Management of the HEQSF Programme

Synthesis of the Proceedings from the 2021 Research Colloquium on '*Articulation from the TVET College Sector into Higher Education*'

Date: 1 September 2021

Time: 9. 00-12.30

Rapporteurs: Dr Christabelle Moyo and Ms Sindisiwe Mbhele

1. Introduction

The Council on Higher Education (CHE) held a Quality Promotion Research colloquium under the theme '*Articulation from the TVET College Sector into Higher Education*' via the Zoom online platform on 1 September 2021. A total of 113 participants comprising Council and HEQC members, CHE Management Committee members and staff, Working Group members, participants from both public and private higher education institutions, presenters, respondent and others took part in this colloquium.

The aim of the colloquium was for the stakeholders to engage with the research findings and recommendations with a view towards finding possible interventions to promote articulation from the TVET sector into higher education.

1.1   Objectives
The objectives of this colloquium were to:

i)   Share the findings of the research;

ii) Present recommendations drawn from the research findings; and

iii) Provide opportunity for researchers and other interested parties to critically engage with both the findings and the recommendations in terms of the interventions that can be adopted and implemented to ameliorate the situation regarding articulation from the TVET sector into higher education.

1.2. Expected Outcome

i) Participants were expected to engage and interrogate the interventions provided and to identify and prioritise those that are more practical and can be implemented in the short-term.

1.3 Structure of the Research Colloquium

The colloquium assumed the following structure:

i) Welcome address: *Dr W. Green - CHE CEO*

ii) Opening Remarks: *Prof N. Themba Mosia, Chairperson of Council*

iii) Background information, objectives and expected outcomes; and introduction of presenters: *Dr A. Saidi*

iv) Presentation: *Articulation from the TVET College Sector into Higher Education: Prof J. Papier and Dr S. Needham*

v) Response to the presentation: *Mr T. Vele*

vi) Discussion: *All*

vii) Synthesis: *Dr A. Saidi*

viii) Way forward and vote of thanks: *Dr W. Green-CHE CEO*

This report gives a synthesis of the key points that were distilled from the proceedings of the colloquium.

2. Welcome address: CHE CEO: **Dr W. Green**.

2.1 Key Points

i) The Council on Higher Education (CHE) is working hard to establish itself as a knowledge centre, an intellectual hub and as a thought leader in higher education. This colloquium fits into the broader purpose of the research function of the CHE.

ii) Articulation has been one of the focus areas for the CHE dating as far back as the advent of the democratic dispensation.

iii) Despite the attention, no approach has been adopted such as is envisaged in the policy documents such as the White Paper on Post-School Education and Training.

iv) The CHE looks forward to a fruitful engagement around the key findings emanating from the research by Prof Papier and Dr Seamus.

3. Opening Remarks: Prof N. Themba Mosia

3.1 Key Points

i) Entities such as (SAQA and the Quality Councils) are all accountable to Parliament through its Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Higher Education, Science and Technology (PCHEST).

ii) In almost all the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee meetings, the question that has been asked is what the CHE is doing with regard to the issue of articulation.

iii) Articulation affects all in the PSET sector, both public and private institutions, adult learning centres, Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs), private post school institutions, National Skills Fund and other regulatory bodies.

iv) The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) is also quite central in this as it has undertaken some work with the University of South Africa (UNISA) and the Durban University of Technology (DUT) and has also reported the findings of that research work to Parliament.

v) The issue of articulation needs everyone to put their heads together to see how the goals of the PSET system, which are to contribute to building a fair, equitable, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic South Africa and expanding access and improving quality and diversity in our provisions, can be promoted. One of the ways of promoting articulation is to strengthen relationships with the workplace.

vi) One of the problems that South Africa is facing today is the unemployability of students. There is a disjuncture between what students are trained on and the demands of the workplace, and hence articulation is seen as one of the cornerstones of trying to level the playing field for our students.

vii)   Looking at responsiveness of institutions and working with employers and the broader society, integrating all the components, is also another way of promoting articulation

viii) All these things mentioned above are doable. The only challenge lies in the unwillingness of the higher education system and also the TVET education system that is not what it should be. That is why there is a lot of resistance particularly in the university sector.

ix)   Articulation is about the mobility of students among and within institutions and policies such as credit accumulation and transfer (CAT), recognition of prior learning (RPL) are there in place to promote articulation, but the challenge lies in the implementation.

x)   As a system, we need to find ways of assisting our students to articulate by removing barriers that are in existence.

xi)   There is a need for higher education institutions to develop their own policies and guidelines to enable articulation to take place. There is also a need to promote RPL. Where possible, institutions should forge partnerships and collaborations with other entities; and between faculties and departments where vertical, lateral and diagonal articulation can be realised.

xii)   The CHE established a Working Group, and through the engagements of the Working group, barriers and interventions to articulation were identified.

xiii) In November 2020, the CHE presented to Parliament on '*Articulation from the TVET sector into Higher Education*.' Based on that presentation, the CHE has engaged Prof Papier and Dr Needham to assist with the research on articulation and that report will be presented in this colloquium.

xiv)   A report will be prepared to the Parliamentary Committee on the short-term, medium-term and long-term interventions. It is important that our stakeholders find the report meaningful and that the sector can also make further recommendations to the Parliamentary Committee on what should be done to promote articulation.

4. Background information, objectives and expected outcomes; and introduction of presenters: Dr A. Saidi

4.1 Key Points

i) The CHE since its inception has always believed that articulation is an important feature of any good education and training system and is critical in providing opportunities to individuals for lifelong learning.

ii) In 2004 the CHE released its criteria for programme accreditation. One of the nine (9) criteria for programme accreditation is programme design. This criterion has seven (7) variables attached to it and one of those variables is articulation.

iii) The aspect of articulation in this programme accreditation criterion states that the CHE will only accredit a programme if it shows that it is designed coherently and that it is articulating well with other relevant programmes.

iv) The White Paper for PSET (2013) shows that despite all the efforts that the CHE has put in this regard, articulation remains poor. An example is given of some universities that do not recognise courses from other universities even though they are in the same field and at the same NQF level, and even within the same institutions, across faculties and departments.

v) The White Paper (2013) prompted the CHE to look into research to try and understand articulation better, and to try and find ways of promoting it within the higher education sector.

vi) The first part of the research focused on looking at the global trends for promoting articulation within the higher education sector while the second year focused on identifying the barriers to articulation within the higher education sector, and also between the higher education sector on the one hand, and the other sub-frameworks on the other.

viii) The summary of findings from the research was presented to the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Higher Education Science and Technology in 2020.

 ix) The feedback from the Parliamentary Committee was as follows:

- Going forward, the work should focus mainly on articulation from the TVET sector into higher education.
- Although there is progress on articulation as demonstrated by the work done by SAQA, the scale of articulation happening is not wide enough and the majority of students from the TVET colleges continue to encounter barriers to articulation when they seek access into higher education.

- The barriers to articulation from the TVET sector into higher education are well known and therefore there is no need to investigate further.
- Priority should be on identifying more practical interventions that can be adopted and implemented to overcome those barriers. The CHE and its partner organisations constituted a Working Group, which was requested to focus on identifying possible practical and feasible interventions that could be adopted and implemented to promote articulation from the TVET sector into higher education.

x) The CHE sought the assistance of Prof J. Papier and Dr S. Needham who have been working closely with the TVET sector for long and have deep insights in the sector. The two academics have worked closely with the CHE and have produced the report that will be presented at this colloquium.

xi) The purpose of this colloquium is to engage with the research, with the findings and recommendations, and to see whether they make sense or whether there are still gaps to be filled or there are questions that still need to be answered.

5. Presentation: Articulation from the TVET Sector into Higher Education: Prof J. Papier and Dr S. Needham

5.1 Key Points from the presentation

5.1.1 Problem Statement

i) TVET college graduates have great difficulty with moving from TVET colleges into higher education.

5.1.2 The PSET Landscape in South Africa

i) The PSET landscape in South Africa is made up of institutions across a number of levels of the National Qualification Framework. These institutions serve different target audiences, are subject to different quality assurance bodies, and their offerings range across a wide spectrum: from general academic to more practically orientated ones.

ii) As a result, there are challenges in trying to bring about equivalences between qualifications.

iii) In the White Paper for PSET of (2013), there are three distinct sets of institutions, and all reside under three (3) quality assurance bodies namely the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) responsible for (levels 5-10), the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) responsible for (occupational qualifications (levels 1-8) and Umalusi responsible for general schooling qualifications (levels 1-4).

iv) SAQA oversees the NQF which consists of ten (10) levels.

v) **Council on Higher Education (CHE)/HEQC** (levels 5-10)

Universities that offer higher education qualifications sub-framework (HEQSF) qualifications may be research universities, comprehensive universities or Universities of Technology (UoTs).

vi) Universities have their own statutes and a high degree of autonomy with regard to the curriculum, employment of staff and other university responsibilities.

vii) **Quality Council of Trades and Occupations (QCTO)** (levels 1-8)

The QCTO registers all occupational qualifications of NQF level 1-8 on the Occupation Qualifications Sub-Framework.

viii) While the QCTO qualifications go from levels 1to 8, they are not considered on par with qualifications on the HEQSF (5-10).

ix) The OQSF includes the NATED part qualifications N4-N6 which may be trimester or semester programmes mostly in Engineering and Business Studies fields.

x) The occupational qualifications are all offered by public and private TVET colleges as well as some workplace providers.

xi) The providers of the QCTO qualifications have to be accredited by SETAs which delegated by the QCTO to undertake quality assurance responsibilities of learning programmes within the OQSF.

xii) **Umalusi:** Is the quality assurance body for school qualifications offered at TVET colleges under the DHET such as the National Certificate Vocational and the NATED 191 N1-N3 certificates that colleges offer.

xiii) College qualifications spurn a wide range of occupational areas. Colleges offer qualifications on the OQSF and also offer qualifications under Umalusi. A wide range of fields are offered such as Early Childhood Development,

Engineering domains, Business and Finance, occupational certificates like hairdressing, and others.

xiv) TVET College qualifications intersect within the space of the 2 sub-frameworks of the NQF: the GENFETQSF and the OQSF. They also occur within the HEQSF space through higher certificates that are offered under e memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with some universities in specific fields and under the quality assurance responsibilities of the HEQC.

Because qualifications at the TVET colleges intersect the 3 sub-frameworks, there is bound to be some confusion. Parents and students are often confused about what the particular type of qualifications the students leave college with, as well as the higher qualifications they can articulate to.

5.1.3 Why the Need for Articulation in South Africa?

i) There is a need for articulation in South Africa from TVET Colleges into universities in particular.

ii) The South African Constitution states that everyone has the right to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible. While all TVET college graduates might not wish to go to a university, there should be no unnecessary obstacles for those who want to realise further and higher education aspirations.

iii) The UNESCO report also makes mention of the need to remove unnecessary obstacles from the pathway of students from TVET colleges who wish to enter higher education.

iv) Key policies aimed at the growth of the economy have identified scarce and critical skills at intermediate and higher levels of education and training that South Africa's education and training systems are currently not addressing.

v) The White Paper for the PSET (2013) makes a strong statement on the need for articulation.

5.1.4 Education and Training Silos

i) Each of the three qualification sub-frameworks have differing mandates and statutory authority over institutions in their domain. While SAQA has oversight of the NQF, it has no legislative authority to enforce articulation between these

sectors. At best, SAQA can devise policies to address articulation, with which there may be nominal compliance. There have been, in many instances, little interface between the three sub-frameworks and the qualifications that are developed within them, and some of the nomenclature of qualifications adopted within each of the three qualifications sub-framework make it difficult for comparison.

ii) Importantly, TVET College qualifications straddle all three qualification sub-frameworks but in ways that do not accord recognition of TVET qualifications for access and progression to further learning.

iii) Over the last 10 to 15 years, at institutional level, there have been structural changes to our PSET institutions. As alluded to previously, public universities are statutorily autonomous. In some cases, the autonomy of universities has been used to obstruct articulation between TVET colleges and universities. Some universities do not even acknowledge or admit college graduates with TVET qualifications that meet university entrance criteria, and online admission systems do not make allowance for that. So, students who come with the National senior Certificate (NSC) are at an advantage when they apply.

iv) Mergers of universities and also structural changes within TVET colleges has exacerbated the challenges of articulation

v) The PSET sector has a diversity within itself, and it is almost impossible to have one blueprint that will apply to everyone in the PSET sector.

vi) There have been curricular changes at programme level. The Higher Education Qualifications Framework (HEQF) which became the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF) saw the disappearance of some of the Technical degrees offered by Technikons which are now Universities of Technology (UoTs), redefined as diploma level qualifications and subsequently re-curriculated into 4-year degree programmes. This brought about some changes to the ways that TVET colleges had related to Technikons previously.

vii) Universities of Technology (UoTs) have increasingly lost the traditional linkages that they previously enjoyed with TVET colleges, and many are pursuing post graduate provision and research in line with higher education funding formulae and competition for that funding.

viii) TVET colleges have also undergone curriculum changes.

ix) As a result, universities have not easily understood the National Certificate: Vocation (NCV) curriculum and the differences between the NCV and the NSC. For example, colleges offer one language at level 4 while schools offer 2 languages at level 4, and this is at times a barrier to students who want to access higher education as well.

x) It is evident that there are key systemic institutional and programmatic issues that affect effective articulation within the PSET sector.

5.1.5 Key Findings from International Literature on Articulation

i) Clear rules and conditions are necessary for articulation to succeed.

ii) Smooth articulation requires coordination and collaboration among education institutions, for instance joint planning, joint admission programmes and structures of communication and collaboration.

iii) The TVET should be linked with higher education to ensure flexible pathways at all levels, and to facilitate the progression of TVET learners to higher levels of education.

iv) Epistemological boundaries must be explicitly navigated rather than ignored.

v) Pathways are strongest when partner institutions are situated academically and geographically in close proximity. This physical proximity enables the situations to share facilities.

vi) Dual sector institutions could meet the needs of smaller communities large enough to sustain one integrated tertiary institution rather than a separate vocational college and a university. Universities are under increasing pressure from governments to engage in 'knowledge transfer', thus collaboration with vocational providers offers the possibility of access to fields of practice in which universities have no experience and could be a source of innovation.

vii) In some systems, those entering higher education from vocational school qualifications had to undergo an assessment of skills if part of their competence and skills were to be recognised as equivalent to higher education (an RPL process).

viii) There were qualifications that were developed for colleges that offer pathways into higher education such as in Scotland. The higher national

certificate and the higher national diploma are specific qualifications that were developed with the intention of enabling college learners to proceed into higher education.

ix) Funded, regional articulation hubs consist of universities that are provided with funding to enable them to strengthen links between universities and colleges, and provide structured articulation routes.

x) There are credit links between the different types of qualifications to enhance flexibility and enable the accumulation and transfer of credit from different routes.

5.1.6 Can Findings from International Articulation Contexts Transferrable to South Africa?

i) It does need to be noted that TVET systems across the world are heterogeneous and cannot be easily compared.

ii) Governance structures, funding arrangements, level of qualification, how they relate to other education and training institutions, all differ.

iii) As such, it is not possible for a simple transference of successful articulation practices in international contexts to South Africa's education and training system. Policy context needs to be taken into account and successful articulation practices need to be contextually aligned with South Africa's education and training system.

6. Key Actions and Recommendations Required for Articulation between TVET Colleges and Universities

6.1 Short-term (0-5 years)

i) Establish a standing National Articulation Committee/Project/Programme consisting of the necessary role-players outlined above, with clear terms of reference and regular reporting mechanism.

ii) At system's level, higher education institutions (HEIs) should be required to report on articulation planning and processes.

iii) Confirm and standardise funding arrangements for articulation partners.

iv) Allocate earmarked funding for universities accepting TVET college graduates above university enrolment targets.

v) Target opportunities for higher education teaching staff from existing college staff who are pursuing postgraduate qualifications – offer them leadership roles in the curriculum development processes with higher education institutions.

vi) Undertake curriculum mapping of TVET and higher education specific curricula to identify gaps and overlaps and ensure clarity and transparency to all; to understand equivalence in terms of volume and complexity; and to eliminate bias in the process of gaining access into qualification.

vii) Formalise agreements and collaborations through MOUs among institutions at programme and course levels.

viii) Identify and incentivise support services needed for articulating students into higher education institutions.

ix) Assist HEIs to develop common and inclusive admission policies that recognise different entry qualification types such as NCV4, NATED, NSC, RPL, alternative admission and so on.

x) Start with a systemic provincial approach to articulation and focus on critical areas that have a strong potential for success.

xi) Given the emphasis of the 2017 Articulation Policy on programmatic articulation, the CHE should ensure resources are provided to undertake a comprehensive mapping of NCV fundamentals in relation to Higher Certificate, Diploma and undergraduate study. This would assist in standardising criteria for NCV completers' entry into universities across the university system. The same process will need to occur for updated NATED qualifications, and other OQSF qualifications.

xii) Address confusion with regard to currency and portability of qualifications at the same NQF levels within different sub-frameworks, for example, the Level 5 HEQSF Higher Certificate, and the OQSF Level 5 qualification. Building this understanding will be crucial to ensure parity of esteem within the system.

6.2 Medium-term (0-10 years)

i) TVET colleges are given the right to offer particular NQF Level 5 higher certificates in their own right, and students can then move into an Advanced Certificate and then a Diploma at a higher education institution.

ii) Credit Accumulation and Transfer system should be made fully operational across all higher education institutions.

iii) Bridging programmes and equivalency schemes that are recognised and accredited by relevant authorities should be considered.

iv) Build into initial TVET programmes a sufficient range of general knowledge and skills to support lifelong learning.

v) Improve support structures at universities and TVET colleges for employed learners studying on a part-time basis.

vi) Assist institutions to setup articulation offices rather than having a single staff member responsible for articulation.

vii) Investing training strong and resourceful leadership to infuse the commitment to articulation throughout the institution.

6.3 Long-term (0-15 years)

i) TVET Colleges and Community Colleges should offer second chance programmes as well as bridging programmes, in a differentiated model of college provision to enable centres of excellence to develop where possible.

7. Response on '*Articulation from the TVET Sector into Higher Education*': Mr T. Vele

7.1 Key Points from the response

Articulation processes provide hope and enable aspirations of many students within the PSET system.

i) According to Statistics South Africa (Stats SA): for the second quarter (Q2) of 2021, the unemployment rate among the youth is 64.6% among those in the age group from 15 to 24 years, and 42.9% % among those between 25 and 34 years.

These are the age groups that the PSET is supposed to be serving. This age group can perhaps benefit from proper articulation processes from the TVET system into higher education.

ii) The study of this nature is therefore very important.

7.2 Policies Driving the Need for Articulation

i) The South African Constitution s29 (1) (b) provides the right to further education, without unnecessary obstacles.

ii) The National Skills Development Plan increases access to high quality and relevant education and training and skills development opportunities.

iii) South Africa's Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan focuses on the removal of barriers to articulation and enables for the rapid development of the much-needed skills in relevant industries to revive the economy.

7.3 Education and Training Silos

i) The report exposes the incoherence of the NQF regulatory landscape. The roles, mandates and authority of the different statutory bodies in the PSET space are not aligned. This has an impact on programme development processes and epistemological approaches such as under the Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework under QCTO, the Occupational Certificate: Office Administrator on NQF5 has 445 credits whilst under the HEQSF of the CHE, the Higher Certificate Office Administration NQF5 has 120 credits. This creates a lot of confusion among students and/ or stakeholders. This confusion has to be cleared.

ii) A legislative/regulatory framework/landscape change is needed to enable the envisaged articulation across the sub-frameworks and qualification types.

iii) Silo operations permeate beyond sub-frameworks of the Quality Councils into institutions themselves where the teaching and learning takes place.

iv) Articulation practices differ from institution to institution, and in some instances from Faculty to Faculty within the same institution.

v) The phenomenon of 'academic drift' which is discernible among the UoTs is a barrier worth noting. This happens when UoTs want to change the purpose for which they were established by trying to mimic research institutions (traditional and comprehensives). When UoTs start focusing more on producing post-graduate degrees at Masters' and Doctoral levels, they also start developing curricular in their undergraduate programmes with a focus on preparing students for those studies, and this creates barriers when students have to articulate from TVET qualifications into these qualifications. Diplomas that were supposed to be developed as vocational qualifications that lead students into jobs are now being developed to prepare students for post-graduate studies.

7.4 Local/South Africa Research on TVET Education

i) Local TVET education research is very limited as compared to higher education research, especially in relation to aspects such as curriculum development, responsiveness, epistemological approaches and so on.

ii) The 'neglect' of curriculum studies research in this sector has exacerbated some of the barriers that exist for articulation of TVET qualification into Higher Education.

iii) There have been efforts of researching in the TVET sector recently with some of the work coming from projects funded by the DHET such as the Unfurling Post School Education and Training (UPSET) project.

iv) Articulation of TVET qualifications to higher education will also need more effort and investment in research within the TVET qualifications space. This cannot be the responsibility of the Department of Higher Education and Training only. Higher education institutions with resources need to come into this space and carry out research so that when curriculum mapping of qualifications at TVET and qualifications at higher education institutions is undertaken, it is informed by abundance of research in those areas.

7.5 International Practices

i) The literature reviewed on international practices show collaborations at programme planning level.

ii) Programme planning and development of different institutional type is undertaken in a collaborative manner with considerations of skills needs within localities or regions.

iii) In South Africa, institutions plan their programme and qualifications mixes (PQMs) with broader (national) skills needs focus rather than regional (local). Higher education institutions should start being locally focused when they develop their PQMs because TVET colleges are more geared to serve local industries. A focus by universities on local and regional skills needs can also be a factor that can facilitate a smoother articulation process.

7.6 Actions suggested in the report

i)   There are other actions that will require advocacy of articulation and the integration of articulation processes within the existing policies and structures that deal with other RPL and CAT in higher education institutions.

ii)   Not all articulation processes will need a new cash injection into higher education institutions. There are already Recognition of Prior Learning offices and there are already Credit Accumulation and Transfer processes that exist within institutions. Articulation of TVET qualifications into higher education should be integrated in those processes rather than creating a new process/system wherein there are systems already in place to facilitate this articulation.

Conclusion

i)   Drawing from international best practices, the suggested actions will form the basis on which the different structures, that is SAQA, Quality Councils, the DHET, PSET institutions and others will have to introspect and start moving towards the realisation of smooth articulation between TVET and higher education qualifications envisaged in the White Paper for the PSET (2013) and in fulfilling the objectives of the NQF.

ii)   The question is: Are these structures ready to move from the comfort of inaction?

8. Discussion Session

8.1 Response: Dr Salim Akoojee: Against the funding of HEIs to enable articulation

- The issue of articulation is a systemic and a structural one.
- The participant argued that he was weary of the suggestion that universities that admit students from TVET Colleges should receive additional funding for that specific purpose.
- The suggestion that universities should be paid to take on college students is not dealing with the issue of engagement between the two sectors. Rather, the funds should be directed to the students and not necessarily the institutions.
- The issue of the reluctance of universities to engage with the college sector was raised.

- Locating the issue of articulation must be around getting universities and colleges to engage with each other, on equal basis. There should not be a situation where universities are 'bribed' to take in TVET college students. The problem of articulation should be seen as a mutual one, where university students are also seen to be enrolling at colleges because that is where job opportunities are.

- The real issue is universities having the power to decide on what basis they would accept TVET college students. Universities need college students in order to expand their diversity. Perhaps people have been in universities for far too long and do not understand what 'equity' means, because, when college students go to universities, they enhance, they provide a diversity that is not currently available.

- Also, part of the issue that we have been grappling with, is the issue of parity of esteem, and that the colleges are 'stepchildren', the issue of colleges being equal to universities needs to be dealt with.

8.2 Response/Comment: Dr Green *What are the reasons for promoting articulation?*

- Dr Green: ***Have we articulated sufficiently* the reasons why we want to promote articulation?** If we have not done that, and if we are not all on the same page in relation to that, we are doomed to fail right from the start.

- If we are promoting articulation because there are problems in the TVET sector, for example, curriculum problems and lack of articulation to the workplace, we might have a problem. If we want to promote articulation because of problems in the higher education sector, for example, we are not able to take students into higher education in the numbers we want right up front, and so we have an alternative route, we might have a problem. If we want to promote articulation because students do not have the competencies to come directly into higher education for those that want to, then we may have a problem.

- Articulation is about providing well-thought-through qualification pathways that are viable and meaningful and allow capable students to move through the various sectors in ways that are aligned to their career planning and their career thinking, and how they hope to progress in their careers. If we can start thinking in that fashion and then create this coherent qualification pathways, we might be more successful in this endeavour.

8.3 Comment: Dr Bolton

- Dr Bolton urged every participant to read the SAQA Bulletins of 2018 and 2019 that document world class practices of articulation.
- The starting point for articulation is to visualise a picture of articulation in the sector because sectors are very different.
- An appeal was made to the CHE to add the UPSET project to the recommendations. The project involves setting up articulation hubs in all the 9 provinces.
- In South Africa there should also be articulation into work and articulation into community and social development.

8.4 Comment: Dr Saidi - Issue of 'PSET' Discourse

- The 'PSET' has not been interrogated and internalized enough and it could provide solutions to some of the issues if this were to be done.

8.5 Response: Mr Vele

Agreed with Dr Salim Akoojee's weariness or skepticism on the issue of funding universities to facilitate the articulation of students from TVET colleges. He was of the view that universities do not have to be funded in order for them to take TVET students.

8.6 Response: Ms Olivia Mokgatle – The recommendation on partnerships

- Ms Mokgatle argued that, as long as TVET Colleges are perceived as the lesser of, then there is a problem, because the partnership will not start on an equal footing. The TVET Colleges and the universities have to realise that they have a role and a purpose to play in the development of the kind of graduates that need to be produced in the sector. Universities have a key role to play in the same way that TVET Colleges have a key role to play that the higher education institution does not play. The nature of the relationship is important. It should not be a big brother and little sister type of relationship.
- The issue of knowledge and curriculum mapping needs to be foregrounded because articulation happens at the programme level.
- In addition to remedial actions aimed at filling the gaps, focus should also be on the design of the curriculum so that there is no need to reedy anything.

8.7 Response: Dr James Keevy

Raised the following points:

- The sector is always trying to fix things by establishing new structures and he cautioned against a creation of new committees and structures to fix the issue of articulation. There are enough structures between the QCs and SAQA that can address this issue more meaningfully.
- The distinctions between systemic and specific articulation did not come through in the presentation. There are systemic policies that are in place but need to be enforced. The sector is being too 'soft' on the issue. Systemic articulation seems to be a neglected area that could be a solution to articulation.
- The sector has become complacent, articulation is not working in South Africa and there is a lot of talk, but not much is happening on the ground.

8.8 Comment: Dr Britta Zawada

- The Institutional Audits Directorate has started a new round of institutional audits and one of the standards in the institutional audits refers to articulation policies and the implementation of quality assurance thereof.

8.9 Response: Prof Darren Lortan

- Articulation seems to work best when it is driven provincially, when the province is involved either as an employer or as a strategic driver of where the province should be going.
- The Higher Certificates have been foregrounded as a device that can enable articulation, especially jointly offered Higher Certificates between TVET colleges and the university.
- The idea of tracking articulating students from the TVET sector into higher education is crucial, and this is not being done overtly. Consequently, much of the so-called evidence of why articulation is working or not working is anecdotal. There is no documentation of students that have transitioned into higher education, or will transition into the workplace, and have kept the three-way articulation system going. We do not seem to know if there is, for example, a statistically significant difference between the performance of the

articulating students and their high school counterparts. What we do know is that a number of people believe it is so, and a number of people believe it is not. Belief is not enough, there should be evidence.

9. Comments and Responses: Chats

- It would be interesting to see how the UPSET Project recently established and located at the DUT will take some of the recommendations forward.

- As we begin the process of developing higher implementation practice standards (HIPS) to underpin the implementation of the new Quality Assurance Framework (QAF), should we be considering articulation as an area for HIPS development?

- The NQF Level 5 intersection of all three sub-frameworks must be a key enabler of articulation into further studies, and between the TVET and higher education sector in particular.

- There is a need to have champions and political will to really action articulation as alternative pathways to further studies and work.

- How we address the issue of exclusivity by some universities that may hinder articulation willingness is very key here

- The presented term of actions should consider the supply and demand of professional educators which has impact on the number of students that can be effectively taught in various learning programmes. This has a direct impact on the professionalisation of the teaching profession, under the greater impetus of Public Service Professionalisation. Thus, planning consideration maybe required regarding the articulation of Educator Qualifications to further support articulation opportunities and meet the supply and demand through a three-pronged strategy.

- Universities are not playing ball and they assume a higher pedestal that automatically and almost naturally disturb the entire system.

- Funding should be allocated to be utilised at public and private institutions, as public universities are limited to certain numbers. The private higher education institutions can accommodate the remainder of students to allow for all to have equal access to opportunities.

- The issue is the entry requirements which are not in line with universities and TVET colleges. It would help if there can be some alignment between the two.

- There is a need to standardise programme nomenclature and credit values regardless of institutional and programme types
- Government needs to form partnerships with business and community-based organizations in ensuring that good practices are implemented.
- The UPSET Project is a great initiative focused on putting in place planned, meaningful and sustainable articulation structures and pathways. It is a game changer.
- One problem that has been identified is working in silos, and we must find ways to collaborate. The UPSET initiative sounds interesting, but how can private providers get involved?
- Lack of articulation between public and private institutions, also has not been addressed.

10. Synthesis

- Articulation involves complex issues, and it requires everyone putting their minds together to address the issue.
- Articulation is about providing well-thought-through qualification pathways that are viable and meaningful and allow capable students to move through the various sectors in ways that are aligned to their career planning and their career thinking, and how they hope to progress in their careers.
- Articulation provides hope and enables aspirations of many students within the PSET system.
- One of the programme accreditation criteria states that the CHE will only accredit a programme if it shows that it is designed coherently and that it is articulating well with other relevant programmes.
- Research has been disproportionately distributed between the two sectors, that is, the TVET sector on the one hand, and the higher education sector on the other.
- The challenges of articulation are not only confined to this country. They are global challenges. The only difference is that other countries are so innovative in trying to find out how they can overcome them. Emphasis is on collaboration in planning and collaboration in implementation,

- The issue of the PSET has not been interrogated and internalised enough and it could provide solutions to some of the issues if this were to be done.
- The mission drift happening among the UoTs is unjustifiable because they already have a role to play, a unique niche to fulfil and hence there is no need for the mission drift.
- Curriculum mapping is essential because initially articulation happens at programme level.
- Most of the proposed interventions from Prof Papier and Dr Needham do not need new money being pumped into the system. They can be implemented using current systems, structures, policies, legislation. What is needed is the will power from everyone to make things happen.

11. Way forward and vote of thanks

- A report on the deliberations at the colloquium will be produced and uploaded onto the CHE website
- The research report will be analysed to identify how the information can be used to strengthen and improve the research so far, and fill in some identified gaps
- Further analysis of the research findings will be undertaken to distil key issues to be packaged for reporting back to the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee and to the Minister.
- The CHE is committed to incorporating the relevant aspects of the recommendations into its work and encourages its partners, role players and key stakeholders to do the same.

There being no other business, the colloquium ended at 12.30 pm