



# OFFICIAL GUIDE TO SOUTH AFRICA 2019/20

**EDUCATION**

## Basic education

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) is mandated to monitor the standards of education provision, delivery and performance across South Africa, annually or at other specified intervals, to assess compliance with provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996 and national education policy.

Schooling 2025, the overarching plan for the basic education sector, encapsulates the long-term vision of education priorities, targets and programmes articulated for the sector in the National Development Plan (NDP).

The NDP: Vision 2030 envisages that by 2030, South Africans should have access to education and training of the highest quality, leading to significantly improved learning outcomes.

The department was expected to continue to focus on: improving school infrastructure; providing high-quality learner and teacher support materials; developing skills for a changing world; planning for the migration of the early childhood development (ECD) function from the social development sector to the basic education sector; providing support to improve matric completion rates; facilitating the increase in supply of quality teachers; and providing nutritious meals for learners through the National School Nutrition Programme.

### Introduction of Kiswahili

The process of incrementally refocusing the teaching and learning of the previously marginalised African languages in South African schools, has led to the introduction of Kiswahili as a Second Additional Language (SAL) in Grades 4-12 in 90 schools (10 per province).

The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement for Kiswahili SAL for grades 4-9, has been versioned and the Kiswahili Toolkit has been developed for the respective grades.

The restructuring of the History curriculum, the introduction of Kiswahili as the SAL and the incremental introduction of African languages, are part of the DBE's responses towards the decolonisation of the curriculum.

### Improving school infrastructure

The department is committed to improving the physical infrastructure and environment at every public school in the basic education sector. The department is expected to accelerate the construction, maintenance, upgrading and rehabilitation of new and existing infrastructure in the basic education sector, including district and circuit accommodation.

Funds from the School Infrastructure Backlogs Grant will be used to provide water, sanitation and electricity to schools that do not have these basic services; and replace schools that are constructed with inappropriate materials such as mud, wood and tin.

### Providing high-quality learner and teacher support materials

The DBE was expected continue ensuring that learners have access to quality learner and teacher support materials by providing workbooks to learners in grades R to 9. The department expects to print and deliver an estimated 58 million workbooks for learners in grades R to 9 in each year over the medium term in life skills, languages and mathematics. These workbooks are expected to be distributed to more than 24 000 public schools across South Africa.

### Developing skills for a changing world

To prepare learners for jobs in a changing and increasingly digitised world, over the medium term the department planned to enhance the curriculum by introducing new technical subjects. These new subject choices include coding, robotics and data analytics at the primary school level. Several public ordinary secondary schools are expected to be transformed into focus schools. By mid-2020, the DBE had developed the Coding and Robotics Curriculum for Grades R-9.

In addition to prioritising mathematics, science and aviation, new technology subjects and specialisations will be introduced at these focus schools. This initiative will be funded through the maths, science and technology grant, which will also provide resources for workshops and laboratories, information and communications technology equipment and support to schools, including technical high schools and primary or feeder schools.

The department's partnership with Ford Motor Company was expected to see a total of 240 engines donated to technical schools offering Automotive as a subject.

The department, in partnership with the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies, was expected to equip identified 152 sites in 76 education districts with Virtual Classroom infrastructure as part of fully embracing the digital revolution of remote learning.

### Planning for the migration of the ECD function

The NDP envisions quality ECD as a priority for South Africa to improve the overall quality of education and the long-term prospects of its future generations.

The department was expected to work closely with the Department of Social Development and other partners to oversee the migration of the responsibility for ECD from the social development sector to the basic education sector, and the process of introducing two years of compulsory preschool for all children before they enter Grade 1.

### Providing support to improve matric completion rates

In response to the NDP's call to reduce the learner dropout rate, the Second Chance Programme provides support to matric learners who do not meet the pass requirements of the National Senior Certificate examinations. The programme's new policy priority would be to include learners with disabilities.

Accordingly, the DBE would use the existing 23 special schools for the blind and 43 schools for the deaf as sites of support for learners with disabilities in the Second Chance Programme. In addition, as a measure to support the performance of all learners, the department will develop a web-based system that will allow multiple users to upload subject support for learners to access.

The programme will provide support in subjects such as mathematics, science, accounting and languages; and will facilitate the establishment of 80 face-to-face centres, and appoint more than 800 teachers and 80 centre managers to teach after school hours and over weekends.

### Closure of schools in 2020

In July 2020, Cabinet took a decision to allow schools to go on a break for four weeks. The sector had managed to reopen schools in a phased-approach in June after the forced closure in March owing to the Coronavirus Disease.

## Role players

### Provincial departments of basic education

The DBE shares a concurrent role with the provincial departments for basic schooling and ECD, but it is the responsibility of each provincial department to finance and manage its schools directly. District offices are the provincial departments' main interface with schools.

### South African Council for Educators (SACE)

The SACE aims to enhance the status of the teaching profession through registering educators appropriately, managing professional development and promoting a code of ethics for all educators.

### Umalusi Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training

Umalusi sets and maintains standards in general and further education and training through the development and management of the general and further education and training qualifications sub-framework. The Nguni name means "herder" or "shepherd."

## Programmes and projects

### Educational portal

Through the Thutong Portal ([www.thutong.doe.gov.za](http://www.thutong.doe.gov.za)), the DBE aims to lead the drive to improve learning in the country through appropriate use of technology.

The Thutong Portal is the online point of entry to a comprehensive array of free educational resources, policy information, and interactive services concerning all aspects of the South African schooling sector.

It provides relevant information and services about the South African school curriculum, teacher development, school administration, and management.

Thutong's key focus is on creating strong and vibrant online communities of practice to facilitate discussion and sharing of information and ideas amongst peer networks, and in an effort to encourage South African educators to develop and improve education by sharing the country's common intellectual capital.

Thutong – meaning "a place of learning" in Setswana – features a searchable database of web-based curriculum resources for various education sectors, grades and subjects.

### School fees and exemption

School fees are set at annual public meetings of school governing bodies (SGBs), where parents vote on the amount to be paid. Parents who cannot afford to pay school fees can apply to the SGB for conditional, partial or full exemption from paying school fees. Schools must not charge school fees for orphans. The right not to charge school fees will be limited to the schools that have been declared no-fee schools.

The names of the no-fee schools, which are determined based on the economic level of the community around the school, will be published in a provincial gazette.

## Higher education and training

The NDP envisages that by 2030, South Africans should have greater access to post-school education and training opportunities through a system that is responsive to their needs. This is supported by Priority 2 (education, skills and health) of government's 2019-2024 Medium Term Strategic Framework.

The DHET was expected to give expression to these guiding policies by focusing on transforming universities and increasing student financial aid; expanding access to TVET colleges and improving their performance; developing artisans; and strengthening the governance of the community education and training sector.

### **Transforming universities and increasing student financial aid**

The DHET was expected to focus on transforming the higher education sector into a high quality, demographically representative system that provides students and staff with opportunities for access and success. To support transformation in the sector, the department was expected to implement the university capacity development programme.

### **Strengthening the governance of the community education and training sector**

The DHET recognises that improving the community education and training sector is key for development as it has the potential to provide students with access to a comprehensive range of programmes that lead to part and full qualifications and employment opportunities, including entrepreneurial opportunities.

To ensure that the sector rises to its potential, the department would continue prioritising the development and training of lecturers in community education and training colleges and learning centres by enabling them to upgrade their qualifications, with a particular focus on mathematics and science. The department has also strengthened its recruitment policies so that only qualified lecturers are employed in the sector.

### **Institutions of higher learning**

South Africa's higher education landscape comprises the following institutions:

- Cape Peninsula University of Technology
- Central University of Technology, Free State
- Durban Institute of Technology
- Mangosuthu University of Technology
- National Institute for Higher Education, Northern Cape
- National Institute for Higher Education, Mpumalanga
- Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University
- North-West University
- Rhodes University
- Sol Plaatje University, Eastern Cape
- Tshwane University of Technology
- University of Cape Town
- University of Fort Hare
- University of the Free State
- University of Johannesburg
- University of KwaZulu-Natal
- University of Limpopo
- University of Mpumalanga
- University of Pretoria
- University of South Africa
- University of Stellenbosch

- University of Venda
- University of the Western Cape
- University of the Witwatersrand
- University of Zululand
- Vaal University of Technology
- Walter Sisulu University, Eastern Cape
- Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University.

### Technical and Vocational Education and Training

The DHET is mandated to provide quality skills programmes that address the need in the labour market for intermediate skills accompanied by practical training. TVET comprises vocational, occupational and artisan education and training as offered by TVET colleges.

This band of education and training is also referred to as ‘post-school’, meaning that it refers to education and training that takes place after leaving school, even if only with a Grade 9 completed.

The only age restriction for a person wishing to study at the TVET level is that the person should be 16 years or older. There are 50 registered and accredited public TVET colleges in South Africa operating on more than 264 campuses spread across the rural and urban areas of the country.

### Role players

#### South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)

SAQA is a statutory body that oversees the development of the NQF by formulating and publishing policies and criteria for the registration of organisations. It also oversees the implementation of the national framework by ensuring the registration, accreditation and assignment of functions.

#### Council on Higher Education (CHE)

The CHE is an independent statutory body to advise the Minister, monitor trends in the higher education system and assure and promote the quality of higher education. The CHE also has the mandate to audit higher education institutions, accredit programmes offered, develop a higher education qualifications framework and set standards.

#### Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO)

The primary functions of the QCTO are to design and develop occupational standards and qualifications and to submit these to SAQA for registration on the NQF, establish and maintain occupational standards and qualifications, ensure the quality of occupational standards and qualifications and learning in and for the workplace, promote the objectives of the NQF, liaise with the National Skills Authority (NSA) on the suitability and adequacy of occupational standards and qualifications, and on the quality of learning in and for the workplace.

#### Sector education and training authorities (SETAs)

SETAs continue to strengthen and deliver relevant priority skills to South Africa’s labour market, with particular emphasis on artisan development, apprenticeships, learnerships, internships and bursaries; and partnerships with TVET colleges, universities and the market to provide work experience opportunities.

SETAs are mandated by the Skills Development Act of 1998 to implement national, sector and workplace strategies to develop and improve skills in the South African workforce; provide learnerships that lead to a recognised occupational qualification and fund skills development.

The authorities derive their objectives directly from the third National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS), which aims to: increase access to occupationally directed programmes; promote the growth of public TVET colleges; address low levels of youth and adult literacy and numeracy skills; and encourage the better use of workplace-based skills development.

### **National Skills Authority**

The NSA is an advisory body to give guidance on:

- policy, strategy, implementation and NSA allocations
- liaising with SETAs about policy, strategy and sector-skills plans
- implementing the NSDS
- reviewing the accounts and balance sheet of NSA annually
- receiving and using information from the Skills Development Planning Unit.

### **National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS)**

The NSFAS is responsible for providing loans and bursaries, developing criteria and conditions for the granting of loans and bursaries to eligible students, raising funds, recovering loans, maintaining and analysing a database of funded students, undertaking research for the better use of financial resources and advising the Minister on matters relating to student financial aid.

