Concluding thoughts

- Ease of movement – stepping stones, zigzags, crooked paths – not linear or uni-directional;
- Complex, sustained work needed, based on direct contact, conversations, negotiations, subject expertise, professional judgment, mapping, agreed 'currency', on what makes educational sense, i.e. structure is not enough
- 'Equivalence' is not easy or straightforward
- Articulation will not fit a one-size-fits-all mould
- Common frustration with form, funding and policy (form should follow function...), should therefore also look at processes, regimes and procedures
- Plan for real and potential needs
- Commitment to nimbleness and innovation
- What about extra-institutional and informal learning?
- What about credit (specified; unspecified; for WIL)?
‘The issue of “dead-ends”, you know, that persons can pick up learning later in life...[that] because you had a bad start somewhere, it doesn’t mean that for the rest of your life you are going to be locked into a system that you can’t move...’ (Isaacs, 2005)

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Outline

- Brief introduction
- An environmental scan – some metaphors for articulation in South Africa
- (Tentative) blockages and barriers to articulation
- A few examples of good practice from South Africa and elsewhere in the world
- Preliminary views and options to be considered
Brief introduction

- Defining ‘articulation’ – the promise
- Clarity; jointedness; connectedness; coherence; coordination; progress; movement...
- Articulation provide for learners, on successful completion of accredited prerequisites, to move between components of the delivery system
- The systematic coordination of course and/or program content within and between educational institutions to facilitate the continuous and efficient progress of students from grade to grade, school to school, and from school to the working world
Articulation – metaphors (1)

- Articulation as *a spiral* - epistemological articulation
  - Distinct but equally valuable expressions of learning
  - Theory and practice are complementary within a holistic curriculum established through collaboration and partnerships in keeping with the purpose of the programme
- Vertical or horizontal/lateral articulation
- Rising spirals or iterative spirals
- ‘Linked qualifications’
- Complementary elements – movement planned and desirable
- Enables movement between different components of the learning system
Articulation – metaphors (2)

- Articulation is a *stairwell* – articulation between NQF levels
  - Between two or more institutions offering learning programmes at different levels, e.g. FET and HE(T);
  - Vertical or diagonal articulation;
- Currently, mostly directly between FET colleges and Universities of Technology; or
- Between FET colleges, catching up with additional subjects or improvement of subjects, then entry to, or credits for HE
- Enables movement between levels
Articulation – metaphors (3)

- Articulation is *a cross road* – ‘change in direction’
  articulation
  - Change of focus mid-programme;
  - Intra-institutional – from one course to another; from one department/faculty to another;
  - Often sideways articulation
  - May have to revert to *stairwell* articulation for additional subjects
  - Intra-institutional articulation facilitated by common programmes, e.g. NC(V); Nat Dipl.
- Systematic coordination of course and/or program content within and between educational institutions
Articulation – metaphors (4)

- Articulation is a *spirit level* – articulation between like/dissimilar institutions
  - Could be lateral, diagonal or vertical articulation;
  - Dependent on mutual esteem of institutions for each other in terms of programme quality, assessment, quality assurance;
  - Intra-institutional and/or intra-sectoral
- Also dependent on systematic coordination or course and/or programme content (mapping) against each other’s programmes
Articulation – metaphors (5)

- Articulation is *a globaliser* – articulation between education systems
  - Internationalisation of education, especially in the context of regional/continental NQFs, e.g. African HE Harmonisation and Tuning
  - Degree comparability; graduate mobility
  - Core ‘competences’ within fields of learning or subject areas are the basis for articulation
  - Particularly about ‘recognition of learning’ in order to enhance mobility
- Enables movement between systems based on coordination of course and/or programme content
Blockages and barriers (1)

- **Institutional** blockages – lack of coherent pathways within the institution and between the departments/schools/faculties
  - May be exacerbated at comprehensive institutions – vocationally oriented and academically oriented programmes;
  - May be inhibited by something as simple as incongruent administrative, procedural, funding systems
- **Legislative/regulatory** blockages – e.g. 50% residency clause (Joint Statute Act, 1988)
- Other regulatory blockages, e.g. between institutions and professions; institutions and workplaces to be explored
Blockages and barriers (2)

- **Structural** blockages – different ‘types’ of qualifications, located with different ‘types’ of quality councils
  - Meaningful articulation only possible if there is a common currency, e.g. subjects or units of learning
- **Epistemological** blockages – socio-political, as well as educational
  - Caricatures of education and training;
  - Ideological elegance;
  - Real epistemological differences;
  - Establishing ‘equivalence’
Blockages and barriers (3)

- **Perceptual** blockages
  - Parity of esteem between public/public institutions; public/private institutions; education/practice; rural/urban; contact/distance; sub-sector/sub-sector; sub-framework/sub-framework ...
- Others?
- Power?
Good practice: south AFRICA

- CPUT, DUT, MUT, TUT, NMMU
  - Universities of Technology and a Comprehensive
- Examples of agreements:
  - Colleges assist students to catch-up;
  - Availability of ‘access/bridging’ programmes at UoTs;
  - Credit/access iro N4/N5 subjects – 1st year;
  - Upgrading of college lecturers’ qualifications;
  - Curriculum analyses, mapping and development;
  - Career guidance
- Other forms of articulation not so evident
Good practice - Australia

- Detailed resources for conversations and negotiations
  - Visual guide of articulation routes; Content mapping; papers, case studies, pilots (IACT)
- Real and potential student demand
  - End-on models; embedded VET models; concurrent study models
- Recognition that definition of articulation is restrictive – should include:
  - ‘articulation pathways that do not require completion of VET qualification’, and articulation between VET and HE, as well as HE to VET
  - Mapping as the foundation for a common currency and consensus on what is equivalent
Good practice - America

- Broad guidelines, policies developed within the frame of objectives of institutions
- Principles include transparency, openness to innovation, accountability for public funds
- Student should be given maximum consideration
- Not prescriptive, but based on:
  - Quality of learning;
  - Comparability of nature, content, level of learning;
  - The appropriateness of learning experience ito programmes offered at ‘receiving’ institution
- Extra-institutional and informal learning
- A framework for articulation is not enough:
  - Direct contact, experts, professional judgment