



Education

The right to education is enshrined in South Africa's Bill of Rights – not only for children but also for adults.

Learners

In 2004, the South African public education system accommodated more than 11,8 million school learners, more than 450 000 university students, more than 200 000 university of technology students, and over 460 000 Further Education and Training (FET) college students. There were almost 26 000 primary, secondary, combined and intermediate schools, with 350 000 educators.

The national matriculation pass rate declined from 73,3% in 2003 to 70,7% in 2004; 18,2% of matriculation candidates passed with university endorsement in 2004, compared with 18,6% in 2003. However, the actual number of learners who passed with endorsements increased from

In 2005/06, R6,9 billion was allocated to the Department of Education to contribute to improving salaries for educators. Some R4,2 billion of the R6,9 billion would be used for expanding pay progression for performance rewards and targeted incentives.

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The Masifunde Sonke Library Project was initiated by the Ministry of Education and civil society to address the challenges of illiteracy, and to promote a love of reading. The project is tasked to profile reading and to encourage stakeholders to promote reading.

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Number of schools for learners with disabilities and special needs

Eastern Cape	43
Free State	21
Gauteng	100
KwaZulu-Natal	62
Limpopo	23
Mpumalanga	18
North West	40
Northern Cape	9
Western Cape	68
National	384

Source: Department of Education

School enrolments

Education	Period	Enrolment
Enrolment (Early Childhood Development)	1999 – 2002	150 000 – 280 000
Primary school enrolment	1995 – 2001	95,5%
Secondary school enrolment	1992 – 2001	85% (+15%)

Source: *Towards a Ten Year Review*

82 000 to 85 117. This was possibly due to an increase of 5,9% in the number of candidates who wrote the exam.

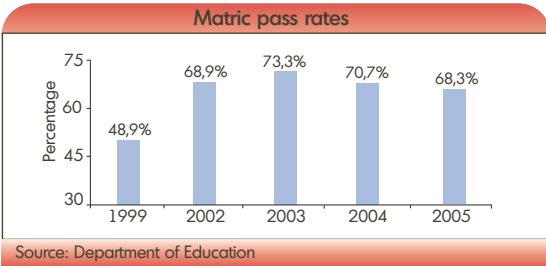
Some 537 schools obtained a 100% pass rate. Some 13 480 girl learners passed Mathematics at Higher Grade (HG) and 17 566 passed Physical Science at HG. A total of 40 098 learners passed with merit and 9 213 passed with distinction.



Over the past 10 years, the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) assisted more than 400 000 students with awards amounting to over R5 billion. A student may receive between R2 000 and R30 000, depending on need that is determined through a national means test.

In 2004/05, over R200 million was paid back by past students and made available to future students.

In 2005/06, the NSFAS was allocated a budget of R776 million.



Girl learners' performance in matric Mathematics HG improved, with 74,4% passing the exam in 2004, compared with 50,9% in 1999. The national matric pass rate in 2005 was 68,3%.

By mid-2005, South Africa had more than 11 373 libraries, of which 9 416 were school libraries.

The new institutional landscape for Higher Education (HE) consists of eight separate and incorporated universities, three merged universities, five universities of technology and six comprehensive universities.

Structures

South Africa has a single national education system, which is organised and managed by the national Department of Education and the nine provincial departments.

Policy

Schooling is compulsory between the ages of seven and 15. All learners are guaranteed access to quality learning. There

By September 2005, more than 22 000 people had been recruited nationwide to prepare and serve school meals, enabling them to gain income through stipends. Meals are served at about 15 000 schools to more than five million learners.

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Number of farm school learners by province, 1996 and 2000

	1996	2000	% decrease 1996-2000
Eastern Cape	50 307	18 333	-64
Free State	104 268	56 618	-46
Gauteng	25 297	12 576	-50
KwaZulu-Natal	192 615	55 304	-71
Limpopo	48 294	24 877	-48
Mpumalanga	93 352	32 847	-65
Northern Cape	16 528	8 321	-50
North West	61 107	35 503	-42
Western Cape	47 264	11 769	-75
Total	639 032	256 148	-60

Source: Department of Education

are two types of schools: independent (private) and public.

At public schools, parents vote on the level of school fees. Poor parents are given exemption or reductions.

According to a plan of action to improve access to free, quality education, released in June 2003, compulsory school fees were abolished for 40% of learners in the poorest schools.

The Department of Education has developed proposals for improving the targeting of funding for schools and the regulations governing school fee exemption.

Curriculum 2005

Curriculum 2005 is based on the concept of outcomes-based education, which regards learning as an interactive process between educators and learners. The focus is on what learners should know and be able to do (knowledge, skills, attitudes and values). The goal is to produce active and lifelong learners with a thirst for knowledge and a love of learning.

Further Education and Training

FET provides learning and training from National Qualifications Framework (NQF) levels 2 to 4, or the

equivalent of grades 10 to 12 in the school system, and Further Education and Training Certificate (FETC) General Vocational and FETC Trade Occupational, on NQF levels 2 to 4 in FET colleges. The FETC will replace the current Senior Certificate in 2008.

The FET curriculum is shifting towards a balanced learning experience that provides flexible access to lifelong learning, HE and training, and productive employment.

The implementation of the FET curriculum in 2006 is expected to complete the circle of transformation of the schools' curriculum. The FET curriculum provides for a fundamental component comprising four compulsory subjects: two official languages, Mathematical Literacy or Mathematics, and Life Orientation, as well as three approved subjects.

In addition to the 21 approved subjects, 13 non-official languages have been added to the curriculum.

In 2002, the 152 technical colleges were merged to form 50 multicampus FET colleges.

In 2005/06, government invested R1 billion over the next three years for improved facilities, equipment and support for FET colleges in the country.

Higher Education transformation

According to a strategic plan for HE, enrolment at these institutions will rise from 15% to 20% of school leavers within 15 years. Within five years, enrolments in the humanities will decline, while those in Business and Commerce, and Science, Engineering and Technology will rise.

The 2001 National Plan for HE also envisaged:

- research being funded through a separate formula based on research output



By May 2005, the South African Council for Educators had registered about 490 000 educators, of which 18 000 were provisionally registered.

- targets being set to increase the numbers of black and female students and academic staff.

The total cost for the restructuring of the HE system is estimated at R1,9 billion for the period 2001/02 to 2006/07.

Institutional restructuring

The new HE landscape consists of the following institutions:

- University of the Witwatersrand
- University of Cape Town
- University of Stellenbosch
- Rhodes University
- University of the Western Cape (which incorporated the Dental Faculty of Stellenbosch University)
- University of Zululand
- University of Venda
- University of the Free State (which incorporated the QwaQwa Campus of the University of the North and the Bloemfontein Campus of Vista)
- North West University (which incorporated the University of Potchefstroom and Vista Sebokeng Campus)
- University of Pretoria (retained its name after incorporating the Mamelodi Campus of Vista University)
- UNISA (retained its name after merging with the Vista University Distance Education Campus and Technikon SA)

Since the launch of the National Strategy for Mathematics, Science and Technology Education, the number of African learners performing better has increased almost two-fold nationally. About 11% of these learners are from 102 dedicated schools. In these schools, performance tripled, especially at higher-grade level. There has also been an improvement in participation by female learners, especially in the dedicated schools, where there are currently more female than male learners taking Mathematics and Science.



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- Tshwane University of Technology (from the merger of technikons Pretoria, North West and Northern Gauteng)
- Durban Institute of Technology (from the merger of Natal Technikon and Technikon M.L. Sultan)
- Central University of Technology (formerly Technikon Free State)
- Mangosuthu Technikon
- University of Johannesburg (from the merger of the Rand Afrikaans University with Technikon Witwatersrand, which incorporated the Soweto and East Rand campuses of Vista University)
- University of Limpopo (from the merger of the Medical University of South Africa [Medunsa] and the University of the North)
- Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (from the merger of the University of Port Elizabeth, Port Elizabeth Technikon and Port Elizabeth Campus of Vista)
- Eastern Cape University of Technology (from the merger of the University of Transkei, Border Technikon and the Eastern Cape Technikon)
- University of Fort Hare (which incorporated the East London Campus of Rhodes University)
- Cape Peninsula University of Technology (from the merger of the Cape Technikon and Peninsula Technikon)
- Walter Sisulu University for Technology and Science (from the merger of the University of Transkei, Border Technikon and Eastern Cape Technikon)
- Northern Cape Institute of Learning
- Mpumalanga Institute of Learning.