

**THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (NQF)/
SOUTH AFRICAN QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY (SAQA)
SUPPORT PROJECT – PHASE II**

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NQF SUPPORT LINK
Seminal text with factual core content

MODULE 2: THE NQF and STRATEGIC GOVERNANCE

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OUTCOMES

SECTION 1: GOVERNANCE AND DEMOCRACYSpecific Outcome 1.1:

Demonstrate a clear understanding of strategic governance within the context of a new South African political dispensation.

Specific Outcome 1.2:

Apply critical and metacognitive thinking to your institutional environment in relation its strategic governance practices.

SECTION 2: A FET STRATEGIC GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK FOR THE NQFSpecific Outcome 2.1:

Outline a systemic view of FET-related governance institutions and their legislative responsibilities.

Specific Outcome 2.2:

Demonstrate a clear understanding of what South African legislation wants to achieve with respect to FET governance institutions in relation to the development and implementation of the NQF.

SECTION 3: GOVERNANCE AND PLANNINGSpecific Outcome 3.1:

Develop a comprehensive strategic plan that includes the development of an institution's vision, mission, values, and strategy, taking account of responsibilities with regard to the NQF.

Specific Outcome 3.2:

Describe and evaluate the institutional environment in terms of the relationship between the governance and management structures with respect to their various responsibilities.

PREAMBLE

The six *NQF Support Link* modules have been designed for leaders who have responsibilities related to the further education and training (FET) band of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). FET leaders are all those who have responsibility for influencing the decisions and plans to develop the FET band as envisaged in the body of legislation that impacts on FET. The vision for FET, in brief, is that it would be a band that provides many different learning opportunities at the intermediate level of knowledge and skill, within different institutional contexts, to different cohorts of FET learners. These learning opportunities would range from general academic to very specific occupation related learning. Central to FET as a system of learning is the National Qualifications Framework.

The NQF is the mechanism by which one part of the FET system relates to another i.e. it will ensure that learners are able to move from one learning pathway to another, from one type of institution to another, and from one level of learning to another. This will be achieved through the qualification and standards generation and registration processes that are managed by SAQA. The NQF is also the means by which the quality of learning throughout the learning system is managed through the establishment and accreditation of the different Education and Training Quality Assurance bodies (ETQAs).

This module, entitled *The NQF and Strategic Governance* is aimed at those who have been nominated to governance positions or appointed to institutional or organisational executive leadership positions. Those appointed to governance positions are South Africa's leaders in governance. The proof of their leadership is the confidence that is displayed in them when nominated by their stakeholder groups to play a decisive leadership role in the governance institutions that they are appointed to. In most cases, the nominations are confirmed by either a Minister of the national government or by a Member of the Executive Council of a provincial government. These leaders have direct responsibility to ensure that the purposes for which the NQF was conceptualised and legislated are brought to fruition. They have responsibility to ensure that the vision for the FET band is brought into being.

What then is meant by the title *The NQF and Strategic Governance*? Module One provides a very detailed discussion of the NQF and describes it terms of its macro and micro-elements.

The word "strategic" derives from "strategy" which means "the science or art of combining and employing the resources of an enterprise in planning and directing large activities and operations towards the enterprises success" (Macquarie Dictionary, 1991).

Governance has to do with policy making, planning and monitoring. A helpful definition for governance is as follows: “Governance refers to a process of making laws and policies, which regulate the delivery of services towards to achievement of national or organisational goals” (Zuma, 2000). From this we can conclude that the module *The NQF and Strategic Governance* is primarily concerned with the way in which policy makers direct the resources (broadly speaking) of an institution towards the achievement of a national goal - the development and implementation of the NQF.

GOVERNANCE AND DEMOCRACY

1.1. Introduction

The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is a central and critical feature of South Africa's Human Resource Development (HRD) Strategy. It is the concept that holds the various policy and legislation together in a meaningful and holistic way. It is the mechanism through which the various parts of the HRD Strategy relate to each other.

Module One, entitled *Implementing the NQF*, reminds us that the overall vision of the HRD Strategy is: "To maximize the potential of people in South Africa, through the acquisition of knowledge and skills, to work productively and competitively in order to achieve a rising quality of life for all, and to set in place an operational plan, together with the institutional arrangements, to achieve this."

The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), according to the SAQA Act (1995), has the responsibility to oversee the development and implementation of the NQF. SAQA is, therefore, not solely responsible for ensuring that the NQF is realised. It does, however, have the responsibility of providing strategic leadership and ensuring that the necessary policies, regulations and structures are in place to do so. We must, therefore, conclude that all governance institutions have a responsibility, along with SAQA, in realising the development and implementation of the NQF.

This module begins with the argument that governance institutions need to function properly or, put differently, need to understand what good governance practice is, in order to meet their responsibilities which include, but are not limited to, the NQF. Leaders in governance, therefore, need to understand the new governance culture within the framework of a new South African democracy. They need to understand their part in the macro picture. They need to understand what is considered to be "best practices" in governance, and finally, how all of this obligates them to take responsibility for the NQF which is a national goal and priority for a new education and training dispensation.

1.2. A New Governance Culture

Education and training in South Africa, as inherited from apartheid, was characterised by racially segregated "own affairs" divisions and homeland governments. The result was / is a deeply divided system marked by incoherence, unequal provision, duplication and an absence of system-wide planning.

From a governance perspective, the system was largely authoritarian by nature and resulted in different governance arrangements (ranging from state control, to state supervision, to state interference) for different institutions. These different arrangements allowed for different degrees of institutional autonomy. Furthermore, for the majority of

historically black institutions, the relationship with the state was one of opposition and conflict rather than that of partnership or collaboration.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) reflects the spirit of the new political dispensation to which South Africans have agreed. The very process of negotiation by all key stakeholders, the compromises, and eventually the agreements reached, created the environment for a new governance culture in South Africa. The transformation and redress agenda of the new state is a key objective in the creation of this culture. The fundamental understanding is that government cannot bring about the necessary transformation on its own. In order to succeed government needs to enter into co-operative arrangements with civil society, represented by key stakeholder groups, to bring about the needed political, economic and social transformation.

It is this culture of co-operation and negotiation for the national good that is critical for the further development and implementation of the NQF. Education and training is itself a contested terrain. In fact, for many these still constitute two different terrains and it is the function of the NQF to advance an integrative approach to both.

An analysis of policy highlights the following factors regarding the new governance culture. All these factors will impact on the degree with which governance institutions will / can formulate policies, plans and implement monitoring systems for the implementation of the NQF.

- Not all structures or participants in governance have equal levels of authority and responsibility. For example, while the Council of Higher Education (CHE) has both advisory and executive responsibilities, the National Board for Further Education and Training (NBFET) has only advisory functions. The National Skills Authority (NSA), however, has advisory, executive and allocative responsibilities in that the NSA advises the Minister of Labour on the National Skills Fund (NSF) allocations.
- Along with responsibility comes the need for accountability. The different policies, therefore, indicate how the Minister, who represents the state at the Head of the governance hierarchy, will hold institutions with legislated governance responsibilities accountable.
- Good governance can only be secured in an enabling institutional environment. A number of factors contribute to creating an enabling environment. These include but are not limited to: the availability and ability (capacity) of those appointed to governance institutions to participate; a mutually agreed understanding of what the responsibilities entail; adequate resourcing; sound relationships (both internal and external) that are motivated by institutional interests and goals rather than narrow stakeholder concerns; the acceptance of joint responsibility; transparency and courageous, strategic leadership.

1.3. The Concept of Co-operative Governance

According to the Minister of Education, Prof. K Asmal, the term “co-operative governance” is a legal term that, in terms of the Constitution, refers to the inter-government relationship between the national government and its provincial counterparts. However, the term is also used in various education and training policy and legislative documents and clearly, it cannot mean the same thing since the nature of the relationships is different. The difference is probably indicated in the words of the previous Minister of Education, Prof Bengu, when at the institution of the National Board of Further Education and Training (NBFET) said that the Board was being established in the “spirit of co-operative governance”. By this he meant that the state was wanting to co-operate with the key stakeholders in education and training for the purpose of realising the vision for FET as captured in the White Paper Four (1998).

The higher education sector was privileged to be the first of the education sectors to participate with government in the policy making process for that sector. The concept of co-operative governance was proposed by the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) in defining the higher education sector’s relationship with the state, represented by the Minister of Education. While the history, traditions and culture of higher education governance is very different from that of further education and training (FET), the discussion raises important principles that can inform FET governance institutions about the ways in which they think about their governance responsibilities and relationships.

The Commission’s approach to governance focused on an understanding of how different agencies and players work with government to achieve national goals and priorities.

Co-operative governance is to be located within a legitimate state that is striving to become democratic and encourage a strong state model in the sense of an assertive government bureaucracy that has capacity and has a multiplicity of autonomous civil society constituencies which acknowledge their different interests, maintain separate identities and acknowledge their mutual interdependence and responsibilities for attaining a common goal. (Report of NCHE, 1996)

Key to the concept of co-operative governance is the notion of institutional autonomy and academic freedom on the one hand and state steering on the other (as opposed to state control and state interference).

The Report of the National Committee on Further Education (NCFE) (1997) does not raise the issue of co-operative governance, but the Education White Paper Four (1998) does. It says the following:

We will establish a new framework for the governance of FET to drive the development of the new system and to ensure its responsiveness to the needs of our people and our country. This new framework will be based on the principles of co-operative governance. It will provide a strong steering, co-ordinating and developmental role for Government, substantial powers for FET institutions, and

partnerships between Government, organized business and labour, and communities. (DoE, 1998:19)

The policy and legislation promulgated by the Department of Labour reflect the same intent. The Labour Relations Act (1995), Employment Equity Act (1998), Skills Development Act (1998), and Skills Development Levy Act (1998) are all good examples of attempted co-operative governance arrangements. They all reflect new social agreements between government and its partners.

1.4. Promoting Good Governance

Establishing policy and legislative governance frameworks neither ensures its “successful” implementation nor does it secure a culture of good governance. Good governance is directly related to the quality of institutional leadership and management. Institutions that have legislated governance responsibilities have to interpret the legislation by which they are governed, and then need to proceed to put in place the necessary institutional policies and plans to ensure that they respectively meet those responsibilities.

It is critical that institutions reflect on whether they are achieving their institutional goals as well to question whether their practices meet the standards of good governance.

The National Board for Further Education and Training (NBFET) is currently undergoing a self-evaluation exercise. The main purpose is to reflect on its role to date and to determine those factors which prevent it from performing its responsibilities efficiently and effectively. This process may lead to recommendations to the Minister for changes in the legislation.

The higher education sector has recently undergone a review exercise. The higher education experience is important in that it demonstrates that policy and practice are subject to change as different partners in governance negotiate the “governance terrain”.

The Council on Higher Education established a governance task team early in 2001 as a result of concern about the quality of governance and management in the HE sector. They later initiated research in this area. The task team had three objectives, namely to:

- Describe and analyse the state of governance at HEIs with special focus on the role of councils, senates, institutional forums and executive management and the relationship between these four structures
- Establish whether, how effectively and with what consequences co-operative governance had been implemented at HEIs in South Africa
- Make recommendations on how to improve efficiency, effectiveness and accountability in higher education governance (CHE, 2002: 5)

The research produced two documents:

1. Council on Higher Education Education: *Policy Report Promoting Good Governance in South Africa Higher Education*, May 2002.
2. Council on Higher Education: *Governance in South African Higher Education*, May 2002.

One important outcome of the research has been a re-evaluation of the suitability of the concept “co-operative governance” in the light of the many changes that have occurred in the higher education environment which include, but are not limited to, the Amendments to the Higher Education Act of 1997.

The report puts forward the concept of “conditional autonomy” as being more appropriate and recommends that the Council on Higher Education initiate a fresh debate around the principles that inform policy and legislation for higher education governance in South Africa.

The Public Review Commission, in reviewing the practices of government departments, expressed its view on the notion of a culture of good governance.

Our view of such a culture, taking account of world-wide experience, is that it should help:

- To protect and enhance representative and participatory democracy;
- To support civil society and its interaction with government;
- To promote economic and social development and the advancement and empowerment of disadvantaged people and communities;
- To shift power and authority from central government to provincial and local government, within a framework of national norms, standards and values;
- To locate responsibility for achieving efficient and effective delivery of services to the lowest possible level;
- To ensure that ethical and professional standards are developed and maintained throughout the public service and all other organs of state;
- To ensure that the functions and records of government are open to public view and appraisal;
- To secure accountable and transparent stewardship of public resources, so as to build the kind of society envisaged in the 1996 Constitution;
- To reward achievement, acknowledge failure and give redress to grievances.

(PRC, 1998:1)

This review resulted in the implementation of new strategies by the public service for the purposes of securing good governance practices.

It is clear from the above that the nature of governance and governance relationships is fluid and, as a result of review and debate, will be redefined. Leaders in the FET band must equip themselves to reflect, to engage, and to articulate the issues for the purpose of “good governance”.

Having set the context in section 1, section 2 will outline the responsibilities that governance structures have in relation to the NQF.

SECTION 2

A FET STRATEGIC GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK FOR THE NQF

2.1 Introduction

A central feature of the policy and legislative framework for FET is the establishment of different institutions with governance responsibilities. These institutions function within different line Ministries, at different levels of the FET system (national, provincial and institutional), and have inherited different levels of legislated authority. Each will therefore respond to the NQF in relation to these factors.

Section 2 of this module will do the following. Firstly, it will identify the different governance institutions that have FET-related responsibilities. Secondly, it will outline

the different legislated functions. (It is recommended that the *NQF Support Link* curriculum developers ensure that the learners engage with all the aspects of the legislation, even though it is not all highlighted in this text.) Lastly, this section of Module Two will propose areas for strategic policy making in relation to the NQF for each of the governance institutions.

2.2. Identifying the Governance Institutions and their Strategic Responsibilities

Figure 1 below indicates the governance institutions with FET responsibilities (oblong shapes)

2.2.1 The South African Qualifications Authority established via the SAQA Act (1995)

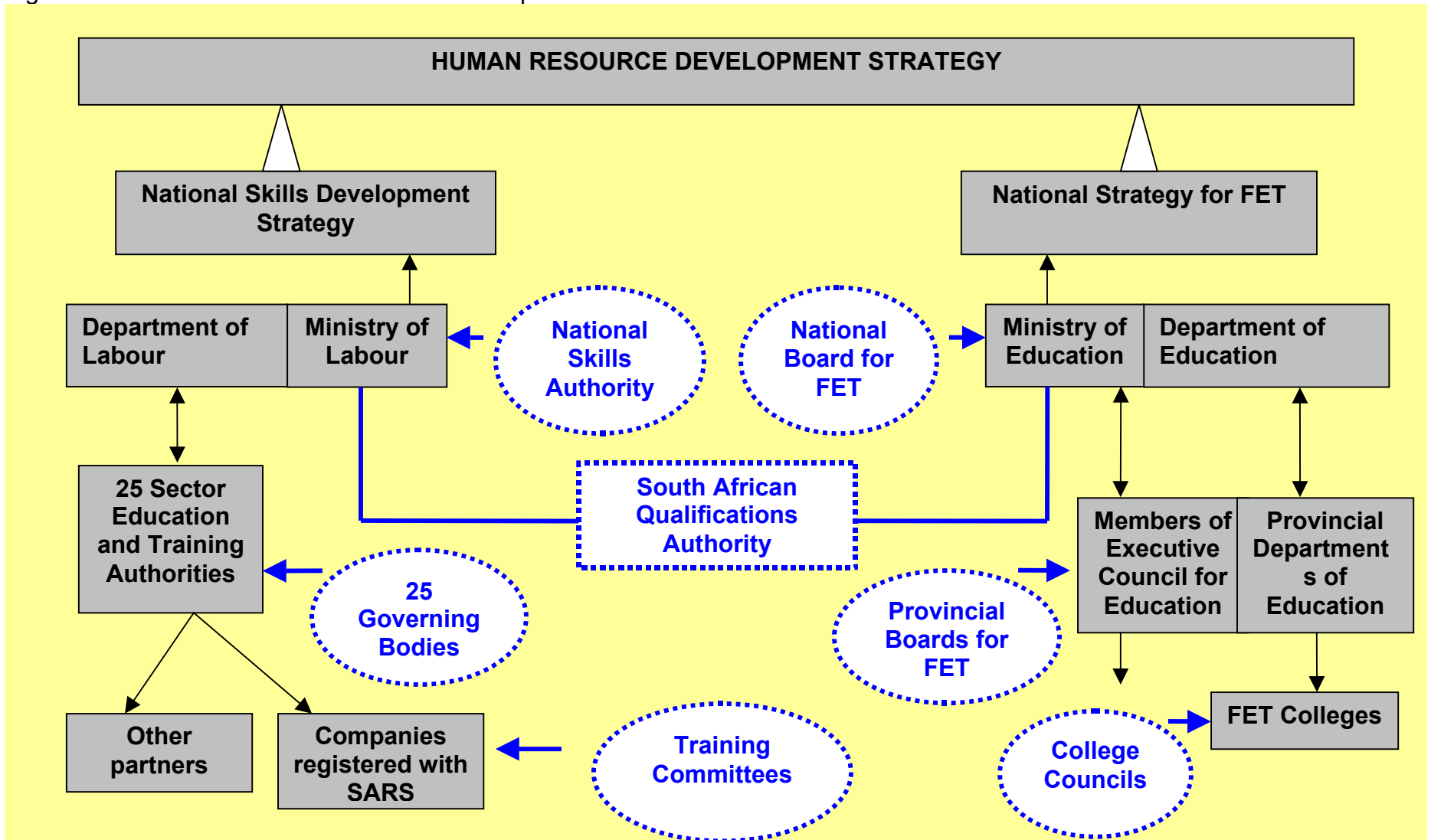
The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) is responsible for the following:

The objectives of the National Qualifications Framework are to:

- (a) Create an integrated national framework for learning achievements;
- (b) Facilitate access to, and mobility and progression within education, training and career paths;
- (c) Enhance the quality of education and training;
- (d) Accelerate the redress of past unfair discrimination in education, training and employment opportunities; and thereby
- (e) Contribute to the full personal development of each learner and the social and economic development of the nation at large.

(DoE, 1995:2)

Figure 1: Governance Institutions with FET Responsibilities



The functions of the Authority are outlined in section 5 of the Act and these are summarised below. (The details can be gleaned from the SAQA Act.)

The Authority has four main categories of functions. These are to:

- (a) Oversee the development of the NQF;
- (b) Oversee the implementation of the NQF;
- (c) Advise the Minister regarding the registration of qualifications and standards; and
- (d) Be responsible for the control of the finances of the Authority.

The Act makes two qualifying statements in relation to the above objectives and functions.

The Authority shall pursue...

- (a) After consultation and in co-operation with the state departments, statutory bodies, companies, bodies and institutions responsible for education, training and the certification of standards which will be affected by the NQF;
- (b) With due regard for the respective competence of Parliament and the provincial legislatures in terms of section 126 of the Constitution, and the rights, powers and functions of the governing bodies of a university or universities and a Technikon or technikons as provided in any Act of Parliament.

(DoE, 1995: 6)

The Authority has since its inception promulgated a wide range of policies and guideline documents that cover all the key elements of the standards setting and the quality assurance processes. These are listed as important resources at the end of this module. But, as is indicated in Module One, the NQF – its development and implementation – is “work in progress”. It is, therefore, expected that further policies and guidelines will become available as areas of need are identified. The SAQA Executive Officer’s constant refrain is, “We are making the NQF road by walking reflectively, accountably and boldly.” It is a developmental process that requires the co-operation of all the key stakeholders in the education and training environment.

The Authority, in terms of its role in providing strategic leadership for the NQF, would need to apply its mind to the issue of financial sustainability and to the implications of the recommendations of the Report of the NQF Study Team.

2.2.2. National Board for Further Education and Training (NBFET)

The NBFET is established via regulations promulgated under the National Education Policy Act of 1996. The regulations provide for the establishment, composition and functioning of the NBFET

Functions of the NBFET (taken from section 3 of the regulations)

The NBFET may advise the Minister on any aspect of further education and training on its own initiative and must –

- (a) advise the Minister on –
 - (i) any aspect on further education and training at the request of the Minister;
 - (ii) national further education and training policy, goals and priorities; and norms and standards, including funding norms and the terms, purposes and conditions of earmarked grants;
- (b) receive reports on further education and training from provincial advisory bodies;
- (c) monitor and report annually to the Minister on the goals and performance of the national further education and training system;
- (d) analyse and disseminate information about further education and training; and
- (e) perform any function assigned or delegated to it terms of any applicable law.

(DoE, 1998: 3)

Further references to the role and function of the NBFET can be gleaned from the FET Act of 1998. It is preferable that all those participating in the *NQF Support Link* familiarise themselves with this Act.

The NBFET is primarily an advisory body. It does not have any executive functions. In order to advise and report to the Minister the NBFET engages with FET policy making processes, as well as national Department of Education FET strategies and implementation activities.

NBFET Strategic Responsibilities in Relation to the NQF

The NQF-related areas that the NBFET should engage with and advise the Minister on are:

- The new FET curriculum frameworks for schools and colleges: The NBFET should ensure that these frameworks are completely aligned with NQF policies and that the objectives of the NQF are adhered to. The NBFET needs to engage with the new FET qualification, the Further Education and Training Certificate (FETC), and ensure that it applies to and meets the needs of the entire NQF system.

- Implementation Strategies: The NBFET should consider the implementation strategies that will impact on the quality of the delivery of NQF-aligned learning programmes in schools and colleges.
- The General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance (GENFETQA) body also known as Umalusi: The NBFET should advise the Minister accordingly – the alignment of policies and operations of Umalusi and its relationship with the Higher Education Quality Committee and the sector ETQAs.
- The co-operation between the Department of Labour and the national Department of Education especially with regard to Learnerships and skills programmes and the role of the public FET institutions as providers in these areas.
- The new funding regime and staffing establishment: If FET colleges are to be responsive to the learning needs of their communities and region they would need to be funded and staffed differently. The new norms would need to allow for much greater flexibility.
- Financial aid for marginalised students: FET, as conceptualised in policy documents, is that band of the NQF that will provide different cohorts of learners, with different needs, with different learning opportunities, all within the context of the NQF. There are many thousands of youth and young adults who need access to FET colleges for work-related qualifications but many cannot gain access because they are unable to pay their tuition fees. FET needs a sound financial aid system.
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL): The FET college sector needs a RPL policy as well as systems for implementation. This is an important aspect of access to FET, especially for adult learners who have gained knowledge and skill via work experience but have not had the opportunity to formalise their learning or to use it as a means of access to further learning.

2.2.3. Provincial Boards for Further Education and Training (PBFET)

The FET Act does not make provision for the establishment of the PBFET. It is understood that since FET is a provincial competence that the provincial legislature will provide for the establishment of these bodies. This is in accordance with phrase found in the FET Act "...subject to this Act and any applicable provincial law". Since the PBFET's have also been conceptualised as advisory boards, it is expected that their strategic response to the NQF would be in line with that of the NBFET.

2.2.4. Governance Structures of Public FET Institutions (FET ACT, 1998)

The FET Act allows for the establishment of the college council, academic board and student representative council. Section 9 reads as follows:

- (1) The council of FET institution must perform all the functions which are necessary to govern the public further education and training institution, subject to this Act and any applicable provincial law.
- (2) Subject to policy, the council must, with the concurrence of the academic board –
 - (a) develop a strategic plan for the institution which must –
 - (i) incorporate the mission, vision, goals and planning for funding of the institution;
 - (ii) address past imbalance and gender and disability matters; and
 - (iii) must be approved by the Member of the Executive Council;
 - (b) determine the language policy of a public further education and training institution and must publish it and make it available on request; and
 - (c) ensure that the further education and training institution is accredited to provide learning against standards and qualifications as registered on the National Qualifications Framework.
- (3) The Council, after consultation with the student representative council, must provide for a suitable structure to advise on the policy for student support services within the public further education and training institution.

(DoE, 1998:14)

The FET College is a provider of learning and the governance structures - the college council and the academic board, have executive responsibilities in relation the NQF. The academic board is primarily responsible for formulating policy regarding academic matters and would put these to the council for acceptance. The Academic Board, therefore, plays an important role in implementing the NQF in the context of the FET College. While the National Curriculum Framework will inform the college offerings, the council has the authority to make decisions for the implementation of qualifications offered by other ETQA's such as the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs), on condition that they are able to fund these offerings from sources other than that received from the provincial Department of Education.

College Council Strategic Responsibilities in Relation to the NQF

College Councils, in terms of the FET Act (1998), are responsible to the Member of the Executive Council for Education in the province for the successful functioning of the public FET colleges. College Councils need to ensure that the colleges provide relevant, appropriate and quality learning opportunities within the government's framework for education and training. They are therefore responsible for the following strategic decisions.

- To decide the programme of NQF qualifications to be offered by that institution.
- To put in place a funding policy for the design of new NQF learning programmes as well as for the capacity building of staff to implement an outcomes-based system of education and training.
- To initiate new qualifications or unit standards in collaboration with other parties
- To offer learnerships and skills programmes in collaboration with workplaces and / or SETAs.
- To put in place access policies that meet the NQF access and redress objectives.
- To put in place a language policy for the institution (language of learning and teaching).
- To institute quality management policies that facilitate outcomes-based assessment practices and the accreditation of learning programmes.

2.2.5. National Skills Authority (NSA) (Skills Development Act, 1998)

Section 5 of the Skills Development Act (SDA) reads as follows:

Functions of the NSA

- (1) The functions of the National Skills Authority are –
- (a) to advise the Minister on –
 - (i) a national skills development policy;
 - (ii) a national skills development strategy;
 - (iii) guidelines on the implementation of the national skills development strategy;
 - (iv) the allocation of subsidies from the National Skills Fund; and
 - (v) any regulations to be made;
 - (b) to liaise with SETAs on –
 - (i) the national skills development policy; and
 - (ii) the national skills development strategy;
 - (c) to report to the Minister in the prescribed manner on the progress made in the implementation of the national skills development strategy;
 - (d) to conduct investigations on any matter arising out of the application of this Act; and
 - (e) to exercise any other powers and perform any other duties conferred or imposed on the Authority by this Act.

The SDA also confers the powers to conduct investigations including “powers of entry and to question and inspect”.

The NSA is primarily an advisory body to the Minister of Labour in relation the policies, strategies and implementation activities of the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS). However, as indicated above, the NSA is also required to engage with SETAs. We can, therefore, conclude that they can also liaise with SETAs with respect to the NQF.

The Department of Labour and its governance partner, the NSA, have gone a long way in formulating policies, strategies and implementation plans for the NSDS of which the NQF is central. They have done so by integrating the NQF objectives, the standard setting processes and quality assurance functions into the NSDS and its implementing agencies, the SETAs.

NSA Strategic Responsibilities in Relation to the NQF

- A new funding framework for the NSDS has been put in place through the skills levy on employers.
- Twenty-five SETAs have been established to take responsibility for the planning and implementation of the NSDS in an economic sector. These include the design and registration of new Learnerships and skills programmes as well as fulfilling SAQA ETQA functions.
- A new system of occupationally related qualifications have been designed and registered under the management and supervision of the SAQA.
- A new learning vehicle, the learnership, has been designed in which learners will obtain both the theoretical and practical experience in defined occupational areas. Learnerships are based on SAQA registered qualifications.
- A National Skills Fund has been established to fund the education training of the unemployed
- National Skills Fund projects have been launched to provide access to the unemployed and other disadvantaged groups, focusing on redress in relation to gender, disability and race.

2.2.6. Sector Education and Training Authorities

(SDA, 1998)

Section 10 of the SDA reads as follows:

The functions of the SETA are:

(1) A SETA must –

(a) develop a sector skills plan within the framework of the national skills development strategy;

- (b) implement its sector skills plan by –
 - (i) establishing Learnerships;
 - (ii) approving workplace skills plans;
 - (iii) allocating grants in the prescribed manner to employers, education and training providers and workers;
 - (iv) monitoring education and training in the sector;
- (c) promote Learnerships by –
 - (i) identifying workplaces for practical work experience;
 - (ii) supporting the development of learning materials;
 - (iii) improving the facilitation of learning; and
 - (iv) assisting in the conclusion of learnership agreements;
- (d) register learnership agreements;
- (e) within a week of its establishment, apply to the South African Qualifications Authority for the accreditation as a body ...and must, within 18 months from the date of application, be so accredited;
- (f) collect and disburse the skills development levies in its sector;
- (g) liaise with the National Skills Authority on –
 - (i) the national skills development policy;
 - (ii) the national skills development strategy; and
 - (iii) its sector skills plan;
- (h) report to the Director-General on –
 - (i) its income and expenditure; and
 - (ii) the implementation of its skills sector plan;
- (i) liaise with the employment services of the Department and any education body established under any law regulating education in the Republic to improve information –
 - (i) about employment opportunities; and
 - (ii) between education and training providers and the labour market;
- (j) appoint staff necessary for the performance of its functions; and
- (k) perform any other duties imposed by this Act or consistent with the purposes of this Act

(DoL, 1998: 9)

The SDA has two further chapters. One is completely dedicated to learnerships and the other to skills programmes. These two chapters should be studied as well as the Skills Development Levy Act of 1998.

Strategic Responsibilities in Relation to the NQF

The SETAs are the central agencies of the Department of Labour for the implementation of the National Skills Development Strategy within specific economic sectors.

Since the NSDS has been conceptualised around the NQF, the SETAs have direct NQF development and implementation responsibilities. SETAs have core functions in three areas that are directly related to the NQF. These are:

- i. Skills planning and development
- ii. Learnerships and skills programmes development
- iii. Education and Training Quality Assurance

Each of the three areas is elaborated below.

i. Skills Planning and Development

One of the skills planning and development functions is the development of a sector skills plan (SSP). This involves gathering and analysing data with respect to the relevant economic sector(s) represented by the SETA. The SETA plans its NSDS activities on the basis of its sector skills plan. Among other things, the sector skills plan is important for identifying areas of scarce skills to which the SETA is expected to respond in terms of its education and training targets that it sets for itself. The SETA governing body is responsible for accepting the SSP as presenting a true reflection of that sector's skills profile. The governing body has the responsibility of ensuring the reliability of the information and relevance of the strategies in the SSP.

ii. Learnership and Skills Development

The SSP informs each SETA's policy decisions about which occupational qualifications should be developed and registered with SAQA. It also identifies the areas for learnership and skills development. The governing body makes policy decisions in this area and allocates the necessary resources for all the implementation activities related to these functions.

iii. Education and Training Quality Assurance

As required by the SAQA regulations, the SETAs are required to apply to SAQA for ETQA accreditation. In terms of this accreditation, SAQA requires that the SETA- ETQA puts in place the necessary policies, guidelines and procedures for

provider accreditation and maintenance, assessor and moderator registration, and learner certification.

2.2.7. Workplace Training Committees (Labour Relations Act 1995)

The establishment of workplace training committees is provided for via Regulations 6729 of the Skills Development Act (1998).

The Labour Relations Act (1995) makes the following reference about consultation in relation to education and training matters.

Section 84 Specific Matters for Consultation

Unless the matters for consultation are regulated by a collective agreement with the representative trade union, a workplace forum is entitled to be consulted by the employer about proposals relating to any of the following matters:

(a – h) ...

(i) education and training

Section 85 Consultation

Before an employer may implement a proposal in relation to any matter referred to in section 84, the employer must consult the workplace forum and attempt to reach agreement with it.

While the workplace training committees are not legislated governing bodies, the concept arises out of the principle that the employer should consult with employees in relation to matters of education and training.

The employer that is required to pay the skills development levy is able to get a grant return of up to 70% of the levy originally paid to the South African Revenue Services. One of a number of requirements is the submission of a workplace skills plan to the relevant SETA. The workplace training committee has a strategic role to play in the development of the workplace skills plan. The plan indicates which learning programmes are required for employees, who the beneficiaries will be and the amounts that are allocated for different learning programmes. The committee also has a crucial role to play in the formulation of education and training policies for their workplace. Policy areas include but are not limited to: access policy (at the same time taking into consideration redress in relation to gender, race and disability), the language policy, and policies in relation to assessment and certification.

SECTION 3 GOVERNANCE AND PLANNING

3.1. Introduction

The promulgation of legislation for the establishment of a new human resource development system, held together by the National Qualifications Framework, has introduced the need for a culture of planning, monitoring and reporting. The Human Resource Development Strategy, the National Skills Development Strategy, and the New Landscape for FET Colleges are all informed by a planning framework linked to national goals and priorities.

It is said that planning provides the tools by which organisations arrive at their decided state or, put differently, their vision of the future.

It is important, therefore, that governance institutions make their policy decisions, including those related to the NQF referred to in section 2 above, within an agreed planning framework. It is important to emphasise that institutions' policy decisions are not limited to the NQF, but NQF-related policies should form an integral part of the broader institutional goals.

There are many resources available for strategic planning. The developers of the *NQF Support Link* are advised to make decisions about which resources to use. There are also many models for strategic planning. FET leaders should preferably be exposed to a number of models and have the opportunity to choose that which best meets their respective organisation's needs. Furthermore, institutional planning should be considered within an organisation development model, since the organisation development model is sensitive to the development needs of institutions and have a formative review and evaluation component built in, which is always helpful.

What follows is a model of institutional planning that distinguishes between the roles of governance and management in the institutional planning process. The different roles are often an area of conflict. Governors and managers do not always make the distinctions and often step into the terrain of responsibility that belongs to the other. This area of conflict is not surprising as, while there are different functions between the two groups, there are often areas of overlap and also "grey areas" which need to be spoken about so that clarity can be gained about the way forward.

The model discussed below does not only distinguish between governance and management roles in planning but it also locates strategic planning in the realm of the "governing body". This may not be the preferred option for some. The danger of this model is that the majority may be excluded from the visioning

exercise. An alternative model is where the executive management of the institution plus representatives from all key stakeholder groups, of which the “governing body” is one, do the strategic planning under the leadership of the Chief Executive Officer. This model is often favored because it is said to better secure ownership of the strategic planning process by all the institution’s stakeholders.

However, as indicated earlier, FET leaders should engage with different models to make a decision on the model or variations thereof best suited and most relevant to their own institution.

3.2. Levels of Institutional Planning

Planning within an institution needs to take place at three levels – the level of governance, management and service delivery. Each level, however, relates to the other so that the strategic and operational plans together form the planning framework for the institution.

3.2.1. Strategic Planning for Effective Governance

The “governing body” of the institution is responsible for the strategic planning of the organisation, remembering that all key stakeholders have a presence on the governing structure. The strategic plan provides the framework for the institution’s operational planning and, therefore, the institution’s delivery.

The key elements of a strategic plan are:

- A vision and values statement. The vision is statement of desired future state
- A mission and institutional goals. The mission describes the core business of an institution. Goals are broad activities that are required to achieve the mission.
- A list of critical factors that can constrain the institution from achieving its mission and those that can help the institution to meet the challenge.
- A list of key role players and stakeholders that can support or hinder the institution from carrying out its goals.
- A set of priority actions / strategies that would need to be undertaken in the course of three to five years to position and build the institution into an organization that is capable of achieving its mission.
- A three-year programme of action with milestones and a monitoring mechanism.
- A sustainability plan that includes human, physical and financial projections.

A Five-step Strategic Planning Process

- i. Pre-planning: This stage includes a self-study as well as environmental scan or “research”. The outcome is a self analysis as well as an analysis of community / regional needs.
- ii. Orientation to the planning process and the clarification of participants’ expectations and needs.
- iii. Introduction to the planning process by outlining situation analysis and mapping of issues.
- iv. Defining the vision, mission, values, core business and character
- v. Designing the strategies and a programme of action to achieve the strategies.

3.2.2. Operational Planning for Effective Management

The Chief Executive Officer or the Principal of the institution is responsible for the operational plan. Operational plans are normally for one year and complement the institution’s strategic plan.

The key elements of the operational plan are:

- Each strategy outlined in full
- The outcome(s) specified for each strategy
- Specific objectives related to the outcome(s)
- Allocation of task and responsibilities
- Expected measurable output
- Deadlines for each objective
- Resources required for attainment of each objective

Figure 2 below is a strategic planning model showing the linkage between strategic and operational planning

3.3. Building Capacity for Planning

A critical issue in all of the above is the issue of capacity and ensuring that all participants have the needed support systems and resources to play their various roles to fulfill their responsibilities. As indicated earlier, an organisation development model for planning builds into the planning process formative evaluations that take account of the question of capacity throughout the planning process.

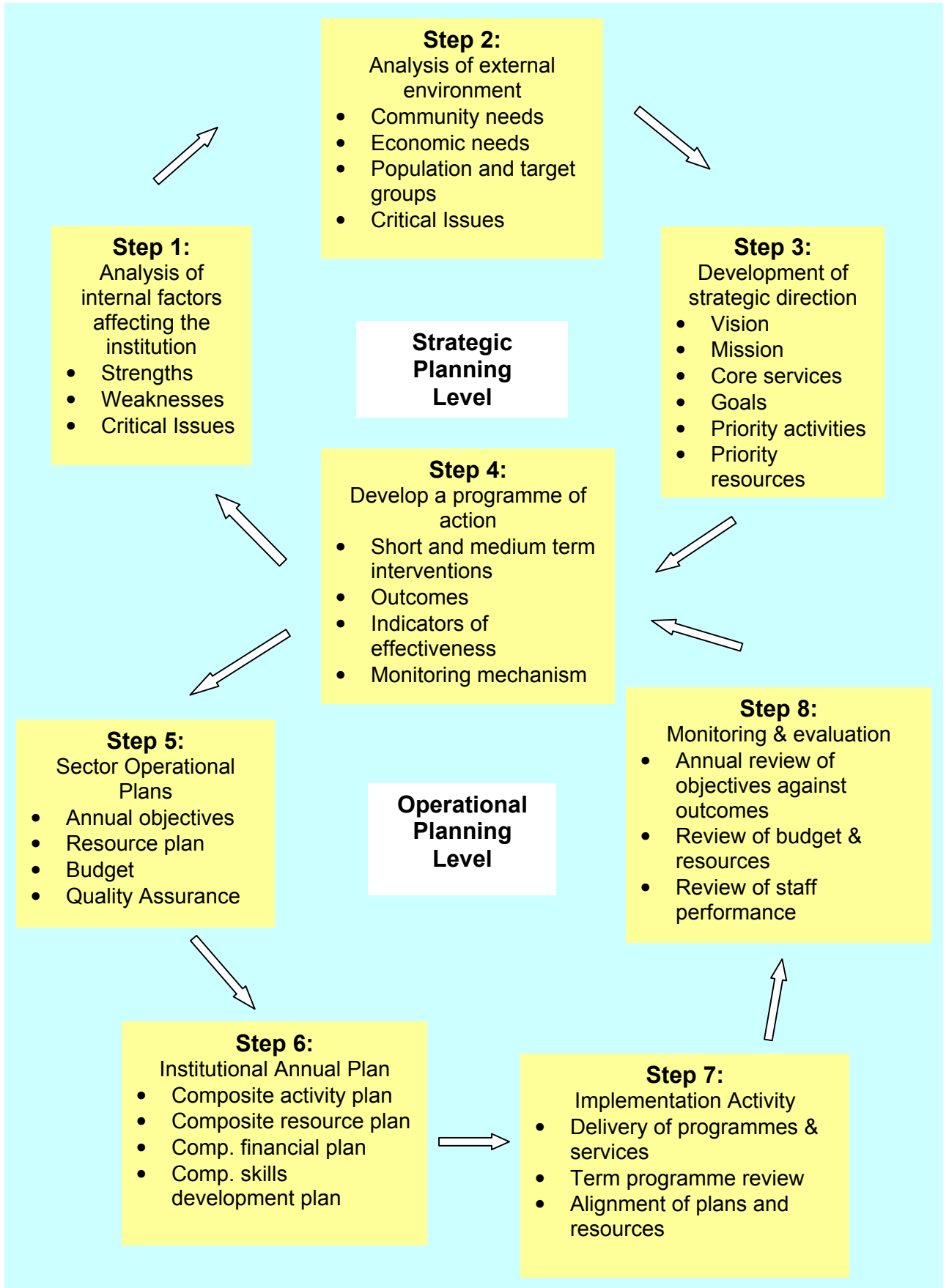
3.4. Monitoring and Reporting

Monitoring and reporting are key to the organisational planning cycle and strategic plans should indicate clearly the times for reporting and the various means by which progress will be monitored. An annual review of achievement against outcomes will inform a revision of the programme of action as indicated in figure 2 below.

Much more can be said about strategic planning. However, the purpose of this section of the module is to emphasise the need to integrate NQF matters into the institution's planning processes (rather than focus on detailed strategic planning) It begins with the "governing body" and the policy decisions it makes in relation to the NQF. It must, however, result in implementation that is monitored against clearly defined outcomes.

In conclusion, an important element of monitoring is measuring the performance of the executive and governance leaders in relation to their respective responsibilities. The process for this would need to be institution specific. Executives should be "measured" within an agreed institutional performance appraisal policy. As regards "governors", this may be a more difficult issue but, in principle, all governance institutions should embrace, at a minimum, the principle of self-evaluation which should be implemented on a systematic basis.

Figure 2: A strategic planning model showing the linkage between strategic and operational planning (Taken from: Implementing Further Education and Training, 2000)



RESOURCES:

1. DoE South African Qualifications Act (1995)
2. DoE: Report of the National Committee on Further Education: A Framework for the Transformation of Further Education and Training in South Africa (1997)
3. DoE: Education White Paper 4: A Programme for the transformation of Further Education and Training (1998)
4. DoE: Regulations for the Establishment of National Board for Further Education and Training (1998)
5. DoE: White Paper: Higher Education & Training (1997)
6. DoL: Labour Relations Act (1995)
7. DoL: Employment Equity Act (1998)
8. DoL: Skills Development Act (1998)
9. DoL: Skills Development Levy Act (1998)
10. CHE: Policy Report Promoting Good Governance in South Africa Higher Education (2002)
11. CHE: Governance in South African Higher Education (2002)
12. Juta & Nice: The FET Implementation Handbook (2000)
13. Juta & Nice: Implementing Further Education & Training (2000)
14. NCHE: A Framework for Transformation (1996)
15. RSA: The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996)