. South Cape College does not have much experience in developing programmes in Agriculture. While the PAETA is thus far satisfied with the level of subject knowledge of the contract trainers provided by the college, there is a belief that college provision does not impart a good enough understanding of the sector. Employers indicate that the college needs to distinguish between the types of materials it uses for different fields like Horticulture and Agriculture. Indeed, based on comments by members of the Agricultural sector, the college will need to make a concerted effort to develop greater internal expertise, experience and capacity amongst college trainers if it intends to provide successful programmes.

The process of delivering learnerships is generally regarded as too time consuming and challenging from a management and administrative point of view. That is because SETA systems and requirements are quite complex and require large amounts of documentation to be monitored, reported on and invoiced.

The current South Cape College strategy to circumvent many of these problems is to employ contract staff on a temporary basis to serve as project managers and trainers. The college's full-time and permanently appointed lecturers are used solely to teach standard college programmes (NATED and NQF-aligned), short courses and skills programmes, while the LPU uses outside project managers and trainers to work on its learnerships.

The role of the LPU in learnership delivery

Given that learnership delivery is the responsibility of the LPU it must ensure that all employed contract trainers have the necessary levels of expertise, and where necessary arrange for trainers to be further capacitated. The South Cape College reported that most

contract staff who work on learnerships generally have the required subject expertise to fulfill their responsibilities, and the majority are qualified assessors and project managers.

South Cape College has progressed well with regard to developing and delivering NQF full qualifications and learnerships. It reported that all campuses other than the Skills Centre currently provide at least one learnership. All campuses, other than Mossel Bay and the Skills Centre, also deliver at least one full NQF-qualification. Of the five campuses, Oudtshoorn campus is the only campus that no longer provides any NATED programmes.

The learnerships that the college delivered during 2004 are listed in Table 5.5. Some are delivered at campuses, while others are provided at employees' places of work or at external sites like schools. The college reports that each campus has the infrastructure and facilities to support delivery in particular niche areas. Mossel Bay campus and the Skills Centre currently provide the main Electrical and Mechanical Engineering programmes, and it is expected that these programmes will also be provided at the Beaufort West campus once it is formally established. In addition, the Skills Centre provides Construction, Hospitality and Hairdressing Skills programmes. The Oudtshoorn campus specializes in Tourism, ECD and Hospitality programmes, while specialities at the George campus are Hairdressing and ECD. All South Cape College campuses provide Business Studies programmes and primary Agriculture programmes.

Table 5.5: Learnerships delivered at South Cape College, 2004

NAME OF LEARNERSHIP	NQF LEVEL	ETQA
Horticulture	NQF 1	PAETA
Agriculture: junior farm manager	NQF 1 & 4	PAETA
Local government: finance and administration	NQF 5	LWGSETA
ABET practitioners	NQF 4	ETDP
ECD	NQF 4 & 5	ETDP
National certificate in furniture production	NQF 2	FIETA
Servicing a motor vehicle	NQF 2	MERSETA
Agriculture machinery technician	NQF 2	SETASA
Tour guiding	NQF 4	THETHA

The LPU manages all of the learnerships from the college's central office (other than the ECD and Tour Guiding learnerships). It is expected that the LPU will also offer many of these learnerships in 2005, along with a further 13 new learnerships, the majority to be delivered under the auspices of the ESDLE (see Table 5.6).

Table 5.6: South Cape College learnerships planned for 2005

NAME OF LEARNERSHIP	NQF LEVEL	ETQA	ESDLE Learnership
LED	NQF 4	LGWSETA	X
Furniture production	NQF 2	FIETA	✓
Vehicle maintenance	NQF 3	MERSETA	✓
Vehicle services	NQF 2	MERSETA	✓
Registered accounting clerk	NQF 3	FASSETA	✓
Baking entrepreneurial practices	NQF 1	FOODBEV	✓
End-user computing	NQF 4	ISETT	✓
Community house builder	NQF 2	CETA	✓
Construction mason	NQF 3	CETA	✓
Project management	NQF 5	ESETA	✓
Secretarial administration	NQF 3	SERVICES	✓
Electrical engineering	NQF 2	ESETA	✓
ECD (two different delivery sites)	NQF 4	ETDP	✓
National certificate in furniture production	NQF 2	FIETA	✓

Some early successes at South Cape

One learnership that was reported to be doing very well at South Cape College, bar a few problems, is the *Agriculture Junior Farm Manager Learnership*. The learnership is delivered in partnership with Oudtshoorn Experimental Farm and is in its third year of implementation. The role of the Oudtshoorn Experimental Farm is to provide the workplace training component for students, all of who are unemployed. The Oudtshoorn Experimental Farm reports that it has a very good relationship with the college and that weekly meetings with the Project Manager ensure that problems are quickly resolved.

A learnership that has experienced some implementation problems recently is the *Agriculture Machinery Technician Learnership*. This programme is an ESDLE learnership that began in June 2004 with an intake of 61 learners, all of who are unemployed. It is expected that once the learners complete the theory and practical component of the learnership at Mossel Bay campus they will be placed at farms or with garages for workplace training, where they will learn to fix farming equipment. The main problem with the learnership is that the workshop needed for the delivery of the core theory/practical component of the learnership had not yet been built, even though the mathematics and communication fundamentals and the core theoretical component of the learnership has already been delivered.

THE LEARNERSHIP EXPERIENCE AT MTHASHANA COLLEGE

In contrast to the success of learnerships implemented at Cape Town and South Cape Colleges, the introduction of learnerships has been very slow at Mthashana College due to a variety of reasons. These include dynamics related to the geographically diffuse rural areas that the college serves. While many learnerships are being planned and discussed, the substantial demands on staff members, college structures and systems, the lack of industry links for the training of students, the low levels of educational qualifications amongst staff and students, alarmingly high rates of unemployment and poverty, and high AIDS-related mortality rates make the introduction of learnerships in the region extremely difficult. Simply put, without the staff members, structures and systems of institutional support, and the capacity to introduce and oversee programme development and delivery, learnerships cannot be operationalised or sustained on an ongoing basis.

Moreover, there is no way of knowing whether programmes would be viable or could be sustained in any systematic way. The college does not have any 'measuring' mechanisms in place to monitor potential, nor an adequate administrative and logistical capacity to set up learnerships in the first place. In view of these limitations, the college presently adopts the approach of 'establishing what the essential requirements are that the college has to meet to introduce new qualifications/programmes, or to NQF-align existing offerings'. In practice this literally means that 'learning materials must be completely sourced from SETAs or bought from providers'.

The college is aware that it will soon have to start developing its own programmes (including unit standard generation) given that many of the programmes and skills courses (such as Beadwork and Garment Making) that it has introduced at skills centres do not have available unit standards 'packages'. The problem is of course that the college does not have the staff capacity at present for this to occur at any meaningful level.

Nonetheless, there are a number of designated staff members within the college that focus daily on learnerships. For example, the assistant LPU Manager oversees learnership implementation on a full time basis, including liaising with the SETAs. The skills facilitator post will also be specifically aligned to learnerships in Agriculture. There are dedicated learnership co-ordinators at campuses responsible for organising and coordinating practical on-the-ground aspects of programmes. Lastly, there are designated staff members that in recent times have been specifically trained to teach on learnership programmes.

All these individuals concentrate on developing 'fundamentals' programmes however, and generally leave the core or elective training programmes for industry to provide. It is

expected that once learnerships develop on a significant scale, the college will have to grapple more meaningfully with how to develop the specialised elective programmes that relate to specific industry needs. This remains unlikely since the present SETA funding model, alongside SETA criteria governing accreditation and the development of unit standards, limits the extent to which a deep rural college like Mthashana can introduce learnerships. Indeed, the college will require substantial cash injections to kickstart learnerships and skills programmes if this kind of provisioning is to 'take off' within the college.

The next section will consider a number of problems that have arisen in the provision of learnerships at the three FET colleges under review.

PROBLEMS WITH LEARNERSHIP PROVISION

Employer reservations

The problem is the now flawed expectation that employers would play an active role in the development of learnerships. This has not been fully realized. With colleges coming into the equation very late, employers have yet to be convinced that colleges can provide the necessary skills required. Their reluctance to commit themselves to ongoing partnerships has led to a college like Mthashana creating and registering its own Business Centre in order to become an employer in its own right.

Multiple sites costly

In the post-merger period more and different kinds of sites are being incorporated into the colleges. The main concern at Mthashana with regard to the incorporation of new sites is that they are mostly youth training centres or skills centres. These centres do not bring in funds and they initially act as a burden on already overstretched college funds. This has led to a number of organisational shifts within Mthashana College, and will require even further re-alignment of functions within the college structure.

Thus, the incorporation of new sites is not only a costly exercise, but will need significant internal changes with an incubation period. This has two implications. Firstly, the sites have obviously not yet built up the reputation to encourage employer participation. Employers notoriously do not interact with college sites in this gestational period, which makes it difficult to initiate learnership agreements and skills programmes. Secondly, there is greater pressure on other sites to earn income, and to initiate lower-level learnership and skills

programmes to do this, which ultimately may shape college programme provisioning in quite substantial ways.

Conflicts over income

A key concern within colleges presently is the issue of allocation of funds earned through the LPU. While Program Managers and staff members based at individual campuses play important roles in the provision of learnerships and skills programmes, many campuses complain that they have no control over income brought in, that funds are often regarded as LPU or central office funds, and that no matter how much effort campus staff exert, they have little say in how the funds are spent. From the experiences of the three LPUs it is clear that this premise is problematic, and has led campus staff members to become increasingly negative about their contribution to the growth of colleges and their engagement with external partners. There seems to be a trend and preference emerging among campus staff to focus on other ways of bringing in revenue, through creating student friendly environments, providing reasonable hostel facilities, starting sport/extramural activities at the various sites, and creating student-friendly university-like campuses. This internal 'conflict' will need to be resolved if learnerships are to become an integrated aspect of college programme offerings and a key source of funds for the colleges.

Bureaucratic SETA processes

Learnerships have very particular requirements that are quite different to setting up 'ordinary' college programmes. SETA requirements are complex and require large amounts of documentation to be monitored, reported on and invoiced. Moreover, it is possible under the 'new programming system' that one learnership can easily be delivered at a number and a variety of sites, which puts pressure on college staff to develop a standardized programme of the same quality at all the sites. These two pressures offer significant (if not insurmountable) challenges to staff members involved in the process.

Outsourcing to contract staff

The current strategy at South Cape College to employ contract staff on a temporary basis for learnership programmes, is a potential problem. Educators and project managers from outside the established staff cohort oversee day-to-day issues associated with the implementation of learnerships, and report directly to the LPU implementer, who in turn, liaises with external quality assurers and monitoring bodies. This means that very few

internal staff members are involved in the process of developing learnerships within the college, and that a significant part of college funds is spent on training contract personnel.

Learnership system not fully evolved

A significant obstacle that all FET colleges are facing presently is that the overall learnership system is not yet fully developed. As learnerships are being developed they are also being delivered, which places enormous stress on all levels of the skills development system - SAQA, SETAs, and providers. Many learnerships are also being delivered against unit standards that have not yet been registered on the NQF, and often learning materials are either not available or are inadequate to support delivery.

With regard to South Cape College, Project Managers often find after they have been contracted that the learning materials are unsuitable or inadequate for immediate use. They also often struggle with SETA programme approval. There are also persistent problems with inappropriate infrastructure and/or equipment for learnership delivery, as well as low student attendance. A further problem is that some contract trainers or Project Managers are found to be unsuitable only after the learnership has started. This puts pressure on outside staff who do not necessarily have a vested interest in the success of the programmes.

No 'embedded' institutional expertise developing around learnerships

Respondents were concerned that the work of the LPU, especially with regard to its work on learnerships, should be integrated into the everyday workings of the college, and that the knowledge and experience developed in this area should not be at risk of being lost. College interaction with SETAs and the development and delivery of NQF aligned programmes and learnerships was not always evenly spread across campuses and there was often very little capacity embedded at the campus level. Indeed, by delivering learnerships separate to and outside of the core function of college campuses, colleges may risk developing in-house capacity.

A further internal dynamic to learnerships is that Project Managers do the bulk of the training and thus have little time left for project management. This causes them to struggle with keeping up to date administrative records like registers, organising extra classes for learners who have missed classes or that need additional support, and ensuring that student allowances are paid timeously.

Rural colleges need support

The process of introducing learnerships at Mthashana College has been significantly slower than the pace of implementation at the two other colleges. The LPU experience illustrates that the SETA funding model and criteria governing accreditation and the development of unit standards limit the ability of deep rural colleges to introduce learnerships. Rurally located colleges require additional financial support for learnerships and skills programmes, to compensate for the limitations posed by their environment and legacy.

Learnership limitations

Several gains have been made by the FET colleges in their provision of learnerships. This has ushered in a whole range of programmes on offer to learners, in excess of 23 learnerships, especially for those who are unemployed. However, problems have emerged which will have to be attended to, not only by the 3 colleges, but also by the Department of Labour and the SETA system, especially those factors to do with the over-reliance on contract staff and the acquisition of externally produced learning materials. Both limit the growth of institutional capacity, and if unregulated, threaten the quality and therefore the educational underpinnings of college education. This issue will be addressed in the final chapter, which provides a critical reading of the overall push to increase college 'responsiveness'.

ANOTHER FEATURE OF 'RESPONSIVENESS'

Examining college curriculum responsiveness in both Chapters Four and Five allows us to elaborate the model of diverse routes to external linkages developed in Chapter Three. Firstly, from Chapter Four, it is clear that the College of Cape Town has a largely Engineering Studies focus, feeding trained employees into the manufacturing sector of industrialized Cape Town. The College of Cape Town also has a growing 'Wholesale and Retail' focus. South Cape College, on the other hand, has a strong Oil and Gas focus given that PetroSA in Mossel Bay is the largest employer in the region. South Cape College is also prioritizing the strengthening of local government personnel in all of the small towns of the Eden Municipality. In sharp contrast, Mthashana has no decisive sectoral focus, with subsistence Agriculture in severe decline. As a consequence, Mthashana College has shifted its focus to short course skills programmes for community development and the generation of sustainable livelihoods.

Secondly, with regard to learnerships, we have seen in this chapter that whilst Cape Town College developed major components of its learnership programmes using existing campus staff, South Cape College outsourced its entire learnership curricula and programme management requirements to external consultants. Mthashana, choosing a third option, chose to de-emphasise learnerships in favour of short-course skills programmes. These curricula responses mirror the organisational strategies adopted by the three colleges – with Cape Town College integrating more fully the curriculum development of learnerships within mainstream college curriculum activity, whilst South Cape College maintained an entirely separate facility for learnership development with minimal links to formal college curriculum activity. Table 5.7 incorporates these additional factors in the evolving model of factors determining diverse routes to the establishment and functioning of the LPU.

Table 5.7: The determining factors behind three differing LPU routes

	Cape Town College	South Cape College	Mthashana College
Core identity of college	Big city urban college	Small town, peri-urban college	Deep rural college
Size	Large 15 000 learners	Medium 3 647 learners	Medium 3 218 learners
Majority population of students	46% African 41% Coloured 10% White	52% Coloured 26% African 21% White	92% African
Levels of unemployment in neighbouring communities	Medium	Medium	High
Core LPU strategy	Revisioning	Mixed mode	Envisioning
Organisational ecology	LPU 'devolved' and integrated within an existing effective organisational infrastructures	LPU 'detached' and separated from existing organisational structures LPU a separate business unit	LPU reports directly to CEO because organisational ecology is too weak to play host to it A 'centrist' model
Role of CEO	The CEO does not lead the LPU on a daily basis; devolved Staff and management structures run the LPU	Mixed; As a separate unit, LPU reports directly to Deputy CEO (New Business), but staff and management structures of the college do play a role	The CEO plays a very central role in starting up and leading the LPU
Presence of external stakeholders	Several urban-based partners available	Several small town based partners available	Few partners Trying to develop rural partners amongst CBOs and

			local government
Origin of new income	From business	From business	From the public sector
Presence of external stakeholders	Several urban-based partners available	Several small town based partners available	Few partners
Origin of new income	From business	From business	From the public sector
Core sectoral/occupational focus	72% of enrolments are in Engineering College also has a Wholesale and Retail focus	Oil and Gas sector Local government development within the larger Eden Municipality	Declining subsistence agriculture Shift to skills programmes that develop communities
Development of Learnership curricula	Integrated with the development of NATED curricula	Outsourced to external consultants	College has de-emphasised Learnerships in favour of short-course skills programmes

Chapter 6

IN CONCLUSION: DIVERSITY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY

Much has been learnt from the experience of establishing the three LPUs in the case study colleges. It is hoped that some of the lessons learnt will be of benefit to those colleges that have not as yet set up such structures. This concluding Chapter highlights matters that deserve further policy consideration, both within FET colleges and across the FET landscape.

Responsiveness

It is very evident that colleges have indeed responded to the call for greater 'responsiveness'. As we have seen in this research report, 'responsiveness' is a two-part phenomenon, on the one hand an educational imperative, and on the other, a response to government's call to action to help deal with the problems of poverty and unemployment. The three case studies show that considerable effort has gone into the college sector's responses in support of government's programmes to alleviate poverty and unemployment.

With regard to 'responsiveness' as an educational response to the new demands of globalisation, the evidence is far less clear. This is so for several reasons. The idea that employers are calling for higher levels of general competence - that is, for a higher level of general education - so that workers can become more flexible and adaptable in the face of dramatic changes in production methods and technological application, is contested in the field and difficult to measure empirically. Some college respondents as well as certain academic commentators see the call for 'responsiveness' as a push to further vocationalise college education and training and to 'dumb down' the academic quality and integrity of the core curriculum. There is certainly evidence from our three case studies that new programmes such as learnerships have led to the outsourcing of the teaching, managing and curriculum development functions of education (normally done by permanent college staff) to temporary, external contract staff. This, in itself, is a negative development over the long run because curriculum expertise around learnerships will never become embedded in the

institutional structures of the college, to the detriment of future generations of teachers and learners.

But in a wider sense, it is still not clear whether the educational version of 'responsiveness' has any analytical currency in today's college sector, or whether it is simply part of the discursive language of academic criticisms of globalisation. To date, we are unable to measure whether learners have been trained more 'responsively' to employer needs, because there are no graduate destination studies that trace SESD learner pathways from college into the workplace. Nor can we ascertain what employers expect from employees and whether recent college graduates possess these attributes. This is because Employer Satisfaction Surveys were not explicitly sought in these three SESD case studies. Tracer studies are extremely labour intensive, difficult to do, and costly to replicate on a wide scale. Therefore, the jury is still out on the question of 'responsiveness' in the educational sense, until such time as tracer studies become more readily available.

However, responsiveness to the socio-economic programmes of government is a vitally important development in the college sector, which in the past has been seen as lagging behind in terms of political transformation. There are additional measures that can be implemented that would amplify the progress achieved so far. This has to do with explaining more clearly and marketing more effectively to the college sector the wide plethora of socio-economic programmes operating at national, regional and local levels. The programmatic armoury of government includes:

- The industrial policies and micro economic development strategies of both national and provincial government, particularly the targeted niche sectors government intends developing such as bio-fuels, agro-processing, BPO, business tourism, mineral beneficiation and clothing and textiles
- The integrated development and local economic development strategies promoted by provinces, metropolitan councils and local municipalities
- The 'second economy' initiatives such as investments in infrastructure development (those initiatives that will benefit remote areas and whose construction will lead to greater employment of the poor), labour intensive production schemes, the Expanded Public Works Programme and the promotion of small and micro enterprises
- Social welfare programmes such as the community development workers scheme (who will assist local government in the delivery of services to remote communities) and the community-based care workers scheme (which will entail the training of early childhood development practitioners and care workers for those afflicted with HIV-AIDS) and other targeted programmes of assistance to the youth, marginalized and disabled

Colleges have a significant role to play in all of these programmes. The dissemination of information and the formulation of college-level strategies to support them, however, require greater impetus and amplification across the FET college sector.

Diverse responses

This research report has also shown that the college sector is not a monolithic entity, and that colleges do not respond to national calls for greater responsiveness in a homogenous or uniform way. We have learnt that three factors shape a college's response to external needs, and for each college, these factors combine in unique and distinctive ways. The factors are:

- The historical and external socio-economic conditions which shape the evolution of college identity
- The distinctive internal organisational ecology of the college
- The current curricula resources of colleges and the curricula needs of external stakeholders

Particular combinations of these factors in three different settings - Cape Town, South Cape and Mthashana - have produced three distinctive routes to the formation of LPUs and the building of external linkages. Cape Town College has built on its own academic strengths in the formation of its LPU, and because of its sound academic staff and management structures, has been able to develop a devolved or decentralised approach to building linkages. It has the privilege of being situated in an industrialized and vibrant urban economy where job prospects are far better than in other corners of the country. South Cape College, operating from a different institutional history and organisational logic, has chosen to use learnerships as a means of generating new income for the college through a dedicated LPU increasingly expert in capturing new niche areas for further college education and training. But this route has taken the LPU out of the mainstream of college day-to-day academic activity, and has located it as a separate campus more directly linked to top management. The organizational approach is therefore a bit 'devolved' and a bit 'centrist' – what we have called a 'detached' (or 'separated') approach to LPU formation. And finally, there is Mthashana College, whose socio-economic conditions of abject poverty and under-development have forced the college to pragmatically de-emphasise learnerships and to use the LPU to assist in building short-course skills programmes aimed at assisting in the process of community development and improved local government delivery. The college Rector has been the driving force behind this new vision, and as a consequence, the route chosen is far more 'centrist' in nature than the other two cases studied.

There is no evidence to suggest that any one route is a superior or inferior approach to LPU formation and the building of linkages with external stakeholders. Rather, the analysis

suggests that these routes are the inevitable pathways for these colleges, given their particular histories, socio-economic locations, internal organisational ecologies and existing curricula resources. FET college policies need to become more flexible and open to allow for this wide array of college trajectories.

Diversity and its implications for policy

Indeed, a number of issues are identified that would benefit from new forms of policy intervention or departmental encouragement and support. Amongst these, three issues stand out.

Tracer Studies

It has become impossible to comment on issues such as responsiveness, employability and college effectiveness if there is no data on the actual destinations of graduates from FET colleges, particularly those cohorts that have benefited from initiatives such as the SESD programme. Also needed are Employer Satisfaction Surveys. There is now some urgency that these sorts of studies be undertaken, both at a national/regional level, but more importantly, as a routine procedure annually in each college.

Quantitative mapping

Chapters Two and Three have shown how important it is for colleges to develop a sense of their socio-economic context and demographic location via a set of measurable indicators. This will require inputs from education management information systems at the national, provincial and local levels. The methodology to do such mapping, and the need for standardisation across colleges, are issues that will need to be addressed. However, without increasing levels of information flow of high quality, the LPUs will not be able to build upon their initial achievements.

Recognising diversity

The case for recognising diverse LPU routes has by now been well made. However, the extent to which the LPUs and the FET college sector engage with diverse 'segments' may not have received as much coverage. This report has identified at least four distinct 'segments' with which the FET sector engages, each requiring specific policy mechanisms and instruments. These are:

- *Articulation with higher education.* This segment received minimal attention in this study, although the College of Cape Town has committed itself to strengthening its articulation with higher education. Colleges will not fulfill their full potential in

being responsive to the larger economic project in South Africa if they fail to build pathways with Higher Education.

- *The formal (or first) economy*, that sector of the national economy that is naturally served by many of the large well-resourced, urban-based colleges such as the College of Cape Town. These colleges need to be more effectively incorporated within regional and local economic development strategies that target particular economic sectors for growth. These FET colleges are critical in the production of intermediate skills for new economic initiatives.
- *The second economy*, which thrives in both South Africa's urban and rural settings, and which is a far more difficult context for colleges to work in. A key point made earlier in this regard is that SME training strategies for the informal sector need to be more effectively 'joined-up' with wider economic development and industrial policy interventions at the national, regional and local levels, which seek to develop a SME sector. These include ongoing infrastructural support, start-up capital and continuing access to credit, business and management skills, and a certain 'market savviness' about the sector. Again, colleges need to join the more established economic agencies and SME networks of government to make their distinctive contribution.
- *The rural economy*, which is characterised by remoteness, lack of infrastructural resources, weak local government and the absence of formal sector jobs. Colleges operating in relation to this segment will need to rely far more on public sector initiatives such as investments in infrastructural development, EPWP schemes, local government development and the new emphases on industries such as indigenous crafts and eco-tourism.

In short, we need to recognise the highly skewed political economy underpinning FET colleges, and the highly differentiated college landscape that results, far more assertively. That colleges are diverse is not a weakness, but an asset. Their socio-economic contexts are very diverse, and therefore, colleges will have to do very different things in their unique contexts to make any kind of impact. FET policy and its key levers, which currently view colleges as homogenous entities, are likely to be more effective if they engage directly with these diverse South African contextual realities.

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