Table 57: Numbers of learners registered for, writing and passing selected Civil Engineering and Construction subjects at N Level 6, 2009

Subject	No. registered to write	No. writing (and % of those registered)	No. passing (and % of those writing)	'Actual success rate' (no. and % passing of those originally registered)
Building Administration	2 354	2 229 (94.7%)	1 605 (72.0%)	1 605 (68.2%)
Building and Structural Construction	2 414	2 253 (93.3%)	1 277 (56.7%)	1 277 (52.9%)
Building and Structural Surveying	3 433	3 082 (89.8%)	1 418 (46.0%)	1 418 (41.3%)
Quantity Surveying	2 590	2 415 (93.2%)	1 254 (51.9%)	1 254 (48.4%)
TOTALS	10 791	9 979 (92.5%)	5 554 (55.7%)	5 554 (51.5%)

(Source of data on which calculations are based: DHET 2009a)

In 2009 while 39 478 learners registered to write exams in the Civil Engineering and Construction subjects in all the NCV programmes at all levels, 52 513 learners did so in all the N programmes taken together.

3.5.3.3 Statistics on Post-School Further Education and Training, 2011-2012

This section of the report provides an overview of access to study, and student progression, at public and private TVET Colleges. It also provides details regarding numbers of learners registered for, writing and passing NCV and N programmes at all of the NQF levels at which they were offered, enabling some comparison with 2011 data.

Information in this section was taken from the publications *Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa 2011* (DHET 2013d) and *Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa 2012* (DHET 2014b).

3.5.3.3.1 Overview of student enrolment in public and private TVET Colleges, by qualification and institutional type, 2011-2012

Table 58 shows the numbers of students enrolled in public and private TVET Colleges in 2011 and 2012, by qualification type, including the National Certificate: Vocational (NCV), Report 191 (or NATED) qualifications (N1-6); and occupational qualifications – qualifications associated with trades, occupations or professions resulting from work-based learning and consisting of knowledge unit standards, practical unit standards and workplace experience unit standards[43]. 'Other' qualifications – referring to all other skills development and short courses – are also included.

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[43] These qualifications are in line with Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework (OQSF) specifications in 2014 (QCTO 2014).

Table 58: Numbers of students enrolled in public and private TVET Colleges by qualification type in 2011 and 2012

Qualification	PUBLIC TVET Colleges 2012	PUBLIC TVET Colleges 2011	PRIVATE TVET Colleges 2012	PRIVATE TVET Colleges 2011
NCV[44]	140 575	124 658	4 181	1 816
Report 191 N1-3	125 096 (N1-3)	222 754 (N1-6)	3 790 (N1-3)	19 524 (N1-6)
Report 191 N4-6	234 528 (N4-6)		12 337 (N4-6)	
Report 550 NSC	1 715	1 128	4 222	5 180
Occupational qualifications	62 359	20 799	47 156	63 394
Other	93 417	30 934	43 900	44 532
TOTAL	657 690	400 273	115 586	134 446

(Source of data on which calculations are based for 2011: DHET 2013d; Source of data on which calculations are based for 2012: DHET 2014b)[45]

Table 58 shows that total student enrolment was higher at public than at private TVET Colleges across both years. Enrollment was also higher at public TVET Colleges for all qualification types apart from the Report 550 National Senior Certificate (NSC) in both 2011 and 2012, and occupational qualifications in 2012.

The highest enrollment at private TVET Colleges was for occupational qualifications – these enrollments made up 47% and 41% of all private TVET College enrollments in 2011 and 2012 respectively (Table 58). Over 86.8% and over 76% of students enrolled at public TVET Colleges in 2011 and 2012 respectively were enrolled for NCV and N programmes.

Total enrollment at public TVET Colleges increased between 2011 and 2012. It decreased at private TVET Colleges in the same period (Table 58). Shifts downwards in enrollment numbers at private TVET colleges for Report 191 (N) and Report 550 (NSC) 'Occupational' and 'Other' qualifications between 2011 and 2012 are mirrored by increases in numbers for these qualifications at public TVET Colleges.

Table 59 shows *percentages* of all students enrolled for NCV and N programmes in 2011 and 2012, in public and private TVET Colleges respectively, and in total, taking all students at public and private TVET Colleges together for a full picture. Total student numbers in Table 27 refer to *all* students enrolled at TVET Colleges in 2011 and 2012, regardless of whether the College is public or private. Table 59 makes visible where most students *proportionally* were enrolled for particular qualifications in 2011 and 2012.

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[44] National Certificate: Vocational, introduced in 2007 at NQF Levels 2 and 3.

[45] Sources of information for this table were, for Public TVET Colleges: Audited Weekly Enrolment Monitoring of Public TVET Colleges (DHET 2011, 2012), and for Private TVET Colleges: Annual Survey of Private TVET Colleges (DHET 2011, 2012).

Table 59: Percentages of students enrolled for NCV and N programmes in 2011 and 2012

Qualification/ Students	No. in Pub. + Priv. TVET Colleges 2012 (% of total)	No. in Pub. + Priv. TVET Colleges 2011 (% of total)	No. in Public TVET Colleges 2012 (% of total)	No. in Public TVET Colleges 2011 (% of total)	No. in Private TVET Colleges 2012 (% of total)	No. in Private TVET Colleges 2011 (% of total)
NCV	144 756 (18.9%)	126 474 (23.9%)	140 575 (21.4%)	124 658 (31.2%)	4 181 (3.8%)	1 816 (1.4%)
Report 191 N1-6	375 751 (48.9%)	242 278 (45.9%)	359 624 (54.8%)	222 754 (55.8%)	16 127 (14.5%)	19 524 (15.1%)
Occupational qualifications	109 515 (14.3%)	84 193 (15.9%)	62 359 (9.5%)	20 799 (5.2%)	47 156 (42.3%)	63 394 (49%)
Other	137 317 (17.9%)	75 466 (14.3%)	93 417 (14.2%)	30 934 (7.8%)	43 900 (39.4%)	44 532 (34.5%)
TOTAL PUBLIC + PRIVATE	767 339	528 411	655 975	399 145	111 364	129 266

(Source of data on which calculations are based: DHET 2013d, 2014b)

Table 59 shows:

- overall, student numbers at TVET Colleges increased by just under a third between 2011 and 2012 – the increases were mainly in the public colleges;
- the qualifications with the greatest proportions of students in public colleges were the N programmes; and
- overall, a smaller proportion of students enrolled for NCV and occupational qualifications in 2012 relative to 2011, with more students overall enrolling for N and 'Other' qualifications in this period – possibly worth noting are the increased proportions of students enrolled for occupational qualifications and other learning offerings in public colleges, and for NCV programmes and other learning offerings in private colleges.

3.5.3.3.2 Overview of numbers of students registered for, writing and passing NCV and N programmes in 2012, with some comparisons with 2011

Table 60 presents overview numbers and percentages of students passing NCV Level 4, and N Levels 3 and 6 exams, in 2011 and 2012.

Table 60: Numbers and percentages of students writing and passing NCV and N exams in public and private TVET Colleges, 2011-2012

Student numbers/ Qualification type	No. writing 2012	No. passing (%) 2012	No. writing 2011	No. passing (%) 2011
NCV Level 4	15 334	6 018 (39.3%)	17 836	7 638 (42.8)
Report 191 N3	9 928	3 724 (37.5%)	2 909	1 366 (47%)
Report 191 N6	8 735	2 902 (33.2%)	2 428	1 488 (61.3%)

(Source: DHET 2014b)

Table 60 shows that the numbers of students writing and the numbers and percentages passing NCV Level 4 exams declined between 2011 and 2012.

Although *pass rates* declined for N3 and N6 exams across the two years, the numbers of students passing these exams increased in line with increased numbers writing the exams (Table 60).

Tables 61 and 62 show the numbers and percentages of students registered for, writing and passing NCV and N exams respectively in 2011 and 2012, using available data.

Table 61: Numbers and percentages of students registered for, writing and passing NCV Levels 2, 3 and 4 exams in public and private TVET Colleges in 2012 and 2011

Qualifications	No. registered to write	No. writing (and % of those registered)	No. passing (and % of those writing)	'Actual success rate' (no. and % passing of those originally registered)
NCV Level 2 (2012)	73 044	38 792 (53.1%)	16 517 (42.6%)	16 517 (22.6%)
NCV Level 3 (2012)	28 017	18 305 (65.3%)	7 663 (41.9%)	7 663 (27.4%)
NCV Level 4 (2012)	18 607	15 334 (82.4%)	6 018 (39.3%)	6 018 (32.3%)
NCV Level 4 (2011)	19 889	17 836 (89.7%)	7 638 (42.8%)	7 638 (38.4%)

(Source of data on which calculations are based for 2011: DHET 2013d; Source of data on which calculations are based for 2012: DHET 2014b)[46]

The patterns of student numbers declining with NCV level, and declining between numbers registered to write, writing and passing in Table 61, mirror 2009 numbers shown in Table 36 above. Reflected similarly, are the increasing success rates as NCV levels increase (see Tables 61 and 36).

The numbers registered to write, writing and passing NCV Level 4 exams in 2011, and pass rates, were higher in 2011 than in 2012 (Table 61). It would be important to analyse data in the same format in future years, to track progress in desired directions or otherwise.

Table 62: Numbers and percentages of students writing and passing N Levels 1-6 exams in public and private TVET Colleges in 2012

Qualifications	No. registered to write	No. writing (and % of those registered)	No. passing (and % of those writing)	'Actual success rate' (no. and % passing of those originally registered)
Report 191 N1 (2012) Engineering Studies	8 293	5 430 (53.1%)	2 081 (38.3%)	2 081 (25.1%)
Report 191 N2 (2012) Engineering Studies	13 594	10 154 (74.7%)	3 013 (29.7%)	3 013 (22.2%)
Report 191 N3 (2012) Engineering Studies	14 216	9 928 (69.8%)	3 724 (37.5%)	3 724 (26.2%)
Report 191 N4 (2012) Engineering Studies	9 189	6 524 (80%)	2 705 (41.5%)	2 705 (29.4%)
Report 191 N5 (2012) Engineering Studies	6 692	4 874 (72.8%)	1 840 (37.8%))	1 840 (27.5%))
Report 191 N6 (2012) Engineering Studies	3 720	2 744 (73.8%)	992 (36.2%)	992 (26.7%)
Report 191 N4 (2012) Business Studies	27 446	19 155 (69.8%)	4 974 (26%)	4 974 (18.1%)
Report 191 N5 (2012) Business Studies	20 703	16 671 (80.5%)	2 725 (16.3%)	2 725 (13.2%)
Report 191 N6 (2012) Business Studies	7 384	5 991 (81.1%)	1 910 (31.9%)	1 910 (25.9%)

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[46] The data in Table 29 refer to qualifications, while data in Table 4 refer to programmes.

Table 62 shows that for N Level 1-6 Engineering Studies, roughly half to three-quarters of students registering to write actually wrote, with around a third to 40% passing in 2012 – a proportion similar to that for the NCV exams at Levels 2-4 in that year (see Table 61).

The patterns of student numbers decreasing with the increase in N levels (Table 62) mirrored that for the NCV in 2012 (Table 61). The drop in numbers between N Business Studies levels was similar to that between NCV levels, but the drop between levels for N Engineering Studies was less steep than that between NCV levels. Drops in numbers registered showed the sharpest decreases between NCV Level 2 and 3 (Table 61) and between Business Studies N Levels 5 and 6 (Table 62).

While NCV pass rates increased steadily with increasing NQF levels in 2009, 2011 and 2012 (Tables 36, 37, 38, 40, 41, 42, 61), and appeared to follow the same pattern in 2009 for N exams (Table 15), pass rates for N exams fluctuated in 2012 (Table 62).

Again, it would be important to analyse data in a similar format in future years, to track progress in desired directions or otherwise.

A summary of student enrolments and achievements in the TVET College sector, in 2008-2012, is presented in the box below.

A summary of student enrolments and achievements in the TVET College sector, 2008-2012

- The uptake of the then-new qualifications of National Certificate (Vocational) at NQF Levels 2 and 3 (NCV2 and NCV3) in 2008-2009 was slow, and low numbers of learners passed the exams. Numbers registered to write and passing fluctuated across the years for which data were available: data for more years are needed to see trends.
- The number of learners registered to write NCV2 exams in 2009 (the year for which these data were available) – 588 224 – was of the same order of magnitude as the number writing the NSC exams that year, with the numbers of all learners registered to write the N1-6 programme exams (474 007) not that far behind.
- In 2008 and 2009, there were steep drops between the numbers of learners registered to write NCV2 and NCV3 exams, and again between those registered to write NCV3 and NCV4 exams: the numbers of learners registering to write the exams dropped with the increase in NCV levels. While this trend is usual for all studies, the extent of the decrease in this instance was higher than expected.
- The proportions of learners passing of those registered to write the NCV exams, increased with NCV levels in 2008, 2009 and 2011.
- The number of learners writing NCV4 exams decreased between 2011 and 2012, as did the percentage of learners passing during these years.
- Learner pass rates at different TVET Colleges differed widely in the year for which data were available for analysis (2008), pointing to the need to study and disseminate known good practices.

Learner registrations and results for N programme exams 2008-2009, 2011-2012

- In 2008 and 2009 (the years for which these data were available), the numbers of learners writing N3 exams were higher than the numbers of learners writing NCV4 exams (both N3 and NCV4 programmes being located on NQF Level 4).

- The qualifications with the <u>greatest proportion of learners in 2011 and 2012 were the N</u> programmes. Proportionally fewer students overall enrolled for NCV and occupational qualifications in 2012 relative to 2011.
- In 2009 (the only year for which these data were available), the <u>numbers of learners registered to write, writing and passing N2-6 exams decreased with the increase in N programme level</u>, and the drop was steeper for Science Programmes than for General Programmes.
- In 2009, 2011 and 2012 (the years for which data were available), <u>pass rates for the N programme exams were generally lower than those for the NCV</u> exams.
- While NCV <u>pass rates increased steadily with increasing NQF levels in 2009</u>, 2011 and 2012, and a similar pattern was visible in 2009 for N exams, <u>pass rates for N exams fluctuated in 2012</u>.
- The <u>numbers of learners writing and passing the N3 and the N6 exams increased considerably</u> between 2011 and 2012, while the <u>pass rates for these exams declined</u>.

Comparing learner enrolments in public and private TVET Colleges, 2011-2012

- Overall, student numbers at TVET Colleges increased by just under a third between 2011 and 2012; the increases were mainly in the public colleges.
- The qualifications with the greatest proportions of students in public colleges were the N programmes.
- Overall, a smaller proportion of students enrolled for NCV and occupational qualifications in 2012 relative to 2011, with more students overall enrolling for N and 'Other' qualifications in this period – possibly worth noting are the increased proportions of students enrolled for occupational qualifications and other learning offerings in public colleges, and for NCV programmes and other learning offerings in private colleges.

3.6 Redress and student access, success and progression in the HEQSF context

This section of the report presents data and analyses in an attempt to show the extent to which the nationally desired redress, access, success and progression in Higher Education have been achieved. As with the schooling sector, a view exists that Higher Education operates outside the NQF. This view is not correct – Higher Education is central in the NQF. Higher Education is the desired goal of many learners studying in the GFETQSF and OQSF contexts. Higher Education is also closely linked to development and the world of work. Links between all of these sub-sectors are essential for learner progression.

Section 3.6 presents trends in student enrolments and achievements overall, and by gender, population group, discipline and qualification type and level. The terms 'student achievement' and 'award of qualifications' are used interchangeably – both refer to successful student attainment of a qualification. Data for public and private Higher Education are presented in separate sections.

3.6.1 Access, success and redress in public Higher Education and Training
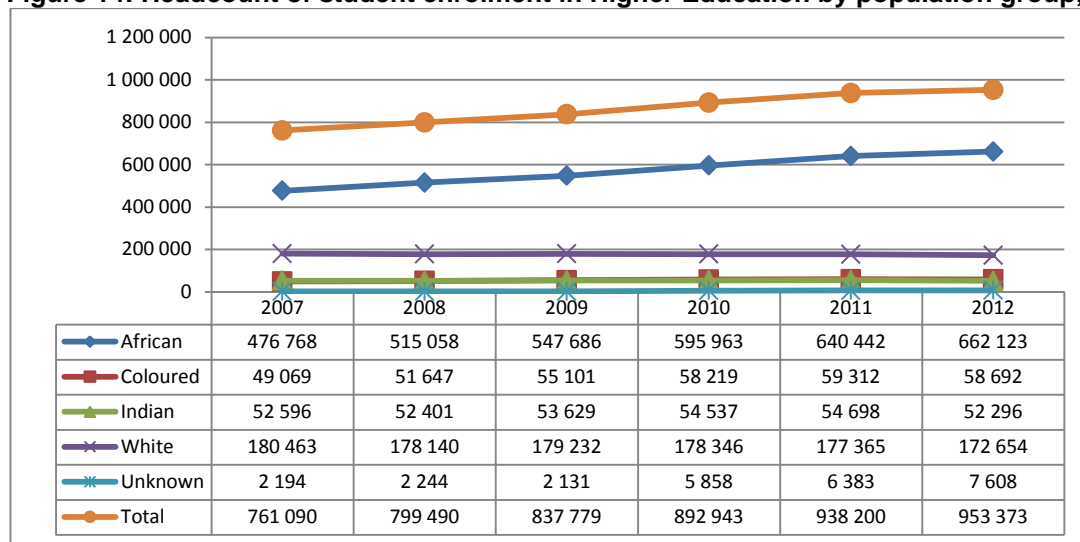
This section of the report features data on public Higher Education covering the following areas:

1. Enrolment numbers and patterns in public Higher Education, 1993-2012.
2. Overall achievement patterns in relation to gender and population groups, 2005-2012.
3. Undergraduate enrolment and achievement patterns according to gender and population groups, 2005-2012.
4. Postgraduate enrolment and achievement patterns according to gender and population groups, 2005-2012.
5. Learner achievement by field of study.
6. Throughput rates in public Higher Education: Cohort studies, 2007-2012.
7. Undergraduate throughput rates – progress over time?
8. Postgraduate throughput rates – progress over time?
9. Higher Education qualification awards: Gender and population group snapshots, 1993-2012.

3.6.1.1 Enrolment numbers and patterns in public Higher Education, 1993-2012
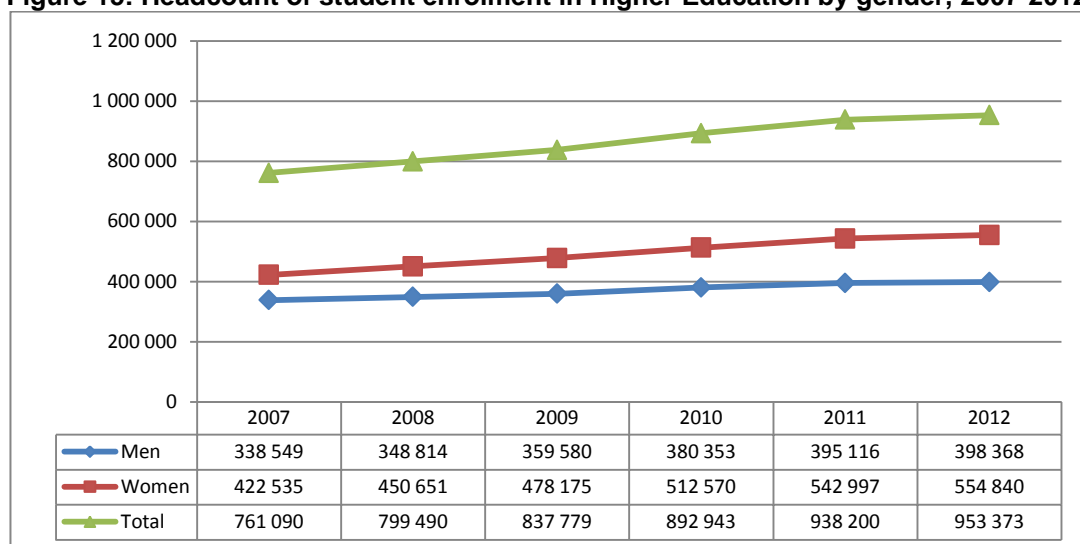
Figures 14-15 show student enrolment in public Higher Education by population group and gender in the 2007-2012 period. The two figures show general trends in desired directions. The trends continue those observed in 2005 and 2006 (CHE 2012:1, 2013:1). For fuller understanding, the proportions of particular groups of students, in relation to the corresponding groups of people in the general population, are shown below.

Figure 14: Headcount of student enrolment in Higher Education by population group, 2007-2012

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
African	476 768	515 058	547 686	595 963	640 442	662 123
Coloured	49 069	51 647	55 101	58 219	59 312	58 692
Indian	52 596	52 401	53 629	54 537	54 698	52 296
White	180 463	178 140	179 232	178 346	177 365	172 654
Unknown	2 194	2 244	2 131	5 858	6 383	7 608
Total	761 090	799 490	837 779	892 943	938 200	953 373

(Source: CHE 2014d: 3)

Figure 15: Headcount of student enrolment in Higher Education by gender, 2007-2012

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Men	338 549	348 814	359 580	380 353	395 116	398 368
Women	422 535	450 651	478 175	512 570	542 997	554 840
Total	761 090	799 490	837 779	892 943	938 200	953 373

(Source: CHE 2014d: 3)

Figures 14 and 15 show that numbers are increasing in nationally desired directions. The extent to which redress has been successful however, can only be seen by comparing these numbers to corresponding proportions of population and gender groups in relation to the numbers in the general population of the country. Figures 14 and 15 show headcount enrolments by population group and by gender respectively, in proportion to national population headcounts for 2005-2012.

3.6.1.1.1 African student headcounts and participation rates, 2005-2012

In 2005 headcounts of African students in public Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) made up 61% of the total student population in that sector (CHE 2012: 2). Headcounts of African students in public HEIs rose steadily between 2005 and 2012 (CHE 2012, 2014d), to 63% in 2007 and 70% in 2012 of the student population in the sector (Figure 16). African people made up 79% of the national population in 2005 (CHE

2012: 2) and 2007, rising to 79.6% in 2012 (Figure 16): the gap in proportion between the African student population in public HEIs and the general African population is closing – progress has been made in the desired direction.

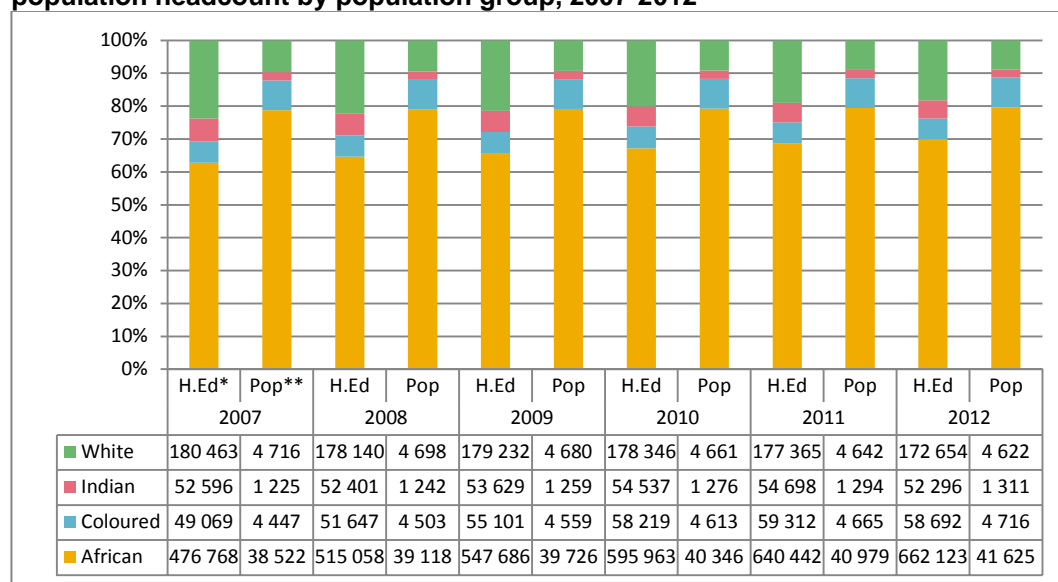*3.6.1.1.2 Coloured student headcounts and participation rates, 2005-2012*

Coloured student headcounts in 2005 made up 6% of students in public HEIs (CHE 2012: 2), This figure has remained similar at 6.5% in 2007 and 6.2% in 2012 (Figure 17). Coloured people made up 9% of the national population in 2005 (CHE 2012: 2) and this figure remained at 9% between 2007 and 2012 (Figure 17).

3.6.1.1.3 Indian and White student headcounts and participation rates, 2005-2012

In 2005 headcounts of Indian and White students in public Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) made up 7% and 25% respectively of the total student population in that sector (CHE 2012: 2). Both groups of students were proportionally larger than their national population counterparts of 3% and 10% respectively (CHE *ibid.*). Headcounts of Indian and White students in public HEIs dropped slowly between 2005 and 2012 (CHE 2012, 2014d) to 5.5% for Indian students and 18.3% for White students in 2012 (Figure 17). The corresponding national population proportions also dropped for the two groups to 2.5% for Indian people and 8.8% for White people (Figure 16).

While proportions of Indian and White students participating in public Higher Education in relation to proportions of Indian and White people in the population fluctuated slightly within a 4% range between 2005 and 2012 (CHE 2012, 2014d), participation rates for these two groups dropped slightly between 2005 and 2012 (*op.cit.*). Progress has been made in the desired directions, if only to very small extents.

Figure 16: Headcount of student enrolment in Higher Education as a proportional comparison to population headcount by population group, 2007-2012

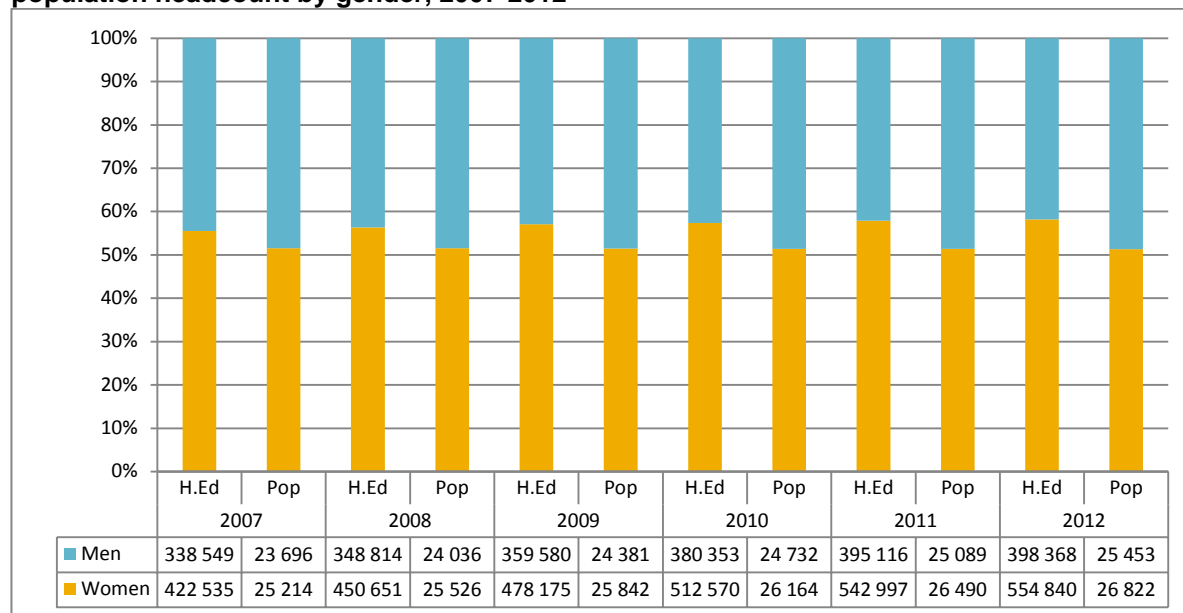|	H.Ed*	Pop**	H.Ed	Pop	H.Ed	Pop	H.Ed	Pop	H.Ed	Pop	H.Ed	Pop
	2007		2008		2009		2010		2011		2012	
White	180 463	4 716	178 140	4 698	179 232	4 680	178 346	4 661	177 365	4 642	172 654	4 622
Indian	52 596	1 225	52 401	1 242	53 629	1 259	54 537	1 276	54 698	1 294	52 296	1 311
Coloured	49 069	4 447	51 647	4 503	55 101	4 559	58 219	4 613	59 312	4 665	58 692	4 716
African	476 768	38 522	515 058	39 118	547 686	39 726	595 963	40 346	640 442	40 979	662 123	41 625

(Source: CHE 2014d: 4)

3.6.1.1.4 Male and female student headcounts and participation rates, 2005-2012

In 2005 the student population in the public Higher Education sector was 55% female and 45% male; the general population was 52% female and 48% male (CHE 2012). Figure 18 shows that the gender gap has

since widened. Between 2007 and 2012 the percentage of female students in public HEIs rose from 56% to 58% while the national female population fell from 52% to 51% (Figure 18). In 2007 there was a 4% gap between the proportions of male students (making up 44% of the student population) and males in the general population (48%). This gap widened to 7% in 2012, with 42% male students compared with the national male population of 49% (Figure 17).

Seeking redress in relation to gender may involve attempts to narrow the gaps between student and general population proportions for the gender groups.

Figure 17: Headcount of student enrolment in Higher Education as a proportional comparison to population headcount by gender, 2007-2012

	2007		2008		2009		2010		2011		2012	
	H.Ed	Pop	H.Ed	Pop	H.Ed	Pop	H.Ed	Pop	H.Ed	Pop	H.Ed	Pop
Men	338 549	23 696	348 814	24 036	359 580	24 381	380 353	24 732	395 116	25 089	398 368	25 453
Women	422 535	25 214	450 651	25 526	478 175	25 842	512 570	26 164	542 997	26 490	554 840	26 822

(Sources from which data were compiled: CHE 2012: 2, 2013: 2 and 2014d: 4)

3.6.1.1.5 Enrolment by institutional type, race and gender, 2005-2012

One of the main objectives of the South African NQF since its inception has been systemic integration. Under the SAQA Act (RSA 1995), the racially structured institutions in the Higher Education sector were rationalised into 23 public Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), which later became 25 (see Section 6.2 of the report for more details). Of the 25, six are Universities of Technology (UoTs) focusing on tertiary-level technical and vocational education and training; 15 are traditional discipline-based universities; two, with a range of offerings spanning what both Universities and Universities of Technology offer, are 'Comprehensives'; and the two new HEIs are still in the process of expanding their ranges of offerings.

Figures 18, 19 and 20 show student enrolment by institutional type. Categories of institutions included are Universities, Universities of Technology and Comprehensives. The University of South Africa (UNISA) is shown separately as it is the only institution with distance-only delivery.
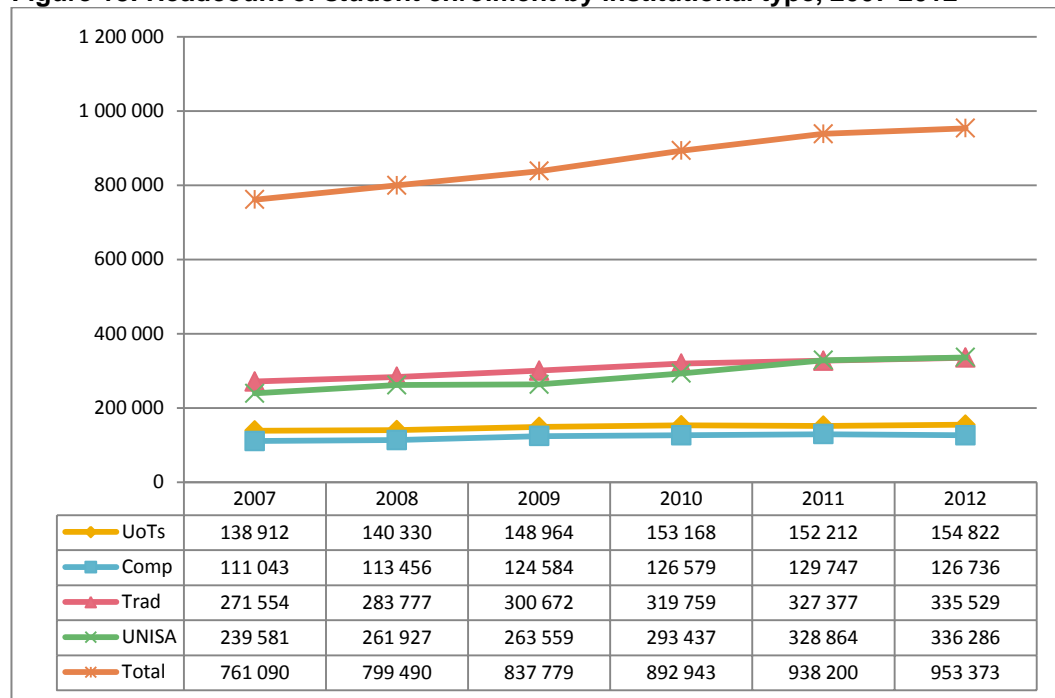
Figure 18 shows that numbers of student enrolments at all types of public HEIs increased steadily between 2007 and 2012[1]. While student enrolments grew in this period by 13% and 16% at Comprehensives and UoTs respectively, the highest growth was at traditional universities (35%) and at UNISA (40%).

[1] Of the 30 measurements shown there are two exceptions – a slight dip in enrolments at UoTs in 2011, after which the upward trend resumed, and a slight dip in enrolments at Comprehensives in 2012.
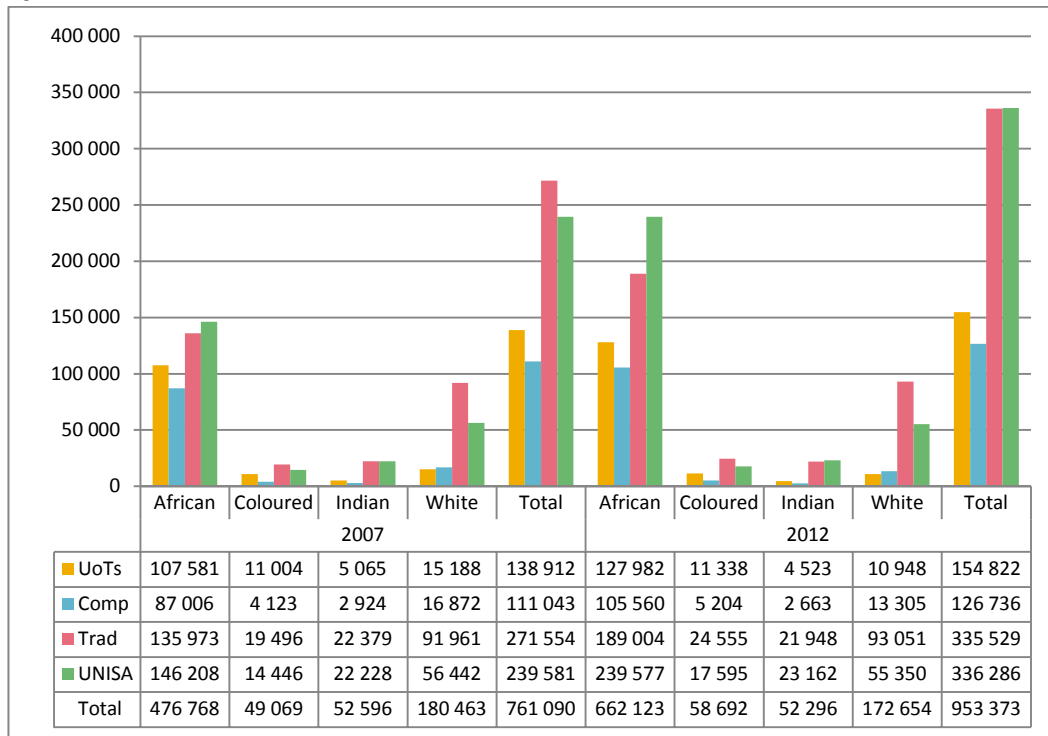
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Figure 19 presents enrolment numbers by institutional type and population group, in 2007 and 2012. The numbers of African students increased across this period by around 20% at UoTs and Comprehensives, by just under 40% at traditional universities, and by 64% at UNISA. The numbers of Coloured students increased by roughly a quarter at all types of HEI. The numbers of Indian students dropped slightly between these years at all types of public HEIs, apart from UNISA (which increased by 4%) and the numbers of White students dropped to a greater extent, remaining roughly similar (1% higher) at traditional universities only.

Figure 20 presents enrolment numbers by institutional type and gender, in 2007 and 2012. The numbers of male and female students increased across this period across all institutional types: male students by 23% at UNISA, and between 13%-18% at other types of HEI. The numbers of female students in contrast rose by 10% and 15% at UoTs and Comprehensives respectively, but by almost a third (28%) at traditional universities, and by 54% at UNISA. This positive trend – especially regarding UNISA – is offset by low graduation rates at UNISA (see Figures 16, 17, 18). It is worth noting that because UNISA offers part-time distance learning, and because its fees as a result are far lower than those at other HEIs, students of all ages and especially more socio-economically disadvantaged ones, are more likely to be able to afford studying at the institution, and to sustain a working life at the same time as being students.

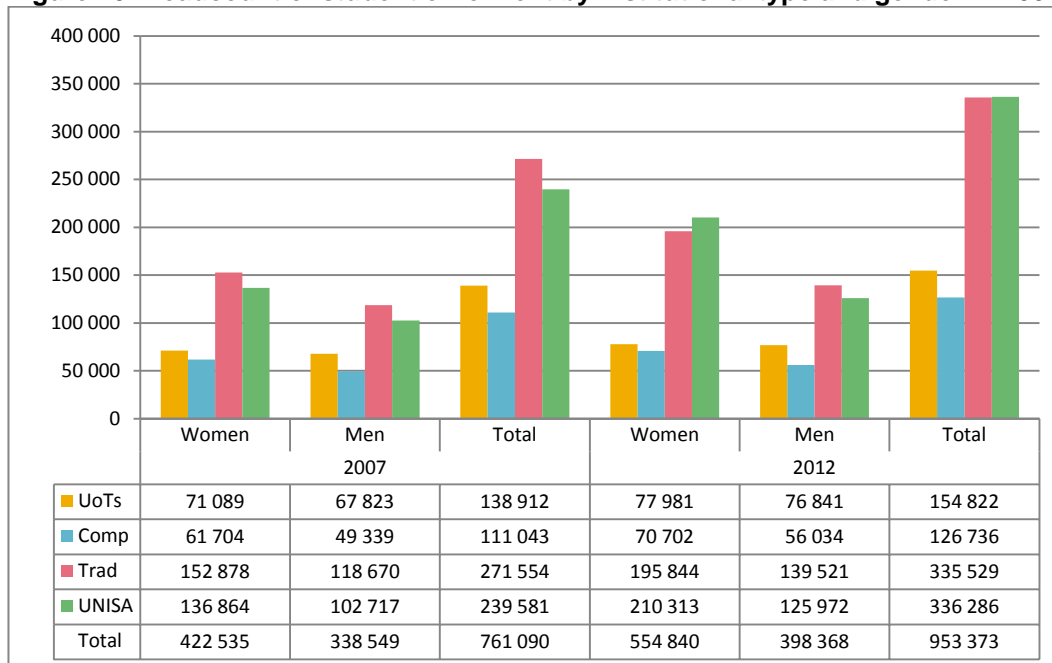**Figure 18: Headcount of student enrolment by institutional type, 2007-2012**

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
UoTs	138 912	140 330	148 964	153 168	152 212	154 822
Comp	111 043	113 456	124 584	126 579	129 747	126 736
Trad	271 554	283 777	300 672	319 759	327 377	335 529
UNISA	239 581	261 927	263 559	293 437	328 864	336 286
Total	761 090	799 490	837 779	892 943	938 200	953 373

(Source: CHE 2014d: 33)

Figure 19: Headcount of student enrolment by institutional type and population group in 2007 and 2012

	African	Coloured	Indian	White	Total	African	Coloured	Indian	White	Total
					2007					**2012**
UoTs	107 581	11 004	5 065	15 188	138 912	127 982	11 338	4 523	10 948	154 822
Comp	87 006	4 123	2 924	16 872	111 043	105 560	5 204	2 663	13 305	126 736
Trad	135 973	19 496	22 379	91 961	271 554	189 004	24 555	21 948	93 051	335 529
UNISA	146 208	14 446	22 228	56 442	239 581	239 577	17 595	23 162	55 350	336 286
Total	476 768	49 069	52 596	180 463	761 090	662 123	58 692	52 296	172 654	953 373

(Source: CHE 2014d: 33)

Figure 20: Headcount of student enrolment by institutional type and gender in 2007 and 2012

	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total
			2007			**2012**
UoTs	71 089	67 823	138 912	77 981	76 841	154 822
Comp	61 704	49 339	111 043	70 702	56 034	126 736
Trad	152 878	118 670	271 554	195 844	139 521	335 529
UNISA	136 864	102 717	239 581	210 313	125 972	336 286
Total	422 535	338 549	761 090	554 840	398 368	953 373

(Source: CHE 2014d: 34)

3.6.1.2 Student enrolment and achievement patterns, 2005-2012

In this sub-section student enrolment and achievement (graduation) are considered in relation to age, educational mode (face-to-face or mixed mode on the one hand, via distance education on the other), population group, gender, qualification level and field of study. It should be noted that in this section, enrolment and graduation numbers do not relate to the same cohorts of students, but rather to the students enrolling or graduating in the particular year shown.

3.6.1.2.1 Enrolment and graduation by age, 2005-2012

Figures 21 and 22 respectively show student enrolment and graduation by student age. The age group with the highest enrolments was 20 to 24-year-olds, followed by 25 to 35-year-olds, with those for the under-20s and over-35s being similar, and lower than those for the other two groups. Between 2005 and 2012 there were small fluctuations but general increases in enrolments for all age groups (CHE 2012, 2014d).

Achievement patterns differed from enrolment patterns. The highest numbers of graduations were achieved by the age group with the highest enrolments, the 20 to 24-year-old group. The numbers of those 25 years or older graduating were similar, but lower. Graduation numbers fluctuated but generally rose by small percentages across the 2005-2012 period for these age cohorts, although graduation numbers were low for all groups (CHE 2012, 2014d) (see further graduation patterns in the remainder of Section 3.6.1.2 and Section 3.6.1.3 of the report).

Graduation numbers were extremely low for the under-20s, and remained low between 2005 and 2012 (CHE 2012, 2014d). It is worth noting that these low numbers pre-date by at least six years Curriculum 2005, the new curriculum introduced in 1996 as part of the education reforms in post-*apartheid* South Africa (see Section 6.1).

Figure 21: Headcount of enrolments by age group, 2007-2012

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
< 20	153 975	159 407	174 549	178 869	179 304	171 661
20 - 24	285 151	292 106	298 533	318 896	336 387	352 685
25 - 35	189 076	198 750	204 065	226 234	247 762	259 268
> 35	132 887	149 227	160 632	168 944	174 747	169 759
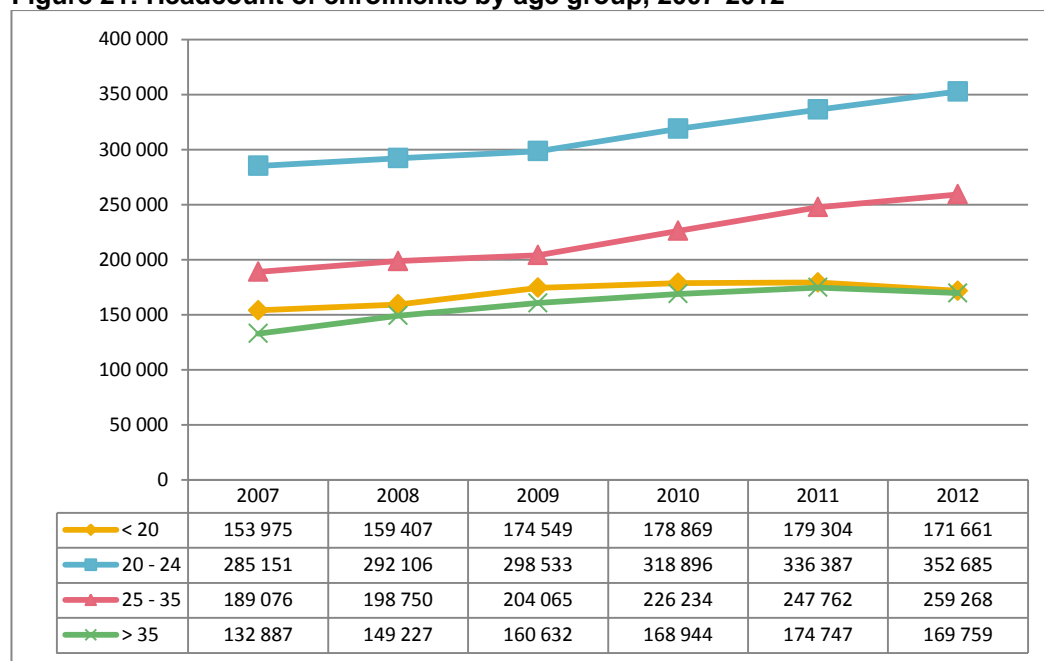
(Source: CHE 2014d: 6)

Figure 22: Headcount of graduations by age group, 2007-2012

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
< 20	4 094	3 927	3 850	3 854	3 946	4 335
20 - 24	64 628	67 789	70 753	73 674	77 872	84 983
25 - 35	30 967	32 943	35 082	37 994	40 230	42 283
> 35	26 951	28 582	35 167	38 219	38 576	34 392
Total	126 640	133 241	144 852	153 741	160 624	165 993
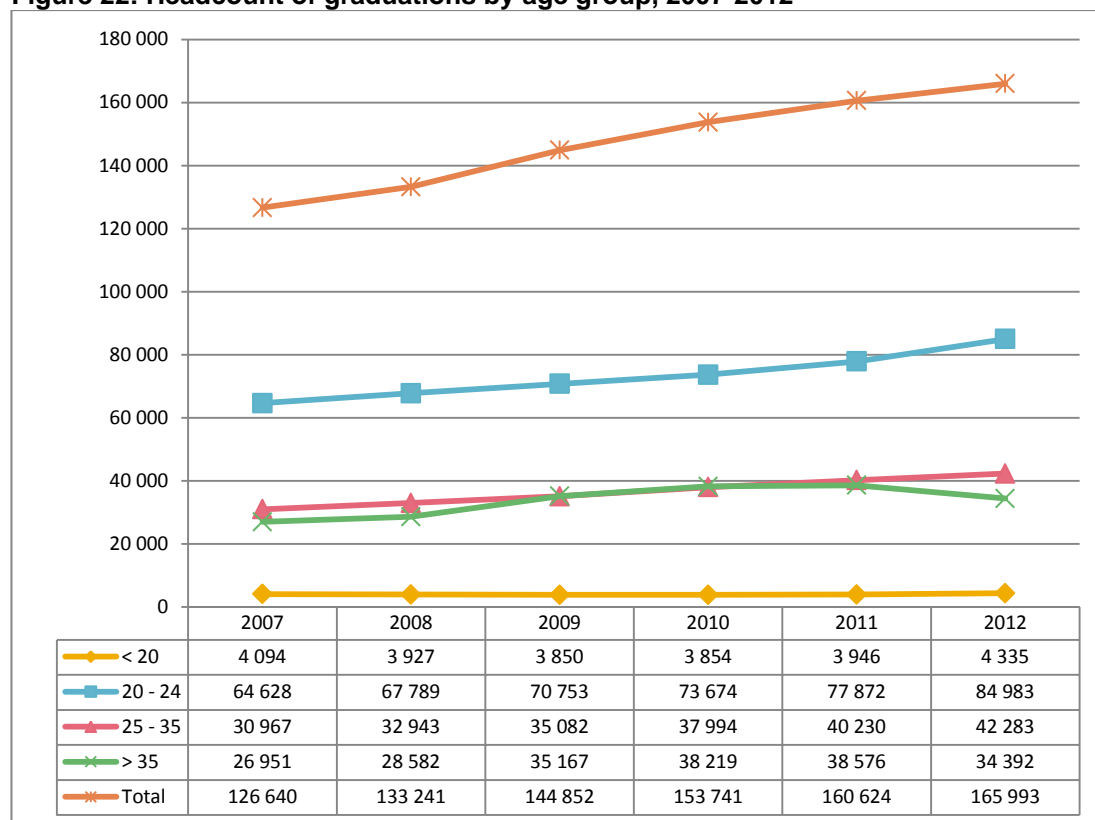
(Source: CHE 2014d: 6)

3.6.1.2.2 Completion rates by population group and gender, 2005-2012

Figures 23-27 show completion rates by population group and gender for the 2005-2012 period.

Figures 23 and 24 show that success rates increased for all population groups, and for male and female learners between 2007 and 2012, continuing trends observed from 2006 (CHE 2012: 11). Female students continued to achieve greater success rates than their male counterparts.

In this period, higher proportions of White students achieved success than all other groups of students, and African students had the lowest success rates (Figure 23). There is however evidence that these gaps are closing: success rates for African, Coloured and Indian students increased steadily between 2006 and 2012 by 7-9%, while the rate of increase for White students was 6% (Figure 23 and CHE 2010: 11) (see also encouraging patterns in Figure 26).

131

Figure 23: Success rates by population group, 2007-2012

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
African	68%	68%	70%	71%	73%	74%
Coloured	71%	73%	74%	75%	76%	77%
Indian	71%	72%	72%	74%	76%	78%
White	79%	80%	81%	82%	83%	84%
Overall	71%	72%	73%	74%	75%	76%
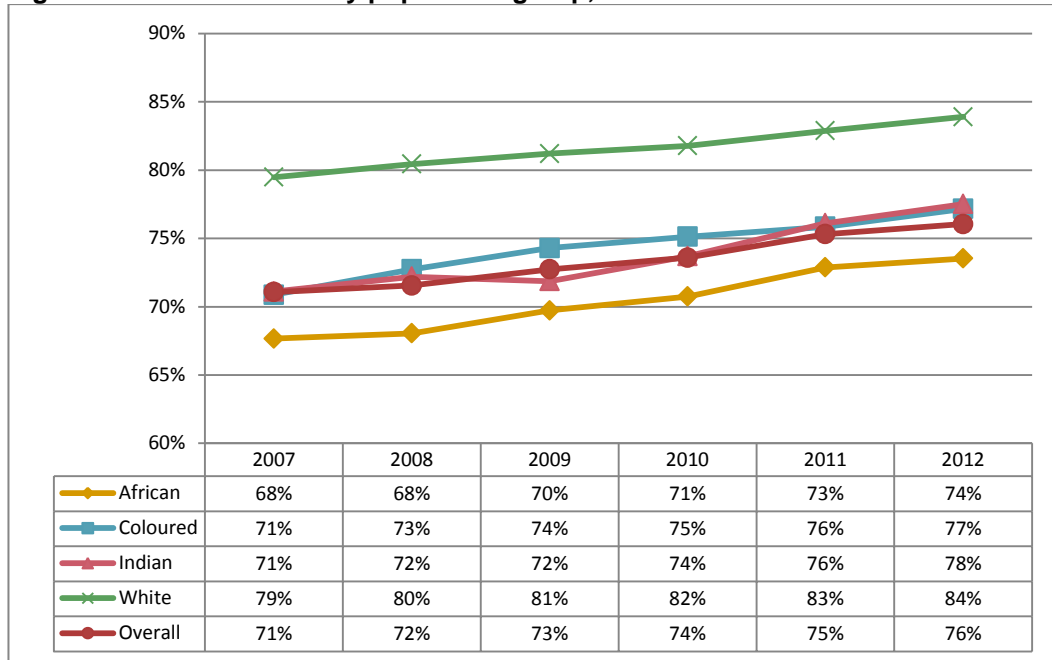
(Source: CHE 2014d: 11)

Figure 24: Success rates by gender, 2007-2012

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Men	68%	69%	70%	71%	73%	74%
Women	73%	73%	75%	76%	77%	78%
Overall	71%	72%	73%	74%	75%	76%
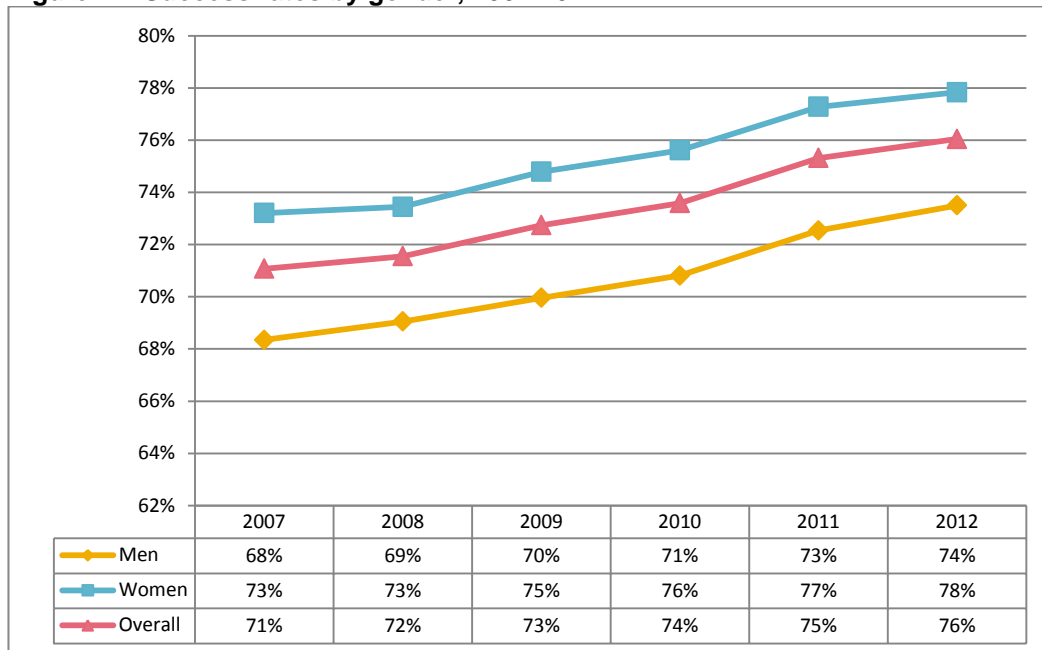
(Source: CHE 2014d: 11)

Figures 25, 26 and 27 show student success rates at undergraduate and postgraduate levels between 2007 and 2012 in general, by population group, and by gender.

In this period there was an increase in success rates at both under and postgraduate levels, with higher success rates at undergraduate than at postgraduate levels (Figure 25), again continuing trends observed from 2006 (CHE 2012: 12).

Figure 25: Success rates by qualification level, 2007-2012

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Undergraduate	72%	72%	73%	74%	76%	77%
Postgraduate	67%	68%	70%	71%	71%	73%
Overall	71%	72%	73%	74%	75%	76%
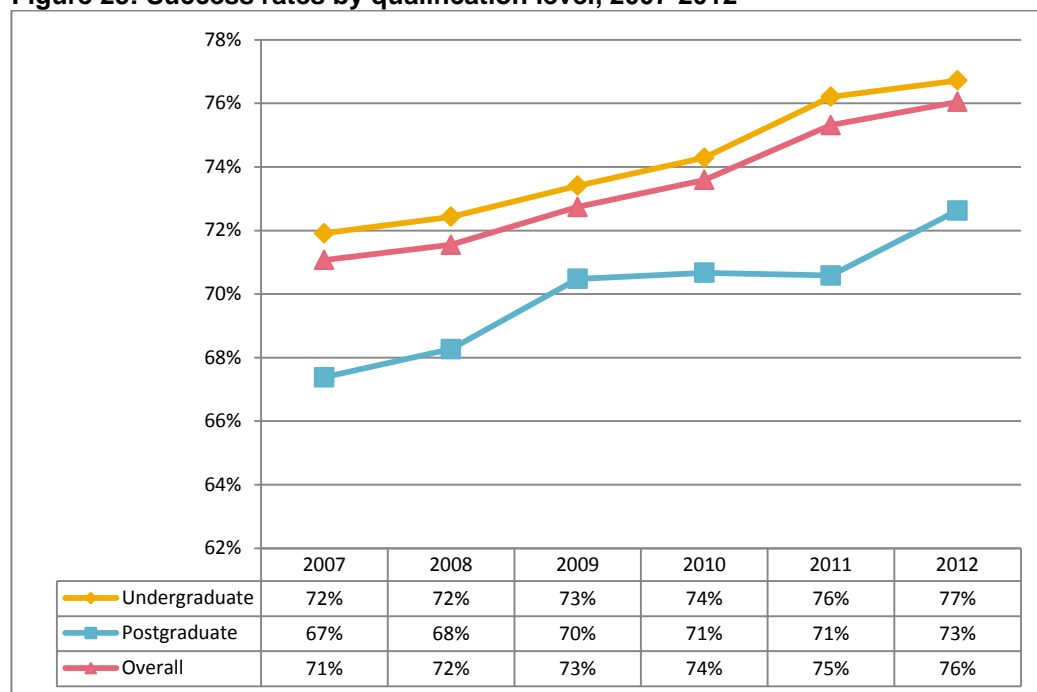
(Source: CHE 2014d: 12)

Figure 26 shows success rates by qualification level and population group. Within the overall patterns shown in Figure 25 – those of increasing success rates over time, and higher success rates at undergraduate than at postgraduate levels, in Figure 26 the gaps between the success levels of different population groups, and also the closing of these gaps, is visible.

At undergraduate level, the highest success rates are shown by White students, the success rates of Coloured and Indian students are similar and the lowest are shown by African students – but the differences lessened over time (Figure 26). The success rates for African, Coloured and Indian students increased by 6-7% between 2006 (CHE 2012: 12) and 2012, while those for their White counterparts increased by 5% (Figure 26).

At postgraduate level, the highest success rates were shown by White and Coloured students, followed by African students, with Indian students showing the lowest levels (Figure 26). Differences lessened across the 2007-2012 period, from 11% to 8% between White and Coloured students, and from 18% to 14% between White students and the groups with the lowest success rates (Figure 26).

133

Figure 26: Success rates by qualification level and population group

	UG 2007	PG 2007	UG 2008	PG 2008	UG 2009	PG 2009	UG 2010	PG 2010	UG 2011	PG 2011	UG 2012	PG 2012
African	69%	61%	69%	62%	71%	65%	72%	66%	74%	66%	74%	68%
Coloured	72%	67%	73%	71%	75%	72%	76%	74%	77%	70%	78%	74%
Indian	73%	60%	74%	62%	74%	62%	76%	65%	78%	67%	79%	70%
White	80%	78%	81%	79%	82%	81%	82%	80%	84%	81%	85%	82%
Overall	72%	67%	72%	68%	73%	70%	74%	71%	76%	71%	77%	73%
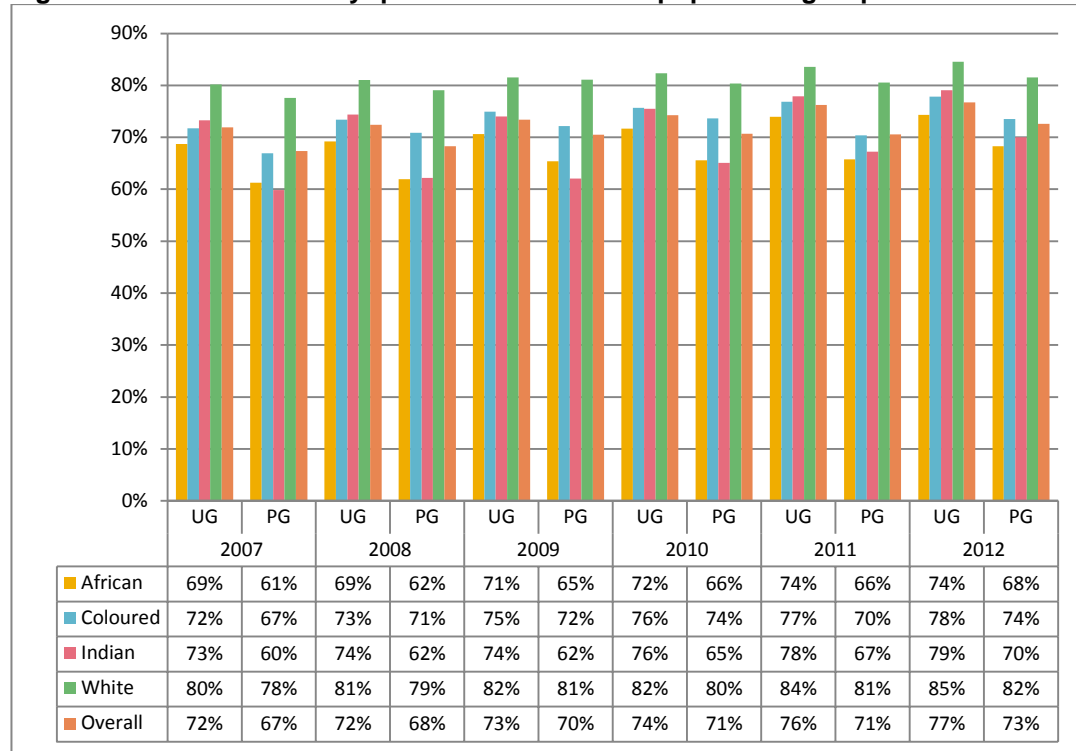
(Source: CHE 2014d: 12)

Figure 27 shows success levels by qualification level and gender. Noting that Figure 25 showed increasing student success rates across the period 2007-2012 overall, and higher success rates at undergraduate than at postgraduate levels, Figure 27 shows that female students were more successful than their male counterparts in this period (CHE 2012: 13). Both male and female students showed increasing success rates over time.

Figure 27: Success rates by qualification level and gender, 2007-2012

	UG 2007	PG 2007	UG 2008	PG 2008	UG 2009	PG 2009	UG 2010	PG 2010	UG 2011	PG 2011	UG 2012	PG 2012
Men	69%	65%	70%	65%	71%	67%	72%	67%	73%	68%	74%	71%
Women	74%	70%	74%	71%	75%	73%	76%	73%	78%	73%	79%	74%
Total	72%	67%	72%	68%	73%	70%	74%	71%	76%	71%	77%	73%
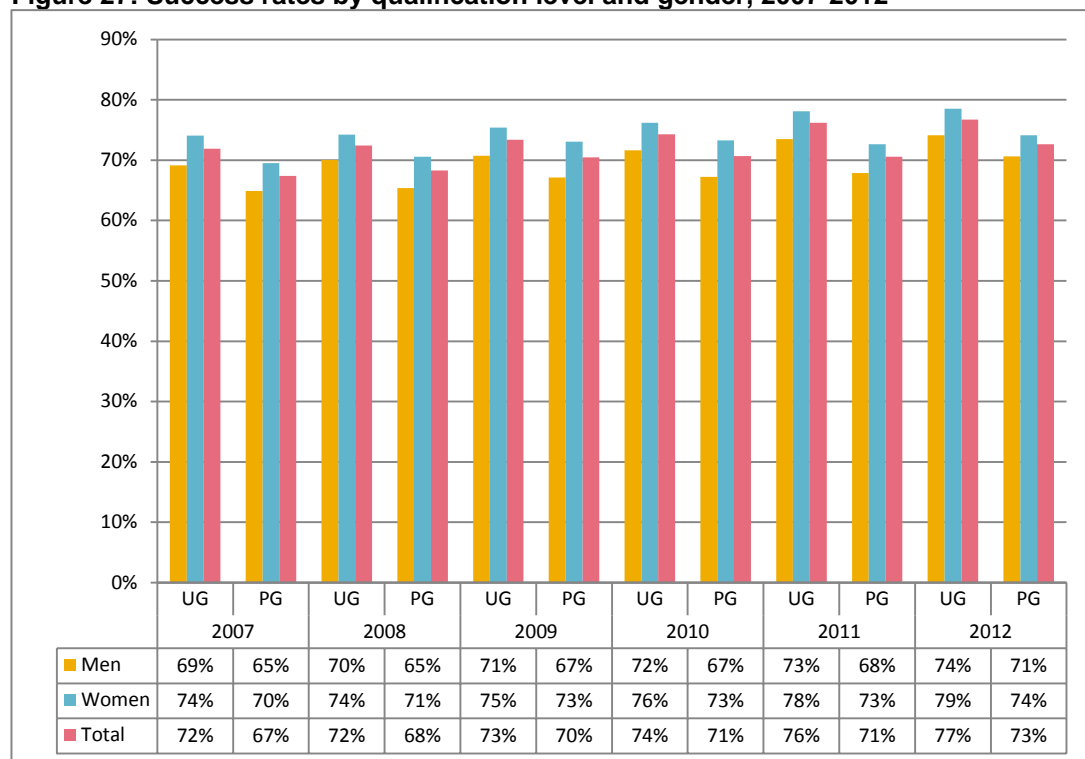
(Source: CHE 2014d: 13)

3.6.1.2.3 Enrolment and graduation by educational mode, population group and gender, 2005-2012

Increasing enrolment numbers between 2005 and 2012 at all Higher Education institutional types, and especially at UNISA, has already been noted (see section 3.6.1.1.5).

Figures 28 and 29 show headcounts for student enrolments and graduations between 2007 and 2012, in HEIs using contact and distance modes respectively. While enrolment and graduation numbers increased for both modes across this period, enrolments grew by 19% for contact modes and 35% for distance modes (Figure 28). Proportions of students enrolling for distance modes increased across the 2005-2012 period, from 34% of all students in 2005 (CHE 2010: 6), to 38% in 2007 and 41% in 2012(Figure 28).

Graduation numbers grew overall: there were 28% more graduations in 2012 than in 2007 for contact modes, and 44% more for distance modes in this period (Figure 29). Proportions of graduations shifted, from 79% in 2007 down to 76% in 2012 for contact modes, and 21% in 2007 up to 24% in 2012 for distance modes.

All these shifts continued trends observed from 2005 (CHE 2012: 8).

Figure 28: Headcount of enrolments by mode of delivery, 2007-2012

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Contact	474 593	489 220	521 430	545 766	556 694	566 239
Distance	286 436	310 222	315 964	346 828	381 130	387 133
Total	761 090	799 490	837 779	892 943	938 200	953 373
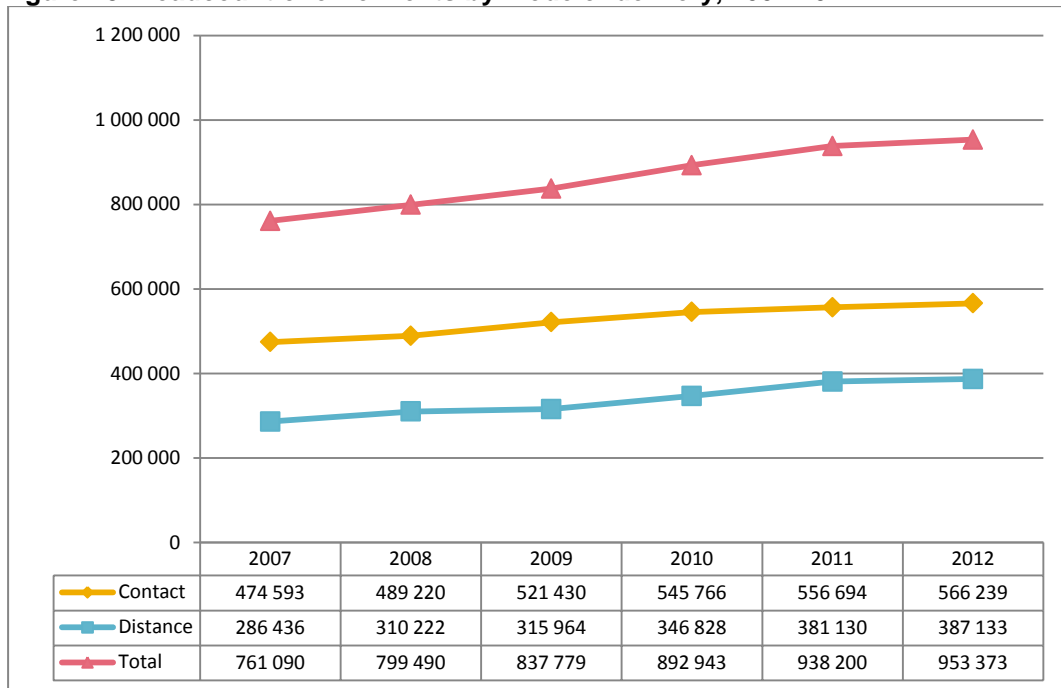
(Source: CHE 2014d: 8)

Figure 29: Headcount of graduations by mode of delivery, 2007-2012

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Contact	99 511	102 500	108 481	112 783	119 829	126 878
Distance	27 119	30 731	36 292	40 873	40 748	39 115
Total	126 640	133 241	144 852	153 741	160 624	165 993
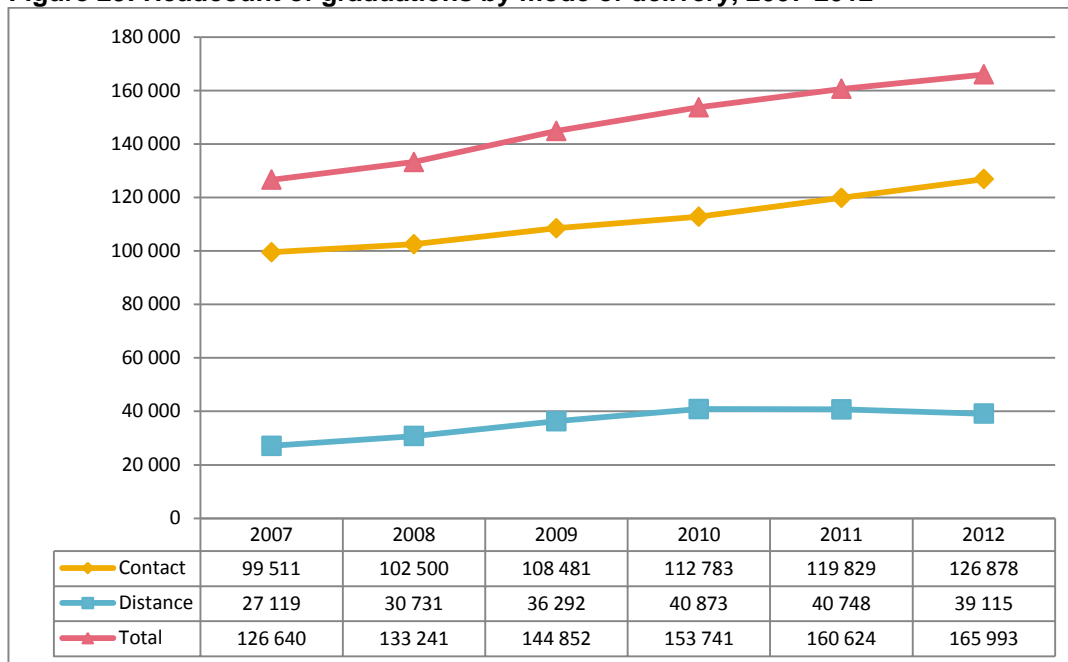
(Source: CHE 2014d: 8)

Within the overall patterns for enrolment and graduation across contact and distance modes shown in Figures 28 and 29, enrolment and graduation patterns differed for students in different population and gender groups.

The numbers for White students enrolling dropped for both modes in 2007 and 2012, the numbers for Indian students were similar, while numbers for Coloured and African students enrolling for both modes

increased (Figure 30). However, percentages of students enrolling for contact modes dropped, and those for distance modes increased, for *all* population groups between 2005 and 2012 (CHE 2012: 7, CHE 2014d: 8 and Table 63), although the *extent* to which they did so differed. While percentages of White students enrolling for contact modes dropped and for distance modes increased across the period by roughly 1%, percentages dropped and rose accordingly, by 4% for Indian students, 5% for Coloured students, and 8% for African students respectively (Table 63). The reasons for these patterns are not known and may be worth tracking over time – and investigating if they persist.

Table 63: Numbers and percentages of students enrolling by mode of delivery and population group in 2005, 2007 and 2012

Population Group (students)	2005			2007			2012		
Mode	Contact (%)	Distance (%)	Total	Contact (%)	Distance (%)	Total	Contact (%)	Distance (%)	Total
White	125 664 (68%)	60 142 (32%)	185 806	119 946 (66.5%)	60 475 (33.5%)	180 421	115 303 (66.8%)	57 351 (33.2%)	172 654
Indian	32 383 (59%)	22 219 (41%)	54 602	28 934 (55%)	23 659 (45%)	52 593	28 606 (55%)	23 690 (45%)	52 296
Coloured	32 706 (71%)	13 595 (29%)	46 301	33 639 (69%)	15 429 (31%)	49 068	38 989 (66%)	19 703 (34%)	58 692
African	290 375 (65%)	156 563 (35%)	446 938	290 165 (61%)	186 588 (39%)	476 753	378 522 (57%)	283 600 (43%)	662 122

(Sources from which data were calculated: CHE 2012: 7 and CHE 2014a: 9)

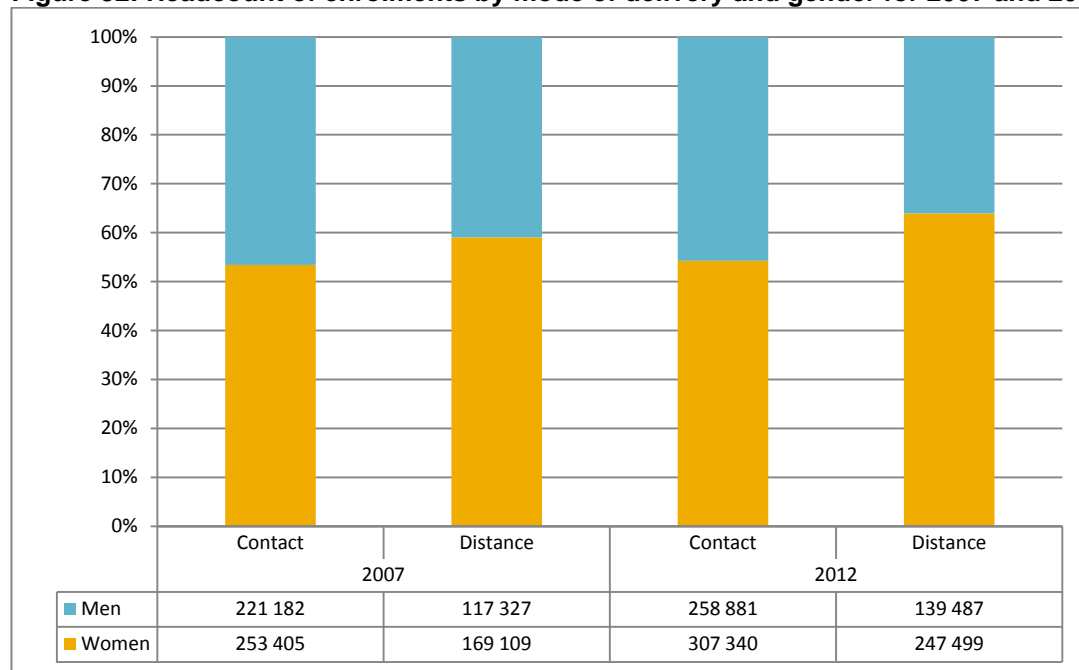**Figure 30: Headcount of enrolments by mode of delivery and population group in 2007 and 2012**

	Contact	Distance	Contact	Distance
	2007		2012	
■ White	119 946	60 475	115 303	57 351
■ Indian	28 934	23 659	28 606	23 690
■ Coloured	33 639	15 429	38 989	19 703
■ African	290 165	186 588	378 522	283 600
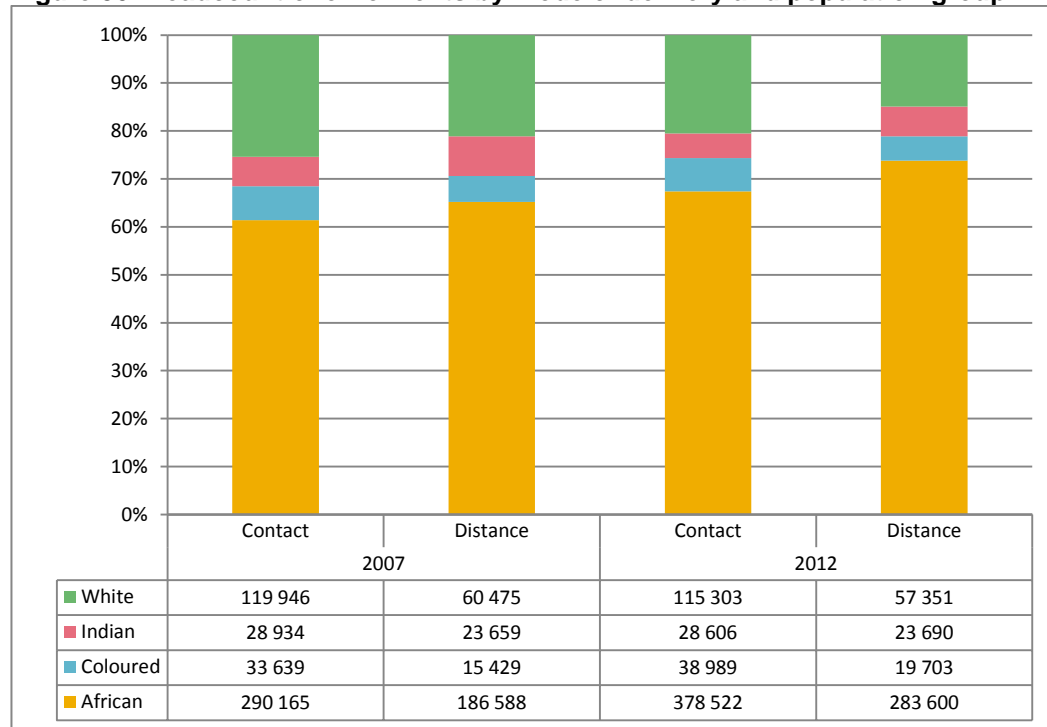
(Source: CHE 2014d: 9)

The numbers of White students graduating for contact modes dropped in 2012 from 2007. The numbers increased at these periods for all other population groups, and the numbers graduating for distance modes

increased for all population groups (Figure 31). *Percentages* of students from all population groups, apart from Africans graduating for contact modes, decreased in the period however, and percentages graduating for distance modes, apart from African students, increased (Table 64) – continuing a trend observed from 2005 (CHE 2012: 8, CHE 2014d: 8). Percentages of African students graduating for contact and distance modes were the same in 2005, 2007 and 2012 (Table 64). Again, these patterns are worth observing as time goes on.

Table 64: Numbers and percentages of students graduating by mode of delivery and population group in 2005, 2007 and 2012

Population Group (students)	2005			2007			2012		
Mode	Contact (%)	Distance (%)	Total	Contact (%)	Distance (%)	Total	Contact (%)	Distance (%)	Total
White	32 544 (85%)	5 662 (15%)	38 206	32 238 (85%)	5 862 (15%)	38 100	31 670 (81%)	7 202 (19%)	38 872
Indian	6 524 (81%)	1 536 (19%)	8 060	6 620 (79%)	1 752 (21%)	8 372	6 957 (74%)	2 389 (26%)	9 346
Coloured	6 397 (88%)	870 (12%)	7 267	6 939 (88%)	982 (12%)	7 921	8 971 (84%)	1 654 (16%)	10 625
African	49 008 (74%)	17 631 (26%)	66 639	53 464 (74%)	18 487 (26%)	71 951	78 040 (74%)	26 895 (26%)	104 935

Sources from which data were calculated: CHE 2012: 7 and CHE 2014a: 9)

Figure 31: Headcount of graduations by mode of delivery and population group in 2007 and 2012

	Contact (2007)	Distance (2007)	Contact (2012)	Distance (2012)
White	32 238	5 862	31 670	7 202
Indian	6 620	1 752	6 957	2 389
Coloured	6 939	982	8 971	1 654
African	53 464	18 487	78 040	26 895
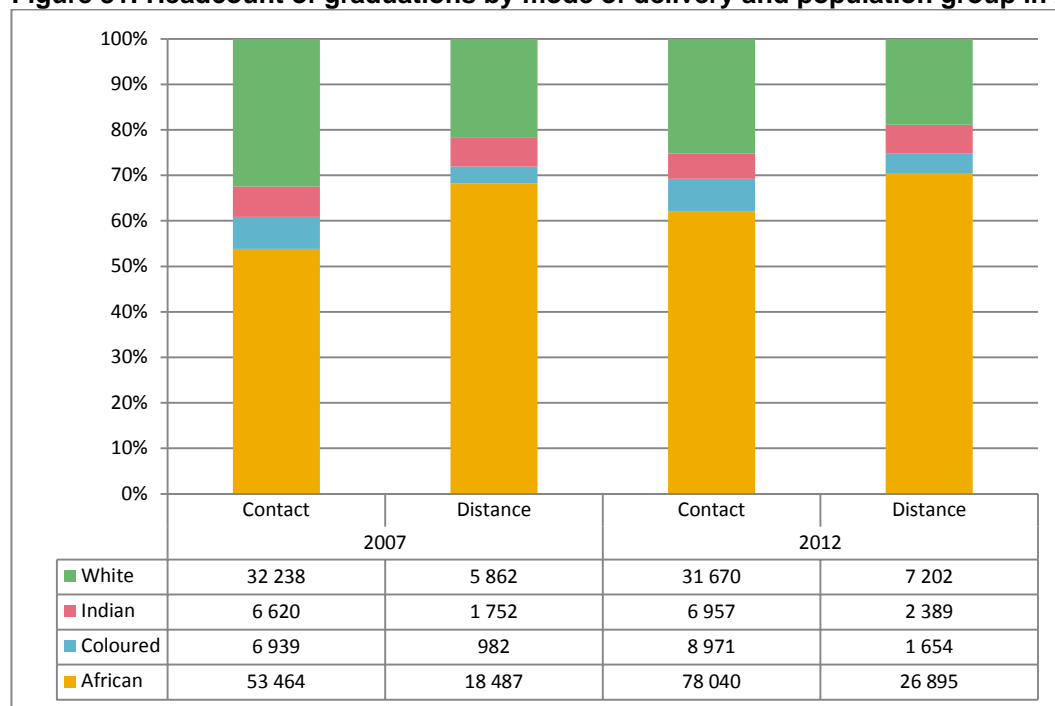
(Source: CHE 2014d: 10)

The numbers of male and female students enrolling for studies via contact and distance modes of delivery increased between 2007 and 2012, with the proportions of male students opting for contact versus distance modes remaining 65% and 35% respectively (Figure 32). The proportions of female students opting for contact modes fell from 60% in 2007 to 55% in 2012, with a corresponding increase in 5% going

for distance modes.

The numbers of male and female students graduating rose for both contact and distance modes of delivery between 2007 and 2012, with the *proportions* of male students graduating via contact modes falling by 1% and those of female students by 3% (Figure 33).

Figure 32: Headcount of enrolments by mode of delivery and gender for 2007 and 2012

	Contact	Distance	Contact	Distance
	2007		**2012**	
Men	221 182	117 327	258 881	139 487
Women	253 405	169 109	307 340	247 499

(Source: CHE 2014d: 9)

Figure 33: Headcount of graduations by mode of delivery and gender in 2007 and 2012

	Contact	Distance	Contact	Distance
	2007		**2012**	
Men	42 607	9 161	53 594	12 448
Women	56 904	17 958	73 283	26 660
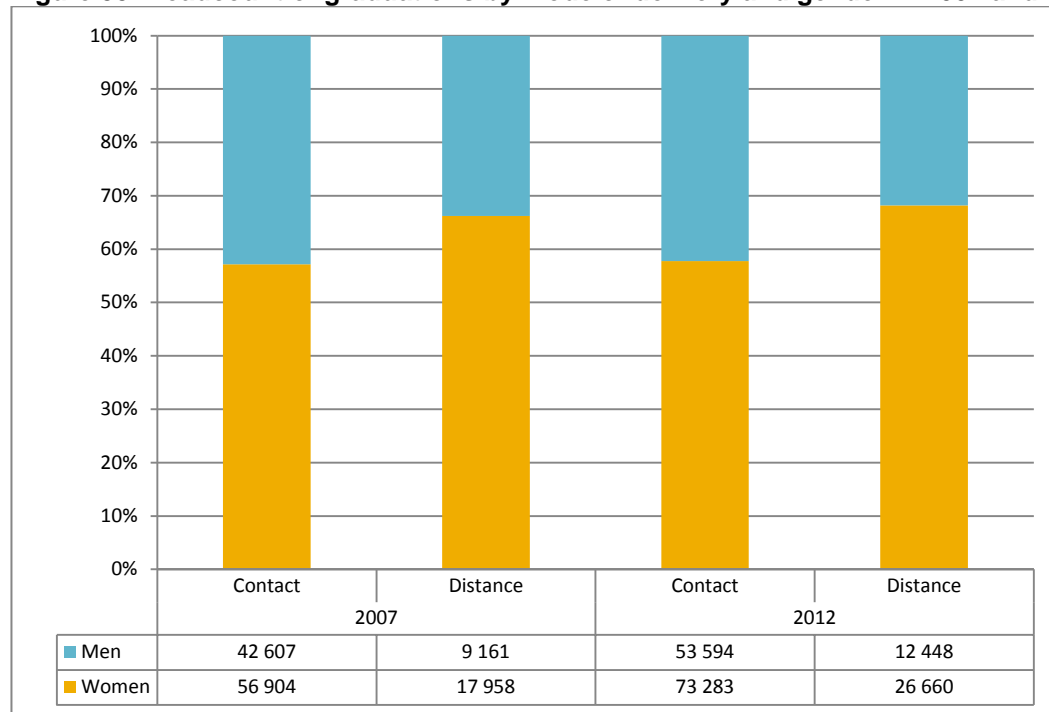
(Source: CHE 2014d: 10)

3.6.1.2.4 Enrolment and graduation headcounts by qualification type, population group and gender, 2007-2012

This sub-section of the report builds on Section 3.6.1.2.2 (Student enrolments and achievements in relation to qualification levels) providing more detail regarding enrolments and achievements for particular qualification types.

Overall undergraduate enrolments were 25% higher in 2012 than in 2007 (Figure 34). The numbers of African and Coloured undergraduate students enrolling in 2007 and 2012 followed this pattern; the numbers of Indian and White students enrolling were lower in 2012 than in 2007 (Figure 34).

The numbers of undergraduate African, Coloured and Indian students graduating were higher in 2012 relative to 2007; the numbers of White students were lower in 2012 than in 2007 (Figure 35). Worth noting also is the extent of the increases: the numbers of African students awarded diplomas and certificates were 17% higher in 2012 than in 2007; the numbers awarded degrees were 71% higher in 2012. The numbers of Coloured students awarded degrees were 37% higher in 2012, while those for Indian students were 5% higher (Figure 35).

Overall postgraduate enrolments increased by a greater extent (35%) than undergraduate enrolments in 2012 relative to 2007 (Figure 37). The numbers of students from all population groups enrolling for all postgraduate offerings (up to and including Honours, Master's and Doctoral degrees) were higher in 2012 than in 2007.

Postgraduate qualifications awarded were also higher in 2012 than in 2007 for all population groups (Figure 37). Worth noting is the extent to which there were increases according to student population groups (Figure 37):

- Awards of postgraduate qualifications up to and including Honours degrees were 84% higher for African students, 65% higher for Coloured students, 32% higher for Indian students and 13% higher for White students in 2012 than they were in 2007.
- Awards of Master's degrees were 62% higher for African and Coloured students, 23% higher for Indian students and 15% higher for White students in 2012 than they were in 2007.
- Awards of Doctoral degrees were 99% higher for African students, 38% higher for Coloured students, 36% higher for Indian students and 18% higher for White students in 2012 than they were in 2007.

These patterns show movements in desired directions.

Figure 34: Headcount of undergraduate enrolments by qualification type and population group for 2007 and 2012

	African	Coloured	Indian	White	Total	African	Coloured	Indian	White	Total
					2007					2012
Dip & Cert	209 295	14 702	7 219	23 375	254 801	242 876	13 806	6 122	16 592	281 280
Degrees	194 131	26 406	35 177	113 690	370 188	316 668	34 769	35 127	111 538	500 430
Total	403 426	41 108	42 396	137 065	624 989	559 544	48 575	41 249	128 130	781 710
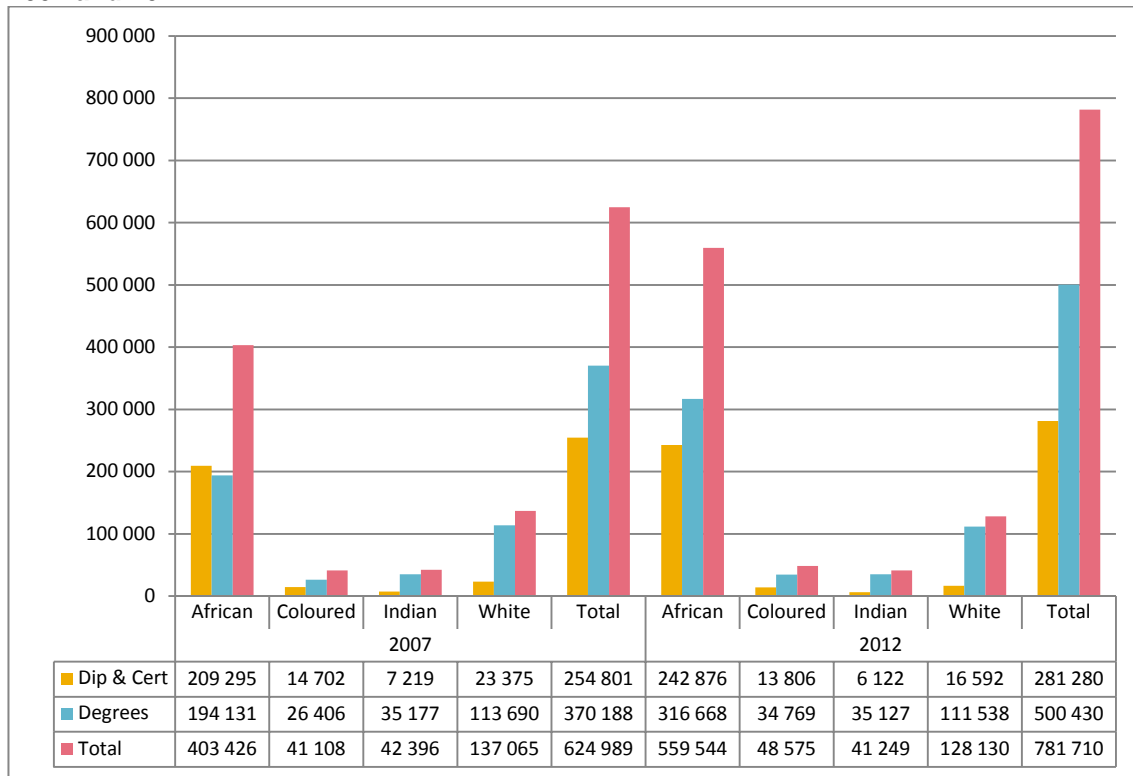
(Source: CHE 2014d: 18)

Figure 35: Headcount of undergraduate qualifications awarded by qualification type and population group for 2007 and 2012

	African	Coloured	Indian	White	Total	African	Coloured	Indian	White	Total
					2007					2012
Dip & Cert	35 561	2 568	1 167	4 050	43 426	41 547	2 802	1 195	3 231	49 654
Degrees	23 357	3 498	4 840	20 523	52 312	40 001	4 785	5 089	20 302	70 742
Total	58 918	6 066	6 007	24 573	95 738	81 548	7 587	6 284	23 533	120 396
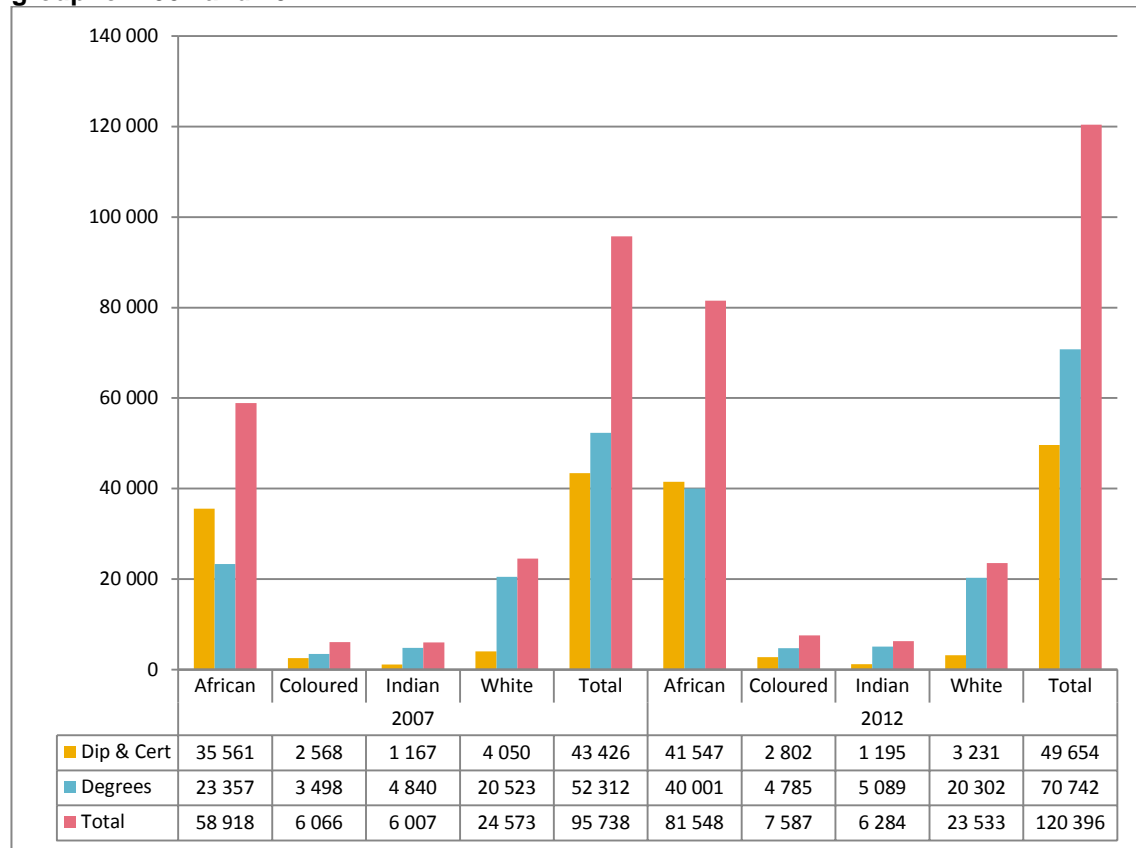
(Source: CHE 2014d: 19)

Figure 36: Headcount of postgraduate enrolments by qualification type and population group for 2007 and 2012

	African	Coloured	Indian	White	Total	African	Coloured	Indian	White	Total
					2007					**2012**
■ PG up to Hons	34 190	3 447	4 184	17 167	59 175	56 365	5 101	4 901	18 076	85 501
■ Masters	19 107	2 497	3 802	15 593	41 179	25 344	3 086	4 055	16 142	49 561
■ Doctoral	3 889	565	797	4 751	10 052	6 573	794	1 062	5 242	13 964
■ Total	57 186	6 509	8 783	37 511	110 406	88 282	8 981	10 018	39 460	149 026
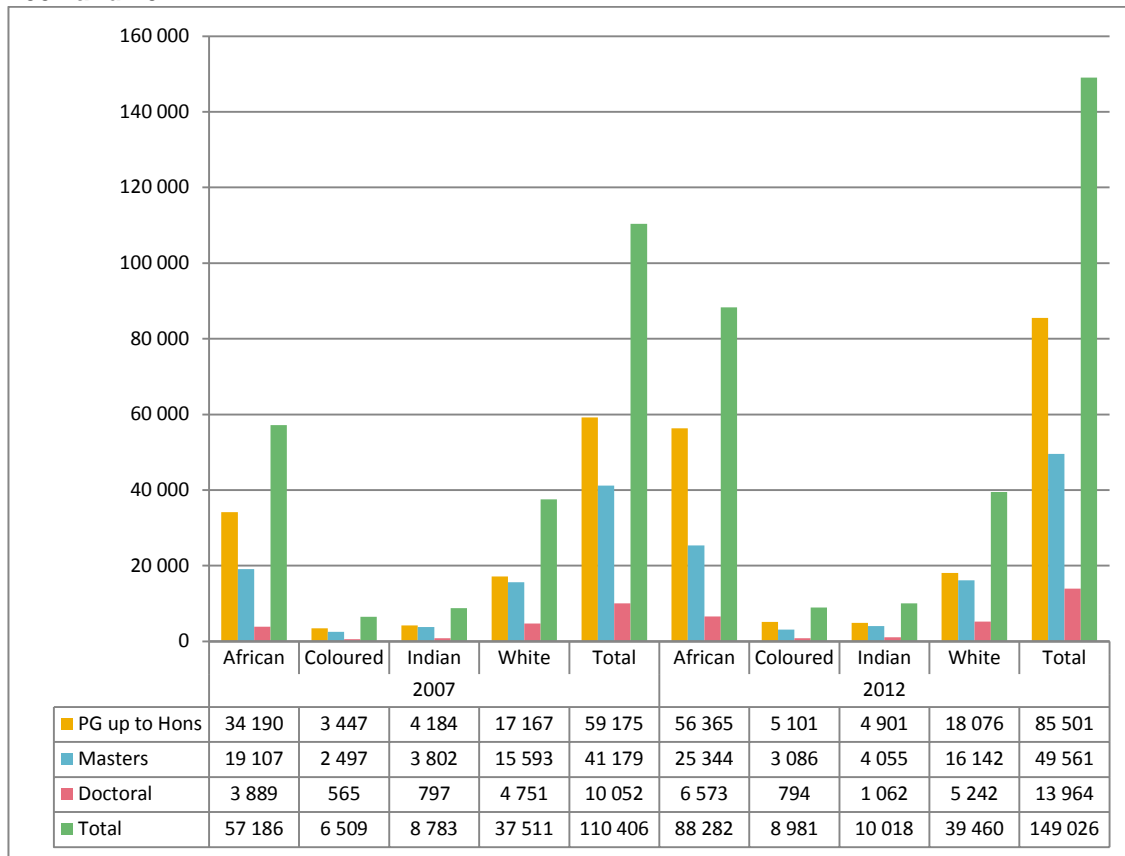
(Source: CHE 2014d: 20)

Figure 37: Headcount of postgraduate qualifications awarded by qualification type and population group for 2007 and 2012

	African	Coloured	Indian	White	Total	African	Coloured	Indian	White	Total
					2007					2012
PG up to Hons	9 885	1 417	1 578	9 161	22 112	18 140	2 344	2 081	10 310	33 385
Masters	2 743	367	683	3 685	7 516	4 443	596	840	4 212	10 334
Doctoral	405	71	104	691	1 274	804	98	141	817	1 878
Total	13 033	1 855	2 365	13 537	30 902	23 387	3 038	3 062	15 339	45 597
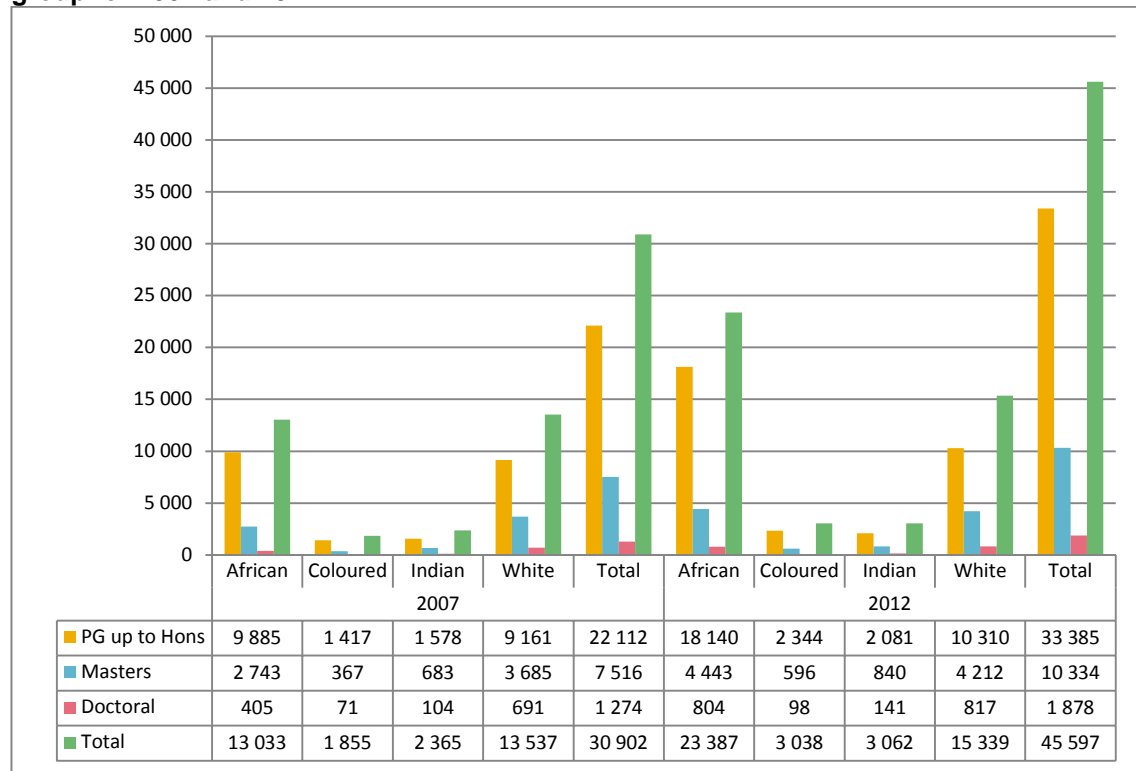
(Source: CHE 2014d: 21)

The numbers of male and female student enrolments and awards for all undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications were higher in 2012 than in 2007 (CHE 2014d: 18-21).

More female than male students enrolled for, and graduated with, all undergraduate qualifications in 2007 and 2012 (CHE 2014d: 18-19). The same patterns were the case for postgraduate qualifications up to Honours degrees (CHE 2014d: 20-21). All of these trends reverse patterns that existed prior to the onset of democracy in South Africa.

The traditional trends, with more male than female students enrolled for and graduating with Master's and Doctoral degrees, persisted in 2007 and 2012 but weakened in 2012 relative to 2007 (see Figures 38 and 39).

- While 16% more male than female students enrolled for Master's degrees in 2007, only 6% more male students registered for this degree in 2012.
- While 37% more male than female students enrolled for Doctoral degrees in 2007, 28% more male students registered for this degree in 2012.
- While 17% more male than female students graduated with Master's degrees in 2007, 7% more male students did so in 2012.
- While 40% more male than female students graduated with Doctoral degrees in 2007, 37% more male students did so in 2012.

Figure 38: Headcount of postgraduate enrolments by qualification type and gender for 2007 and 2012

	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total
		2007			2012	
PG up to Hons	36 050	23 125	59 175	54 090	31 324	85 501
Masters	19 099	22 077	41 179	24 071	25 488	49 561
Doctoral	4 249	5 803	10 052	6 113	7 848	13 964
Total	59 398	51 005	110 406	84 274	64 660	149 026
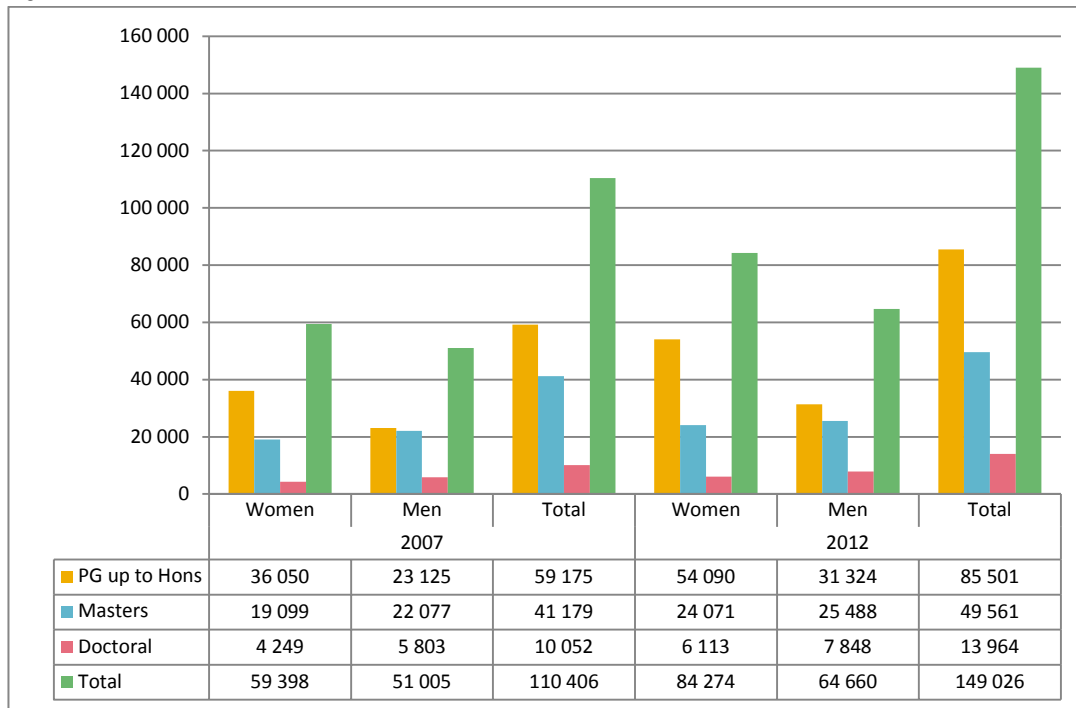
(Source: CHE 2014d: 20)

Figure 39: Headcount of postgraduate qualifications awarded by qualification type and gender for 2007 and 2012

	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total
		2007			2012	
PG up to Hons	13 647	8 465	22 112	20 985	12 395	33 385
Masters	3 471	4 045	7 516	4 983	5 350	10 334
Doctoral	530	744	1 274	794	1 084	1 878
Total	17 648	13 254	30 902	26 762	18 829	45 597
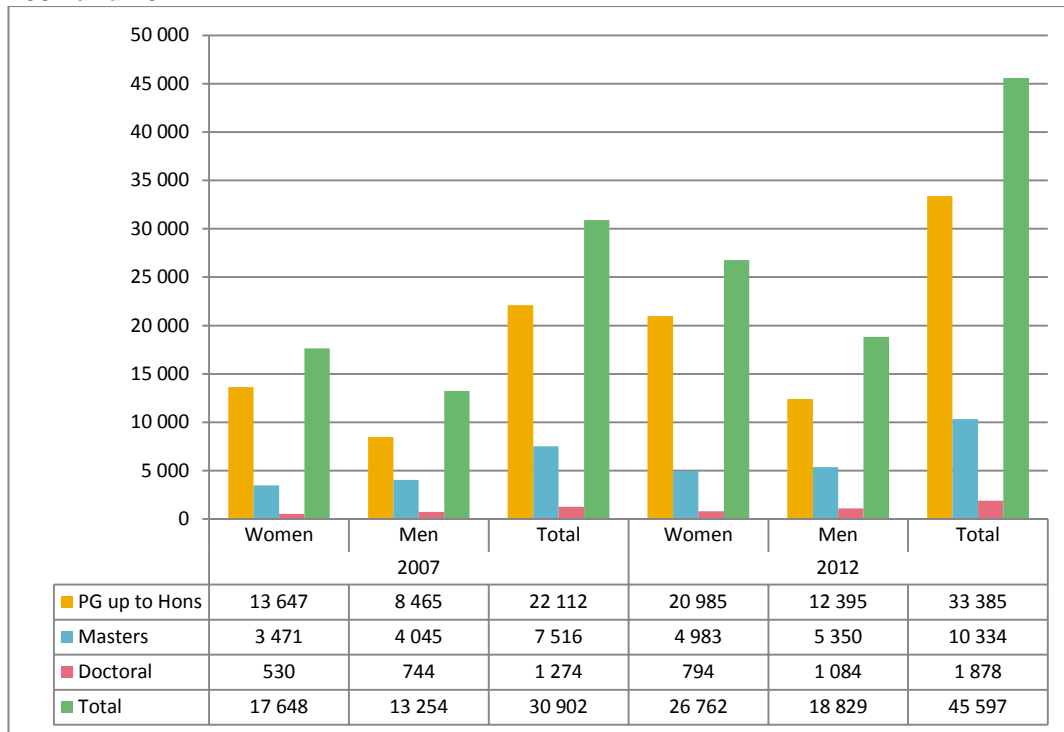
(Source: CHE 2014d: 21)

3.6.1.3 Student throughput: Comparing cohort studies for students enrolling in 2006, and in 2007

Enrolment and graduation data in the figures in Section 3.6.1 of the report, up to this point, do not refer to the same cohorts of students. These data cannot be used to show throughput rates. In the present section, developments relating to the cohorts of students enrolling for 360-credit diplomas, three-year degrees, four-year degrees, Honours degrees, coursework and research Master's degrees and doctoral studies in 2007 are considered. Developments relating to the corresponding 2006 cohorts are also considered and compared with patterns found in the 2007 cohorts. Both enrolments and graduations are shown for each 2007 and 2006 cohort, showing their throughput rates.

UNISA data are shown separately as UNISA enrolment numbers are high and its distinctive patterns would potentially skew the bigger picture.

3.6.1.3.1 Throughput rates for the 360-credit diploma with enrolment in 2007

Figures 41 and 42 show the throughput rates for the 2007 cohorts enrolling for 360-credit Diplomas in public HEIs. By 2009 when most of the cohort would ideally have graduated, only 20% of students had in fact graduated (Figure 41). This number rose to 47% after the sixth year of study. Data for the 2006 cohort are almost identical (CHE 2013: 59).

Figure 42 shows the throughput rates for the 360-credit diploma by population group. While 20% of African students passed in 'regulation time' (the planned time for the qualification), 27% of Coloured students did so, as did 29% of Indian students and 38% of White students. By the end of the sixth year of study graduation rates had increased to 47% of African students, 50% of Coloured students, 56% of Indian students and 59% of White students – the differences between the four demographic groups were smaller. The data for the 2006 cohort were almost identical (CHE 2011: 60). These accumulative pass rates are still lower than desired, and the related dropout rates are too high.

Figure 40: Throughput rates for 360-credit diplomas with the first year of enrolment in 2007 (excluding UNISA)

	non-accumulative				accumulative			
	2009	2010	2011	2012*	2009	2010	2011	2012*
Graduated	20.0%	14.4%	8.5%	4.1%	20.0%	34.4%	42.8%	47.0%
Dropped out	6.7%	4.8%	1.6%	5.3%	41.3%	46.1%	47.7%	53.0%
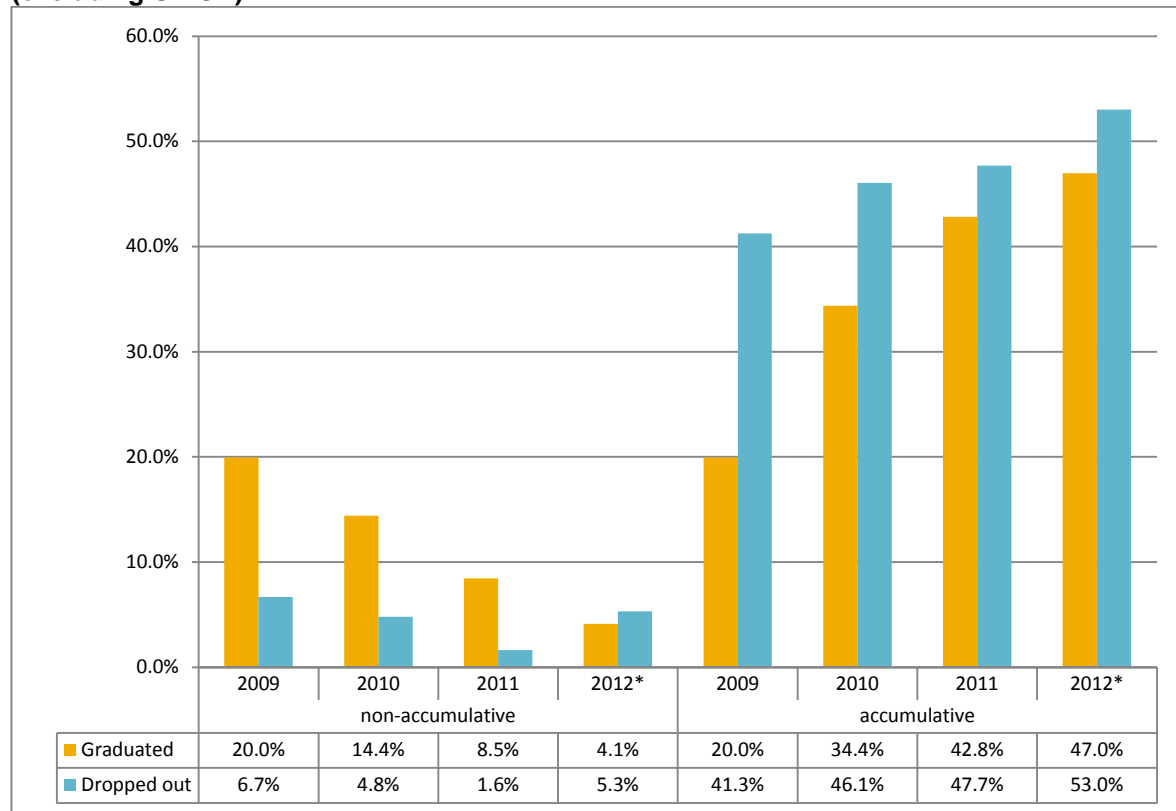
(Source: CHE 2014d: 61)

Figure 41: Throughput rates by population group for 360-credit diplomas with the first year of enrolment in 2007 (excluding UNISA), accumulative

	African		Coloured		Indian		White	
	Graduated	Dropped out	Graduated	Dropped out	Graduated	Dropped out	Graduated	Dropped out
2009	20%	41%	27%	43%	29%	34%	38%	36%
2010	34%	46%	40%	45%	43%	39%	50%	38%
2011	43%	48%	47%	46%	52%	39%	56%	39%
2012*	47%	53%	50%	50%	56%	44%	59%	41%

(Source: CHE 2014d: 62)

147
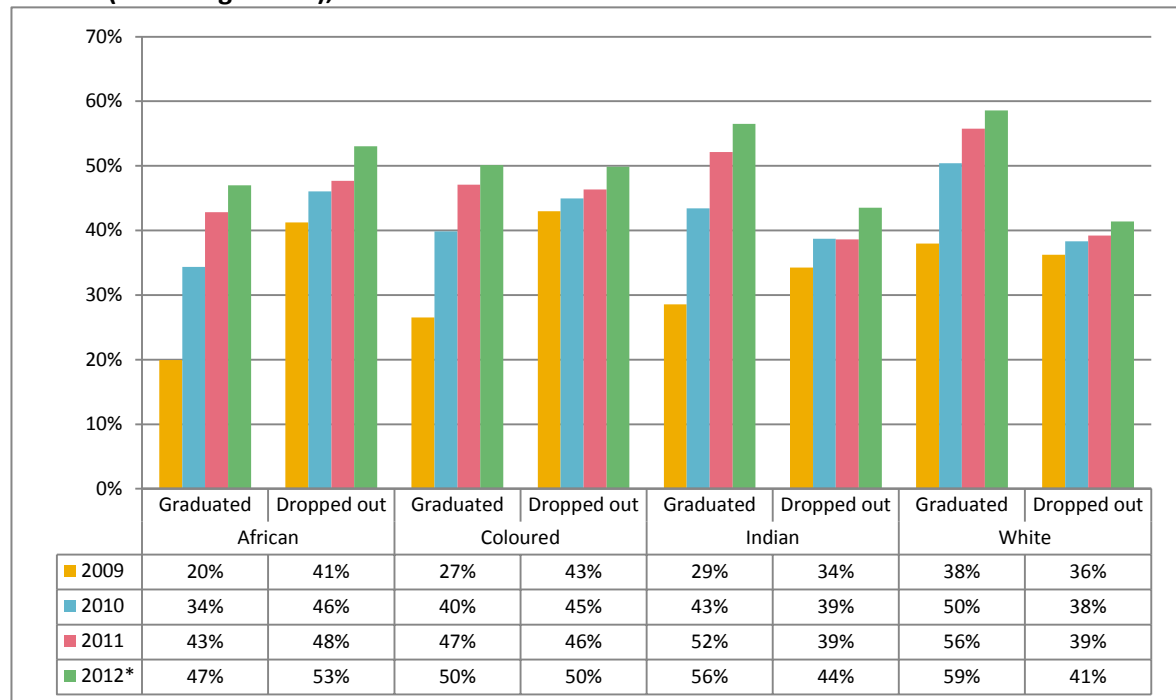
3.6.1.3.2 Throughput rates for the three-year degree with enrolment in 2007

Figures 42 and 43 show the throughput rates for the 2007 cohorts enrolling for three-year degrees. By 2009 when most of the cohort would ideally have graduated, 28% of students had graduated (Figure 42), the number rising to 55.9% after the sixth year of study in 2012. The success rates for these students were slightly higher than the rates for the 360-credit diploma students, but were still low. Data for the 2006 three-year degree cohort are almost identical to those for the 2007 cohort (CHE 2013: 60).

Figure 43 shows the throughput rates by population group for the three-year degrees with first enrolment in 2007. As for the 360-credit diploma group, African students had the lowest pass rates, followed by Coloured, Indian and White students in ascending order. Differences between the pass rates of these demographic groups were smaller after three, and after six years, than differences between groups doing the 360-credit diploma. Pass rates were also higher, and dropout rates lower, for all demographic groups for the three-year degree, compared to those for the 360-credit Diploma. Student achievement patterns were almost identical for the corresponding 2006 cohort apart from Coloured students, more of whom passed in 2007, but not enough to change the ranking pattern (CHE 2013: 61). These accumulative pass rates, although higher than those for the 360-credit diploma, were still lower than desired, with high dropout rates.

Figure 42: Throughput rates for three-year degrees with the first-year of enrolment in 2007 (excluding UNISA), accumulative

	non-accumulative				accumulative			
	2009	2010	2011	2012*	2009	2010	2011	2012*
■ Graduated	28.0%	17.1%	7.7%	3.1%	28.0%	45.1%	52.8%	55.9%
■ Dropped out	4.4%	3.4%	1.4%	3.2%	36.1%	39.5%	41.0%	44.1%

(Source: CHE 2014d: 62)

148
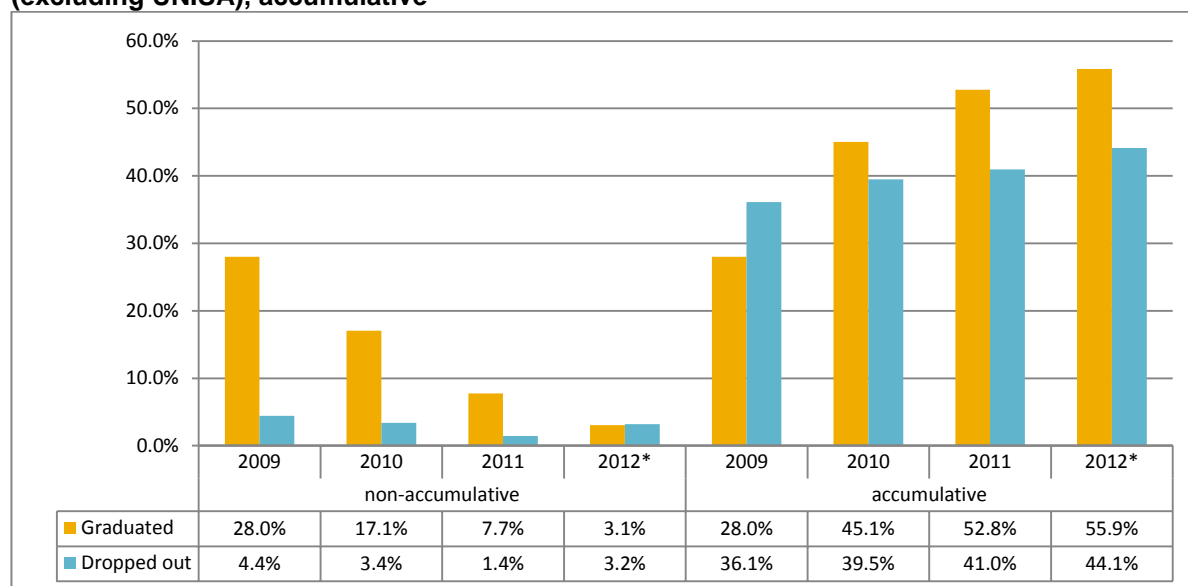
Figure 43: Throughput rates by population group for three-year degrees with the first year of enrolment in 2007 (excluding UNISA), accumulative

	Graduated	Dropped out	Graduated	Dropped out	Graduated	Dropped out	Graduated	Dropped out
	African		Coloured		Indian		White	
2009	19%	38%	23%	41%	26%	36%	42%	32%
2010	37%	43%	41%	45%	44%	39%	58%	33%
2011	46%	45%	49%	45%	54%	40%	63%	34%
2012*	50%	50%	52%	48%	57%	43%	65%	35%
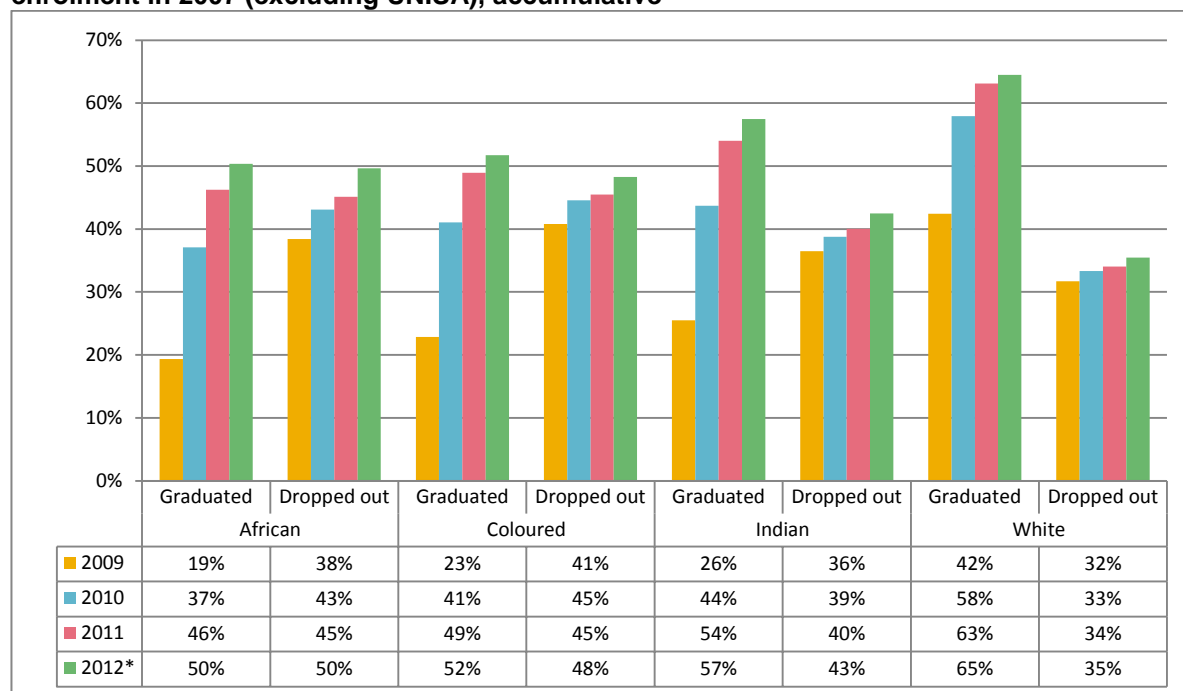
(Source: CHE 2014d: 63)

3.6.1.3.3 Throughput rates for the four-year degree with enrolment in 2007

Figures 45 and 46 show the throughput rates for the 2007 cohorts enrolling for four-year degrees. By 2010, the 'regulation time' for graduation for this degree, 38% had graduated (Figure 45), the number rising to 65% after the sixth year of study in 2012. The success rates for these students were higher than those for the three-year degree and considerably higher than those for the 360-credit Diploma. Pass rates after each of the fourth, fifth and sixth years of study were higher for the 2007 cohort of four-year degree students than for their 2006 counterparts (CHE 2013: 60).

Figure 46 shows the throughput rates by population group, for the four-year degrees with first enrolment in 2007. After four years of study (regulation time), as well as after five and six years, African, Coloured and Indian students had similar percentage pass rates, with the pass rates of White students being a little higher for each year. In addition, the differences in pass and dropout rates between the different demographic groups were smaller than for the three-year degrees, which in turn were smaller than those for the 360-credit Diplomas. It appears that as time passed, the students from previously disadvantaged population groups moved steadily towards 'closing the difference gaps' between the population groups.

In the cohort enrolling for four-year degrees in 2006, African students had higher pass rates than their Coloured counterparts after four, five and six years of study. These two groups had slightly lower pass rates than those of the Indian and White students (CHE 2013: 63). The patterns are however moving in the desired directions over time.

149

Figure 44: Throughput rates for four-year degrees with the first-year of enrolment in 2007 (excluding UNISA), accumulative

	non-accumulative			accumulative		
	2010	2011	2012*	2010	2011	2012*
Graduated	38%	14%	6%	38%	52%	58%
Dropped out	4%	2%	6%	35%	37%	42%
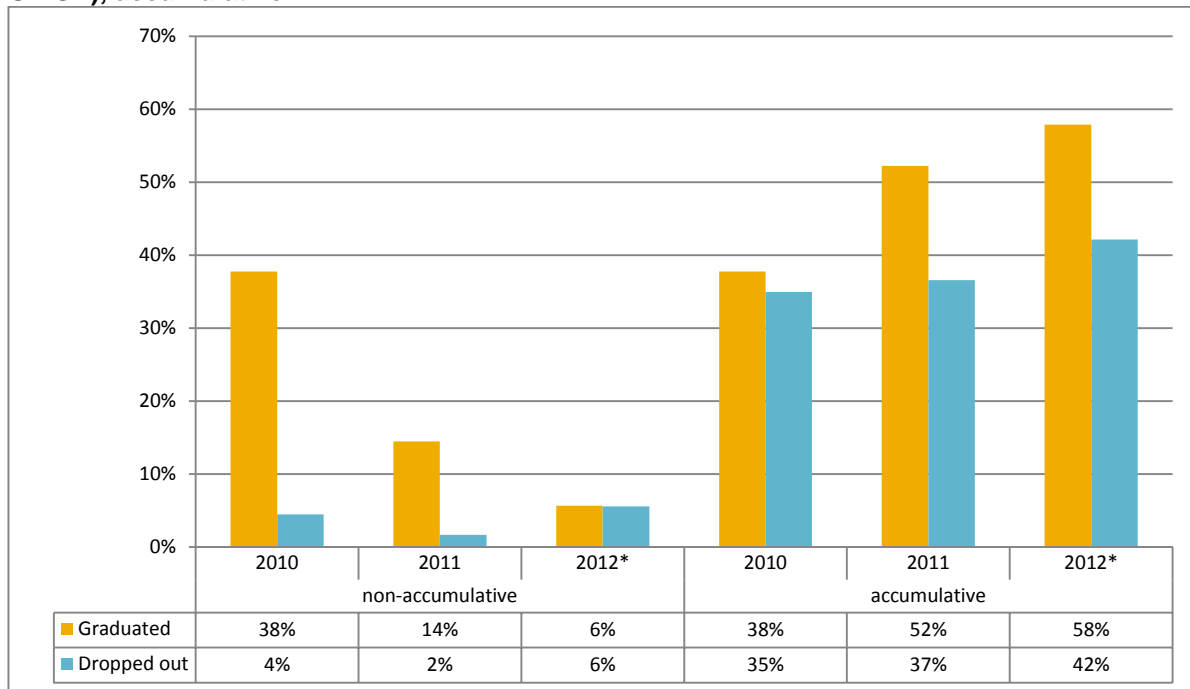
(Source: CHE 2014d: 64)

Figure 45: Throughput rates by population group for four-year degrees with the first-year of enrolment in 2007 (excluding UNISA), accumulative

	African		Coloured		Indian		White	
	Graduated	Dropped out	Graduated	Dropped out	Graduated	Dropped out	Graduated	Dropped out
2010	33%	36%	34%	40%	33%	36%	48%	31%
2011	48%	38%	48%	42%	50%	37%	61%	32%
2012*	54%	46%	53%	47%	58%	42%	65%	35%
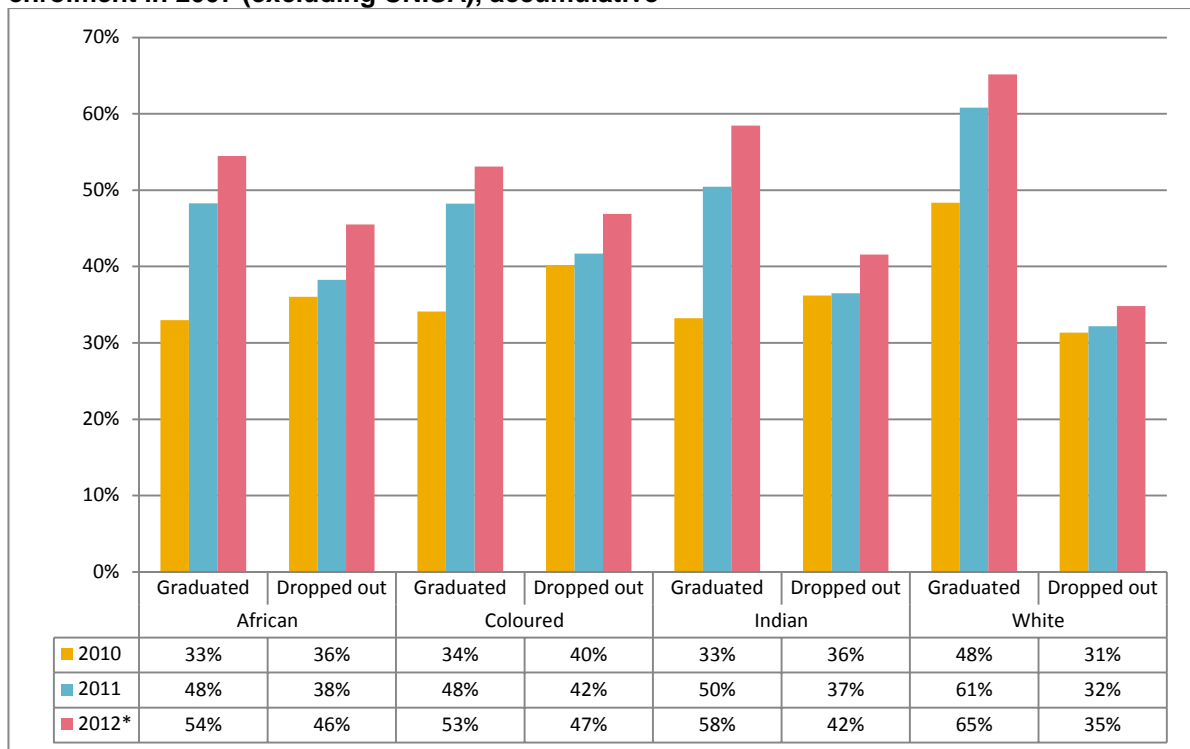
(Source: CHE 2014d: 65)

3.6.1.3.4 Percentages graduating in six years by discipline, for 360-credit diplomas, and three-year and four-year degrees with enrolment in 2007

Figures 46, 47 and 48 respectively show the percentages of students graduating after six years of study, by discipline, for 360-credit diplomas, and three-year and four-year degrees with enrolment in 2007. Figures 46, 47, and 48 show considerable variety in the pass rates of different disciplines; the pass rates of disciplines are not ranked in the same sequence across the three types of qualifications, and neither are they ranked similarly by qualification for cohorts enrolling in 2006 and 2007 respectively (CHE 2013: 63, 67, 71 and CHE 2014d: 65, 69, 73).

Figure 46: Percentage of 2007 cohort for 360-credit diploma graduating in six years (i.e. by 2012)
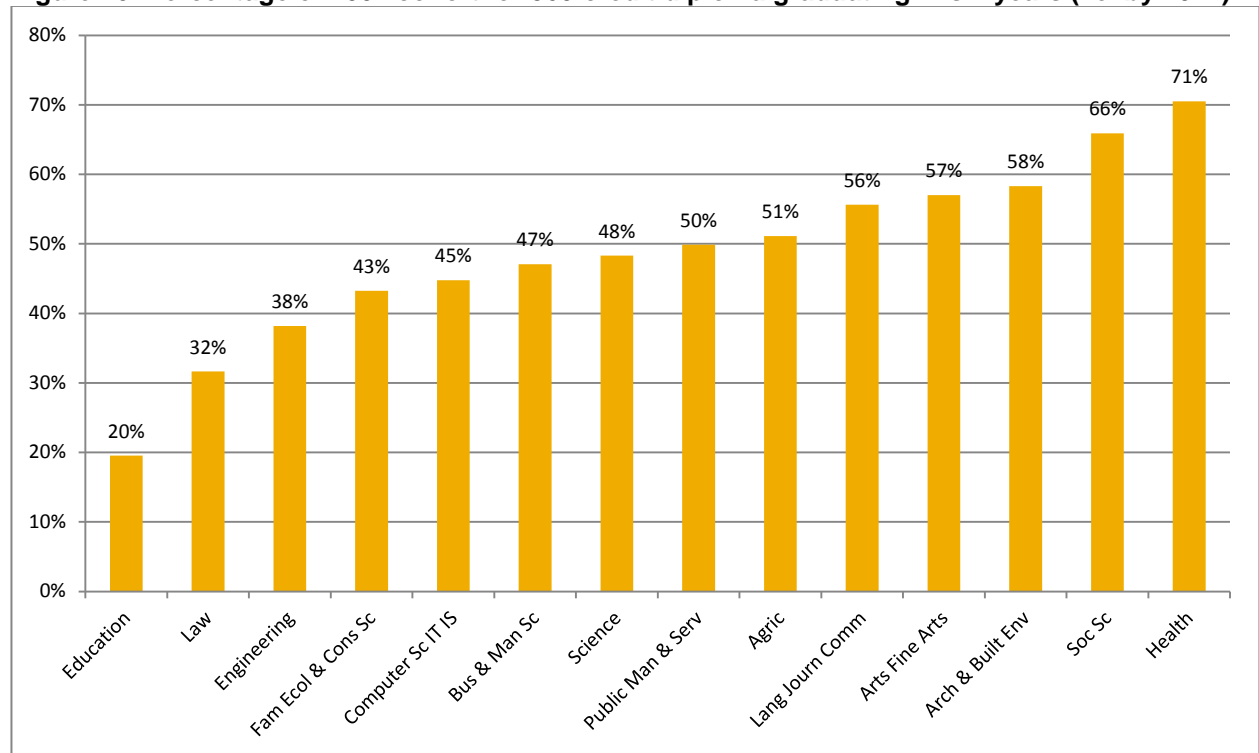
(Source: CHE 2014d: 65)

Figure 47: Percentage of 2007 cohort for three-year degree graduating in six years (i.e. by 2012)
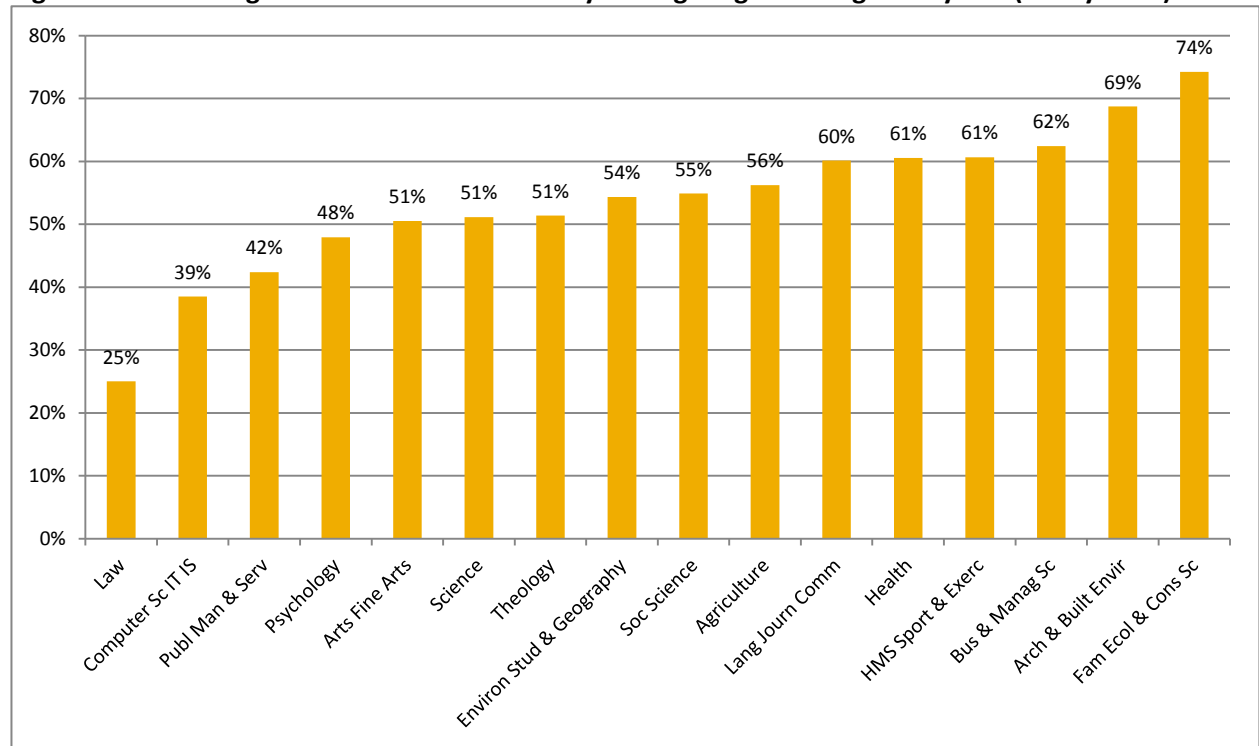
(Source: CHE 2014d: 69)

Figure 48: Percentage of 2007 cohort for four-year degree graduating in six years (i.e. by 2012)
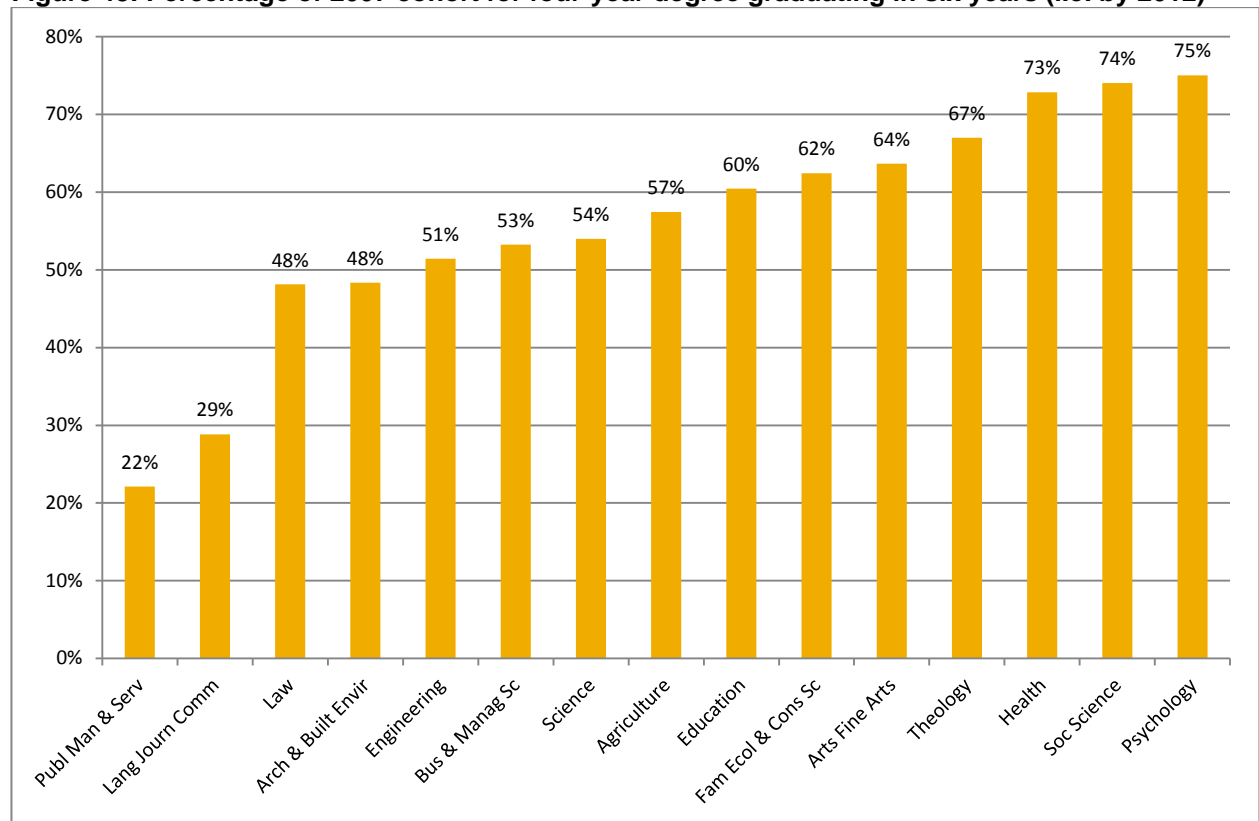
(Source: CHE 2014d: 73)

3.6.1.3.5 Throughput rates for UNISA for 360-credit diplomas, and three-and four-year degrees with enrolment in 2005

Figures 49, 50 and 51 show the throughput rates for 360-credit diplomas, and three and four-year degrees for which first enrolment was in 2005. Pass rates after three, four, five, six, seven and eight years are shown for each of the qualifications. Given that study for these qualifications is part-time and through distance modes, it is to be expected that graduation would take place two to three times later than full-time face-to-face study.

While the increases in throughput rates seen for the qualifications represented here at contact institutions (Figures 40-45) are also shown across Figures 49, 50 and 51, they are on a smaller scale and pass rates are lower than expected. Analyses of throughput rates for these qualifications at UNISA, in the years 2013, 2014 and 2015, for enrolments in 2005, are needed to see the full picture.

Figure 49: Throughput rates at UNISA for 360-credit diplomas with the first year of enrolment in 2005

	non-accumulative						accumulative		
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2010	2011	2012
Graduated	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	3%	4%	5%
Dropped out	6%	3%	1%	1%	2%	6%	88%	89%	95%

(Source: CHE 2014d: 80)

153

Figure 50: Throughput rates at UNISA for three-year degrees with the first year of enrolment in 2005

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2010	2011	2012
	non-accumulative						accumulative		
Graduated	2%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	5%	11%	14%
Dropped out	9%	4%	2%	3%	4%	26%	67%	72%	86%
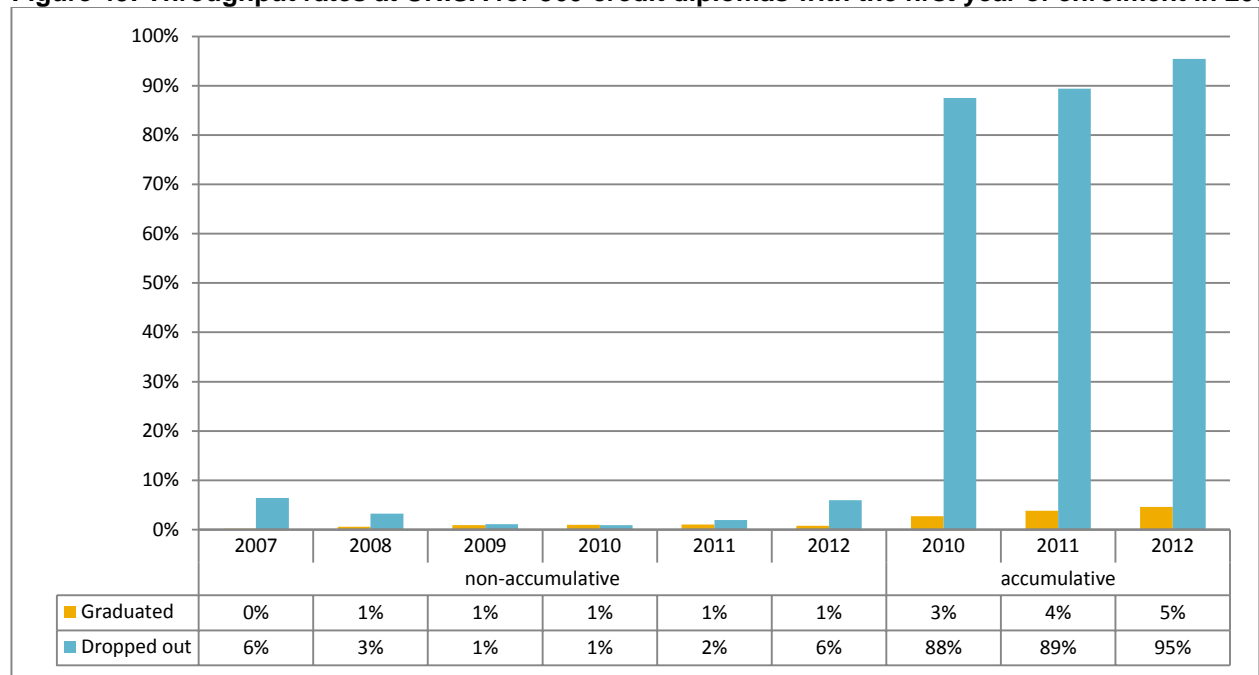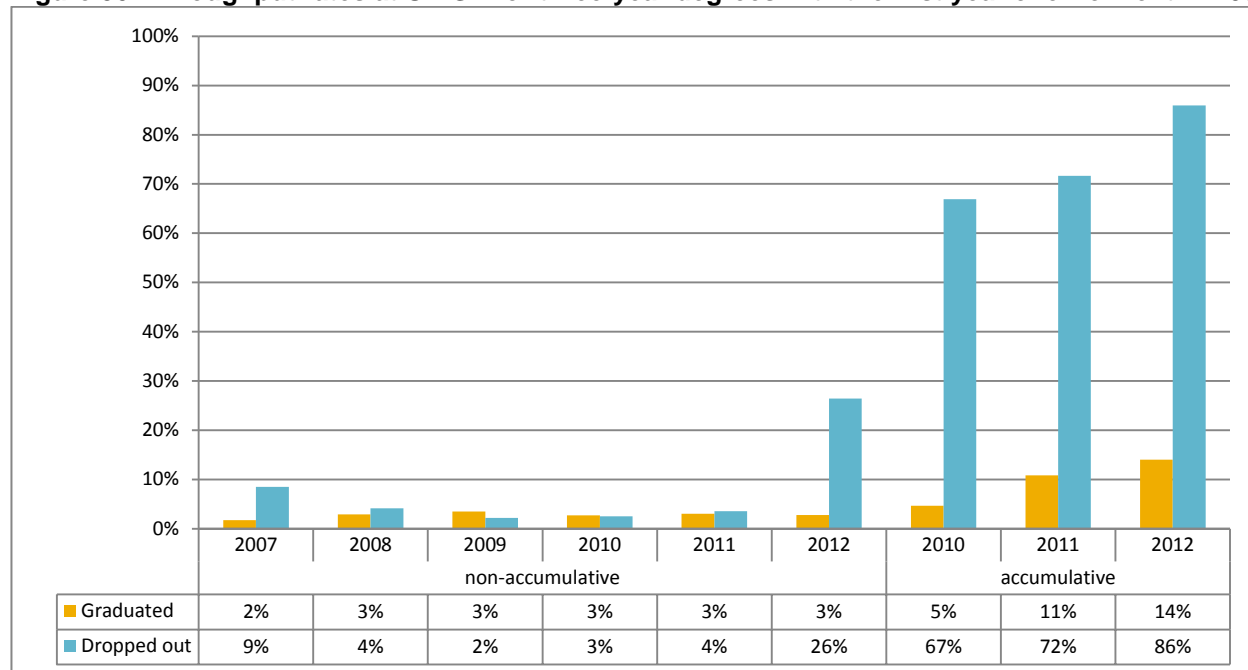
(Source: CHE 2014d: 80)

Figure 51: Throughput rates at UNISA for four-year degrees with the first year of enrolment in 2005

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2010	2011	2012
	non-accumulative					accumulative		
Graduated	4%	4%	3%	3%	2%	12%	14%	16%
Dropped out	5%	3%	2%	2%	13%	69%	71%	84%
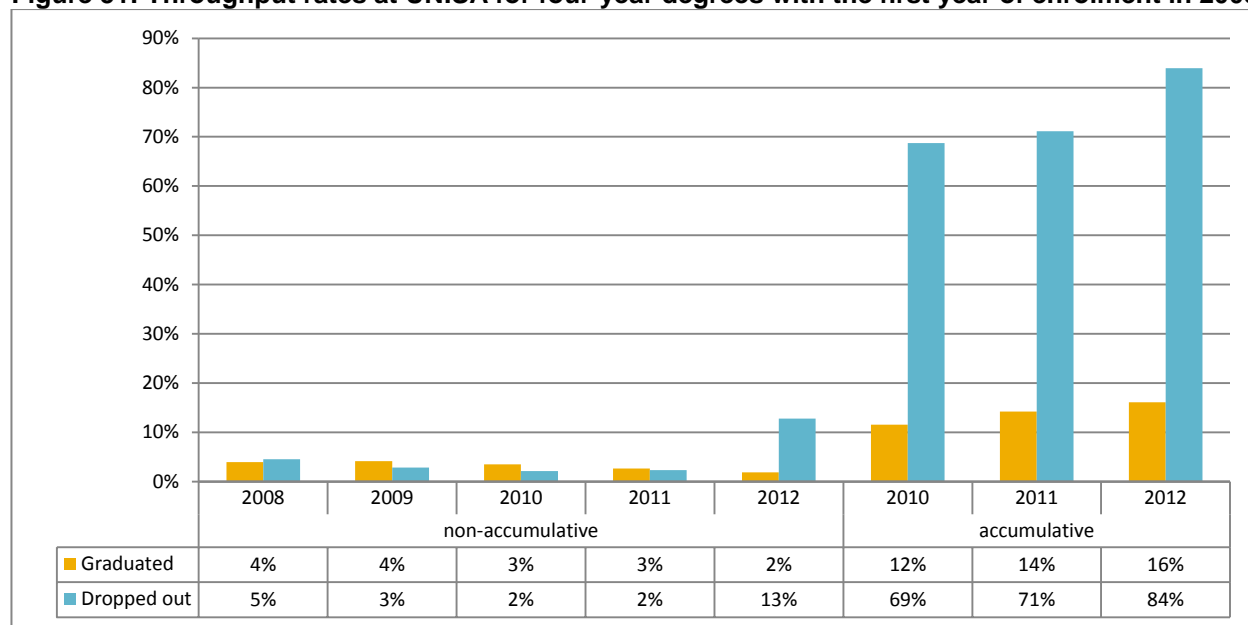
(Source: CHE 2014d: 81)

3.6.1.3.6 Throughput rates for Honours, Master's and Doctoral degrees with enrolment in 2007

Figures 52-55 show throughput rates for Honours, coursework and research Master's degrees respectively, and Doctoral degrees with first enrolment in 2007.

Comparing data in Figures 52-55, and comparing data in this set of figures with those in Figures 42 and 44 for undergraduate throughput rates, show the following trends:

- Throughput rates for Honours degrees were higher than those for undergraduate degrees overall, and they were at relatively high levels within regulation times, for the 2007 cohort.
- Throughput rates for coursework Master's degrees were roughly comparable to the throughput rates for three-year degrees for the 2007 cohort; the rates were lower than those for four-year degrees and for Honours degrees for the 2007 cohorts. Roughly a third had passed within regulation time; this number was just over half after six years of study.
- Throughput rates for research Master's degrees were similar to those for coursework Master's degrees for the 2007 cohort; pass rates were around 2% lower for research than for coursework Master's degrees each year between 2009-2012; 51% of the 2007 cohort had passed after six years of study.
- Throughput rates for Doctoral degrees for the 2007 cohort were lower still; by the sixth year of study 45% had passed.

Figure 52: Throughput rates for Honours degrees with the first year of enrolment in 2007 (excluding UNISA)

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012*	2009	2010	2011	2012*
			non-accumulative				accumulative			
Graduated	42.0%	16.8%	8.9%	3.5%	1.4%	0.9%	67.7%	71.2%	72.6%	73.5%
Dropped out	18.7%	4.3%	1.8%	0.8%	-0.1%	1.0%	24.7%	25.6%	25.5%	26.5%
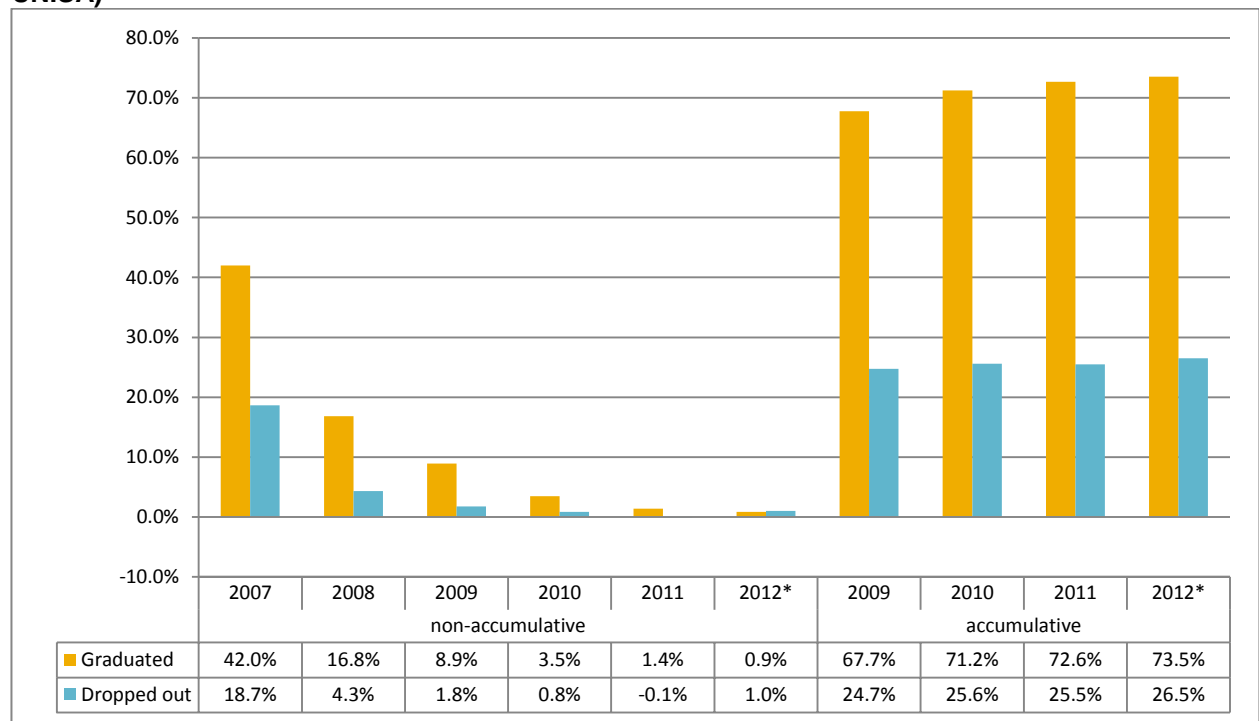
(Source: CHE 2014d: 84)

Figure 53: Throughput rates for coursework Master's degrees with the first year of enrolment in 2007 (excluding UNISA)

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012*	2009	2010	2011	2012*
			non-accumulative					accumulative		
Graduated	8%	17%	12%	8%	5%	3%	37%	45%	50%	53%
Dropped out	21%	9%	6%	4%	1%	6%	36%	39%	41%	47%
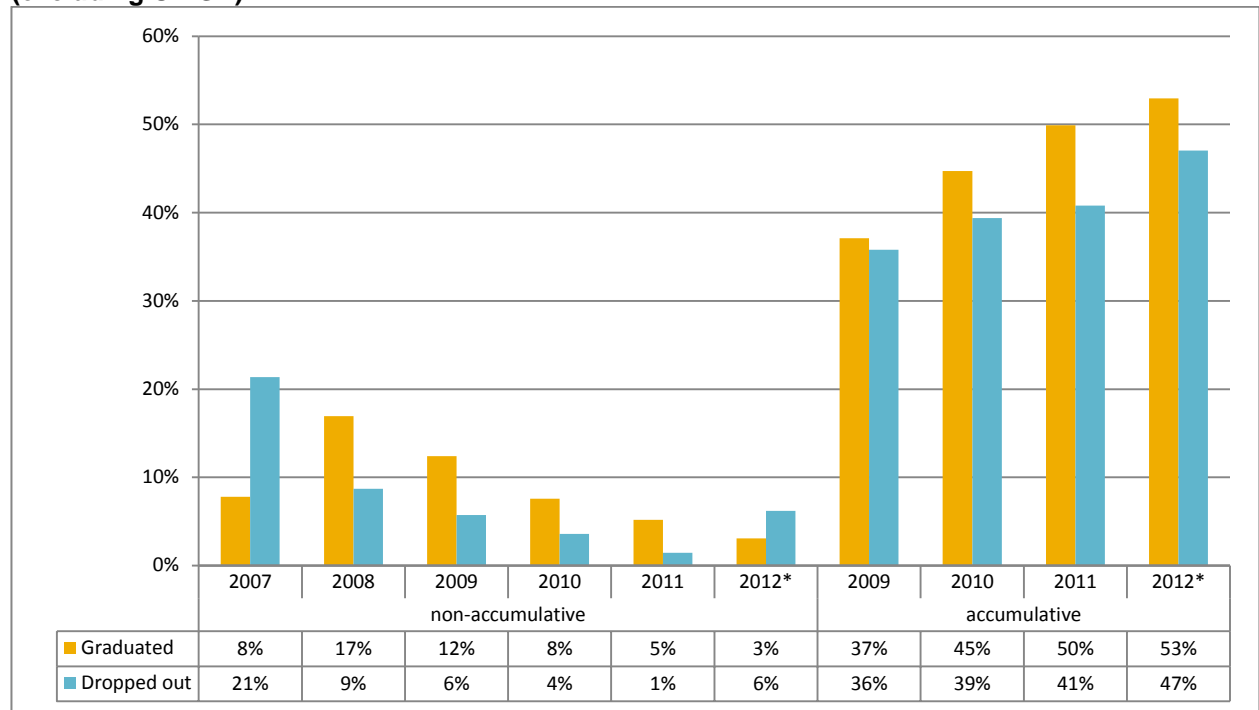
(Source: CHE 2014d: 84)

Figure 54: Throughput rates for research Master's degrees with the first year of enrolment in 2007 (excluding UNISA)

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012*	2009	2010	2011	2012*
			non-accumulative					accumulative		
Graduated	4%	15%	15%	8%	5%	3%	35%	43%	48%	51%
Dropped out	24%	9%	6%	3%	1%	6%	40%	42%	43%	49%
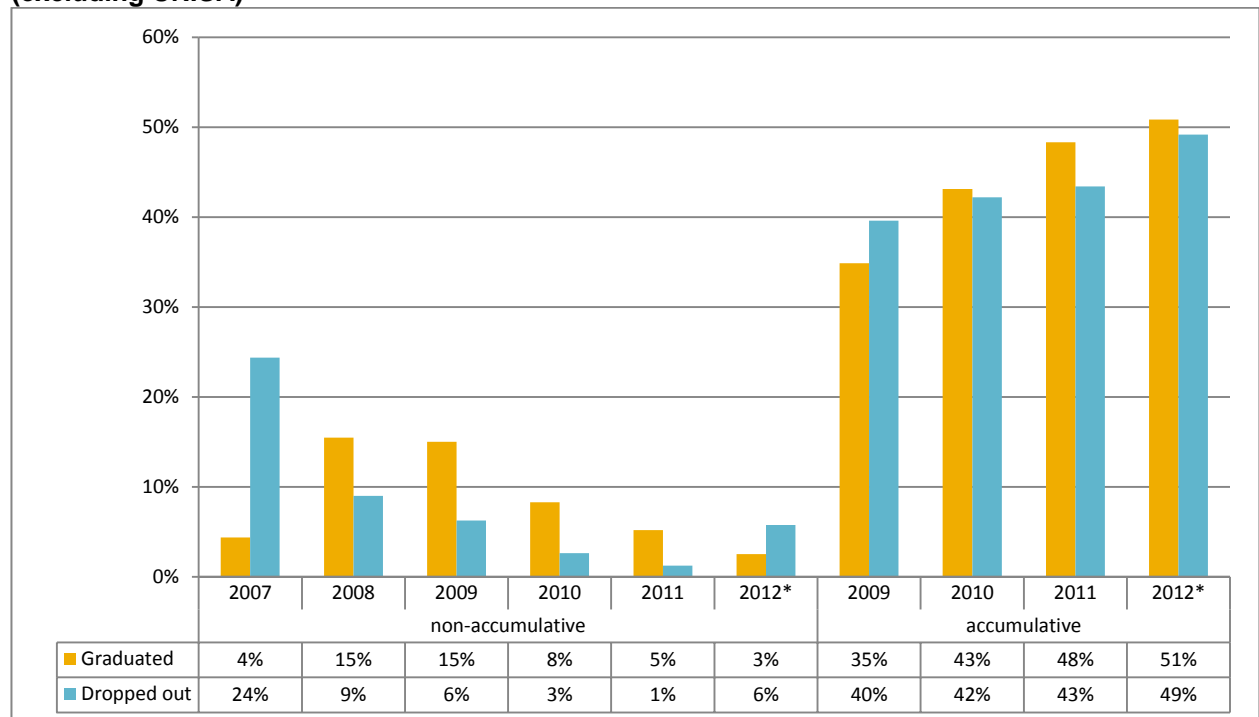
(Source: CHE 2014d: 87)

Figure 55: Throughput rates for Doctoral degrees with the first year of enrolment in 2007 (excluding UNISA)

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012*	2009	2010	2011	2012*
			non-accumulative				accumulative			
Graduated	3%	4%	10%	12%	10%	7%	16%	28%	38%	45%
Dropped out	19%	6%	6%	4%	1%	18%	32%	36%	37%	55%
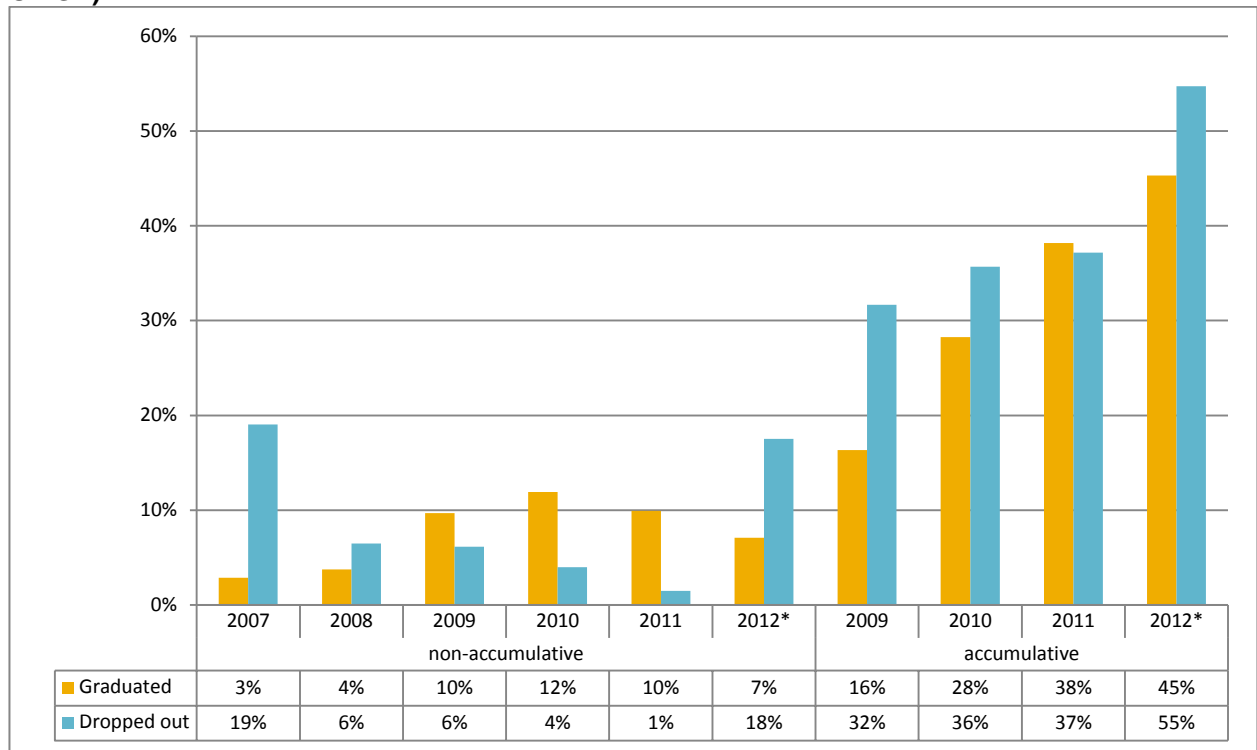
(Source: CHE 2014d: 87)

3.6.1.4 Public Higher Education: Snapshots

Using available data and analyses, Section 3.6 up to this point has presented enrolment and achievement patterns in public Higher Education between 2007 and 2012. Overall patterns are shown, as are enrolments and graduations in relation to the population group, gender and age groups of students, institutional type, mode of delivery, level of study, type of qualification, and academic discipline.

In closing this section of the report, some snapshots based on data from the National Learners' Records Database are shown. These snapshots reflect overall numbers of student achievements in public Higher Education between 1993 and 2012[1], and numbers of student achievements per population group and gender at different points in time. The snapshots also reflect the kinds of data housed in the National Learners' Records Database (NLRD). What lies within these broad brushstrokes has already been shown.

3.6.1.4.1 Total student achievements recorded in the National Learners' Records Database (NLRD) for public Higher Education, 1993-2012

Figure 56 shows the total number of achievements[2] recorded for public Higher Education between 1993 and 2012 in the NLRD.

The numbers of achievements have generally risen steadily across these years. The dips in 1998 and 2010 reflect data gaps rather than diminished numbers of students (Figure 57)[3]. It is expected that these gaps will be addressed via the SAQA-Higher Education Development Project (HEDP) (see Section 3.1.2).

The steep change from 1999 occurred because the HSRC Register of Graduates gathered public Higher Education data only from universities, whereas the HEMIS data of 1999 onwards (loaded onto the NLRD) includes data from Technikons[4].

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[1] Every achievement for every student is counted separately. Enrolments are not analysed, as the NLRD records this information according to the year of first enrolment, and does not check for repeat enrolments. There is no guarantee that the learners showing 'enrolled' status will complete the qualifications. As soon as students do complete their studies, their status is updated to 'achieved' for the specific achievement year, and their records are included in the achievement statistics from then on.

[2] Achievements in public Higher Education in the NLRD signify student graduation at a public Higher Education Institution (HEI), and submission of that data to the NLRD by that HEI. There are currently 2 036 435 of these achievements, for 1 517 977 students.

[3] The reader is reminded that currently data for public Higher Education are loaded onto the NLRD directly from the Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS), operational since 1998. Prior to the commencement of HEMIS, NLRD data was supplied by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) Register of Graduates; 1998 was the changeover year.

[4] Technikons were Higher Education Institutions (HEI) focusing on technical and vocational education at tertiary level in *apartheid* South Africa. In the mergers of HEI (2004-2005), Technikons fell away; current HEI comprise traditional Universities, Comprehensive Universities, and Universities of Technology.

Figure 56: Total student qualification awards in public Higher Education recorded in the NLRD for 1993-2012
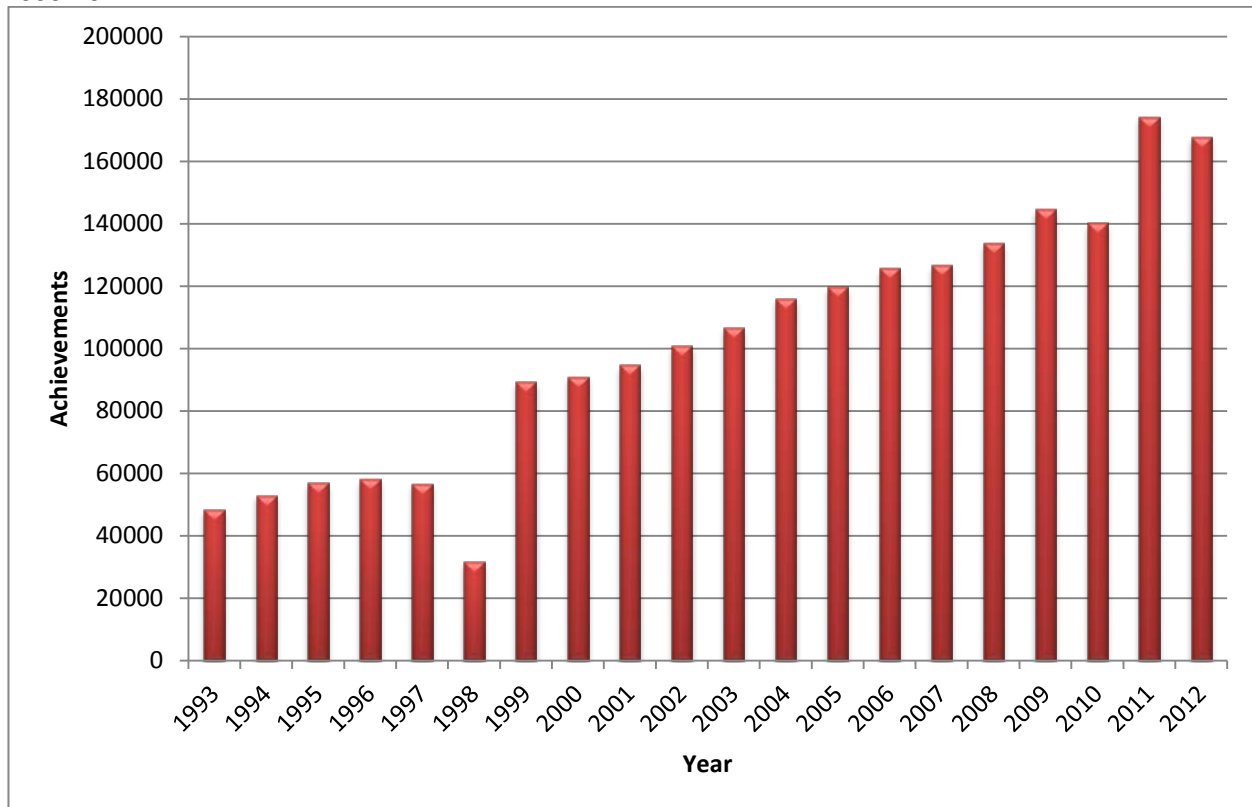
(Source: NLRD)

3.6.1.4.2 Total student achievements recorded in the National Learners' Records Database (NLRD) for public Higher Education, 1993-2012, by gender

Figure 57 shows total student achievements recorded in the NLRD for public Higher Education from 1993-2012 by gender. The data dips in 1998 and 2010 were explained above. There are fewer records for female than male students for 1993; records for the two for 1994 are similar; and from 1995, records for female students exceed those for male students, increasingly so with time.

Figure 57: Total student achievements recorded in the NLRD for public Higher Education, 1993-2012, by gender

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Female	23 451	26 308	29 011	31 774	30 985	16 810	48 334	51 206	54 412	58 428	61 784	67 529	70 284	74 665	74 810	79 659	87 903	93 152	97 263	100 857
Male	24 482	26 486	27 867	26 267	25 498	14 897	38 083	39 400	40 372	42 570	44 827	48 707	49 552	51 053	51 833	53 987	56 689	60 739	63 419	66 728
Unknown	420	243	170	43	40	9	3 029	245	113	1	1		9	9	9	7	2	3		1
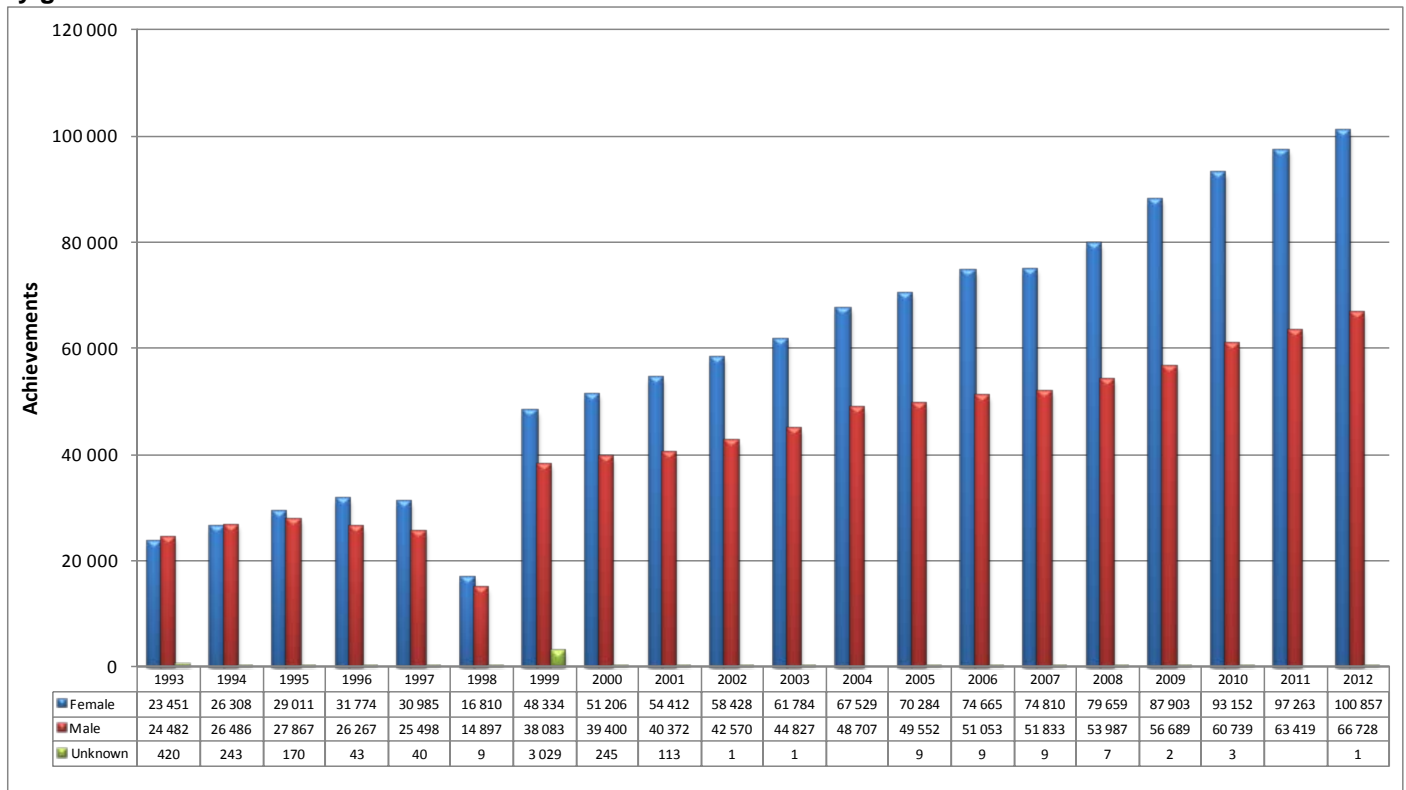
(Source: NLRD)

Figure 58 provides snapshots of the proportions of male and female students in 1994, 2003 and 2012 – from the start of democracy in South Africa, nine years hence, and the latest year for which there was audited public Higher Education data in the NLRD[5]. The snapshots show clearly the higher and increasing proportions of records for female students in public Higher Education.

Figure 58: Snapshots of total student achievements recorded in the NLRD for public Higher Education by gender for 1994, 2003 and 2012
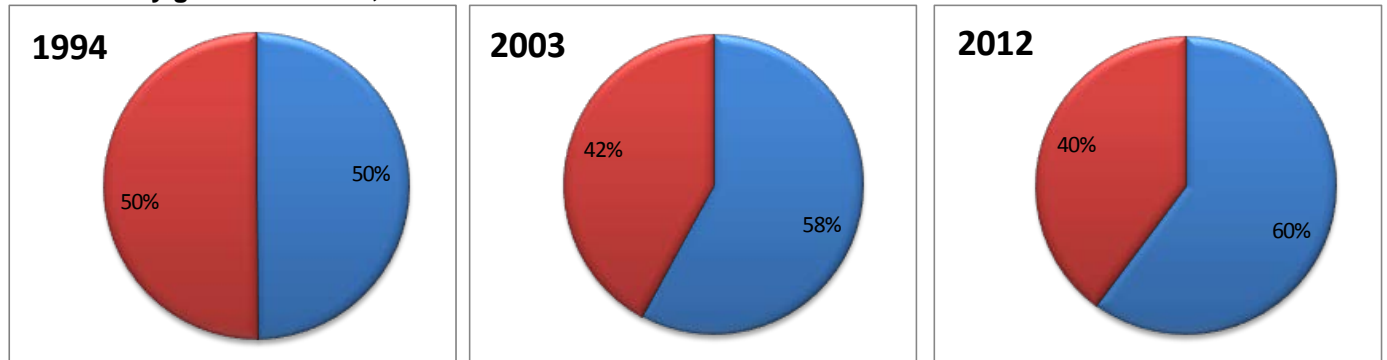
(Source: NLRD)

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[5] The numbers for 'unknown' portions have been apportioned across the known categories.

3.6.1.4.3 Total student achievements recorded in the National Learners' Records Database (NLRD) for public Higher Education, 1993-2012, by population group

Figure 59 shows total student achievements recorded in the NLRD for public Higher Education from 1993-2012 by population group. Data dips in 1998 and 2010 were explained in Section 3.6.1.4.1.

In this period, records for African students in public Higher Education increased by 737%, those for Coloured students increased by 433%, those for Indian students by 213%, and those for White students by 47%.

Figure 59: Total student achievements recorded in the NLRD for public Higher Education, 1993-2012, by population group

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
African	12 672	16 236	23 137	25 875	24 363	12 523	45 568	48 223	50 298	54 080	57 036	64 518	66 231	71 332	72 144	77 802	86 659	95 381	99 619	106 078
Coloured	2 005	2 201	2 255	2 821	1 655	1 076	4 314	4 396	4 945	5 220	6 300	6 660	7 247	7 766	7 887	8 419	9 915	10 324	10 783	10 695
Indian	3 139	3 382	3 443	3 616	4 095	1 790	4 422	5 916	6 246	6 871	7 382	7 822	8 111	8 087	8 338	8 632	8 550	8 808	9 200	9 832
White	27 313	29 532	26 700	25 204	24 553	16 133	31 653	31 956	33 183	34 659	35 609	37 026	38 148	38 393	38 028	38 556	39 110	38 728	40 448	40 261
Unknown	3 224	1 686	1 513	568	1 857	194	3 489	360	225	169	285	210	108	149	255	244	360	653	632	720

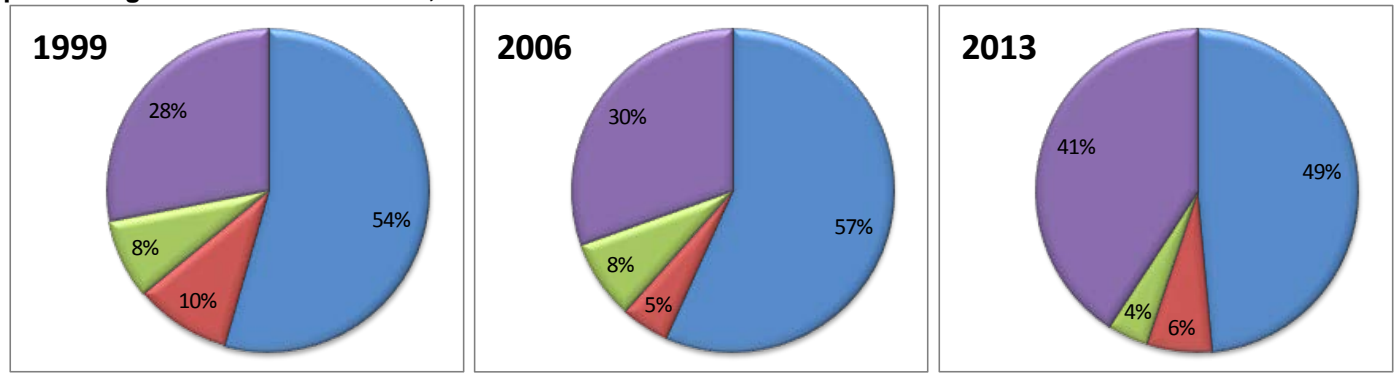*(Source: NLRD)*

Figure 60 provides snapshots of the proportions of students by population group in 1994, 2003 and 2012 as for Figure 58 – from the start of democracy in South Africa, nine years hence, and the latest year for which there was audited public Higher Education data in the NLRD.

The snapshots show clearly the higher and increasing proportions of records for African, Indian and Coloured students in public Higher Education.

161

Figure 60: Snapshots of total student achievements recorded in the NLRD for public Higher Education by population group for 1994, 2003 and 2012
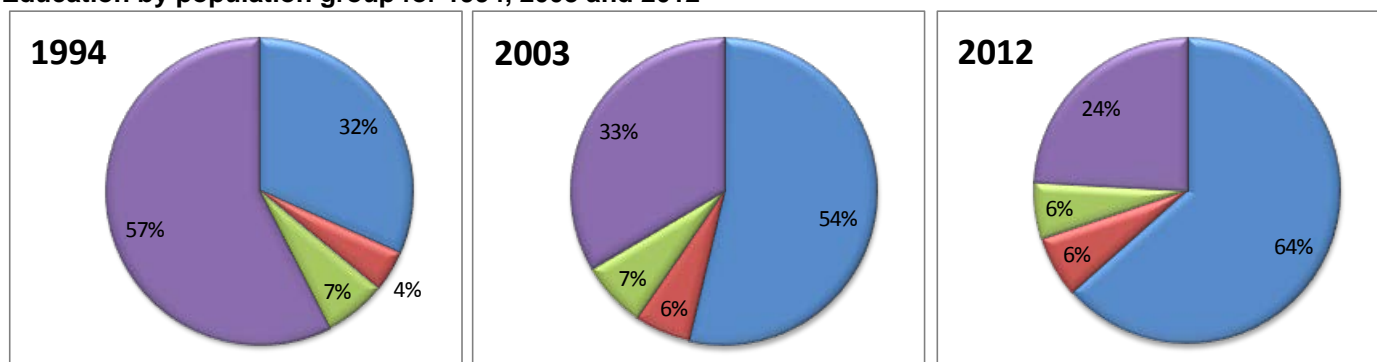
(Source: NLRD)

■ African   ■ Coloured   ■ Indian   ■ White

3.6.1.4.4 Total student achievements recorded in the National Learners' Records Database (NLRD) for public Higher Education, 1993-2012, by qualification type

Figure 61 shows the distribution of the 2 036 435 public Higher Education achievements recorded in the NLRD across the qualification types of the NQF. Those qualification types that are part of the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF) are shown in green.

Two qualifications are commonly referred to by names which differ from their qualification types in the HEQSF[6]: these qualifications are shown in blue. The first, the Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE), has been known by this title for many years, and has had considerable student uptake. It is currently defined as a National Certificate on the NQF, and is completely different from the Advanced Certificate of the HEQSF (which had an uptake of only 89 people by 2012).

The second qualification shown in blue, the Bachelor of Technology, is usually considered to be a type of National First Degree although it has never yet been assigned an NQF Level on the ten-level NQF. It is shown separately in Figure 61 in order to see the extent of its uptake.

The qualification types shown in red do not form part of the HEQSF but were offered by public HEIs during the period 1993 to 2012. Many of these qualifications carry the name 'Diploma', but are not the 'National Diploma' that was added only when the HEQSF came into being[7].

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[6] The types of these qualifications in the NQF, and the names by which they are commonly known, differ.

[7] Because the 'Diploma' (which is not the 'National Diploma') was added only when the HEQSF came into being, many of the qualifications that would now have 'Diploma' as their qualification type were noted as 'National Diploma' at the time of loading their learner achievements. It is expected that the qualification type 'Diploma' will eventually be noted retrospectively for further qualifications.

Figure 61: Student achievements recorded in the NLRD for public Higher Education by Qualification Type for 1993 to 2012
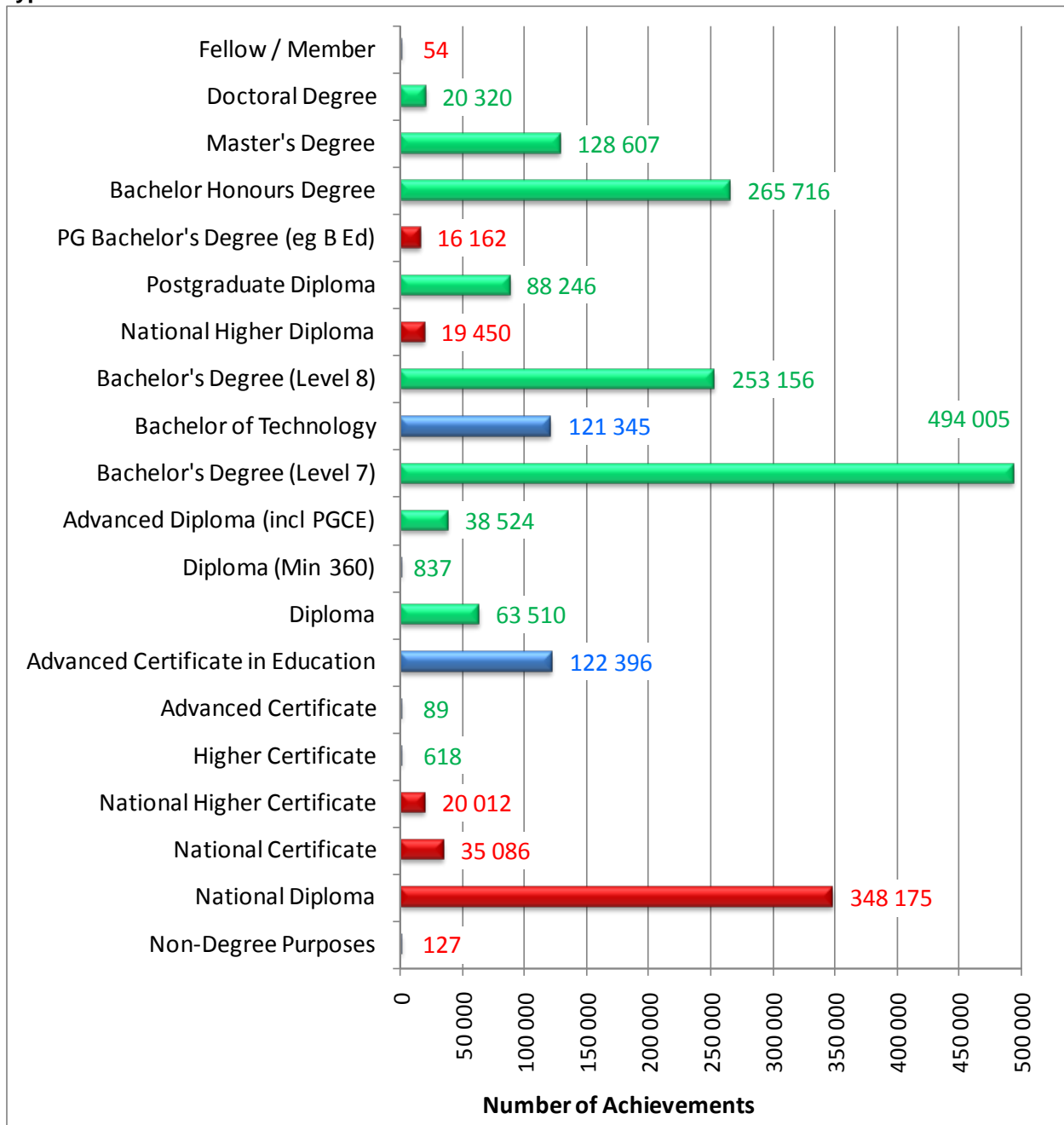
(Source: NLRD)

■ 1 On the HEQSF   ■ 2 Part of an HEQSF category   ■ 3 Not on the HEQSF

163

3.6.2 Access, success and redress in private Higher Education

It was noted in Section 3.1.2 that data from Private Higher Education Institutions (PHEIs) are collected and loaded onto the NLRD through the Higher Education Quality Committee Information System (HEQCIS), launched in 2008. Until then, there had been no national database of private Higher Education statistics.

The methodology for collecting, storing and analysing the data in the HEQCIS is based on that of the NLRD. All of the PHEIs are expected to upload data at least twice a year.

Some PHEIs have taken longer than others to arrive at the point where they are able to comply with this standard; currently, most do so. There are, however, still gaps in the data of some of the institutions (as can be seen when the data trends are examined for each institution separately[8]), particularly for the years prior to 2008 when the institutions may not have had all of their data stored electronically. The PHEIs concerned are being encouraged by SAQA to fill these gaps.

Data for private Higher Education statistics will be analysed in more depth in future NQF impact study reports.

In the present report snapshots of NLRD records for student achievements[9] in PHEIs are given. These snapshots represent overall numbers of student achievements in private Higher Education between 1993 and 2013, and numbers of student achievements by population group and gender at different points in time. The total number of student achievements in private Higher Education recorded in the NLRD is currently 67 400 achievements for 62 946 students.

3.6.2.1 Achievement trends in Private Higher Education Institutions

Figure 62 shows the total number of achievements recorded for private Higher Education between 1993 and 2013 in the NLRD. The numbers of achievements have generally risen steadily across these years. The drop in 2013 signifies a lag in data loading rather than a true dip in the numbers.

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[8] In the analysis provided here, the data for the institutions is aggregated. As different institutions have gaps in different years from each other, the gaps are not apparent in the aggregations.

[9] As for public Higher Education Institutions, every achievement for every student is counted separately. Enrolments are not analysed, as the NLRD records this information according to the year of first enrolment, and does not check for repeat enrolments. There is no guarantee that the learners showing 'enrolled' status will complete the qualifications. As soon as students do complete their studies, their status is updated to 'achieved' for the specific achievement year, and their records are included in the achievement statistics from then on.

Figure 62: Total student qualification awards in Private Higher Education recorded in the NLRD for 1993-2013
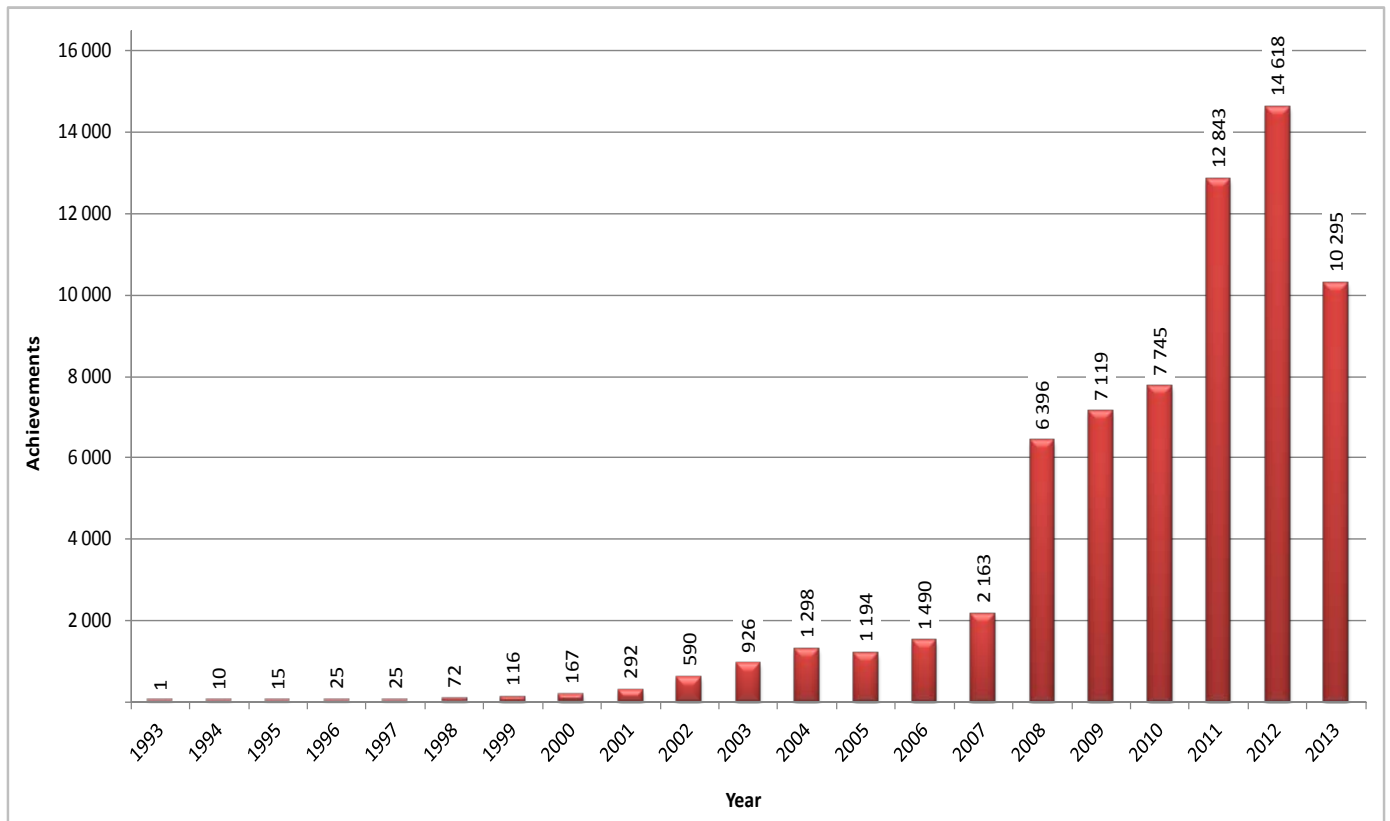
3.6.2.2 Snapshots of achievements in private Higher Education Institutions by gender: 1999, 2006 and 2013

Figure 63 provides snapshots of the proportions of male and female students in 1999, 2006 and 2013 – the year of the start of meaningful private Higher Education data; seven years hence; and the latest year for which there are private Higher Education data in the NLRD.

Figure 63: Snapshots of total student achievements by gender recorded in the NLRD for private Higher Education for 1999, 2006 and 2013
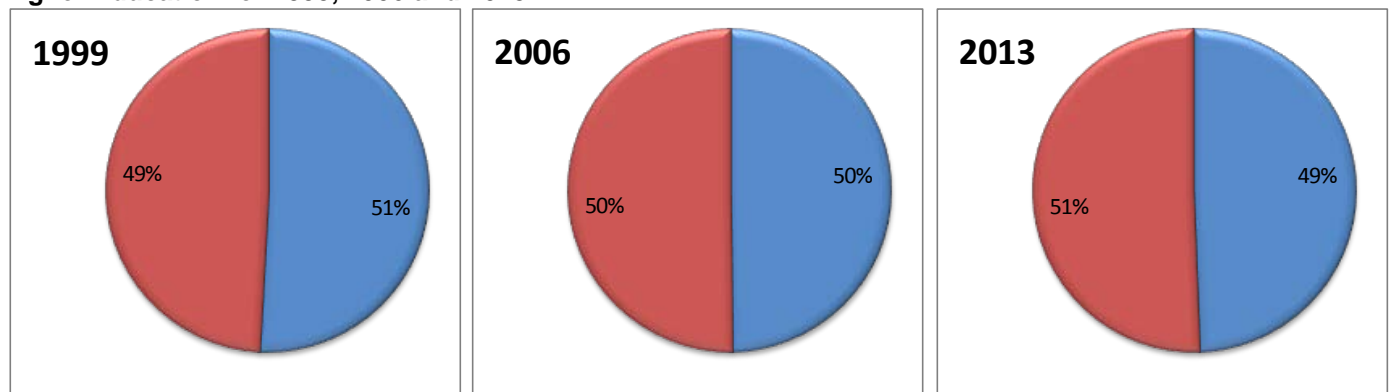
Figure 64 provides snapshots of the proportions of students by population group in 1999, 2006 and 2013 – the selection of years as for Figure 64.

The snapshots show clearly the higher and increasing proportions of records for African students in private Higher Education. The shares of Indian and Coloured students have decreased over the time period, and that of White students has increased over the years.

Figure 64: Snapshots of total student achievements by population group recorded in the NLRD for private Higher Education for 1999, 2006 and 2013

(Source: NLRD)

■ African   ■ Coloured   ■ Indian   ■ White

A summary of student enrolment and achievement trends in HEIs in 2005-2012 is shown in the box below.

Summary of student enrolment data for HEIs, 2005-2012

- In the period 2005-2012 there were increases in student enrolments for undergraduate and postgraduate studies in HEIs, of 25% and 35% respectively, and the percentages of students enrolling for all types of HEIs increased across the 2005-2012 period.
- The proportions of female students in HEIs were higher than the proportions of women in the general population, and these proportions increased between 2005 and 2012. In 2005, 55% of students in HEIs were women, when women made up 52% of the population. There was a steady increase in the percentages of women in HEIs to 58% in 2012, when 51% of the general population was female.
- Population group differences between the proportions of students in HEIs relative to proportions of particular population groups in society decreased across the years 2005 and 2012.
- The highest proportions of enrolments and graduations were in the 20-24 years age group, followed by enrolments in the 25-30 year age group.

Summary of student achievement trends in HEIs, 2005-2012

- The <u>overall numbers – and proportions – of graduations were lower than desired</u> in the 2005-2012 period. However there were <u>steady increases in the percentages of students graduating</u> at undergraduate and postgraduate levels.
- In the period 2005-2012 the <u>differences between graduation rates of students from different population groups narrowed markedly</u>. In 2005, White students had the highest graduation rates, Coloured and Indian students followed with similar graduation rates to each other, and African students had the lowest graduation rates. These gaps closed steadily between 2005 and 2012. By 2012 these population group patterns had started to scramble.

- The graduation rates of male and female students increased across the 2005-2012 period; female students continued to achieve greater success rates across these years.
- The percentages of learners graduating differed across disciplines.
- Cohort studies for students enrolling in 2007, and completing their undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications in regulation time, or regulation time plus one, two or three years, showed similar patterns to similar cohort studies for students enrolling in 2006. The percentages of graduations increased with the NQF levels of the qualifications, up to Honours Degree level.
  Importantly, while population group differences were visible in the graduation rates at regulation time, the differences were decreasing across the years analysed.
- Regarding graduations by mode of delivery (contact versus distance delivery of programmes at HEIs) in 2005-2012, the numbers of White students graduating via contact modes dropped, while the numbers of students from all other population groups graduating via contact modes increased in this period. The *percentages* of students graduating via contact modes dropped for students from all population groups in this period, apart from African students – and the *percentages* of students from all population groups graduating via distance modes increased for students from all population groups, apart from African students.
- Comparing snapshots of the total numbers of student achievements via public HEIs recorded in the NLRD for 1994, 2003 and 2012 shows the shift from 50% of records being for female students in 1994, to 61% of the records in 2012, and the percentages of records for African, Coloured and Indian students combined increased from 43% in 2004 to 76% in 2012. The total numbers of achievements via private HEIs shifted from 51% of achievement records for female students in 1999, to 49% in 2013, and from 72% of records for African, Coloured and Indian students combined in 1999 to 59% in 2013.

3.7 Redress, access, success and progression in the OQSF context

Data in this section refer to qualifications that fall within the Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework (OQSF)[10]. The data on which the analyses were based were drawn from the following sources:

- National Learners' Records Database (NLRD) data and analyses.
- Reports developed by the NLRD including *Report 3: Work-related qualifications and part-qualifications registered on the NQF – Trends 2002-2011* (SAQA 2013d) and further related analyses.
- The publications *Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa 2011* (Department of Higher Education and Training [DHET] 2013d)*,* and *Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa 2012* (DHET 2014b).

The sub-sections that follow detail records for annual learner enrolments for, and achievements of, occupational qualifications between 2002 and 2012[11]. All records presented refer to whole qualifications. Data for unit standards are not included unless otherwise specified.

Snapshots of learner achievements of occupational qualifications by gender and population group in 2002, 2007 and 2012 are also provided. Details regarding qualification levels, types and content areas are provided by gender and population group as evidence of patterns in access, redress and success.

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[10] See Section 6.3 for more detail.
[11] The publication *Report 3: Work-related qualifications and part-qualifications registered on the NQF – Trends 2002-2011* (SAQA 2013d) included data up to 2011; a further year of audited data has been included.

3.7.1 First-time enrolments and total achievements for occupational qualifications annually, 2002-2012

Figure 65 shows NLRD records for first-time enrolments[12] for occupational qualifications annually, 2002-2012. It is important to note that this information is dependent on data being uploaded by Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) and is not necessarily as complete as are the records of qualification achievements in this sector. Figure 65 nevertheless provides an accurate picture of enrolment *trends* in the sector.

There is a general upward trend in records of enrolments and achievements in this period, with spikes in particular years – notably in 2004, 2009 and 2010 in Figure 65 and in 2005, 2009 and 2010 in Figure 66.

To explain fully the fluctuations in both the enrolment and the achievement datasets for occupational qualifications, the data would need to be unpacked and represented according to occupational sub-field. In addition, follow-up with the stakeholders involved (such as SETAs and others) would be needed, to develop understanding of the trends in the particular sub-fields.

An example of a reason for a sub-field spike – using the high numbers of achievements relating to Agriculture and Nature Conservation in 2006 (see Figure 66) – is the growth in Primary Agriculture around that time. Another example is the increase in achievements in the Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology sector in 2005 due to a once-off special grant released for employed learners. These patterns may or may not coincide with increases or dips in total occupational achievements for the years concerned.

Increases in achievements of occupational qualifications from 2007 to 2009 coincide with an injection of funds in the Education, Training and Development sub-field as part of a special project by what was then the national Department of Education (DoE), the Department of Social Development (DSD), the ABSA Foundation, the Health and Welfare SETA (HWSETA) and the Education, Training and Development Practices SETA (ETDP SETA).

The 2010 peak in total occupational enrolments and achievements (Figures 65, 66) coincided with a sudden increase in achievements in the Physical Planning and Construction sub-field. This marked increase can be explained by drawing attention to the large numbers of African men and women undertaking studies in Construction, Contracting or Community House Building (SAQA 2013g).

While it is not easy to draw links between the numbers of enrolments and achievements for occupational qualifications and particular national initiatives, events and circumstances, it seems reasonable to argue that the 2009-2010 spikes (Figures 65, 66) were linked to skills and training needs required for South Africa to host the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

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[12] The data refer to first-time enrolments per year: the counts of enrolments for the same people are not included in subsequent years, when the learners are still studying.

Figure 65: Total first-time enrolments for occupational qualifications per year, 2002-2012
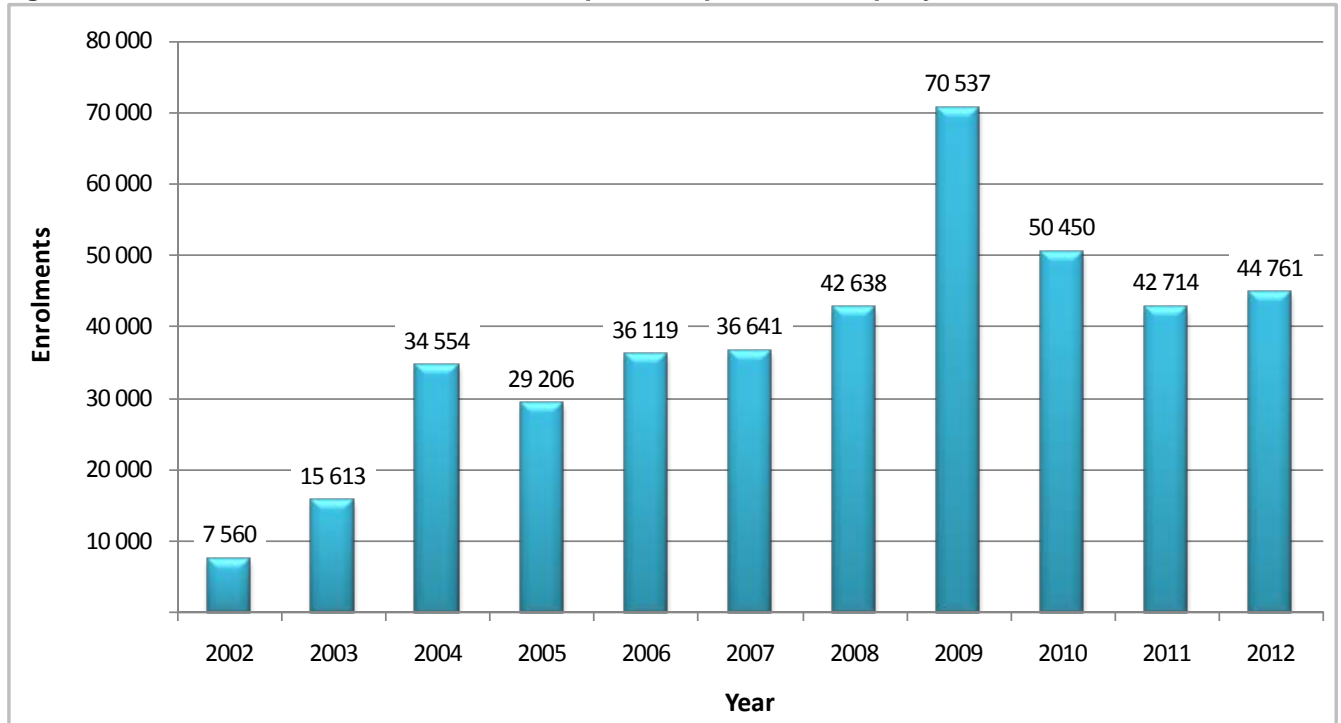
(Source: NLRD)

Figure 66: Total achievements for occupational qualifications per year, 2002-2012

(Source: NLRD)

169
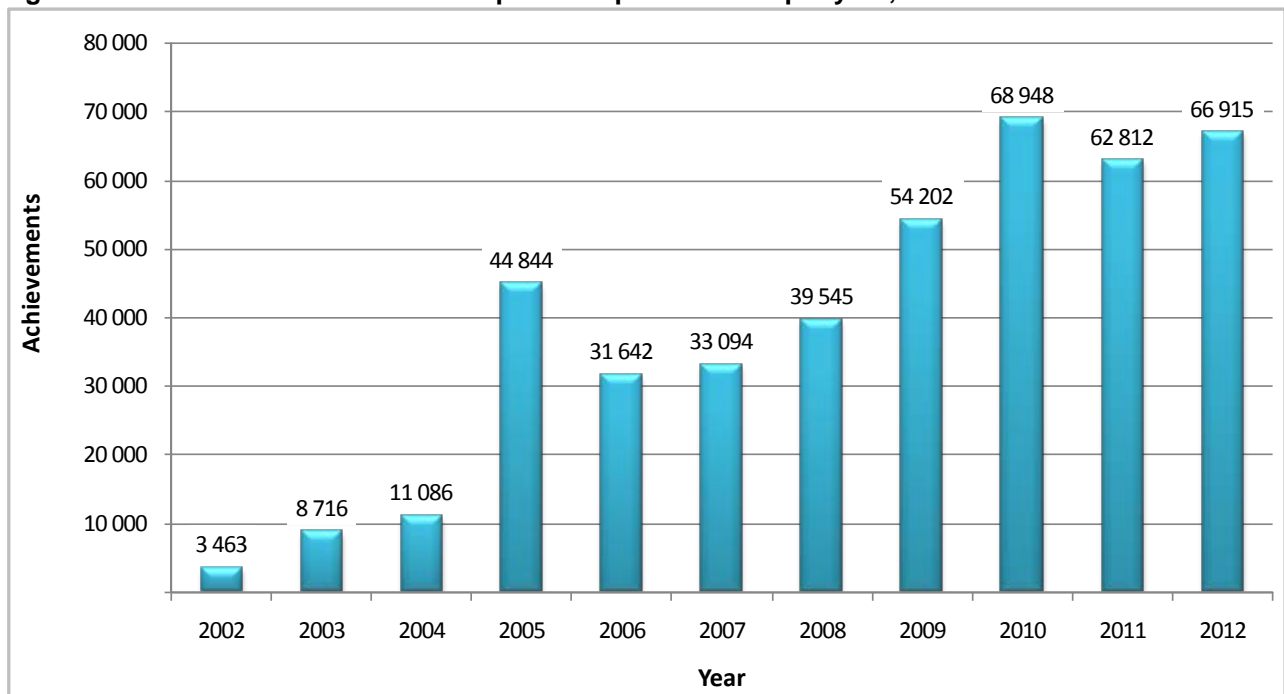
3.7.2 Achievements of occupational qualifications by gender

Table 65 shows records of the numbers of achievements of occupational qualifications by male and female learners annually between 2002 and 2012. While there is a general increase in the numbers of achievements for both male and female learners over time (sub-field patterns and events described in Section 3.7.1 influence these patterns too); the proportions of female learner achievements outstrip those of male learners from 2009. A graphic representation of these trends is shown in Figure 67.

Figure 69 provides snapshots of NLRD records for achievement of occupational qualifications by gender in 2002, 2007 and 2012, making clear the shift in proportions of achievements by male and female learners over time. A further level of analysis would be needed to ascertain what the women – and men – were studying.

Table 65: Distribution of achievements of occupational qualifications by gender, 2002-2012

Gender	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Total
Female	747	2 651	3 005	22 301	12 789	14 602	18 882	30 583	38 213	35 129	36 411	215 313
Male	2 605	5 447	7 619	21 875	17 929	17 033	19 087	22 359	28 669	26 484	29 958	199 065
Unknown	111	618	462	668	924	1 459	1 576	1 260	2 066	1 199	546	10 889
Total	3 463	8 716	11 086	44 844	31 642	33 094	39 545	54 202	68 948	62 812	66 915	425 267

(Source: NLRD)

Figure 67: Achievement trends, 2002-2012, for occupational qualifications by gender
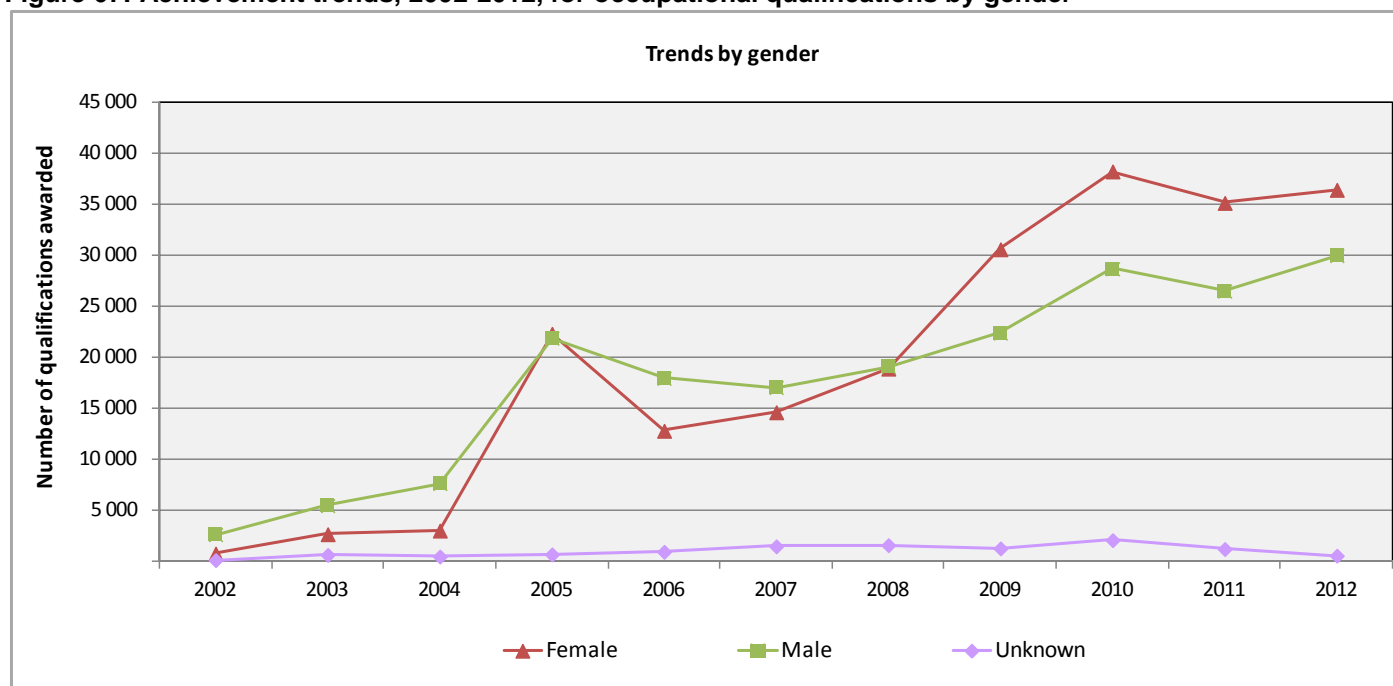
(Source: NLRD)

Figure 68: Snapshots of achievements of occupational qualifications by gender in 2002, 2007 and 2012
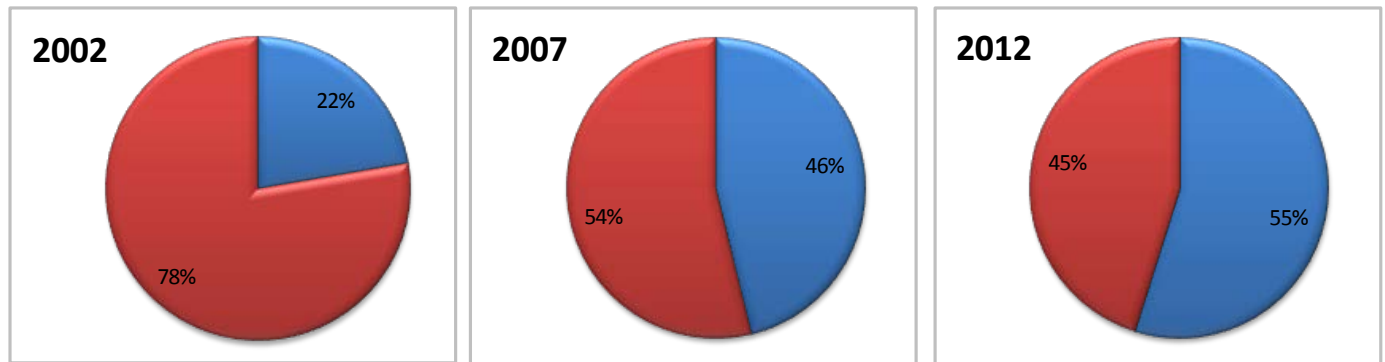
(Source: NLRD)

■ Female   ■ Male

3.7.3 Achievements of occupational qualifications by population group

Table 64 shows records of numbers of achievements of occupational qualifications by population group annually between 2002 and 2012. There is a general increase in numbers of achievement records for learners from all population groups in this period. Again sub-field patterns and events described in Section 3.7.1 influence these patterns. Proportions of increases differ between population groups.

For African learners there is an increase in records of occupational qualification achievements of over 5 000% between 2002 and 2012; for Coloured learners, an increase of over 1 600%; for Indian learners a 370% increase; and for White learners a 350% increase.

Figure 69 provides a graphic representation of these increases; the high increase of records for African people is clearly visible. Figure 69 makes clear that the proportions of records in 2012 are much closer to the proportions of the population groups in the national population, than they were in 2002.

Figure 70 provides snapshots of NLRD records for achievement of occupational qualifications by population group in 2002, 2007 and 2012, showing the shifts in proportions of records for achievements of occupational qualifications held by learners in differing population groups.

Figure 71 shows the proportions of the total number of occupational qualification achievements held by learners from the different population groups across the whole period, 2002 to 2012. The current proportions are close to those of 2007, showing that a match between the proportions of qualifications held by the different population groups has been approaching the proportions of the population groups in the national population for a small number of years.

Table 66: Distribution of achievements of occupational qualifications by population group, 2002-2012

Population Group	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Total
African	944	2 637	4 624	31 839	21 109	21 218	25 907	36 053	45 109	41 446	50 070	280 956
Coloured	324	626	1 107	5 000	2 961	3 833	4 316	5 494	7 382	6 127	6 194	43 364
Indian	226	416	781	1 524	1 151	1 268	1 175	2 350	3 210	2 283	1 891	16 275
White	1 526	2 824	3 265	4 638	4 293	4 138	5 439	8 058	9 957	10 858	7 630	62 626
Unknown	443	2 213	1 309	1 843	2 128	2 637	2 708	2 247	3 290	2 098	1 130	22 046
Total	3 463	8 716	11 086	44 844	31 642	33 094	39 545	54 202	68 948	62 812	66 915	425 267

(Source: NLRD)

Figure 69: Achievement trends, 2002-2012, for occupational qualifications by population group
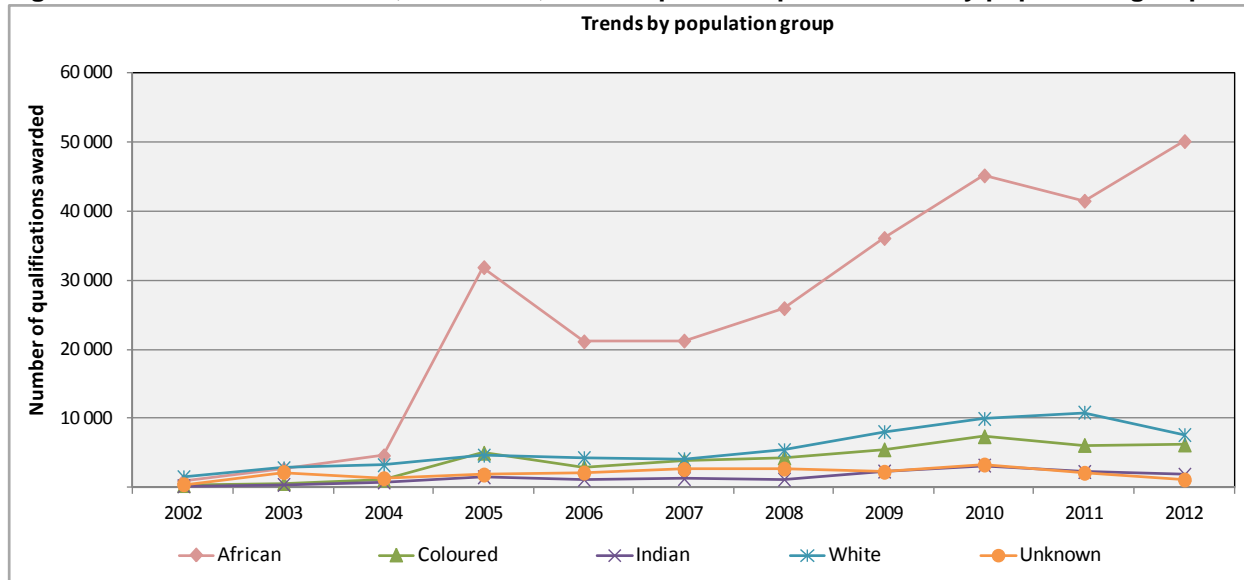
(Source: NLRD)

Figure 70: Snapshots of achievements of occupational qualifications by population group in 2002, 2000, and 2012

(Source: NLRD)

172
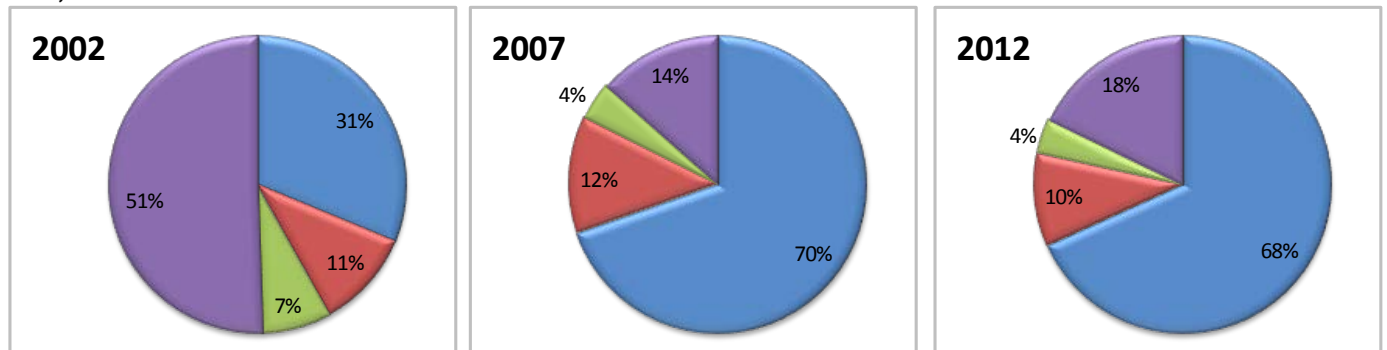
Figure 71: Total of all occupational qualifications achievements by population group, 2002 to 2012
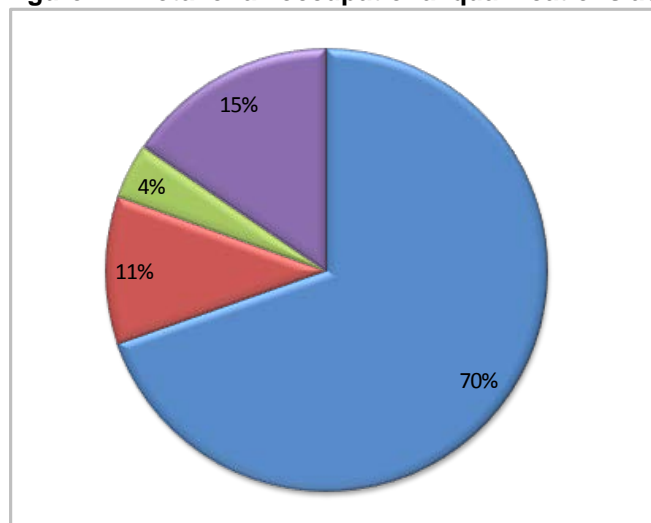
(Source: NLRD)

■ African   ■ Coloured   ■ Indian   ■ White

3.7.4 Occupational achievements by gender and population group

A small selection of tables and graphs has been replicated here from *Report 3: Work-related qualifications and part-qualifications registered on the NQF – Trends 2002-2011* (SAQA 2013d). This selection was extracted from the section 'All Fields Graphs and Tables', and the 2012 data were added. As stated in Report 3 (SAQA 2013d):

> Until 2003, most of the learners with qualification achievements were recorded as white or with unknown population group, and male. Thereafter, with more substantial numbers present, the ongoing trends for the decade were established: African people were consistently in the majority, followed by white people, and women slightly outnumbered men

Table 67: Achievement trends, 2002-2012, for occupational qualifications by population group and gender

Population Group	Gender	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
African	Female	131	691	1 310	16 799	8 838	9 833	12 924	21 844	26 292	24 174	27 612
	Male	812	1 946	3 314	15 040	12 270	11 381	12 982	14 209	18 814	17 272	22 457
	Unknown	1				1	4	1		3		1
	Total	**944**	**2 637**	**4 624**	**31 839**	**21 109**	**21 218**	**25 907**	**36 053**	**45 109**	**41 446**	**50 070**
Coloured	Female	39	123	317	2 330	1 144	1 819	2 648	3 201	4 769	3 924	3 859
	Male	285	503	790	2 669	1 817	2 014	1 668	2 293	2 613	2 203	2 335
	Unknown				1							
	Total	**324**	**626**	**1 107**	**5 000**	**2 961**	**3 833**	**4 316**	**5 494**	**7 382**	**6 127**	**6 194**
Indian	Female	15	50	125	414	283	420	337	1 066	1 554	967	911
	Male	211	366	656	1 110	868	848	838	1 284	1 656	1 316	980
	Unknown											
	Total	**226**	**416**	**781**	**1 524**	**1 151**	**1 268**	**1 175**	**2 350**	**3 210**	**2 283**	**1 891**
White	Female	371	654	747	1 906	1 723	1 682	2 291	3 857	4 798	5 496	3 625

Population Group	Gender	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
	Male	1 155	2 170	2 516	2 731	2 570	2 456	3 148	4 201	5 159	5 362	4 005
	Unknown			2	1							
	Total	**1 526**	**2 824**	**3 265**	**4 638**	**4 293**	**4 138**	**5 439**	**8 058**	**9 957**	**10 858**	**7 630**
Unknown	Female	191	1 133	506	852	801	848	682	615	800	568	404
	Male	142	462	343	325	404	334	451	372	427	331	181
	Unknown	110	618	460	666	923	1 455	1 575	1 260	2 063	1 199	545
	Total	**443**	**2 213**	**1 309**	**1 843**	**2 128**	**2 637**	**2 708**	**2 247**	**3 290**	**2 098**	**1 130**
Total	Female	747	2 651	3 005	22 301	12 789	14 602	18 882	30 583	38 213	35 129	36 411
	Male	2 605	5 447	7 619	21 875	17 929	17 033	19 087	22 359	28 669	26 484	29 958
	Unknown	111	618	462	668	924	1 459	1 576	1 260	2 066	1 199	546
	Total	**3 463**	**8 716**	**11 086**	**44 844**	**31 642**	**33 094**	**39 545**	**54 202**	**68 948**	**62 812**	**66 915**

(Source: NLRD)

Table 67 shows that the numbers of records in the 2001-2012 period for occupational qualifications increased for all population groups, and for both genders. These increases were steeper for some of the groups than others, and most noticeable for African women, followed by African men.

In 2002 there were higher numbers of records for men than for women across all of the population groups. By 2012 this trend had reversed for African and Coloured women, and the gap between the genders had almost closed for the Indian group, and also for the White group.

3.7.5 Achievement trends by occupational qualification level

Table 68 and Figure 72 show achievement trends by qualification level between 2002 and 2012.

Most of the occupational qualifications in this period were awarded at NQF Level 4: the number of qualification achievements at this level rose steadily from 1 756 in 2002 to 19 346 in 2011, with a peak of 20 786 in 2010. Qualification awards at NQF Levels 2 and 5 followed, with those at Level 2 increasing from 103 qualification achievements in 2002 to 6 587 in 2011, with a peak of 15 031 in 2010. The explanations for peaks and dips are given in Section 3.7.1. Figure 72 provides a visual representation of these trends.

Looking at achievement trends by qualification type is useful to see *what* people are accessing. Cohort studies would reveal the extent to which these achievements are part of learning pathways and lifelong learning.

Table 68: Achievement trends, 2002-2012, for occupational qualifications by level of qualification

NQF Level	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Level 1	9	83	565	7 761	3 844	4 912	4 628	8 804	7 786	6 512	4 444
Level 2	141	1 344	1 819	6 488	5 413	7 574	8 012	11 574	15 853	7 857	13 825
Level 3	1 368	2 048	3 537	6 120	5 499	5 955	7 236	8 424	13 135	12 394	8 413
Level 4	1 757	4 645	4 432	12 310	11 218	9 535	14 012	19 946	21 931	23 750	18 887
Level 5	188	596	733	12 139	5 578	4 903	5 450	5 310	9 399	11 147	19 910
Level 6				25	89	212	130	3	650	1 068	1 359
Level 7				1	1	3	77	141	194	84	77
Total	3 463	8 716	11 086	44 844	31 642	33 094	39 545	54 202	68 948	62 812	66 915

(Source: NLRD)

Figure 72: Achievement trends, 2002-2012, for occupational qualifications by level of qualification
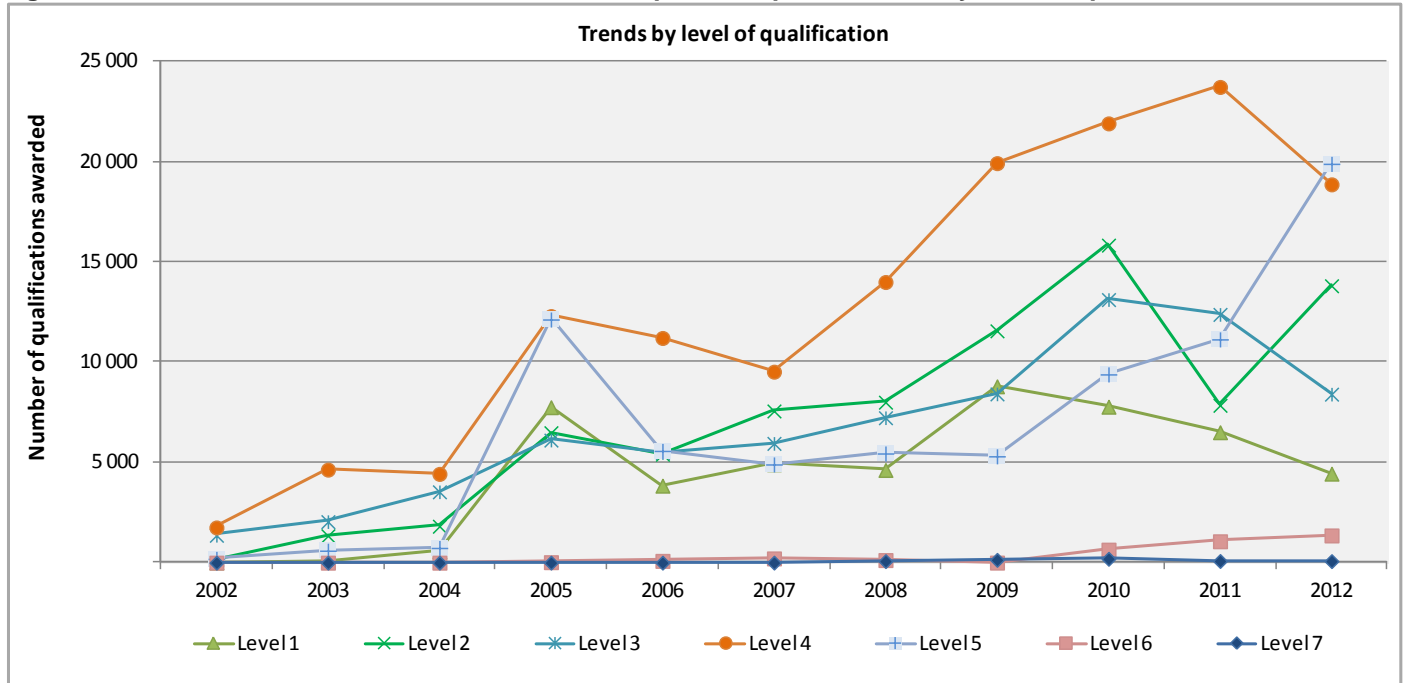
(Source: NLRD)

3.7.6 Achievements regarding learnerships

Learnerships are important system elements in that they have the potential to aid learning pathways across institutions of learning and workplaces.

Figure 73 shows a comparison between the number of completions of learnerships, and the number of achievements of work-related qualifications, between 2004 and 2012. The upward trends are moving in desired directions.

Some learners completed several learnerships consecutively. Figure 74 shows this trend between 2004 and 2012. More than 80 000 people completed two learnerships, while approximately 65 000 people only ever undertook one. A fair number of people completed between three and six learnerships. Two people completed 12 learnerships each, between 2004 and 2012.

175

Figure 73: Learnership completion trends compared with qualification achievement trends, 2004-2012

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Learnership	5 757	23 983	29 683	21 687	29 868	35 550	40 462	33 372	44 850
Qualification	11 086	44 844	31 642	33 094	39 545	54 202	68 948	62 812	66 915
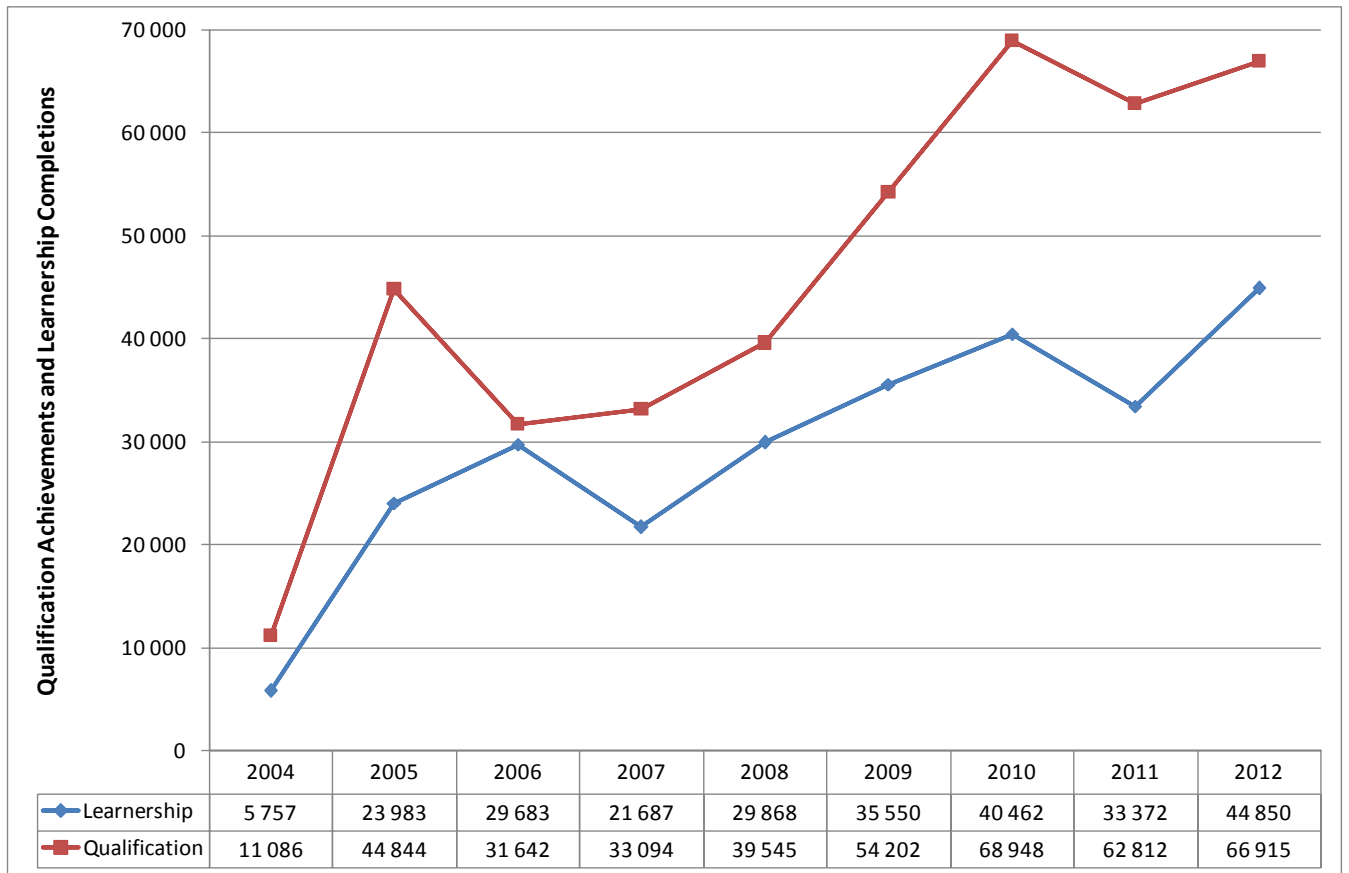
(Source: NLRD)

Figure 74: Numbers of learnerships per person, by how many people have completed this number of learnerships, for the period, 2004-2012
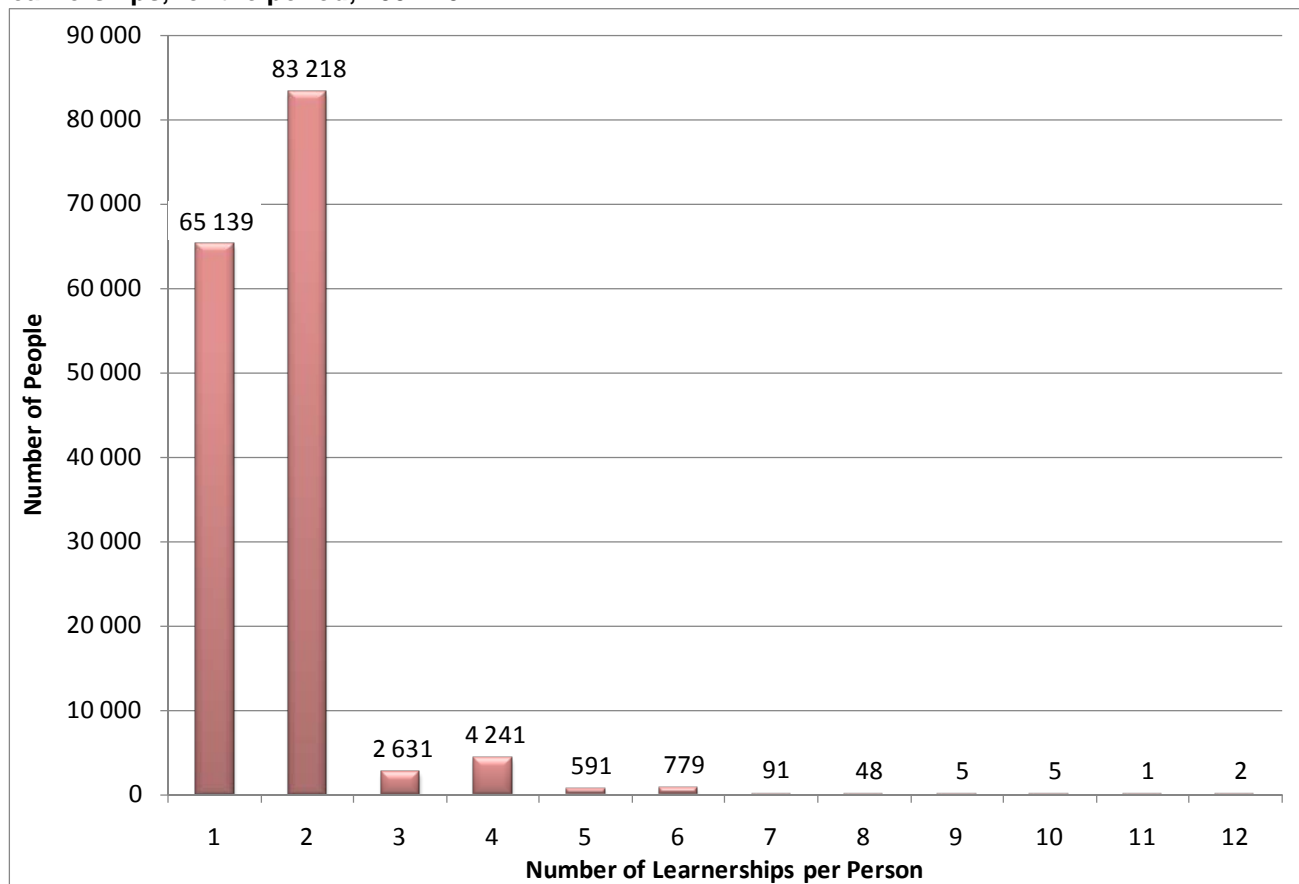
(Source: NLRD)

3.7.7 Artisan training

The Skills Development Act (RSA 1998) defines an artisan as a person certified as being competent to perform a listed trade (DHET 2014b). According to Government Notice 35625 (August 2013), there are 125 listed trades in South Africa (DHET 2014b). Each trade can be identified by a code – the Organising Framework for Occupations (OFO) code managed by the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO)[13].

It is widely known that there is a great need for qualified artisans in South Africa to support industries and economic growth in the country. South Africa's National Development Plan (NDP) indicates that by 2030 the country should be producing 30 000 qualified artisans per year (RSA 2012). The country is in fact producing an average of 13 000 annually (DHET 2014b). Artisan development has thus been elevated to being a priority area for skills development (DHET 2013d, 2014b).

In order to become a certified artisan, a learner needs to complete the theory component for a particular trade, a practical training component, structured workplace training and a Trade Test.

[13] See the diagram of the OFO in Section 6.3.1.4.2 – there are four skill levels in the OFO, all of which can be mapped against the NQF. The OFO levels are distinguished by types of skills (each level contains a fixed range of types of skills) combined with levels in the authority hierarchy in workplaces.

INDLELA is the national entity responsible for testing learners who have completed the theory, practical and workplace components of their training. INDLELA also certifies as artisans learners who succeed in their Trade Tests, in terms of the applicable industry-based Bargaining Council Agreements.

Tables 69 and 70 show the numbers of learners respectively entering and completing artisan programmes in the period 2011/12 to 2012/13. The numbers across the two tables do not refer to the same cohorts of learners. The aim of including the tables is to begin to sketch the numbers of artisans in the training system, towards assessing the extent of shifts in nationally desired directions over time.

Table 69 shows that while overall numbers of learners entering artisan programmes dropped in 2012/13 relative to the 2011/12 year, in seven of the 18 entities under which there was artisan training, there were increases in the numbers of learners across these years. The numbers of learners successfully completing Trade Tests increased across these years (Table 70).

Development and analysis of this data pool are important focus areas for future NQF impact studies.

Table 68: Numbers of learners entering artisan training, 2011/12 to 2012/13

SETA/ ENTITY	No. of learners 2011/12	No. of learners 2012/13
AGRISETA	96	70
CATHSSETA	563	662
CETA	1 849	579
CHIETA	2 541	1 989
EWSETA	1 046	1 316
FOODBEVSETA	15	0
FP&MSETA	351	584
HWSETA	Data not available	0
INDLELA	5 227	5 795
LGSETA	413	528
MERSETA	6 254	4 951
MICT SETA	Data not available	0
MQA	2 525	2 365
PSETA	78	53
SASSETA	Data not available	516
SERVICES SETA	2 104	984
TETA	1 019	711
W&R SETA	334	746
TOTAL	24 415	21 849

(Source: DHET 2014b: 48; National Artisan Development Support Centre [NADSC] National Artisan Programme [NAP] Database)

Table 69: Numbers of learners completing artisan training programmes, 2011/12 to 2012/13

SETA/ ENTITY	No. of learners 2011/12	No. of learners 2012/13
AGRISETA	77	149
CATHSSETA	282	1 007
CETA	699	520
CHIETA	989	1 279
ETDP SETA	Data not available	Data not available
EWSETA	571	37
FOODBEVSETA	160	36
FP&MSETA	Data not available	Data not available
HWSETA	Data not available	Data not available
INDLELA	3 392	1 355
LGSETA	226	305
MERSETA	3 155	7 166
MICT SETA	Data not available	Data not available
MQA	2 525	2 035
PSETA	1	5
SASSETA	Data not available	Data not available
SERVICES SETA	1 521	841
TETA	208	169
W&R SETA	176	373
TOTAL	14 023	15 277

(Source: DHET 2014b: 48, and National Artisan Development Support Centre [NADSC] National Artisan Programme [NAP] Database)

3.8 National initiatives towards getting people into the system

The education and training system in South Africa is oriented towards inclusivity[14]. This approach is evident in public funding of the system, in the admission policies of public education and training institutions, in the emphasis on student and learner support, and in additional policies and institutions that seek to enhance inclusivity.

This section of the report addresses five long-term national moves towards inclusivity. It does not cover public works programmes, Extended Public Works Programmes (EPWPs), the community education and training initiatives of universities and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and education and training institutions and offerings that do not yet fit within the NQF. This wide range of initiatives, each seeking to address education and training needs, is important and worthwhile – and aids inclusivity – but is not the subject of the report. There are also several initiatives under way in public tertiary education and training institutions, to increase access via mixed mode provision. These developments too, are not discussed in the report.

The first national move towards inclusivity discussed here is Adult Education. There are many adults in South Africa who have not had opportunities to study in the past, or do not currently have opportunities to do so. Adult Education (including Popular Education and Worker Education) attempts to address these gaps in different ways, and to change consciousness in terms of how people view education and society. A national initiative is currently under way to clarify these types of education, and to look for overlaps between them and for appropriate institutional forms.

Adult Education and Training (AET) Centres, which are becoming types of Community Colleges (MHET 2013), offer a range of learning opportunities from Adult Basic Education and Training, to second-chance opportunities to complete school, to general skills development programmes. AET is offered in public and private AET Centres to adults and out-of-school youth. Section 3.8.1 of this report presents enrolments and achievements in AET Colleges in 2011 and 2012.

The second national move towards inclusivity involves large-scale education and training initiatives for workers and unemployed people, in the form of SETA-supported learnerships, internships and skills programmes[15].

The Kha Ri Gude Mass Literacy Campaign (Kha Ri Gude) that commenced in 2008, ongoing developments towards a national Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) system, and work towards wide implementation of Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT) comprise the remaining three initiatives.

Each of these national initiatives is analysed in the sections that follow.

3.8.1 Adult Education and Training (AET) Centres: Developments

The Adult Education and Training (AET) Certificates at AET Levels 1-4[16], General Education and Training Certificates for Adults (GETCA), National Senior Certificate for Adults (NASCA) and National Vocational

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[14] Inclusivity refers to ethnicity, culture, age, gender, disability, and any other way in which people can differ.

[15] *NQFpedia* defines a skills programme as a part-qualification that is a 'QCTO-accredited learning programme that is occupationally based and which, when completed, may constitute credits towards a qualification registered on the NQF'. Skills programmes are made up of logical groups of unit standards which together constitute training towards a specific skills set. Skills programmes are currently not registered on the NQF in their own right, although most of the SETAs would like them to be, and the Minister of HET has requested that SAQA investigates how to deal with the records of learners' achievements in this arena since the beginning of the NQF.

[16] The Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET or AET) Certificate at ABET Level 4 is located at NQF Level 1.

Certificate for Adults (NAVCA) – offered or to be offered at AET Centres – are of key importance in the education and training system as they offer access to learning pathways and potential entry points for many people.

The inclusion of AET qualifications in the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-Framework (GFETQSF) (see Section 6.1.9.4), and the move first proposed in the White Paper for Post-School Education and Training (MHET 2013) to integrate AET Centres into Community Colleges signal welcome integration of this usually neglected sector into the mainstream education and training system. Other recent initiatives supporting this integration include the draft Policy for Community Colleges circulated by the DHET for public comment in December 2014, and the work of the Worker Education Task Team (WETT).

Table 70 shows learner enrolment in AET Centres by institutional type and programme for 2011 and 2012. While most of the learners enrolled at public centres in this period, there is clearly a role for private centres. The increase in enrolments at AET Levels 3 and 4, and for Grades 10 and 12, are encouraging although enrolment trends dipped at the other levels.

Table 71 shows the numbers of learners in public and private AET Centres registered for, writing and passing GETC-ABET Level 4 examinations in 2011 and 2012. Analysis of trends in the AET sector is another important developmental area for future NQF impact studies.

Table 70: Learner enrolment in AET Centres by institutional type and programme, 2011-2012

Institutional type/ Programme	Public AET Centres 2012	Private AET Centres 2012	All AET Centres 2012	All AET Centres 2011
AET Level 1	24 213	1 148	25 361	27 762
AET Level 2	33 470	1 263	34 733	34 967
AET Level 3	36 253	1 356	37 609	35 074
AET Level 4 (NQF Level 1)	134 276	2 370	136 646	117 910
Grade 10 (NQF Level 2)	258	53	311	213
Grade 11 (NQF Level 3)	213	8	221	265
Grade 12 (NQF Level 4)	71 037	2 049	73 086	71 738
Skills development	6 658	443	7 101	9 705
TOTAL	306 378	8 690	315 068	297 634

Source of data from which analysis was done: DHET 2013d, 2014b[17])

Table 71: Numbers of learners in public and private AET Centres registered for, writing and passing GETC-ABET Level 4 examinations[18] in 2011 and 2012

YEAR	No. registered to write	No. writing (and % of those registered)	No. passing (and % of those writing)	'Actual success rate' (no. and % passing of those originally registered)
2011	96 452	62 044 (64.3%)	17 001(27.4%)	17 001 (17.6%)
2012	90 384	49 856 (55.2%)	18 663 (37.4%)	18 663 (20.7%)

(Sources of data from which analysis was done: DHET 2013d, 2014b[19])

The pass rates at the Centres are unacceptably low, and the numbers of learners reached represent a small percentage of the total pool of learners. A great deal more needs to be done to attract, retain and assist

[17] The sources of data for the DHET analyses comprise the Annual Snap Surveys of AET Centres conducted by the DHET in 2011 and 2012.
[18] The General Education and Training Certificate (GETC) at AET (or ABET) Level 4 is located at NQF Level 1 on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-Framework (GFETQSF) – see Section 6.1.9.

adult learners to succeed in their studies. The move to incorporate AET centres into Community Colleges may assist in this work; the extent to which it does so depends on how the Community Colleges are rolled out.

3.8.2 Learnerships, Internships and Skills Programmes: Developments

Table 72 shows the numbers of learnerships, internships and skills programmes completed by unemployed people, in relation to completions by working people. More unemployed than working people registered, and were certificated for, learnerships in 2011-2012. Between the two years there was an increase in the numbers of both unemployed and working people registered and certificated for learnerships.

Although fewer unemployed than working people registered and were certificated for Skills Programmes across both years, significant numbers of unemployed people were involved in these programmes. Between 2011 and 2012 there were increases in the numbers of unemployed people registering and being certificated for Internships, and certificated for Skills Programmes. The numbers of those registered and those certificated do not refer to the same people.

Table 72: Numbers of workers and unemployed people registered for, and certificated in, SETA-supported learning programmes, by programme type and year

YEAR	LEARNERSHIPS		SKILLS PROGRAMMES		INTERNSHIPS		
	Achieved (Workers)	Achieved (Unemployed people)	Achieved (Workers)	Achieved (Unemployed people)	Achieved (Workers)	Achieved (Unemployed people)	TOTAL
2011 Registered	16 371	27 679	71 656	16 250	N/A	3 452	135 408
2011 Certificated	9 646	19 524	71 417	16 110	N/A	878	117 575
2012 Registered	20 678	30 207	64 105	10 482	N/A	6 127	131 599
2012 Certificated	14 399	22 759	68 173	18 318	N/A	2 195	125 844

(Sources of data from which analysis was done: DHET 2013d, 2014b[20])

3.8.3 Kha Ri Gude Mass Literacy Campaign

Adult literacy is a challenge in South Africa. Over 4.7 million people are functionally illiterate or innumerate.

In 2008 the then-Department of Education launched the Kha Ri Gude Mass Literacy Campaign. The campaign seeks to prioritise the needs of poor people and address the rights of all citizens to basic education. The intention through the campaign is to create opportunities for and enable all adults in the country regardless of socio-economic status to become literate and numerate in any one of the eleven official languages.

South Africa made a commitment to participate in the UNESCO *Education For All* initiative by halving the country's illiteracy rates by 2015, among other goals[21].

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[19] The sources of data for the DHET analyses comprise the Annual Snap Surveys of AET Centres conducted by the DHET in 2011 and 2012.

[20] The sources of data for the DHET analyses comprise the Annual Snap Surveys of AET Centres conducted by the DHET in 2011 and 2012.

[21] Along with many countries attending the World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000, South Africa committed to working to achieve six educational goals, among which were ensuring access to education for all children by 2015 and improving the levels of adult literacy by 50% by 2015.

The programme targets vulnerable groups including women, disabled people and elderly people. It provides special packs for blind learners and makes provision for deaf learners. Its reach is nationwide and spans all communities, rural and urban.

The Kha Ri Gude programme is registered at Adult Education and Training (AET or ABET)[22] Level 1. It focuses on teaching reading, writing and numeracy in the mother tongues of learners. In addition, learners also learn spoken English. The programme integrates themes and life skills relating to health, gender awareness, environmental conservation and civic education.

The following sub-sections of the report present achievements for the Kha Ri Gude programme by gender and population group over the latest five years for which there was audited data: 2008-2013.

3.8.2.1 Numbers of learners successfully completing the Kha Ri Gude programme

The Kha Ri Gude programme sees around 600 000 completed portfolios per year. The figures shown here represent learner achievements recorded at AET Level 1. Figure 76 shows the numbers of successful completions of the Kha Ri Gude programme per year between 2008 and 2013. Learner numbers fluctuate across the years, but at their highest point in the period analysed (2012) are of the same order of magnitude as the numbers of Grade 12 learners passing the National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations.

In future NQF impact studies, when more years Kha Ri Gude data have been accumulated, it would be useful to compare the numbers of successful Kha Ri Gude learners and the numbers of respondents in the Census data, with particular levels of education and training, at selected points in time.

Figure 75: Total numbers of learners successfully completing the Kha Ri Gude programme annually, 2008-2013
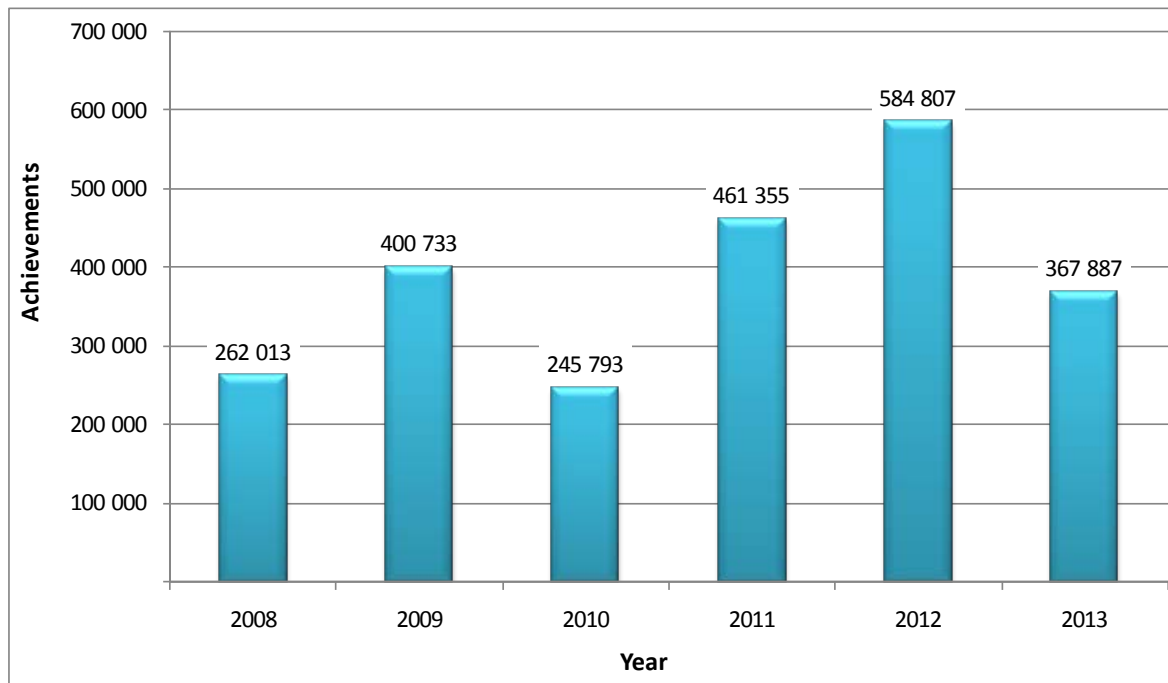
(Source: NLRD)

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[22] The two parts of the Kha Ri Gude programme are both registered on the NQF below NQF Level 2.

3.8.2.2 Numbers of learners successfully completing the Kha Ri Gude programme, by gender

Figure 76 shows the relative percentages of female and male learners who completed the Kha Ri Gude programme, from its inception up to the end of 2013, the time up to which there was audited data. The overwhelming majority of learners (71% of learners) who completed the programme were women.

Figure 76: Total number of learner successfully completing the Kha Ri Gude programme up to the end of 2013, by gender
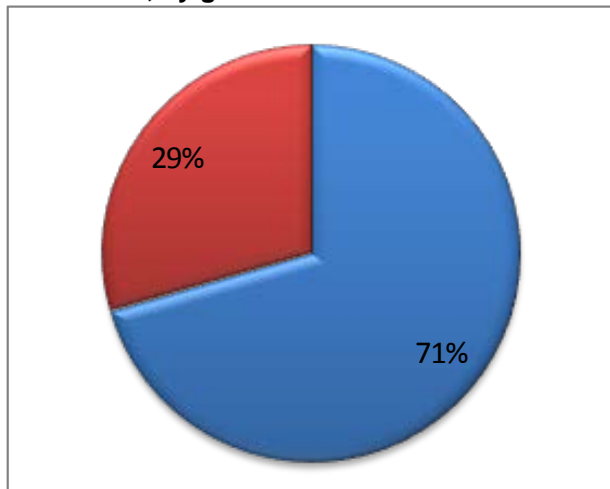
(Source: NLRD)

■ Female ■ Male

3.8.2.3 Numbers of learners successfully completing the Kha Ri Gude programme, by population group

Figure 77 shows the percentages of learners who completed the Kha Ri Gude programme in the time from its inception to the end of 2013, by population group.

Almost all the learners who completed the programme are African people. There is a tiny percentage of Coloured people, this group translating into between 20 000-25 000 people in all.

Figure 77: Total number of learner completions of the Kha Ri Gude programme up to the end of 2013, by population group

(Source: NLRD)

■ African ■ Coloured ■ Indian ■ White

185
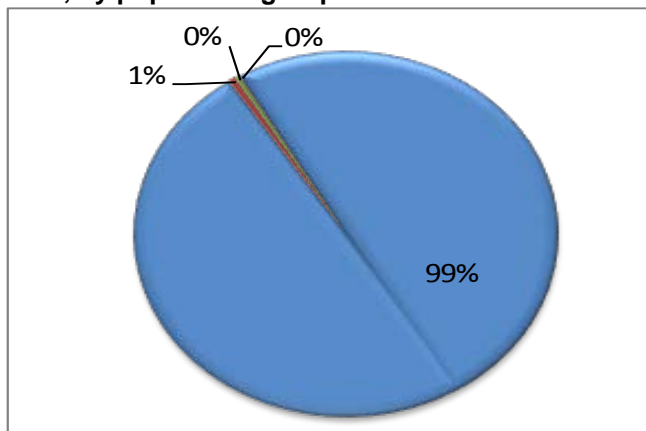
3.8.2.4 Numbers of learners successfully completing the Kha Ri Gude programme, by province

Figure 78 shows the percentages of learners who had completed the Kha Ri Gude programme in the time from its inception up to the end of 2013, by province.

The provinces with the highest numbers of learners who completed the programme are the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo, followed by Gauteng, Mpumalanga and the Free State.

Figure 78: Total numbers of learner completions of the Kha Ri Gude programme up to the end of 2013, by province
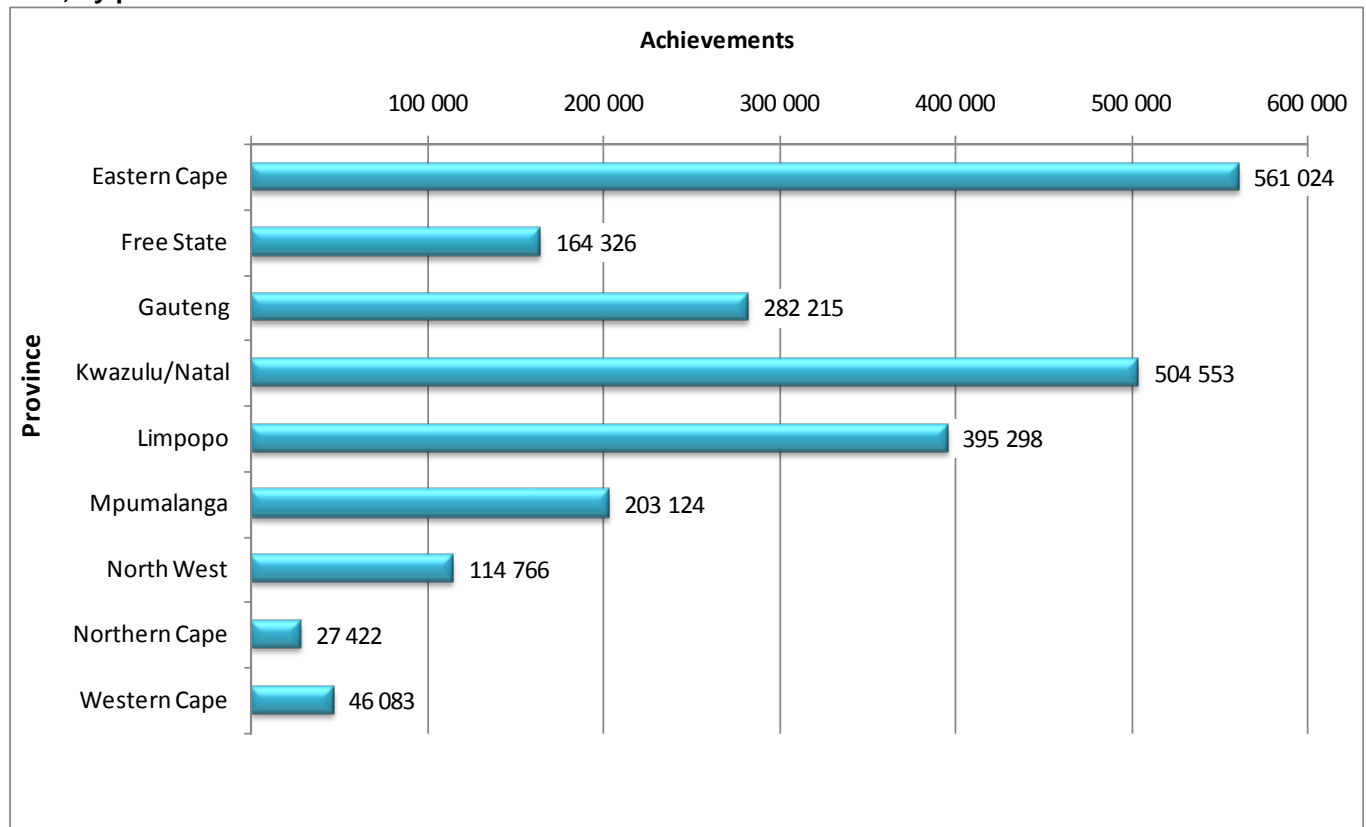
(Source: NLRD)

The relatively high numbers of learners completing the Kha Ri Gude programme, and their demographic profiles and contextual locations, suggest that the programme is playing a role in redress. Cohort studies would show the extent to which successful learners in the programme continue their formal learning pathways.

3.8.4 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

The focus of this section is on Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) policy developments and achievements to date in South Africa. Progress made in this regard in the first 15 years of the NQF in the country accelerated since 2010.

In 2008 an international study (OECD 2009) positioned South Africa as a leader in RPL practice[23]. In 2010 SAQA hosted a national RPL workshop in an attempt to identify all the challenges preventing South Africa

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[23] The OECD (2009) study found four countries ahead of South Africa at the time, in that these countries had begun to move towards establishing national RPL systems. It is argued on the basis of information in Section 3.8.4 that, since 2012, South Africa

from moving towards a fully-fledged national system. This event was followed six months later by the *National RPL Conference: Building and expanding existing islands of excellent practice,* which aimed to address these blockages.

Outcomes of this event included:

- a participant-endorsed *RPL Working Document* (SAQA 2011b);
- a National RPL Task Team appointed by the Minister of Higher Education and Training, and its work (DHET 2013b);
- revision of national RPL policy (SAQA 2013a); and
- a number of national RPL implementation initiatives.

An inclusive RPL model was developed through long-term SAQA-University of the Western Cape (UWC) Partnership Research (see Section 4.3.1.2). Drawing on this work, and with the aid of the RPL Reference Group, the new and widely embraced *National Policy for the Implementation of RPL* (SAQA 2013a) was published and disseminated in 2013.

The White Paper for Post-School Education and Training (MHET 2013: 73) maintains RPL as a key approach for addressing past injustices. RPL is also a tool to address present injustices. The White Paper emphasises the importance of a national strategy to embed RPL in the system for education and training and that, where possible, the learners concerned should be able to go through an RPL process without having to complete a formal learning programme.

This section of the report provides some details regarding these RPL developments, with the aim of showing progress made and remaining challenges.

3.8.3.1 What is RPL is and why is it important? Developments since 1995 and 2010

The National Policy for the Implementation of RPL (SAQA 2013a: Clause 26) states that:

> Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) means the principles and processes through which the prior knowledge and skills of a person are made visible, mediated and assessed for the purposes of alternative access and admission, recognition and certification, or further learning and development.

RPL can link skills development to career paths and career development. It has the potential to facilitate alternative access to education and training, including to a whole range of skills development initiatives. It can enhance the integration of workplace training or experience and theoretical learning, and ease the transition from Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) to higher education and training (HET), and from the workplace into institutions of learning. It can assist recognition towards obtaining work, in-work progression and progression between jobs. It is a means to address inequalities based on class, race, gender and age.

In order to realise this potential of RPL, RPL processes need to be accessible, affordable, feasible and credible. Legislation and policy need to require RPL, as well as enable it and provide the necessary guidance and support for all practitioners and candidates. Providers need the necessary expertise. RPL candidates need to be prepared to strive to make recognition of their non-formal and informal experiential

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could have been added to that leading group of countries. In the OECD (2009) study, South Africa was still one level beneath the leaders with 'scattered islands of excellent practice'.

learning possible. Research (such as Cooper *et al.* 2015) has shown that learning in one context usually requires mediation for use in another context. This finding is true across a wide range of contexts.

3.8.4.1.1 RPL in South Africa since 1995

At SAQA's 2011 *National RPL Conference: Building and expanding existing islands of excellent practice,* 52 abstracts showcased work done between 1998 and 2010. Some 37% of these initiatives directly addressed RPL in the workplace, 33% covered RPL in Higher Education and 4% RPL in the TVET sector. A first scan of the numbers of successful RPL candidates up to 2020 revealed 20 000 in Higher Education, 51 000 in the workplace, and RPL in eight of the then 12 scarce skills areas. While much was learned about RPL in the first 15 years of South Africa's democracy, and some benefitted, the general view early in 2011 was that RPL had yet to deliver fully on what it promised.

An Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD 2009) study of RPL across 15 countries positioned South Africa in a cluster of five countries at 'Stage 5 of 7' in terms of setting up a national RPL system (the study found four countries at 'Stage 6 of 7' – and no countries anywhere with fully-fledged national RPL systems at 'Stage 7'). South Africa was described in the study as having a vision for RPL, many practices, access for people from many different backgrounds and sporadic funding. The OECD study also commented that 'not all levels or sectors were open' to RPL.

3.8.4.1.2 RPL developments in South Africa: 2010-2011

At the SAQA-hosted *National RPL Workshop* in 2010 blockages and needs stemming from the first years of RPL implementation in the country were identified in relation to four key areas, namely:

(a) sharing effective delivery models for RPL;
(b) enhancing the quality of RPL;
(c) developing workable funding models for RPL; and
(d) addressing legislative and other barriers to the expansion of RPL nationally.

These needs were addressed at the 2011 *National RPL Conference*, at which there was a stream dedicated to each aspect. The *Resolution and Working Document on RPL* (SAQA 2011b) was one of the conference outputs endorsed by the 350 participating delegates.

This *Resolution and Working Document on RPL* (SAQA 2011b) has been used as a blueprint, and much has been accomplished since 2011. When SAQA recently tried to engage with an international RPL expert, the response was 'But the world is looking to South Africa now – you are leading the way'.

3.8.4.1.3 RPL policy development and implementation: progress since 2011

Several significant developments followed the *National RPL Conference 2011* and the finalisation of the *Working Document on RPL* through democratic process. These developments are detailed here.

Acting on advice given by SAQA which was based on *National RPL Conference 2011* delegates' recommendations, the Minister of Higher Education and Training appointed a National RPL Task Team. This Task Team conducted research into RPL policy, research and practice to date, and the status of RPL in all the sub-sectors making up the NQF; the status of RPL in SETAs; funding models for RPL; legislation affecting RPL; and a comparison of different international RPL coordinating mechanisms. This research was reported in the Report of the Ministerial Task Team for RPL (MHET 2013a), and a *SAQA Bulletin* (SAQA 2012c).

The Task Team's overview of legislation in South Africa that could have an impact on the application of RPL in mainstream education and training shows that in principle, RPL could be conducted widely within the current education and training system. Existing legislative and overarching policy frameworks support this. Barriers were found to RPL implementation, in some cases emanating from contradictions and ambiguities in the legislation. These barriers were identified by the Team but were not considered insurmountable. It was acknowledged that addressing the barriers would require further research and a systemic and coherent approach to dealing with them.

Based on its work, the Task Team recommended the following (MHET 2013a):

- The creation of a National RPL Institute, a coordinating mechanism, in a two-stage process. The first phase (Years 1-5) would see the Institute attached to an existing non-sectoral institution such as SAQA as a special project. Its roles would include directing and commissioning research; developing and managing strategic projects and initiatives that could support RPL development (e.g. career development initiatives); engaging in forums towards RPL implementation; developing and maintaining a national database of RPL providers; capacity building across the system; advocacy; maintaining links with national and international networks; articulating, supporting and disseminating leading practices; establishing an RPL clearinghouse; and undertaking evaluation of RPL initiatives.

- A state and employer-driven funding model for RPL, where resourcing of RPL is based on *what already exists*. The state could fund the necessary infrastructure (e.g. an RPL Institute) and subsidies within Further and Higher Education and Training. Employers would provide RPL funding for their respective employees through the SETAs. State funding could be reduced towards the end of the first phase, when fees could perhaps be introduced. Fees could increase progressively with privilege, with the poor being exempt. A limit could be placed on the number of times any individual could access RPL for free.

- An implementation strategy driven by key and strategic projects – including foci on RPL in the public sector, the community development sector, artisans, agricultural workers in rural areas, and on hubs – where SAQA projects already under way would be supported and expanded.

- An implementation strategy underpinned by extensive advocacy and capacity development, where alongside advocacy there is capacity development at all levels. Professionalisation of all RPL practitioners is supported, as is the establishment of an RPL Practitioners Association which would be separate from, but supported by, the RPL Institute.

- Incremental quality development in the RPL system – where stakeholder driven-initiatives are supported alongside the strategic projects coordinated by the RPL Institute.

- The overall objective of this national RPL Implementation Strategy is to ensure that within the next 5-10 years RPL will be embedded within the education and training system in the country, that quality RPL services will be widely available, and that increased numbers of candidates will making use of these services.

- Cross-cutting supporting activities should be prioritised, including inter-ministerial and inter-departmental support; DHET, HRD-SA, DPSA and School of Government support of the RPL Institute; the extensive buy-in of key role-players and stakeholders, and encouraging the development of communities of trust.

SAQA appointed an RPL Reference Group through a democratic process in the month following the National RPL Conference 2011, to assist with RPL policy revision. Seventy-nine nominations were received and 18 members were selected to represent all stakeholders (DHET, DBE, the Quality Councils, SETAs, public and private providers at all levels, employers, organised labour, SAQA) on the basis of (a) expertise; (b) representation; (c) number of nominations; and (d) spread of geographical areas. The revised RPL policy, developed in consultation with the RPL Reference Group, in broader consultation with organised labour, and after a six-week period for public comment, is grounded in extensive stakeholder consultation, research and experience. The revised Policy for the Implementation of RPL was published and disseminated in 2013.

The new policy was extensively workshopped early in 2014, as part of the *National RPL Conference 2014: Tried and Tested, Tools, Templates.* The main aims of this conference and workshop were to (a) build common understanding around RPL in South Africa; (b) share good RPL practice, and (c) further enhance sectoral, cross-sector and national coordination of RPL. Around 400 delegates participated. Two books of case studies are under development for further sharing of successful RPL practice.

Extensive RPL coordination and development work has taken place since 2011. One area of coordination involves data on learner achievements via RPL, and RPL provider information. Since its inception, the NQF has made provision for the achievement of part and full qualifications via RPL, and for recording these achievements in the NLRD. Prior to the publication of the revised RPL policy (SAQA 2013a), it was not mandatory for providers to submit RPL data for uploading onto the NLRD; RPL data currently in the NLRD were supplied voluntarily. The NLRD RPL data are presented in Section 3.8.4.3.

Over 200 RPL providers are listed in the NLRD. In this regard it is a challenge that the accreditation status of some of these institutions is not known: currently potential RPL candidates – individuals and institutions requiring advice and assistance with respect to RPL – can receive assistance from SAQA.

Of the 25 public Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), 22 were found to have RPL policies (SAQA 2011a). Of these HEIs, 12 were implementing RPL using decentralised models (in other words – RPL was implemented differently across different faculties/ departments) and 10 had centralised models. RPL was incorporated in the following numbers of HEI faculties nationally: nine Management Science, nine Law, nine Economics, seven Arts/ Humanities/ Social Sciences, six Education, four Engineering and Technology, two Health and Environment Sciences, one Public Management, and two Agriculture faculties.

SETAs were found to be at various stages of implementing RPL, with some at policy development stage and others at advanced stages of implementation. There were diverse understandings, interpretations and ways of implementing RPL across the 23 SETAs (SAQA 2012c). While weaknesses included lack of coherence and monitoring, and lack of documenting and reporting, it was emphasised that SETAs had extensive knowledge and experience of RPL and had built up excellent systems, processes, implementation models and tools over the years (SAQA 2012c).

It was initially not mandatory for Professional Bodies to provide for RPL towards professional designations under their jurisdiction. However, the current *Policy for Recognising a Professional Body and Registering a Professional Designation for the purposes of the NQF Act, Act 67 of 2008* (SAQA 2012b) makes the inclusion of RPL imperative. In order for a Professional Designation to be registered on the NQF, it must *inter alia* "Include as general requirements, experiential learning, recognition of prior learning, and/ or practical experience" (SAQA 2012b: Clause 42). To date four of the 77 recognised Professional Bodies have introduced RPL processes towards their designations.

SAQA has assisted and continues to assist with the implementation of RPL policy in a number of sectors. This work is continually expanding and is covered in detail in Section 3.8.4.2.

3.8.3.2 National RPL implementation initiatives

Since 2011 SAQA has assisted over 20 national RPL initiatives in addition to assisting individuals on a case by case basis as the requests are made by organisations or individuals. These initiatives have the potential to reach over 220 000 people, many of whom seek RPL at or below NQF Level 4, although all NQF levels are involved in this work.

So far, SAQA has assisted all organisations approaching it for assistance, and is assisting the following entities[24]:

- **Agricultural sector:** RPL for workers in the agricultural industry, especially seasonal workers (the most disenfranchised workers in the industry) – collaboration with DeLoitte and stakeholders across the agriculture industry (initial potential reach: 50 000 candidates).
- **Correctional Services:** RPL for offender artisans (initial potential reach: 30 000 candidates).
- **Democratic Nursing Association of South Africa (DENOSA)**: Development and implementation of RPL policy for DENOSA members (initial potential reach: 3 000 candidates).
- **Department of Defence (DoD):** RPL for Military Veterans (potential reach: 10 000 candidates).
- **Department of Public Service Administration (DPSA):** Coordination of RPL in the public services sector (potentially 10 000 candidates).
- **Department of Social Development (DSD):** RPL for the professionalisation of all Community Development Practitioners (potential reach of over 70 000 candidates).
- **Department of Transport (DoT):** RPL for staff in the Department of Transport (500 candidates).
- **Education and Labour Relations Council (ELRC):** RPL for educators teaching at different levels in the system (potential reach: 5 000 candidates).
- **E-TV:** RPL for E-TV staff members (potentially 500 candidates)
- **Game Rangers:** Collaboration with Rhodes University and South Africa National Parks (SANParks) to develop an RPL model for game rangers (initial potential reach: 10 000 candidates).
- **Marine Industry Association South Africa (MIASA):** RPL for artisans in the marine industry (initial potential reach: 5 000 candidates).
- **Medical Laboratory Scientists:** RPL policy and processes created at Higher Education Level (currently no candidates).
- **National Artisan Moderating Body (NAMB):** 30 RPL pilots for artisans (initial potential reach 10 000 candidates) .
- **Rand Water:** RPL for 100 artisans and 20 management staff members at Rand Water (120 candidates).
- **Road Traffic Management Corporation:** RPL for Traffic Officers (10 000 candidates).
- **State Information Technology Agency (SITA):** RPL for internal restructuring (potentially 300 candidates).
- **South African Police Services (SAPS):** RPL for musicians in the SAPS (400 candidates).
- **South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA):** RPL for SAQA staff (two successful cases completed; RPL potentially available for all SAQA staff members, currently over 180).
- **South African Sports Confederation (SASCOC):** RPL pilot towards setting coaching standards, potentially with national and international impact (initial potential reach: 10 000 candidates).

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[24] Individuals who have received or are currently receiving assistance are not included here.

3.8.3.3 RPL records in the NLRD

It is important to note that far more qualifications have been achieved via RPL in reality than are recorded as 'via RPL' in the NLRD. As noted in Section 3.8.4.1.3, before November 2013 the uploading of RPL data was voluntary, after which it became mandatory[25].

Figure 79 shows a comparison between qualification achievements in *NLRD Report 3* (SAQA 2013d) with a subset of these records, which were achieved via RPL.

Figure 79: Comparison between qualification achievements in *NLRD Report 3* with the subset of these records, which were achieved via RPL
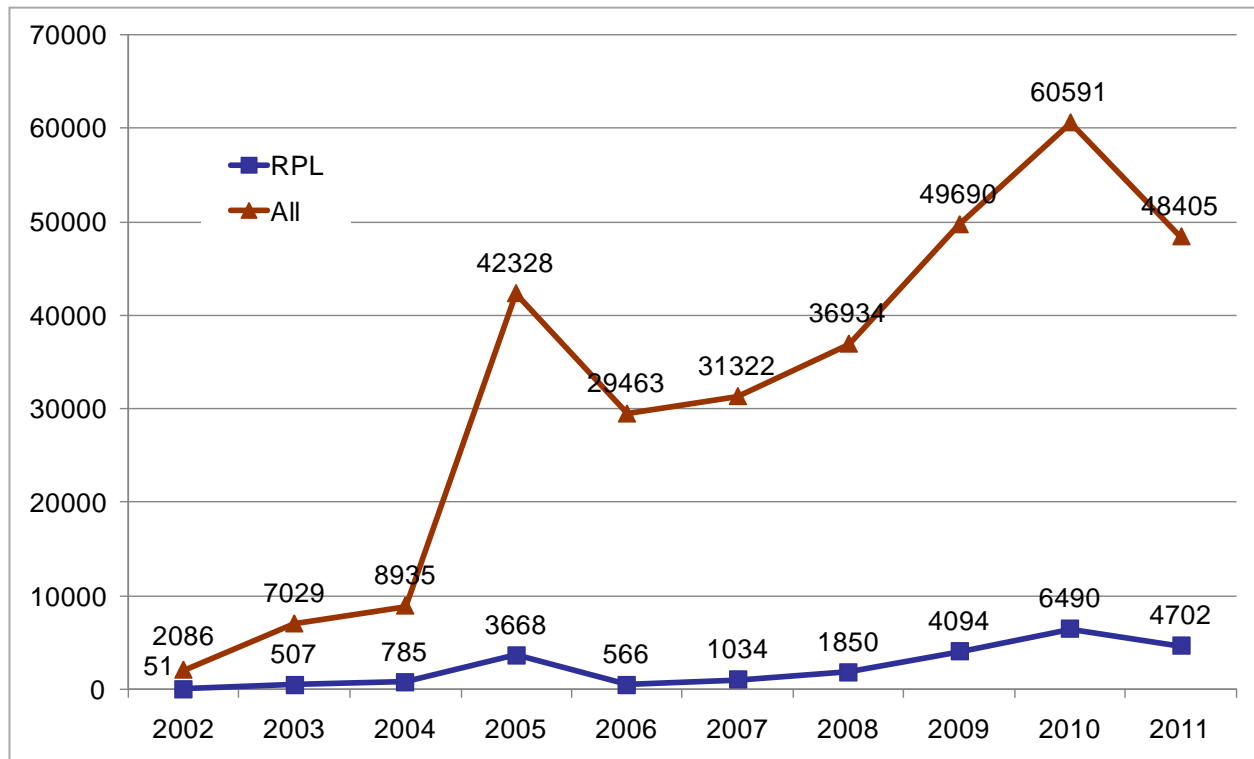
(Source: NLRD)

The numbers of achievements via RPL – expected to rise with implementation of the new national RPL policy (SAQA 2013a) – will be tracked in future NQF impact studies.

Figure 80 shows NLRD records of the ten most popular qualifications achieved via RPL between 2002 and 2012, and the number of achievements for each qualification. All achievements that were not via RPL are not included in this figure.

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[25] National Policy for the Implementation of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) (SAQA 2013a) made it mandatory to supply details regarding learner achievements via RPL, for uploading into the NLRD. RPL achievements nevertheless remain confidential and are recorded only for the purposes of analysis, monitoring and evaluation. The national RPL policy seeks to ensure that no learners are disadvantaged by achieving qualifications via RPL as opposed to achieving via traditional means. The RPL policy was published and has been in circulation since November 2013. Prior to November 2013, the NLRD included records for 153 different qualifications Qualifications obtained via RPL, over a third of which were in the field of Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology at NQF Levels 1-4. A fifth of the records were in the Physical Planning and Construction fields, and a further fifth were for Business, Commerce and Management studies. The majority of the 25 505 recorded achievements via RPL at the time were in the field of Services and NQF Levels 1 and 4.

Figure 80: Records of top ten qualifications achieved via RPL between 2002 and 2012
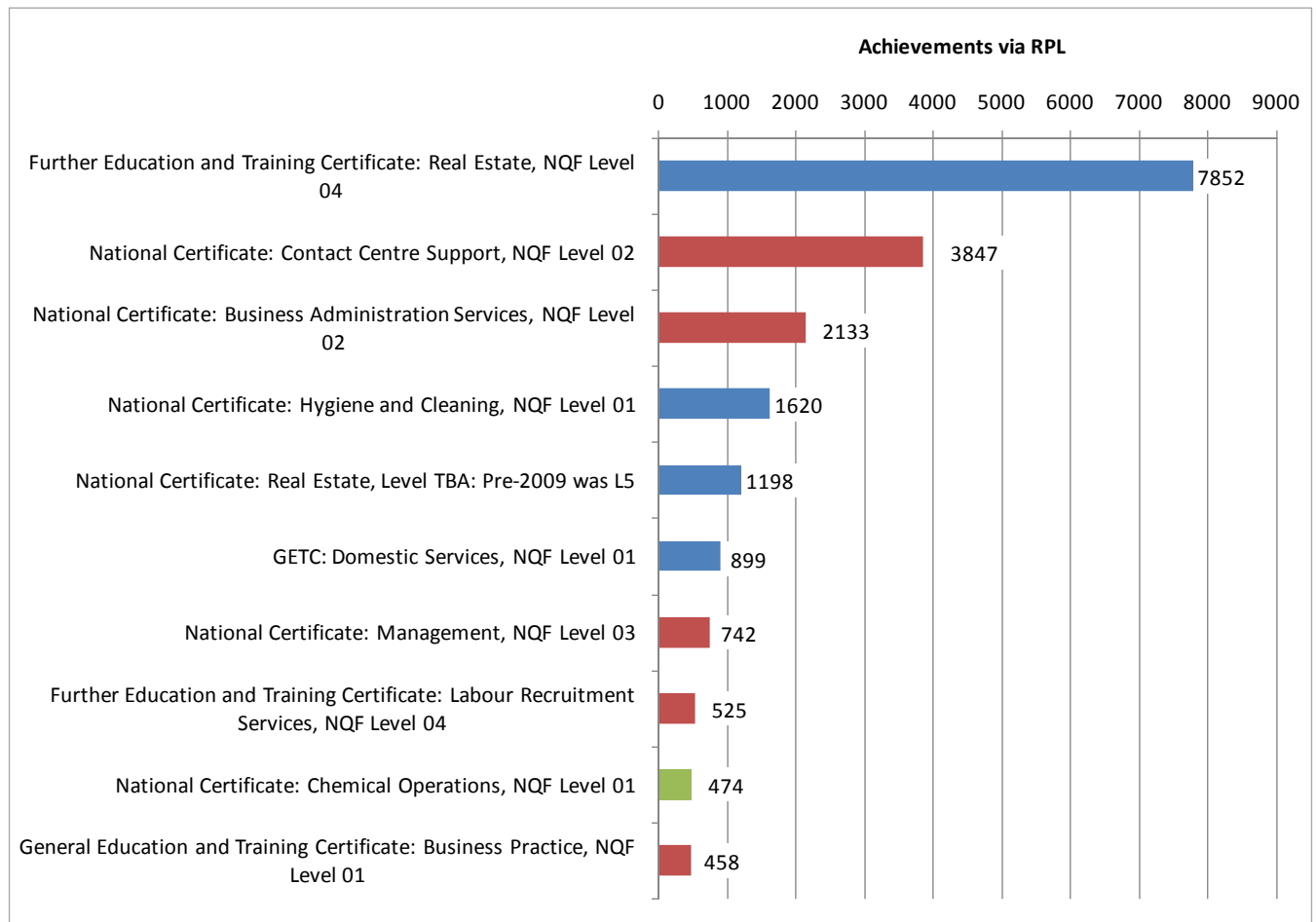
(Source: NLRD)

■ Field 11 - Services   ■ Field 03 - Business, Commerce and Management Studies   ■ Field 06 - Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology

Figure 81 shows trends in the uptake of three unit standards related to RPL practices between 2002 and 2012. Completion of these unit standards – for assessment, moderation and RPL practices respectively – could be interpreted as suggesting the qualification holders' intentions to assess learner achievements via RPL.

While there was little uptake of the RPL practices unit standard – there were steady increases in uptake of the unit standards for assessment and moderation.

Figure 81: Achievement of unit standards relating to RPL practices between 2002 and 2012

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
◆ 115753 Assessment	1	4	201	6 496	12 936	16 917	17 323	16 642	15 429	15 831	15 616
■ 115759 Moderation			93	1 586	3 349	3 975	5 048	5 209	5 560	4 898	5 274
▲ 116587 RPL Practices			13	17	35	21	84	59	225	91	40
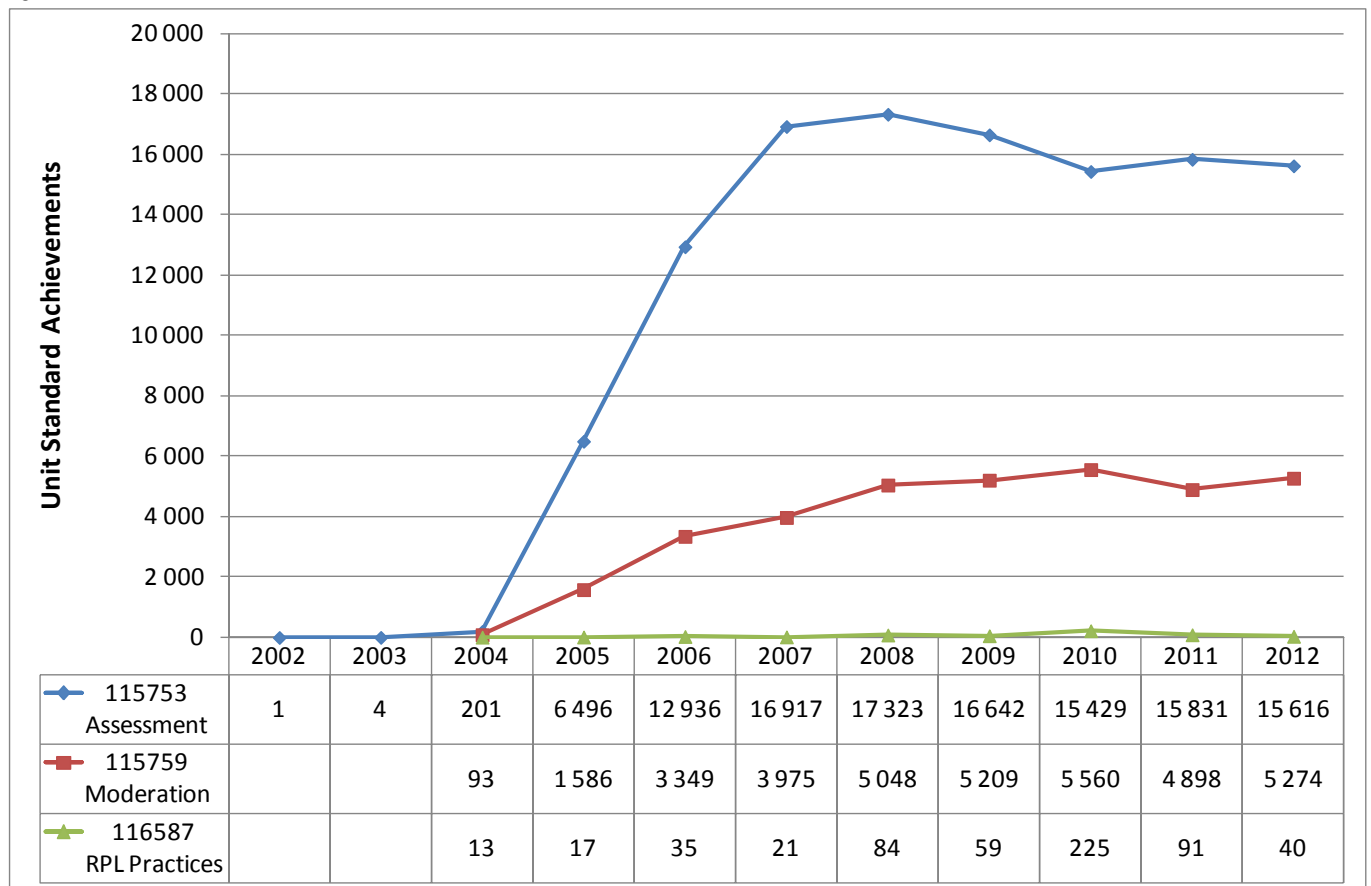
(Source: NLRD)

3.8.5 Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT)

In 2014 SAQA, in line with its mandate (RSA 2008c: Clause 13(h)[iii]), developed a national *Policy for Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT)* within the NQF (SAQA 2014b). This policy is the first its kind in the country.

The CAT policy (SAQA 2014b) was developed in conjunction with policies for RPL (SAQA 2013a) and assessment (SAQA 2014a), for the purposes of enabling the accumulation of credit within qualifications, and the transfer of credit between qualifications within and between the NQF Sub-Frameworks. It provides for the inclusion of CAT within qualification design in the NQF context. It is a tool to promote articulation and progression through the education and training system.

3.8.4.1 CAT principles

CAT is founded on six principles (SAQA 2014b: Clause 15) as follows:

a) *Access for success*

Institutions and providers facilitate the bridging of theory and/ or practice components that are identified as weaknesses during admission and/ or RPL processes in order to promote CAT. Steps are taken to support individuals starting on courses in new sectors or more advanced courses by

194

identifying gaps in knowledge and skills and making arrangements to supply these gaps through bridging courses or other supplementary work.

b) *Articulation by design*

Possibilities for articulation pathways, including within and between the sub-frameworks of the NQF and the world of work, are included in the design and purposes of new qualifications and part-qualifications.

c) *Comparison based on credible methods*

In promoting CAT, qualifications are compared based on credible methods that determine the extent to which their curricular properties as well as their content and outcomes match, as guided by the NQF level descriptors. The comparison of qualifications takes into account the purpose of each qualification, and its broader application.

d) *Supplementarity*

Where there are differences in prerequisites, the rigour of the curriculum or the topics covered, the relevant authority may require the learner to do supplementary work before credits are awarded. This supplementary work is to be determined in a fair, consistent and transparent manner, using credible methods and consultation between the two institutions involved.

e) *Transparency*

Rules, regulations and any register of precedents which inform, influence or govern decisions taken in respect to CAT are valid, fair, reliable and transparent. The rules must be publicly available, brought to the attention of prospective students, and where fees are charged, all information about fees for CAT must be made clear.

3.8.4.2 CAT in the context of the South African NQF

In the context of the South African NQF CAT can take two forms.

Firstly, as part of *systemic articulation*, which is based on legislation, national policy and formal requirements (within and between the Sub-Frameworks of the NQF), and state mechanisms such as funding and planning, CAT can involve the recognition and accumulation of credits across all institutions of education and training in the country.

Second, CAT can be intra-institutional – when credits are totalled within institutions – or inter-institutional, where there is recognition and accumulation of learners' credits between two or more institutions. This form of CAT involves *specific articulation* – formal and informal agreements within the educational and training system, mostly between two or more education and training sub-systems, between specific institutional types, and guided by guidelines, policies and accreditation principles.

Credit transfer is the process whereby credits awarded in one learning programme can count towards the same learning programme in a different department in the same institution or at another institution, or – at a different department in the same institution or in a different institution – another learning programme on the same or different level of the NQF, or the same or a different NQF Sub-Framework.

The NQF, through its Level Descriptors, provides a basis for credit matrices that can be developed to promote CAT.

3.8.4.3 Responsibilities regarding CAT

The CAT policy (SAQA 2014b) has implications for SAQA, the Quality Councils, Professional Bodies, public and private providers of education and training, all those involved in assessment, and learners. Its implementation and further development is the collective responsibility of the Department of Higher Education and Training, the Department of Basic Education, SAQA, the Quality Councils, education institutions and skills development providers, assessment bodies, recognised professional bodies and workplaces. The specific responsibilities of each of these entities are detailed in the policy.

It is expected that the CAT policy will enhance systemic articulation. Its implementation will be monitored by SAQA, and reported in future NQF impact studies.

3.9 Funding for enhanced redress, access and progression

Funding is central for the functioning of the education and training system, and for the achievement of NQF objectives. The scope of the NQF Impact Study did not permit analysis of funding. This focus area could be included in future NQF impact study reports.

4. Systemic integration

Chapter 1 of this report presented descriptions of the structures, tools and services constituting the NQF in South Africa. In Chapter 1 some metaphors were presented for understanding the different aspects of the NQF. The metaphor most elaborated was that of the NQF as several interacting activity systems aiming to achieve the same objectives in different ways. Engeström's (1987) Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) was used to describe the scenario of different interacting activity systems (see Section 1.2.3).

Chapter 2 described the context in which the NQF is being implemented, and which forms part of the NQF. In Chapter 3 trends in redress, and learner access, success and progression were shown within and across the different NQF Sub-Framework contexts. Chapter 4 picks up concepts introduced in Chapter 1, drawing on NQF structures, tools, services and metaphors first described in Chapter 1 to develop an argument for the move towards systemic integration. The data, analyses and discussion in this chapter, in providing substance for the NQF aim of systemic integration, form the an important part of the basis for the meta-analysis in Chapter 7. Chapter 4 addresses Research Question 1 of the NQF Impact Study: What is the impact of the NQF on the integration of the education and training system?

4.1. Progressive development of systemic integration

Systemic integration refers to the extent to which the system for education, training, development and work forms an integrated whole in South Africa. The integrated system desired can be contrasted to the system under *apartheid*, in which there were different opportunities for people based on their demographic categorisation, and based on the social class positioning of different types of knowledge. The ideas of articulated qualifications and learning pathways associated with an integrated system are addressed in Section 4.2.

The present section draws on categories in Engeström's (1987) Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) triangle for an analysis of the extent to which there has been progress towards the systemic integration desired (see the diagram in Section 1.2.3.1). In particular, the concepts of 'tools', 'rules' and 'communities of practice' are used, in an attempt to show shifts towards systemic integration[1]. A deeper analysis of progress in the development of the system, using more CHAT categories, is presented in Chapter 7. The present section focuses on the aspect of systemic integration.

4.1.1 Tools and rules for integration

The suite of tools for systemic integration is described in detail in Chapters 1 and 3 of the report. An analysis of these tools is presented here.

4.1.1.1 NQF Act 67 of 2008 and related Acts, and integration

It is argued that the National Qualifications Framework Act (Act 67 of 2008) and the related Skills Development Amendment Act (Act 37 of 2008), Higher Education Amendment Act (Act 39 of 2008) and General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance (GENFETQA) Amendment Act (Act 50 of 2008) are key tools for systemic integration because they require engagement with relationships between parts of the system.

The objectives of the NQF Act (RSA 2008c: Clause 5) for example, include creating a single integrated

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[1] 'Tools' can be anything used in the transformation process in which an actor or institution achieves its aims (Engeström 1987; see Section 1.2.3.1). A community of practice is a collective that shares purposes and values (Engeström 1987).

national framework for learning achievements. At least eight parts of SAQA's mandate are designed to facilitate integration. These parts include coordination of the NQF Sub-Frameworks; development of the NQF Level Descriptors, and policies for registering qualifications on the NQF; registering Professional Bodies and professional designations; assessment, RPL and CAT; the National Learners' Records Database (NLRD); Foreign Qualifications Evaluation and Advisory Services; and NQF advocacy.

In the following sub-sections the development of these integration tools is discussed.

4.1.1.1.1 NQF Level Descriptors and integration

The NQF Level Descriptors (SAQA 2012a)2 developed as part of SAQA's mandate (RSA 2008c), provide generic characteristics for the types of knowledge, skills and attributes that need to underlie qualifications at different levels of complexity in the NQF. The Level Descriptors have proved to be a working mechanism for developing coherence between learning achievements within and across the three NQF Sub-Frameworks (see Sections 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 of the report). The Level Descriptors aim to enable evaluation of the national and international comparability of qualifications (see Chapter 5).

The South African experience in this regard is in line with international experience. Recent research supported by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) (Keevy and Borhene 2014) has shown that NQF Level Descriptors are widely used internationally.

While Level Descriptors alone cannot determine the comparability of qualifications – it is widely recognised that curriculum content is a major consideration in this regard – they are clearly a tool for the development of a common qualifications language on which further integration can be developed.

4.1.1.1.2 Registering qualifications on the NQF: policy tool and rules for integration

The rules for the systematic organisation of differentiated qualifications nationally, and for enhancing access in the system, are set by the development and implementation of the Policy and Criteria for Registering of Qualifications and Part-Qualifications on the NQF (SAQA 2013c), National Policy for the implementation of Recognition of Prior Learning in the Context of the National Qualifications Framework in South Africa (SAQA 2013a), and national Policy for Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT) (SAQA 2014b).

These policies are made up of broad overarching principles and criteria, setting the outer boundaries within which the Quality Councils develop the corresponding Sub-Framework policies for their sectors. Development of these related but differentiated sectoral policies – all at national level – serve to focus the work of SAQA and the Quality Councils on cross-cutting relationships between parts of the system as well as, in the case of the Quality Councils, on relationships between the components of each Sub-Framework.

Importantly, the same rules for registering qualifications apply in all the Sub-Framework contexts but *how* they apply differs. SAQA and Quality Council co-development of these overarching policies deliberately sought to develop these policies in ways that would enable and support differentiated implementation while at the same time meeting the NQF requirements.

For example, there has been a requirement since 2012, for a qualification to be recommended and submitted to SAQA by a Quality Council to be registered on the NQF (SAQA 2013c). In addition to meeting Sub-Framework criteria, qualification submissions must *inter alia* use NQF Level Descriptor characteristics (SAQA 2012a) to help to determine the level of the qualification; indicate how the qualification meets the needs in the sector for which it has been developed; identify the learning pathway in which the qualification resides; indicate how the qualification benefits learners, society and the economy; and frame exit level outcomes (what learners will be able to do and know upon

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[2] See Section 1.1.2 for more details.

completing the qualification) and overarching assessment criteria. To be registered, a qualification must also allow for RPL, and provide statements of articulation possibilities nationally – within and between the NQF Sub-Frameworks – and internationally, as appropriate for the Sub-Framework in which it is located (SAQA 2012a).

All of these features involve consideration of links between the qualification for which registration is sought and other qualifications, and between the qualification and the world of work.

Current requirements for registering qualifications can be contrasted with the requirements under the SAQA Act, Act 56 of 1995 (RSA 1995). The Level Descriptors (SAQA 2012a) embed the Critical Cross-Field Outcomes, previously a separate element in the qualifications structure. More attention is paid to articulation possibilities than was previously the case; explicit statements of articulation requirements are required. For example, all part-qualifications "should indicate the registered qualification(s) of which they are part" (SAQA 2012a: Clause 31). Criteria for registration for all qualifications include a rationale that indicates "the learning pathway where the qualification resides" (SAQA 2012a: Clause 38[f]iv) and "a statement describing the horizontal, vertical and diagonal articulation possibilities within the relevant Sub-Framework and between Sub-Frameworks" (SAQA 2012a: Clause 38[n]). The inclusion of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) was previously stated as a 'yes/no' item, but now requires a critical statement of institutional policy and an explicit expression of actual practice.

These current requirements can also be contrasted to qualification development and availability prior to the SAQA Act (RSA 1995). The absence of regulatory criteria before 1995 made possible the development of qualifications where there was a wide range in terms of quality, while learners had limited means to assess the quality of what was on offer. The extent to which qualifications led to dead-ends in terms of learning, development and work was not known. Fly-by-night providers were able to operate quite easily under these circumstances. Currently anyone can access information on the accreditation status of providers and the registration status of qualifications[3], making the planning of learning and work pathways of quality easier.

Since publication of the policy for registering qualifications (SAQA 2013c) under the NQF Act (RSA 2008c), a total of 341 qualifications have been registered. A parallel process has involved the alignment of previously registered qualifications to the requirements of the respective Sub-Frameworks – the GFETQSF, HEQSF and OQSF. Tracking learner enrolments and graduations over time and considering trends like those presented in Chapter 3 show the extent to which learners actually move along these official pathways.

4.1.1.1.3 Quality, Quality Councils and integration

Management of the quality of education and training provision and learner achievements is a key tool for systemic articulation and integration Learners' further movement through the system depends on the recognisability of their success levels, and the quality of their achievements, in initial or prior learning.

Without systemic quality, the possibilities for integration would be limited to isolated pockets of excellence. Quality Council initiatives towards enhancing quality and the effects of these initiatives and tools are addressed in Chapter 6 of the report. Joint work between SAQA and the Quality Councils has already been noted.

4.1.1.1.4 Integration from Umalusi's perspective

The General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework (GFETQSF) developed

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[3] See Section 3.1 for more details. The registration status of occupational qualifications expires from time to time, for the purpose of industry relevance. Qualifications on the GFETQSF and HEQSF may be reviewed from time to time, but do not have expiry dates.

and managed by Umalusi coordinates with the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF) developed and managed by the Council on Higher Education (CHE) and the Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework (OQSF) developed and managed by the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO).

The intention is that the GFETQSF, which serves as a register of general educational qualifications at NQF Levels 1 – 4, facilitates and provides the basis for articulation between qualifications within the Sub-Framework and also between qualifications in the GFETQSF and qualifications in the other two Sub-Frameworks developed and managed by the Quality Councils.

Umalusi (2014g) policy outlines the nature of the qualification types on the GFETQSF. The policy serves as a means for the public to understand and have confidence in the achievements relating to these qualifications. The policy for the GFETQSF enables common understanding of the relationships between qualifications within it.

Through related policy (Umalusi 2014f), the parameters for designing qualifications on the GFETQSF are made clear. These parameters facilitate the general comparability of qualifications across the GFETQSF system, thus allowing for greater ease of access for learners and for the possibility of Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT) between qualifications as appropriate.

The placement of new qualifications on the GFETQSF is in large part determined by comparative evaluations that relate the new qualifications to existing qualifications on the Sub-Framework. The level of qualifications is further determined through research into the critical curricula underpinning the qualifications, and through an evaluation of the quality and depth of the concomitant assessment. The levels of qualifications are in line with the NQF Level Descriptors.

Every qualification on the GFETQSF specifies the NQF level of the qualification, its minimum credit rating, and its purpose and characteristics. A qualification is required to meet at least the generic competencies associated with the NQF level at which the qualification has been pegged. The basic qualification types on the GFETQSF are used as points of reference for the development of specialised qualifications.

In the event of a need to formulate a new qualification type, Umalusi consults with the other two Quality Councils and the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) before the development of such a qualification begins, particularly in the event that such a qualification may impact on the sphere of responsibility of one of the other Quality Councils.

4.1.1.1.4.1 Articulation between the GFETQSF and the other two NQF Sub-Frameworks

Umalusi understands articulation as the process which formally creates recognisable (and recognised) connections between qualifications and part-qualifications, whether within the GFETQSF or across the NQF Sub-Frameworks. It is a practice which creates explicit links between qualifications and/ or part-qualifications.

The qualification types determined for the GFETQSF form the first and most basic kind of articulation, since the intention is to put broadly comparable qualifications at the same NQF level. Being on the same NQF level, however, does not necessarily allow for the assumption of articulation in the GFETQSF, since qualification purpose and design may preclude the possibility of Credit Accumulation and Transfer.

One of the primary means employed by Umalusi in establishing articulation possibilities is through the identification of access possibilities within a qualification policy. The entry requirements determined at the point of qualification development serve to connect the qualification to others which are considered to prepare successful candidates for entry into the qualification described.

Articulation in the GFETQSF also includes exemptions – the situation where some part of the prerequisites required for one qualification is recognised for the transfer of credit to another qualification. For example in the GFETQSF context, certain subjects already achieved by a candidate and certified in one qualification may be recognised within the context of another qualification, thus providing exemption from those subjects. The determination of exemption based on prior achievement is ascertained on a qualification by qualification basis through researched comparison of the curricula for the qualifications in question, as well as of the demands made in terms of assessment relating to the qualifications. Articulation of this nature only occurs when there is a significant degree of consonance between the qualifications themselves in terms of purpose, their respective curricula and the nature of the associated assessment.

Articulation may also be established through regulation, to allow for access to another qualification – an example here being the regulated Higher Education admission requirements associated with the National Senior Certificate (NSC) and National Certificate: Vocational (NCV). For large-scale national qualifications such as those on the GFETQSF, the regulation of articulation options between qualifications is possible, desirable and necessary. However, the regulation of articulation between a national qualification on the GFETQSF such as the NSC or NCV and others on another Sub-Framework (such as a Bachelor's Degree, Diploma or Higher Certificate on the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework, for example) is only possible because issues of qualification purpose, national curriculum, uniform quality assurance and assessment are considered to be sufficiently understood and adequately managed.

Articulation is called for where *research* shows that learning acquired in one context is valid for another. Adaptation of curricula and assessment practices may forge greater consonance between qualifications, thus allowing for the possibility of articulation.

The credibility of a qualification depends on the quality it comes to represent, and is determined by many factors. It often takes time for all the parts of the system to understand the qualification and to implement it well. Only once a qualification is well understood and accepted generally, can it be used to negotiate relationships with other important qualifications in the system. Even if the qualifications have a high level of general acceptance, the actual articulation needs research to establish the nature of the relationships between them.

4.1.1.1.4.2 Accumulation and transfer of credits towards qualifications in the GFETQSF context

Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT) is the process whereby a learner's achievements in relation to one qualification are formally recognised so that they can count towards part of another qualification. Credits previously obtained may be recognised as meeting some of the requirements for a different qualification, and subject to limits, the credits achieved towards one qualification may be recognised as meeting part of the requirements for another qualification. Decisions regarding the transfer of credit are made by the Quality Council(s) responsible for the qualifications in question.

The Department of Basic Education and its provincial counterparts are advised regarding the permissibility of credit transfer: such decisions in respect of qualifications offered by the Departments of Education need to be regulated before being implemented.

Umalusi certification processes recognise partial achievement of qualifications through the issuing of subject statements and, under the prerequisite conditions, allowing the combination of partial achievements to result in a full qualification.

Umalusi has policies regarding credit recognition, accumulation and transfer and the recognition of prior learning, as these are practised in a large-scale, massified education system (Umalusi 2014d). These policies are designed to enable learner progression through the system.

4.1.1.1.4.3 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in the GFETQSF context

Informal and non-formal learning may be recognised by Umalusi through a process of formal assessment. Learners seeking to be recognised for prior learning against a specific qualification write an external assessment at the exit point of the qualification. Placement assessment may also be used to evaluate prior learning. Institutions should be able, in the interests of creating classes of learners with similar learning needs for example, to be able to use tests to advise adult learners as to their readiness to embark on learning towards a particular qualification, or whether they should consider some other form of learning as preparation.

For this reason, all accredited providers of education and training and assessment are required to have a policy that governs the application of RPL in their institutions, in line with Umalusi's (2014d) RPL policy. Umalusi's RPL policy is in turn aligned with the National Policy for Implementing RPL in the context of the NQF in South Africa (SAQA 2013a).

4.1.1.1.4.4 Progression within the GFETQSF

The General and Further Education and Training Sub-framework is designed, where possible, to facilitate vertical, horizontal and diagonal progression within and across the National Qualifications Framework and within the Sub-Framework in particular. The minimum requirements for vertical progression between qualifications are stipulated by the entry requirements in the qualification policy.

Progression is also possible horizontally between qualifications if candidates meet the minimum requirements for admission to the target qualifications. For example, candidates who have achieved N3 Technical Certificates are still able to achieve the old 'National Senior Certificate (NSC): Colleges' by passing two business languages. Both the N3 and the NSC: Colleges are on the same NQF level, but the NSC: Colleges functions as a (technical) school-leaving certificate.

Diagonal progression between qualifications is possible if candidates present a completed qualification or credits toward a related qualification as a means of meeting the admission requirements for the target qualification. Candidates moving at the end of Grade 9 from the NSC into the NCV are regarded as progressing diagonally from the one qualification to another.

4.1.1.1.4.5 Admission to General and Further Education and Training qualifications

All qualifications on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework have their own policies that specify minimum admission requirements where applicable.

4.1.1.1.4.6 Articulation with qualifications in the HEQSF and OQSF contexts

The intention is that the NQF will facilitate articulation within and between General, Further and Higher Education and Training, where appropriate.

4.1.1.1.5 Professional Bodies and integration

The Policy and Criteria for Recognising a Professional Body and Registering a Professional Designation for the Purposes of the NQF Act, Act 67 of 2008, (SAQA 2012b) are tools to integrate professional bodies into the national education and training system, while preserving the autonomy of their specialised expertise.

Eight high-level criteria provide guidance for the specialised expertise required. Examples include the requirement to be legally constituted with the human and financial resources to undertake the functions required. Other criteria include protecting public interests; developing, awarding, monitoring and revoking professional designations; publishing and implementing a code of conduct; and providing SAQA with lists of members (SAQA 2012b).

Other criteria focus particularly on enhancing access on the one hand and lifelong learning on the other. These criteria include having policies and practices to provide Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for members, not applying unfair exclusionary practices in membership, and making career advice available (SAQA 2012b)[4]. These criteria in particular, serve to align the work of professional bodies with the national Constitutional and NQF goals of integration, inclusivity and transparency.

Since publication of this policy in 2012 (SAQA 2012b) 77 Professional Bodies have applied for recognition, were found to meet the criteria, and have been recognised and recorded on the official Register of Professional Bodies in the NLRD. A further 100 are in the process of being recognised. These numbers show an increasing number of professional bodies aligned with the NQF and integrated into the national education and training system.

4.1.1.1.6 NLRD and integration

The National Learners' Records Database (NLRD) becomes an integrating device by showing relationships between qualifications and part-qualifications registered on the NQF; professional bodies and professional designations registered on the NQF; education and training providers accredited to offer registered qualifications and part-qualifications; and learner enrolments and achievements.

NLRD databases and gaps are detailed in Section 3.1.

4.1.1.1.7 RPL, CAT and integration

The development and implementation of national policy for the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) (SAQA 2013a) is covered in Section 3.8.4 of the report. Related work needed in the immediate future and in the medium to long term is also detailed in this section. The recognition of prior learning from a *context* different to that in which a qualification is offered, serves to integrate the informal/ non-formal learning involved in each case.

Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT), involving the recognition of learning between institutions, is also an integrating device. While up to 2014 the adoption and nature of CAT agreements in the country were determined by individual institutions or on a case by case basis, the recently developed national policy for CAT (SAQA 2014b) provides the principles and guidelines for a national CAT system.

While it will be some years before the effectiveness of this policy could be assessed, the rules for CAT are clear (see Section 3.8.5).

4.1.1.1.8 The NQF Sub-Frameworks, Quality Councils and integration

Since the promulgation of the NQF Act (RSA 2008c) in 2009 and in line with this Act (RSA 2008c: Clause 14), the CEOs of the Quality Councils are *ex officio* members of the SAQA Board and the SAQA CEO is an *ex officio* member of the Councils of the Quality Councils.

While this structural integration has not yet led to resolving all barriers to integration, it has enabled dialogue, for example around development of the three NQF Sub-Frameworks between 2010 and 2013 and publication of these Sub-Frameworks by 2013.

The NQF Sub-Frameworks developed within the context of the NQF Act (RSA 2008c) and the Skills Development, Higher Education and GENFET Amendment Acts (RSA 2008d, 2008b, 2008a), have

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[4] There is no single definition for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) nationally or internationally. Conceptualisations range from seeing CPD as all natural learning experiences (informal learning) as well as planned activities designed to benefit individuals and organisations or society (Day 1999), to seeing it as 'the systematic maintenance, improvement and broadening of knowledge and skills' and the individual development of the abilities to execute 'professional and technical duties' throughout an engineering career (Engineering Council of South Africa).

enabled the systematic structuring of qualifications within the occupational, Higher Education and GENFET sectors. The Sub-Frameworks have also served as tools for integration in different ways: the registration of qualifications requires articulation within and between the Sub-Frameworks, and between education and training on one hand, and work on the other, as appropriate (SAQA 2012b; see Section 4.1.1).

Making these requirements clear in their own right is a step towards integration. Deepening of Sub-Framework implementation is required: generally acknowledged challenges include the need to develop more qualifications at NQF Levels 5 and 6 (see for example Ramsarup 2014), to ensure that these qualifications are part of learning pathways, and to strengthen learning pathways throughout the NQF (see also Sections 4.2 and 4.3).

4.1.2 Communities of Practice for integration

All communities of practice throughout the education and training system have potential to be communities of practice driving systemic integration. The sections that follow describe some which have advanced integration.

4.1.2.1 NQF Partner Communities of Practice

The Minister of Basic Education (MBE) with the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and its predecessor the Department of Education (DoE), have driven systemic integration since the mid-1990s. The Ministry has successfully overseen the progressive integration of 17 national departments of education, and systems, curricula, and exams that differed for different population groups – into a single integrated schooling system. Since 2008 there have been single school-based Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) curricula and assessments per school subject, which incorporate elements of the previous Higher and Standard Grade levels. Since 2010 the approval of school textbooks for mass publication and distribution has been national, eliminating the potentially unfair differences between provinces in the country. The focus for a number of years has been on enhancing the *quality* of curricula, curriculum delivery and assessment in this integrated school system (see Section 6.1 for details).

The Minister of Higher Education and Training (MHET) has been integrating the components of Post-School Education and Training since 2009. The NQF Act, Act 67 of 2008, which replaced the SAQA Act, Act 58 of 1995, is clear about the roles and responsibilities of the NQF stakeholders. In terms of the NQF Act, the Minister (MHET) has overall executive responsibility for the NQF, SAQA and the three Quality Councils (RSA 2008c: Section 8(1)(a)(b)(c), (2)(a)-(f), (3)(a)-(c) and (4)). As a result, the MHET uses the DHET for regulation of Higher Education, the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges, Adult Education and Training, Worker Education, Artisan training, learnerships, internships and the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) – which were not previously located within one reporting stream. Apart from the *organisation*s and institutions for which the Minister has oversight, he also has oversight over those elements stated in the NQF Act.

The one reporting stream enables the Minister to establish cohesions, and better systemic integration than was previously the case. The Minister uses mechanisms such as the NQF with its three Sub-Frameworks, which he determined in 2013-2014 (DHET 2013a, 2014a) and the White Paper for Post-School Education and Training (MHET 2013), to implement the policy frameworks and drive systemic integration. Under the NQF Act (RSA 2008c) he has also set up a number of Ministerial Task Teams to drive particular areas of development[5].

In 2009 a decisive step to enhance integration was taken with the establishment of decision-making structures made up of senior representatives of the main NQF organisations, in the form of the Inter-

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[5] These Ministerial Task Teams include the Worker Education Task Team (WETT), the Task Team for RPL, the Task Team for Articulation, and others.

Departmental NQF Steering Committee and the CEO Committee (see Chapter 1). Each of these bodies is also represented in the highest authority structures of SAQA and the Quality Councils – the SAQA Board, Umalusi, the Council on Higher Education (CHE) and the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO).

Each of these bodies has also led activities towards integration. SAQA provided leadership for the development of the suite of NQF policies detailed in Chapter 1 (Section 1.1). Progress regarding implementation of these policies and related initiatives is discussed in Sections 3.8 and 4.1.1.1. Moves by the Quality Councils to implement the NQF Act (RSA 2008c) are described in Sections 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3.

4.1.2.1.1 The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and integration

Department of Higher Education (DHET) staff members provided the text in this sub-section of the report.

Some of the most critical instruments initiated by the Minister of Higher Education and Training (MHET) include the White Paper for Post-School Education and Training (MHET 2013) which is the Minister's policy framework for the Post-School system, and the Ministerial Guidelines which provide the key strategies and priorities for SAQA and the Quality Councils to perform in implementing and further developing the NQF (see Sections 2.2, 7.1 and 7.4). Two other documents are important to guide implementation and inter-organisational relationships. These are the NQF Implementation Plans and the System of Collaboration (SAQA 2011c; see Sections 1.1.2.5-1.1.2.6) Importantly, the NQF Implementation Plan 2011-2015 (SAQA 2011) has been completed (see Section 1.1.1.2.6), and the new NQF Implementation Plan 2015-2020 was being developed at the time of the report. The relationships between SAQA, the Quality Councils and the DHET are framed by the System for Collaboration (SAQA 2011c), which creates the framework in which NQF matters and relationships are managed.

Important structures established by the DHET to deal with all matters relating to the NQF, including the Inter-Departmental NQF Steering Committee (IDNQFSC) and the NQF Forum (see Section 1.1.2.10) have also aided systemic integration. The IDNQFSC membership comprises each branch within the DHET, and the Department of Basic Education (DBE). SAQA and the Quality Councils are invited to raise issues with the IDQNFSC and to present any issues to this structure. The IDQNFSC also extends invitations to SAQA and the Quality Councils to address matters which are raised by members of the IDQNFSC. The approach is collegial, communicative and collaborative, and the IDNQFSC is pleased with the many matters which have been dealt with in pursuit of the further development and implementation of the NQF.

An NQF Directorate was established in DHET in 2011 to provide support and advice to the Minister about all matters relating to the statutory requirements of the NQF Act (RSA 2008c) that both the Minister and the Director-General for Higher Education and Training are required to perform. The NQF Directorate performs a monitoring and evaluation function for the DHET by:

- reporting on the four quarterly reports presented by SAQA and the three Quality Councils to the DHET, and
- by developing an annual monitoring and evaluation report to the Director-General about the achievements of SAQA and the Quality Councils against their Annual Performance Plans and the NQF Implementation Plan (SAQA 2011c).

These structures and activities are geared to provide an enabling environment for SAQA and the Quality Councils, and for the NQF to be implemented.

4.1.2.1.2 The Department of Basic Education (DBE) and integration

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) with its nine provincial Departments of Education, districts

and schools has 'nested' communities of practice[6]. The integration work of the DBE is cascaded through the provincial Departments of Education to regions, districts and individual schools.

The existence of 17 national Departments of Education under *apartheid* led to an unequal distribution of knowledge and skills across different social groups[7]. The development and refinement of national curricula for schools – from *Curriculum 2005* to the *Revised National Curriculum Statements* (RNCS) in 2004, to the *National Curriculum Statements, Learning Programme Guidelines* and *Subject Assessment Guidelines* in 2006, to the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements* in 2010 – comprised bold moves to integrate the system and enhance its quality. The relatively small changes between the 2006 and 2010 curricula indicate general agreement that the current curricula are closer to what they need to be than they were in 2005. Umalusi's research (2008a, 2009a, 2009b, 2010a, 2010b, 2013a, 2013b) supports this idea, that what is needed are refinements rather than radical changes.

The DBE has built on the integration work begun by the national Department of Education (1994-2009). In addition to the waves of curriculum reform, the DBE over the years embarked on a number of quality interventions for the whole system, serving also to integrate it further. These interventions, detailed in Section 3.5, include teacher and subject advisor training; intensive monitoring and support; provision of Learning and Teaching Support Materials and additional materials; additional winter school classes and teaching centres; and measures to ensure syllabus completion.

Under *apartheid*, school textbooks differed across provinces and population groups. After 1994, although textbooks were available for all learners equally, school textbooks were still procured separately by the new provinces. Once national curricula existed (from the latter half of the 1990s), the national Department of Education issued the curriculum documents together with short briefs to commercial publishers. Publishers then developed prospective textbooks and submitted 10 copies of each to all nine provincial Departments of Education, and the National Department of Education – 100 copies of each book – for the selection process. The nine provinces each made their selections and suggestions for improvement. Usually, depending on the capabilities and preferences of the provinces, different provinces ended up with different versions of the same book, with some versions being more elaborated than others. This practice ended in 2010 with the integration of school textbook selection into the work of the Department of Basic Education.

While schooling-related deficiencies, when they occur, have quickly become central topics in public newspapers, successes are less well publicised. What is tacitly but universally agreed however, is that there is a single schooling system in South Africa.

Areas for development include articulation between school and the TVET College system, between schooling and the world of work, between schooling and qualifications for Trades and Occupations, and between schooling and Higher Education. Since research (Umalusi 2007b, 2010b) has found the curricula to be internationally comparable, the focus of attention needs to be on curriculum delivery and addressing all the contextual and other features affecting this delivery.

The issue of language in the development of quality schooling and its articulation with other sectors is an urgent one: although English is the language of business and commerce, it is the home language in around only 8% of households in the country (Stat SA 2011).

4.1.2.1.3 The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) and integration

Since the establishment of the NQF (RSA 1995), but increasingly since promulgation of the NQF Act (RSA 2008c), SAQA has led a range of communities of practice towards systemic integration. The work

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[6] 'Nested' here refers to the fact that schools operate within districts, which operate within regions, which operate within provinces, which operate in line with the Department of Basic Education – with oversight provided at each level. Each level of organisation is nested inside another.
[7] See Chapter 1 and Section 6.1 for more details.

of the Inter-Departmental NQF Steering Committee and the CEO Committee are described in Section 1.1.2.5-1.1.2.6.

Following the SAQA Act (RSA 1995), SAQA led the formation of Standards Generating Bodies (SGBs) and National Standards Bodies (NSBs)[8] for qualification development. Within the NQF Act (RSA 2008c), SAQA led Reference Groups for the development of the suite of NQF policies (Section 1.1) and other related work. SAQA also convened a range of conferences and workshops to share and debate NQF-related ideas and work, and has developed national communities of practice for the verification of qualifications, the evaluation of foreign qualifications, career advice and the NLRD.

There was more contestation within these NQF communities of practice under the SAQA Act (RSA 1995) with its top-down approach (SAQA 2010a), than there is under the NQF Act (RSA 2008c) with its devolved and differentiated model. The increasing numbers of participants in these SAQA-led activities, dialogue and feedback received clearly show increasing buy-in and engagement.

4.1.2.1.4 The Quality Councils and integration

The Quality Councils describe their existence and work, and their communities of practice, in the contexts of the SAQA Act (RSA 1995) and the NQF Act (RSA 2008c), in Sections 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3.

4.1.2.2 NQF Family Communities of Practice

Communities of practice in the vocational context include the SETAs with their employers, providers and learners. Integration work has taken place under the auspices of the SETAs, including the sectoral quality assurance of qualifications and the development of sectoral RPL policies under the SAQA Act (RSA 1995). Developments towards systemic integration under the NQF Act (RSA 2008c) have included the establishment of a centralised system for quality assurance in the occupational sector with the creation of the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations, and policies and structures for Development Quality Partners (DQPs) and Assessment Quality Partners (AQPs), in the 2010-2014 period (see Section 6.3 for more details).

Communities of practice have emerged around providers of education and training. Perceptions of the effects and effectiveness of the current basket of NQF policies in these communities were not addressed in the present report, but could be included in future NQF impact studies.

A community of Professional Bodies has been created in the context of the policy for recognising professional bodies and professional designations (RSA 2012a). All NQF-recognised professional bodies as well as the statutory councils are part of this community of practice. Two meetings per annum take place with a focus on issues pertinent to the professional bodies. These meetings include having specialists address themes such as Continuing Professional Development (CPD)[9], professional ethics and utilising RPL for professional designation purposes. One of the emerging challenges has been to create parity of esteem between the non-statutory and statutory professional bodies, although the NQF approach has served as some sort of leveller between these two types of professional bodies. Another challenge relates to the proliferation of professional bodies within a specific sector, an issue that is more dominant in the non-statutory than in the statutory sector.

4.1.3 Rules and Divisions of Labour for integration

The rules and divisions of labour for implementing the NQF are made explicit in the NQF Act (RSA 2008c) and its recently developed related suite of policies (see Chapter 1). Integration is central to these policies. There is a single set of policies that are applicable nationally; extensive attempts to

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[8] The National Standards Bodies (NSBs) had strategic oversight roles in their sectors. NSBs registered Standards Generating Bodies (SGBs) in their sectors, interrogated SGB outputs and recommended qualifications developed in the SGB processes to the NSB Committee, which then recommended the qualifications to the SAQA Board for registration on the NQF.

ensure buy-in included the enabling of co-development of these policies, between SAQA and knowledgeable experienced representatives from all sectors affected in each case. As the policies are rolled out, it will become possible to assess the extent to which the present set of rules facilitates integration.

4.2. Articulation-related developments

Systemic integration refers to the extent to which there is a single system for education and training in the country. Once the system has integrated, learners need to be able to progress within it.

Although the links between parts of integrated systems are generally referred to as 'articulation' or 'learning pathways', these concepts are not necessarily understood in one way.

Learning pathways can be 'official', when particular qualifications are designed to lead to other qualifications or specific types of work, or 'individual', when learners progress in their education, training, development and work by making use of formal, informal and non-formal learning and experience (Lotz-Sisitka and Ramsarup 2011, 2012). These definitions are used here, although there are others.

Articulation between qualifications is described as being 'systemic' when based on legislation or nationally specified formal requirements such as state planning and funding (SAQA 2014b: Clause 18a). Articulation is 'specific' when it is based on formal or informal agreements, usually between two or more institutions, and may involve guidelines, policies and accreditation principles (SAQA 2014b: Clause 18b).

In the following section, diagrams of learning pathways available to learners are shown for 2009 and 2014 respectively. Articulation blockages are discussed.

4.2.1 Learning pathways in 2009

An analysis conducted by the Education, Science and Skills Development (ESSD) research programme at the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) in 2009, reported by Cosser (2009), is useful for the present study as it reveals obstacles in NQF in learning pathways in 2009 – the year of the promulgation of the NQF Act (RSA 2008c). Cosser's (2009) research provides a snapshot of articulation-related realities in the period immediately before the implementation of the NQF Act.

Figure 82 shows articulation possibilities in 2009, with two of five obstacles noted at the time (Cosser 2009). In 2002, an HSRC survey of the destinations of graduates from N2, N3 and NSC programmes showed that 81% of respondents enrolling for College programmes already possessed Senior Certificates. This pathway is noted as Obstacle 1 in the diagram, as it was wasteful (Cosser 2009). The admission requirement for entry into an auxiliary nursing programme at the time was Grade 10, with those applying also usually being in possession of a Grade 12 matric certificate – this pathway is noted as Obstacle 2 in the diagram.

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[9] Continuing Professional Development (CPD) varies widely across different fields and Professional Body contexts. In some contexts for example, it includes formal training and assessment, presenting papers at conferences and writing peer-reviewed papers. In other contexts, attending workshops or courses and obtaining participation certificates suffice.

Figure 82: Learning pathways in 2009, with Obstacles (OB) 1 and 2
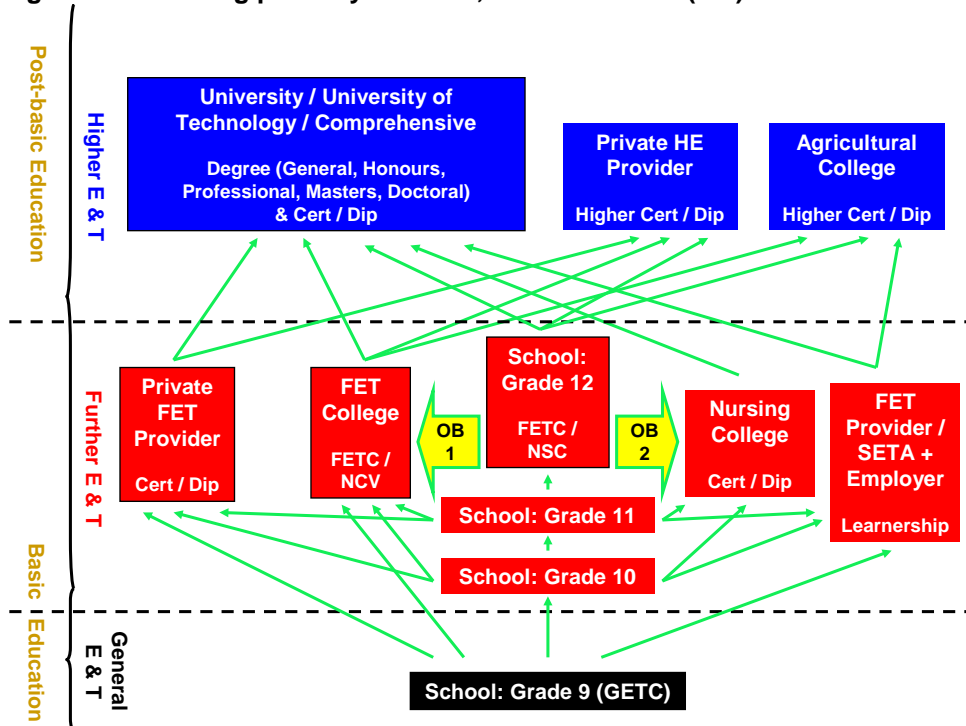
(*Source: Cosser 2009*)

Figure 83 shows a third obstacle (OB3). Seventy-two percent of young unemployed learners surveyed in another HSRC study (Visser and Kruss 2009) already possessed NQF Level 4 qualifications when they enrolled for learnerships. The majority (92%) enrolled for learnership programmes at levels lower than or equal to NQF level 4 (Cosser 2009).

Figure 83: Learning pathways in 2009, showing Obstacle (OB) 3
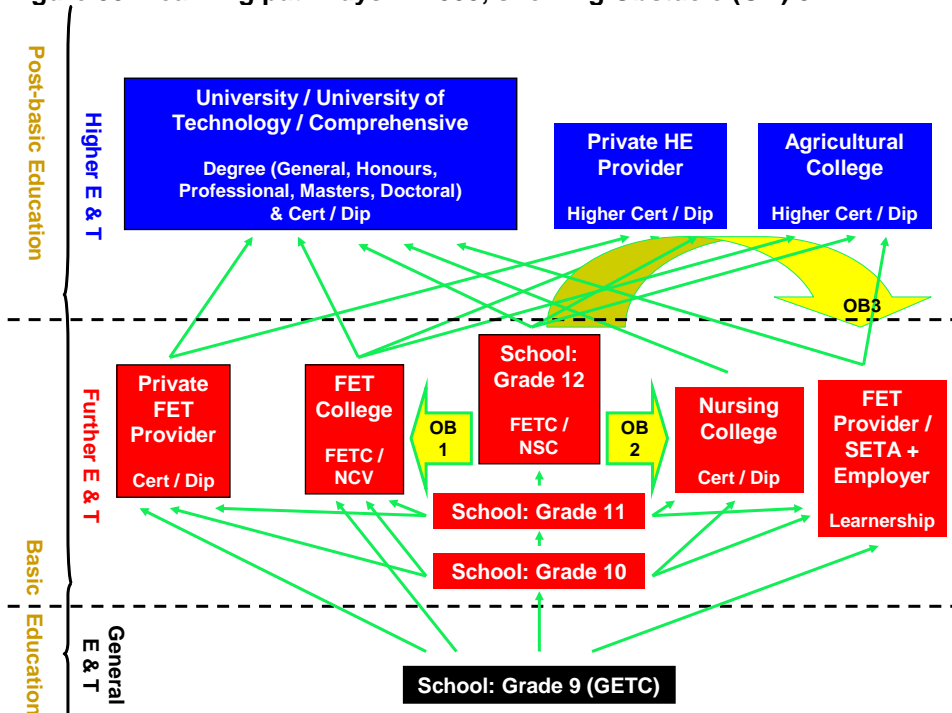
(*Source: Cosser 2009*)

According to Cosser (2009), a fourth obstacle at the time involved private provision at TVET level, which was found to be larger than provision in the public colleges (Akoojee 2005). The public TVET colleges were not seen to provide credible programmes that could lead to employment (Akoojee 2005). Further, Cosser (2009) argued that it appeared that private Higher Education was plugging the gap between schooling and public Higher Education provision.

A fifth obstacle was the limited options for post-school study. At the time there were pathways into Higher Education but far fewer into post-school TVET. Figure 84 shows the fourth and fifth obstacles.

Figure 84: Learning pathways in 2009, showing Obstacles 4 and 5
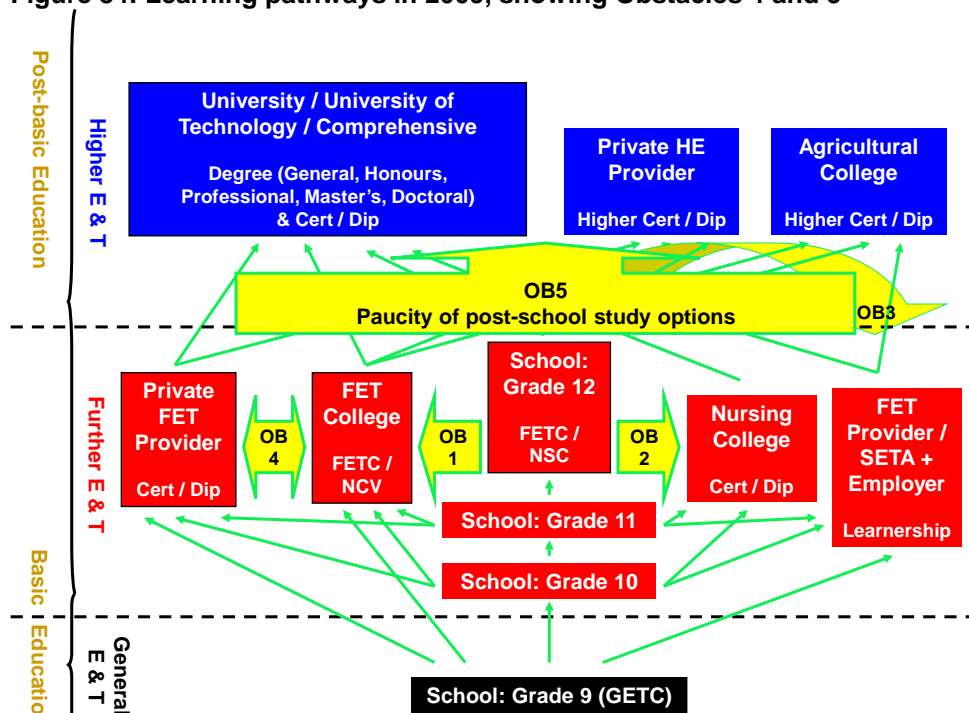
(*Source: Cosser 2009*)

4.2.2 Learning pathways in 2014

While there is no cohort study to accompany them, Figures 85 and 86 show learning pathways in 2014.

In Figure 85, all the qualification types in the NQF and the available learning pathways between them are shown. Each NQF level is shown in a different colour and qualifications are represented in the same colour family as that of the NQF level on which they are placed. The articulation options from each qualification are shown in the same colour as the box around the qualification concerned. Directional arrows with solid lines represent articulated (available) pathways between qualifications. Arrows with dotted lines indicate instances in which articulation requires inter-institutional agreements. There is potential for learners to move between boxes through RPL processes.

Figure 86 shows the same diagram, with all the qualifications available per NQF level, and learning pathways marked with directional arrows, but in three shades of grey to indicate the Sub-Framework context for each qualification. The qualifications in pale grey boxes are located in the OQSF, those with medium-grey boxes are in the GFETQSF, and those with dark grey boxes are in the HEQSF. This figure shows articulation within and between the three NQF Sub-Frameworks.

While the percentages of learners with matric certificates enrolling in TVET Colleges in 2014 are not known, the available data show that the numbers of learners completing learnerships generally increased between 2004 and 2012, and those completing internships increased between 2011 and

2012 (see Sections 3.7.6 and 3.8.2). More data are needed to show enrolment and achievement trends in TVET Colleges over time (see Section 3.5.3).

Unlike the pre-2009 figures (Cosser 2009), in 2011 and 2012 there were more learners in the public than in the private TVET system (see Section 3.5.3.3.1). Since 2009, Umalusi has developed additional post-school qualification types (see Section 6.1.9), and several TVET-level qualifications have been submitted by the CHE and the QCTO and successfully registered on the NQF. The White Paper for Post-School Education and Training (MHET 2013) provides for enhanced post-school opportunities (see Section 2.2).

Importantly, for the first time, a diagram such as that presented in Figures 85 and 86 for the whole education and training system is possible. Unlike in the 2009 scenario, in theory all the pathways represented are feasible. In practice however, curriculum alignment, the quality of teaching and learning and of learner achievements, and disparities between institutions, intervene.

Figure 85: Learning pathways in the NQF, by NQF level
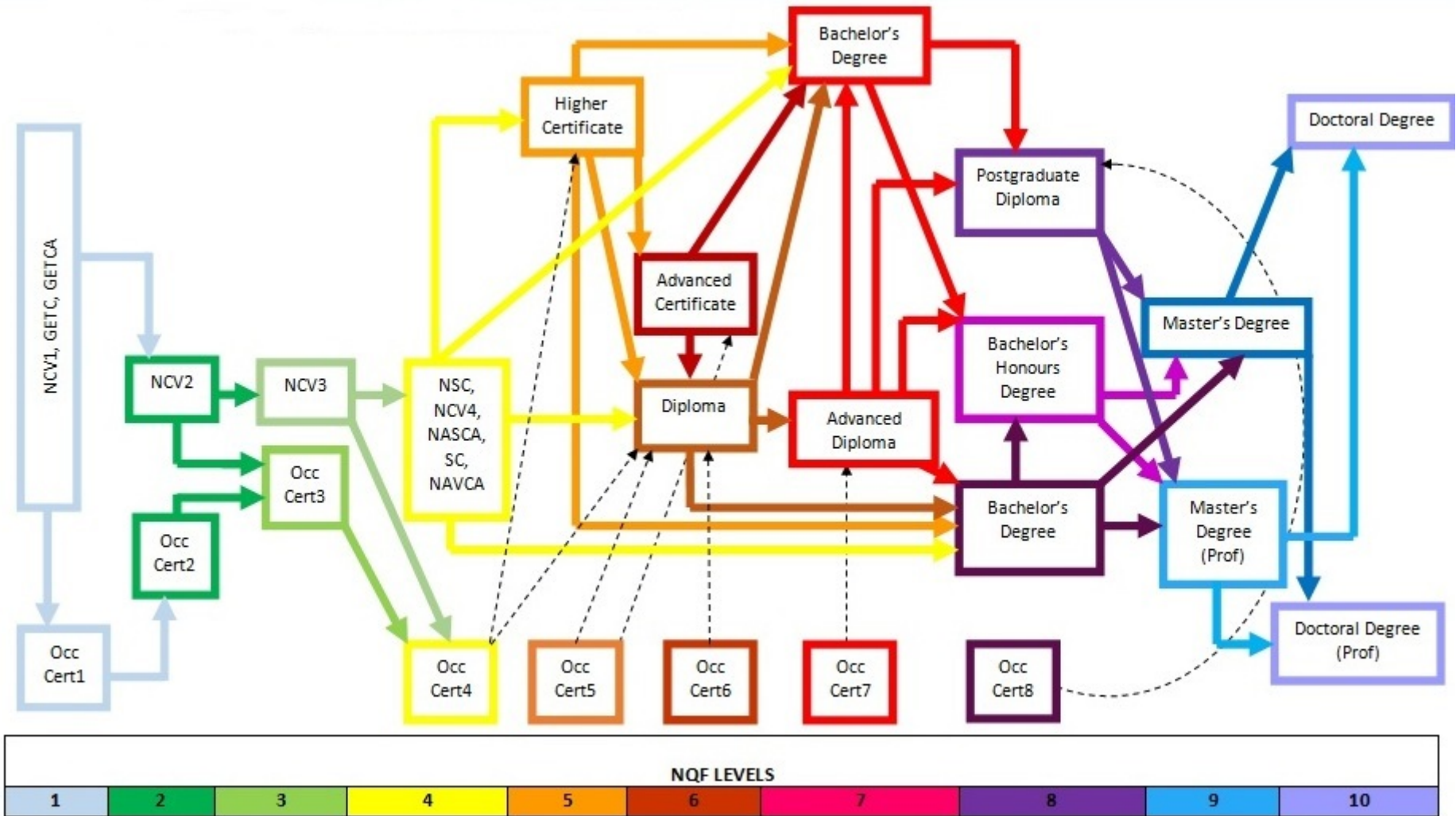
(Source: SAQA)

Figure 86: Learning pathways in the NQF, by NQF level and NQF Sub-Framework
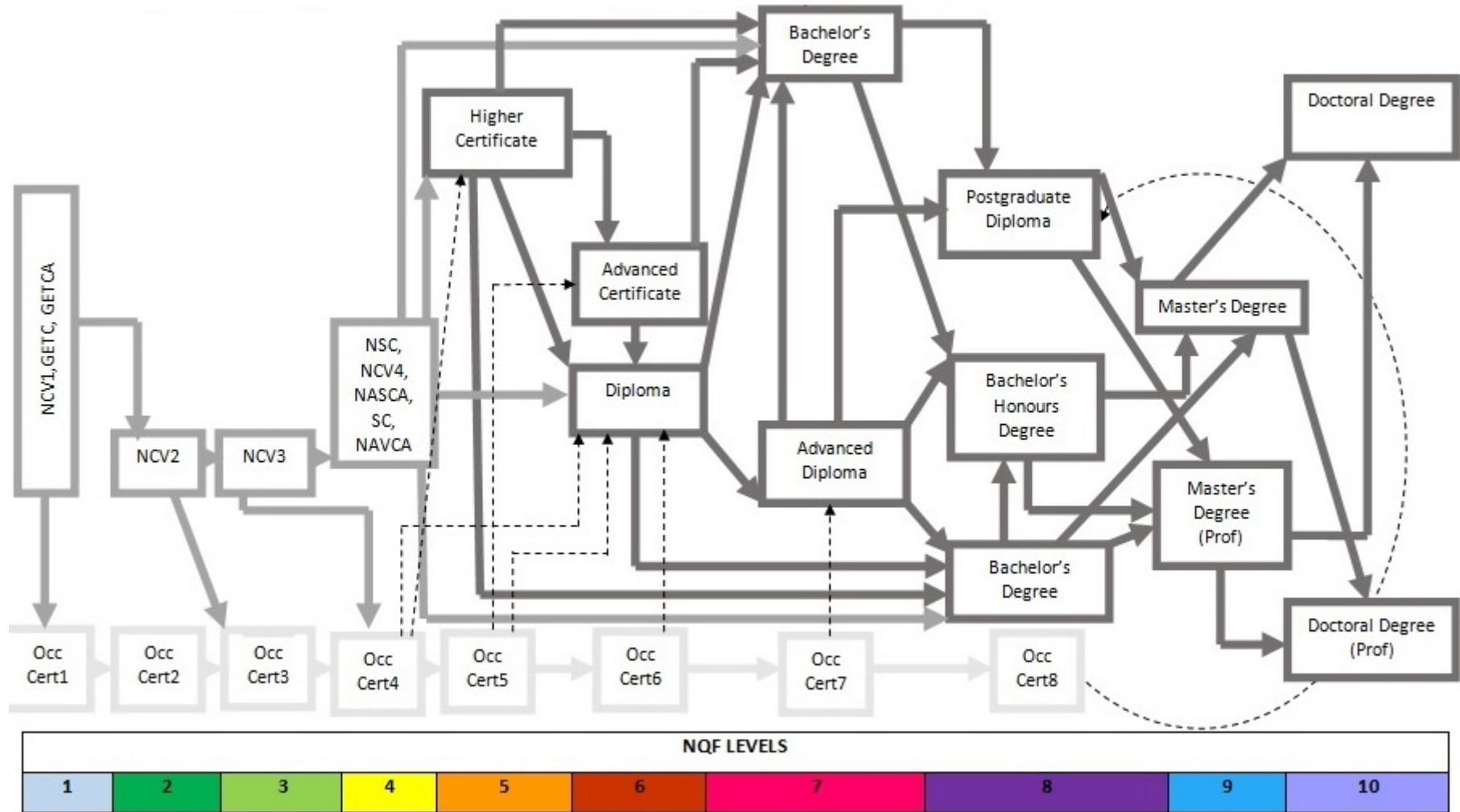
(Source: SAQA)

4.3. Research and systemic integration, and articulation

This sub-section of the report analyses research that supports systemic integration and articulation, and efforts to get this research into policy and practice. The aim of the sub-section is to show how research has been used as a tool in the development of an integrated system.

4.3.1 Research that supports systemic integration

In line with its mandate, SAQA's research programme is designed to conduct or commission research, and publish the findings, on matters relating to the implementation and further development of the NQF (RSA 2008a). This research informs SAQA's oversight role regarding development and implementation of the NQF, and provides a theoretically and empirically grounded basis on which SAQA can draw.

SAQA has a small internal research unit and expands its capacity to conduct longer-term evidence-based research through a research partnership model. The partnerships are shaped by the research needs of the integrated national education and training system. In line with SAQA's mandate, the areas researched are transversal – they cut across two or more of the NQF Sub-Frameworks, and can also include education and training not yet on the NQF.

SAQA (2008-2014) has to date supported seven such partnerships[10]. This research includes the SAQA-Rhodes studies into workplace learning and learning pathways; SAQA-UWC research into an optimally inclusive RPL model, and into flexible provision for lifelong learning; and SAQA-UKZN research into TVET College lecturers.

4.3.1.1 SAQA-Rhodes research into learning pathways

Initial SAQA-Rhodes research undertaken in 2008-2010 sought to develop research methods and understandings of change-oriented workplace learning and sustainable development-related practices, with a view to informing NQF fields, standards-generation processes and courses[11].

Phase 1 of the research identified key issues influencing the construction of sustainable development learning pathways[12]. First, researchers identified the significant role played by trainers or extension workers in the field, as these individuals brought knowledge and skills relating to sustainability issues into existing systems of change-oriented learning. Second, the researchers identified the lack of appropriate learning materials and learning pathways (lack of training programmes, qualifications and new learning opportunities) to further the objectives of the sustainability practices being introduced in workplaces.

Phase 2 of the research sought to understand these gaps. It sought to broaden the research programme to a more systemic level, where the foci of inquiry were systems of workplace-oriented learning as envisaged within the National Skills Development Strategy III concept of 'Professional, Vocational, Technical and Academic Learning' (integrative work and learning programmes) (DHET 2011), and learning pathways that articulate across the NQF Sub-Frameworks.

As in Phase 1 of the research, the focus was on learning pathways and occupations relating to

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[10] SAQA's long-term research partnerships to date have focused on (1) Articulation possibilities between selected qualifications; (2) Groundwork for the NQF Impact Study; (3) Workplace learning for sustainable development; (4) The learning trajectories of TVET College lecturers, and their teaching and learning practices and needs; (5) A maximally inclusive RPL model in the context of the South African NQF; (6) Learning pathways for scarce skills in the environmental sector; and (7) flexible learning provision to enhance inclusivity.

[11] Text in this section of the report has been drawn from the close-out report from the SAQA-Rhodes Phase II research (Lotz-Sisitka 2015).

[12] Information in Section 4.3.1.1 has been summarised from the close-out report for the SAQA-Rhodes learning pathways research (Lotz-Sisitka 2015).

sustainable development. The focus on sustainable development is an important one in that it is a 'newly emerging' area tied to discussions around the emerging 'green economy', and is an example of how a system of provisioning comes to be established within an NQF located in a changing, dynamic societal context.

4.3.1.1.1 SAQA-Rhodes research into learning pathways: Research foci and questions

The SAQA-Rhodes Phase 2 research focused on systems of work and learning within occupational learning pathways, an area in which development is needed. In particular, the study sought to investigate articulation between the National Certificate: Vocational (NCV) and Higher Education, between the National Senior Certificate (NSC) and Higher Education, between N-courses and Higher Education, and between qualifications generated by Standards Generating Bodies and the QCTO and Higher Education. The object of the study was to investigate articulation from differing perspectives such as: learning pathway articulation (vertical forms of articulation), course to workplace articulation (integrative work and learning programme articulation intentions which are normally horizontal), and epistemological articulation (tacit and explicit knowledge in courses and workplaces).

The intention was not to provide specific 'technical answers' for NQF development, but rather to explore technical issues in a *broad* sense, with a view to understanding and enhancing articulation and quality across the three NQF Sub-Frameworks. The research was not constituted as a set of technical studies on, for example, 'Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT) systems relevant to a specific suite of qualifications for a specific occupational learning pathway'. The Phase 2 research is seen as a roadmap for learning pathways research, which could draw on it to investigate particular pathways.

4.3.1.1.1.1 SAQA-Rhodes research methodology

The Phase 2 research involved contextual research to understand the wider context and rationale for learning pathways development in the sustainable development focus area. It also involved methodological development as it was found that almost no research into learning pathways was taking place in South Africa, especially in the field of sustainable development where many of the learning pathways were new or 'under construction'. The research also involved conceptual development to understand some of the key conceptual concerns relevant to learning pathways research. Finally, it included contextually rich case studies into a selected range of scarce skill occupations or occupations that were identified in earlier research to be significant to sustainable development, but marginalised in the education and training skills provisioning system.

4.3.1.1.1.2 SAQA-Rhodes research questions

The broad research question guiding the research programme was: What are the quality and articulation [and other][13] issues that arise in learning pathways relevant to sustainable development, particularly in boundary zones between qualifications pathways that cross the Sub-Frameworks of the NQF?

A number of sub-questions were defined at the start of the research programme, including the following:

- What are the transfer-related barriers and what needs to be done?
- What are the access, quality and articulation issues related to learning pathways leading to sustainable development practices?
- What histories, policies and epistemologies influence these systems of work and learning, and what do these aspects mean for course and qualification design, and for learning support?
- How do explicit and embedded learning and curriculum theories influence the constituting of

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[13] It became clear that there were many 'other issues' such as transitioning processes that were significant. Quality and articulation were only two of the key issues identified.

systems of work and learning and sustainable development practices in different workplaces? What are the tensions and critical points that could provide leverage for the development of quality education for sustainable development and articulation in the NQF?

- What learning pathways exist, and / or are needed to enable sustainable development practices in workplaces?

4.3.1.1.1 SAQA-Rhodes research outputs

The main research outputs from this project included seven peer-reviewed papers and five postgraduate dissertations. Findings elaborated in the papers are summarised here, as they are relevant to systemic articulation and integration.

4.3.1.1.1.1 Paper 1 on conceptualising learning pathways

Paper 1 (Lotz-Sisitka and Ramsarup 2011) explored conceptualisations of learning pathways and articulation. It probed the idea of articulation from the perspective of a system being 'joined up' and noted different meanings, including articulation as 'following a structured learning pathway with credit accumulation and transfer'; as 'learning in and out of practice', and as 'learning pathways'. The paper considered the 'relational element' in learning pathways, and the 'differentiated sub-systems' across which some learning pathways are constructed. The paper noted that it was less important to research the system for education, training, development and work, than to understand differentiation 'pattern types', 'border zones' between NQF Sub-Systems, distinctions made, and boundary-crossing – how learners cross or do not cross boundaries between qualifications, institutions, or places of learning and work.

4.3.1.1.1.2 Paper 2 on learning pathways from systems and individual perspectives

Paper 2 (Lotz-Sisitka and Ramsarup 2012) starts with a literature review of learning pathways research, which was found to have strong links to education policy research internationally, and to 'pathways engineering' in some cases. There was also a trend towards making pathways more open and flexible. 'Learning pathways' feature in the White Paper on Post-School Education and Training (DHET 2013). The concept of learning pathways and critiques of the concept were reviewed in some depth.

Little was found in the literature on (a) the individual experiences of learning pathways, (b) the absence of learning pathways, and (c) how these micro-level aspects are connected to the system of learning pathways provisioning. The paper notes that in learning pathways research, approaches focus either on policy and system reviews or the individualised career journeys of those on learning pathways. There was an absence of research that linked these two approaches – namely, individual pathways within systems.

The paper takes these absences up as a methodological issue, dealing with it by focusing on occupational categories in which career stories can be identified and described, and which also relate to the system provisioning aspects of learning pathways construction.

The researchers chose to explore the critical realist dialectic of Bhaskar (1993), which is oriented towards transformative praxis (real changes). The paper explains that Bhaskar's dialectic requires identification of what is (being), and also of what is absent (non-being), what is possible (totality scoping) and what can be done (via agentive action at the individual and/or collective level). It was found that this way of working with the dialectic allows for engaging with learning pathways at macro (systems) levels, and at the micro-levels of individual pathways followed, in which being (what exists) is as important as becoming (what can be different). This approach made possible the linking of individualised career stories to field and system-based elements; conceptualising transformative praxis opportunities for enabling and strengthening learning pathways, and taking account of structure-agency dynamics in learning pathways research without compromising systemic understanding and perspectives.

4.3.1.1.1.3 Paper 3 on learning pathways from the perspective of workplaces

Paper 3 (Lotz-Sisitka *et al.* 2013a) focuses on 'boundary zones' in learning pathways research, and in particular on access to learning pathways for sustainable development in workplaces.

Boundaries were described as being 'socio-materially constructed by people's actions and practices' in material and social contexts, and it was noted that boundary-crossing could only be resolved in the same way (through people's actions and practices). The manner in which socio-material factors and 'absences' are 'boundary makers' that affect access and articulation possibilities, and boundary crossing, were also considered.

To explore these concepts, data were drawn from one of the studies in the programme that had developed detailed profiles of the learning pathways of workers, supervisors and managers (three different levels of occupational categories) related to sustainable development in local government settings. The purpose was to explore what kinds of boundaries existed in the learning pathways of these occupational categories, how they were made and maintained through people's actions and practices, and how people found ways of crossing the boundaries between everyday work and more formal learning opportunities (such as skills programmes and/ or qualifications for either horizontal or vertical progression).

For workers, it was found that there was a strong boundary between workplace practices on the one hand, and the education and training system on the other. Significant boundary-making factors included poor-quality prior education, the large scale of provisioning demands, disjunctures in policy implementation, and the absence of RPL and other mechanisms for access. While *in combination* these boundary-making factors sustained disadvantage and lack of access and progression, a number of 'boundary-crossing practices' were found. These useful practices included the effective provisioning of AET, the training of trainers to expand provisioning of training at worker level, practices that actualise policy in practice, and improvements in workplace skills planning and RPL mechanisms.

For supervisors, greater mobility in learning pathways, and greater ability to cross boundaries between work and training, were noted. Boundary-making practices included inefficient management and workplace systems, and an absence of appropriate training opportunities.

For managers, the existence of higher levels of mobility were noted. A number of boundary-making practices were identified, such as high workloads and levels of responsibility and access to mentorship.

Paper 3 concluded by noting that, for an articulated system to emerge it may be necessary to place more emphasis on understanding the boundary-making and boundary-crossing practices in the NQF. While the research on which the paper was based tested these ideas in one context only, that of workplace-to-training transitions, it was expected that similar research would shed light on articulation in the context of the NQF. This research is important for SAQA, given its mandate to enhance boundary crossing across the three NQF Sub-Frameworks.

4.3.1.1.1.4 Paper 4 on understanding absences in learning pathways

Paper 4 (Ramsarup and Lotz-Sisitka 2013) focuses on 'occupational category' as a basis for learning pathway analysis, and 'system elements' rather than the 'voiced experiences of those who are constructing learning pathways'. It hones in on two priority scarce skill occupations in the environmental sector to uncover systemic disjunctures. It uses Bhaskar's (1993) dialectical critical realism to understand the absences.

As explored in Paper 2, absence within the critical realist dialectic allows for the development of a vantage point that connects what is or 'being' to what can be or 'becoming' and hence underlines the intent for change. Paper 4 draws on Norrie (2010) who describes change as the 'absenting of absences', as well as 'absenting the structural constraints' that keep absences in place. One way to do

away with absences ('absent absences') is to draw on qualities present in one context but absent in another, to model possibilities for absences found (Bhaskar 1993).

The paper analyses the learning pathways provisioning system for environmental scientists starting with an analysis of the Organising Framework for Occupations. Here high-skilled occupations are listed, but are virtually absent at the intermediate level with very few listed at elementary occupational level. There is almost *no occupational range* for the environmental scientist and technician occupations. While in the agricultural sector (a more established, older sector) these pathways are well defined at elementary, intermediate and high skills levels, in the environmental sector there are 'unfocused occupational progression pathways'. Absences at intermediate level were noted in particular, despite the fact that there is a severe shortage of environmental technicians in South Africa.

To illustrate possibilities for transformative praxis related to the environmental scientist/ technician occupational categories, the paper draws on another occupation – that of engineering – to show that *if* system elements such as 'NOPF' categorisation and differentiation[14], qualifications development, better labour market information and professionalisation via a professional body are in place, progression is enabled.

This paper provides a methodological approach/ way of researching systemic level absences in learning pathways construction in relation to scarce skills (or other) occupations in a way that builds systemic integration. The paper has attracted national interest regarding the Strategic Infrastructure Projects (SIPs) and the first author was invited to serve in two of the SIPs occupational task teams where critical scarce skills are being addressed at systems planning level. The paper has also attracted attention from the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) and some SETAs for its potential to address systemic skills development issues in the public sector.

4.3.1.1.1.5 Paper 5 on the development of green skills in South Africa

Paper 5 (Lotz-Sisitka *et al.* 2013b) provides a sector-wide perspective on the issue of learning pathways for sustainable development. It points to how the insights reported in Paper 4, into the development of learning pathways at system level, are relevant for sustainable development (as outlined in the National Development Plan 2030), the successful emergence of the green economy in South Africa, and for achieving the policy objectives of climate-resilient development in South Africa (RSA 2011b).

This paper provides an example of the important role that the NQF can play in enabling 'articulated systems' at the 'interface' of the education and training system, and the 'wider developmental trajectories in the country' (Lotz-Sisitka *et al.* 2013b). The paper notes that green economies and climate-resilient development pathways, while widely talked about, still need to be developed. The paper notes further, that the education and training system (via the NQF and its implementation) will be a vital element for enabling the development of successful green economies and climate-resilient development pathways for South Africa. Conversely, sustainable development and the green economy are viewed as being structural factors that influence skills development planning and systems development in the country. The paper urges readers to locate the development of learning pathways in the wider context of sustainable development.

This paper was also well received the national skills development system, and has been used in the design of a number of Sector Skills Plans within SETAs. There is especially interest from those involved in green skills planning, including the Green Skills Forum hosted by the Office of the Premier in the Eastern Cape.

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[14] National Occupational Pathway Framework (NOPF).

4.3.1.1.1.6 Paper 6 on 'boundary-less' careers

Paper 6 (Ramsarup 2014) builds on Paper 5, focusing on details in the construction of learning pathways for sustainable development. Paper 6 notes the rapid advances relating to the development of green economies internationally, and the new policy regime developed to this end in South Africa over the last 20 years. It draws attention to the National Climate Change Response White Paper (RSA 2011a), which, following a similar call in the National Environmental Management Act (RSA 1998a) and the White Paper on Education and Training (DoE 1995), proposes the mainstreaming of environment and climate-resilient development principles and practices into all sectors of society and all levels of education and training.

Paper 6 uses the idea of 'boundary-less career discourse' in its attempts to explore and explain transitions within and across 'occupational and organisational life'. It uses the example of the pathways followed by environmental engineers to show the non-linearity of transitions and the importance of institutional arrangements in and across education, training and work to enhance learning pathway construction for sustainable development. It uses the term 'transitioning' to describe the progression of a professional on a learning pathway; 'articulation' refers to the 'structural dynamics' of 'joined-up' training provisioning.

4.3.1.1.1.7 Paper 7 on the emergence of learning pathways for sustainable development in South Africa

Paper 7 (Lotz-Sisitka and Ramsarup 2014) further develops the idea of a 'transitioning system', based on a synthesis of the analyses and findings from the SAQA-Rhodes research programme. It suggests that the kind of research conducted in this project 'is characteristic of the kind of research necessary for understanding transitioning systems'.

The paper also points to the transitioning systems research in seven European Union countries, showing similarities between these and the South African system development needs.

4.3.1.1.1.8 The SAQA-Rhodes research and national and international links made

Findings from the SAQA-Rhodes research were presented bi-annually in several SAQA-hosted NQF research seminars for NQF partners between 2009 and 2014, and at several other forums. Presentations were made at the National Environmental Sector Skills Summit (2011, 2012, 2013), the FETWATER Conference hosted by the Department of Water Affairs (2011), SETA-hosted workshops and conferences during 2009-2014, the Provincial Green Skills Forum hosted by the Eastern Cape Premier's office (2013-2014), and various Strategic Infrastructure Project (SIP) groups. The findings were shared at over 10 international events, and the researchers have been sought-after for work relating to the ideas described here.

4.3.1.1.1.9 Overarching synthesis of findings from the SAQA-Rhodes research

Four useful perspectives and key points emerging from the SAQA-Rhodes research are presented here. First, from a contextual perspective, there was a need to identify the contextual drivers for sustainable learning pathways. The research engaged with high-skill occupations, intermediate skill level occupations and elementary level occupations related to sustainable development, as the contextual factors shaping learning pathways at these levels are different (Lotz-Sisitka 2015). The research showed:

- the neglect and/ or absence of sustainable development learning pathways at elementary occupational level;
- inadequate systemic-level interventions for sustainable development learning pathways at intermediate phase level; and
- a proliferation of specialisation options at high skills levels, although these are yet to be systemically integrated into the systems that allow for sustainable learning pathways

development (Lotz-Sisitka 2015).

Second, from a conceptual point of view, there was a need for clarification (Lotz-Sisitka 2015). Nuanced understandings of the concepts of 'learning pathways', 'boundaries, boundary-making, boundary-crossing, and boundary-less careers' were developed. Importantly, various understandings of 'articulation' were identified. Articulation can be understood in terms of the structuring of qualifications to allow progression and/ or Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT). It can also be understood more broadly, as 'systemic articulation' or a 'joined up' system incorporating various elements aligned to and supportive of learning pathways. The concept of 'transitions' also becomes important when a learning pathway involves transitions from training to work, from work to training, from school or College to Higher Education, and so on. The NQF is referred to as a 'transitioning system'; South Africa is a 'transitioning society' as it orients its development path to low carbon, climate-resilient, green growth and inclusive sustainable development.

Third, methodologically, the bifurcation of learning pathways research into micro-level career story studies on the one hand, and macro-level policy studies on the other, had to be addressed. The SAQA-Rhodes research needed to link the micro-level studies to macro-level systemic concerns in order to understand the construction of learning pathways for sustainable development. Working with learning pathways located in different parts of the social structure and Bhaskar's (1993) critical realist dialectic enabled this integration, as well as the identification of system-based absences and possibilities for transformative praxis.

Fourth, key insights emerged from the occupational case studies conducted[15]. Since the research programme was 'breaking new ground' a mix of occupations and learning pathways at different levels in the authority hierarchy were selected. The field of education and training for sustainable development in South Africa is relatively new. It spans a wide range of knowledge fields and occupational categories, and has relevance for all three NQF Sub-Frameworks. As such, it is a 'transversal issue'. The present research has relevance for NQF integration and development because it deals with transversal issues, and because it focuses on an emerging area. The approach used here could be applied to other emerging areas, such as Worker and Adult Education and Early Childhood Development.

4.3.1.2 SAQA-University of the Western Cape research into an inclusive RPL model

The SAQA-University of the Western Cape (UWC) research towards developing an inclusive RPL model involved conducting and documenting action research into four existing successful RPL initiatives.

The four case studies focused on access to undergraduate study at UWC, access to postgraduate study at the University of Cape Town (UCT), access to RPL in the workplace, and access to Worker Education at the Workers' College respectively.

The findings of this research were fed directly into the RPL policy development work, and national RPL initiatives described in Section 3.8.4. In addition to its being written up in peer-reviewed paper form

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[15] The research engaged with mainstream environmental occupations (such as those of the environmental science technician, environmental manager and environmental engineer); or mainstream occupations that have to adopt change-oriented sustainability practices (such as in the case of the rehabilitation practices in the mining industry); or marginalised occupations (such as local government sustainable development occupations and elementary level occupations). Attempts were made to select occupations that have been identified as 'scarce skills' or as 'key growth areas' for green jobs (such as elementary level natural resource management workers or SMME development) or occupations that have a high impact in terms of sustainable development (such as local government occupations and mining rehabilitation occupations). As noted, occupations were also studied at high, intermediate and elementary occupation levels. With more capacity the research programme could have expanded, especially into green energy sector and water sector occupations as these are 'high impact' occupations. The point was not however to cover all occupations, but rather to sample a range of occupations for their contextual diversity in order to more fully understand the transversal nature of sustainable development skills development, and to allow for contextually rich insights.

and as case studies, the research is captured in detail in the book *Crossing the lines: RPL as pedagogy* (Cooper *et al.* 2015).

4.3.1.3 SAQA-University of the Western Cape research into Lifelong Learning

Within a lifelong learning system, networks of education and training institutions are key for enabling access and success for diverse students of all ages. SAQA-University of the Western Cape (UWC) research into *Lifelong learning and flexible provision* involves conducting and reporting on action research to assist one historically black university to realise a lifelong learning philosophy and approach under new and changing conditions (Cooper *et al.* 2015). The lessons from this ongoing in-depth study are in the process of being disseminated to assist other institutions in the system.

The research was concerned with the inter-relationships among the students, their working lives and the university. The primary question is: How can the university respond meaningfully to the real circumstances of students to enhance prospects for their professional development? The study is also interested in the process of influencing organisational change through the research. In brief, the research sets out, using an action research orientation, to explore how the university could develop more appropriate pedagogical approaches to help working students to succeed. This project entails understanding the working lives of students, engaging their workplaces and influencing the teaching, learning and administrative environment of the university.

The key contradiction to which the research responds, is that access is being limited through the partial closure of after-hours or evening classes, at a time and in a place where access for working and first-generation students is a core part of the university's historic mission. The research is developing an argument and approach for the university to move beyond the traditional binaries of part and full-time provision, and day and night-time time-tabling, to flexible learning and teaching provision for the diversity of students across the different ages and stages of life.

In addition to research reports, four academic articles have been produced for publication in peer-reviewed journals and a book (Abrahams 2014; Jones and Walters 2015; Walters and Daniels 2015; Walters *et al.* 2015), and an M Ed thesis on 'Time for Studies' has been submitted for examination. Several seminars have been convened to disseminate this work, and production of a popular booklet is under way.

The study is developing nuanced understandings of the nature of lifelong learning and its enablers and challenges, which operate at macro, meso and micro-levels, from national policy to institutional to classroom contexts. The project is still under way. Remarkably, it includes the actual institutional transformation necessary to enhance lifelong learning.

4.3.1.4 SAQA-University of KwaZulu-Natal research into TVET College lecturers

Work accomplished in the SAQA-University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) partnership, which was fed into initiatives to enhance quality in the TVET sector, including the development of a new qualification for TVET College lecturers, is detailed here[16]. The project was entitled *TVET College Lecturers: Biography, identity, pedagogy.* It complements the quality assurance work done by all three Quality Councils. It is an important piece of work in its own right, and also provides insights that have the potential to assist the achievement of targets specified in the White Paper for Post-School Education and Training, for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges (MHET 2013).

4.3.1.4.1 Summary of the SAQA-UKZN research into TVET College lecturers

In the period 2008-2011 the SAQA-University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) partnership sought to

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[16] The text in this section is drawn from a summary of the project developed by Professor Volker Wedekind (internal SAQA document, and the book *TVET College lecturers: Biography, identity, pedagogy* (Wedekind *et al.* 2015).

understand the impact of the then-new vocational education and training system, and vocational qualifications, on lecturers in public TVET colleges, and the ways in which these lecturers' lives were shaped by, and served to shape, the new system[17].

The project sought to open the 'black box' of College classrooms. The centrality of the Colleges – and by implication their lecturers – to the realisation of a revitalised vocational education system, which has been the subject of major policy reforms, was acknowledged. The effects of the rationalisation of 150 technical colleges into 52 public TVET Colleges and the extensive reforms of governance, curriculum and student bodies in the Colleges were explored. At the time, the nature of the new qualifications and how they provided access to and integration with the rest of the education and training system was shifting and developing; these developments are not yet complete.

The context in which the project was located included that there had been little training or support for College lecturers, and that little was known about them. The research findings are still relevant at present. National data on the system is limited and there is little detailed research into the lives, careers and experience of College lecturers. It was this gap that the UKZN-SAQA project was attempting to address, in an attempt to understand the conditions in which curriculum delivery could be maximised.

Some of the research questions the project sought to address included: Who are the lecturers? From which education and training pathways have they come? What are their knowledge bases? What workplace experience and expertise do the lecturers have in their subject areas? And how do they teach?

4.3.1.4.2 Methodology and findings of the SAQA-UKZN research into TVET College lecturers

A mixed-methods approach was used to attempt to answer these questions.

4.3.1.4.2.1 Phase 1: Survey methodology and findings

The first phase of data collection comprised a survey of college educators in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng, which was aligned with similar work undertaken in the Western and Eastern Cape. This survey sought to better understand the backgrounds of the people who teach and train in TVET colleges. Biographical data on the lecturers' work and educational background, teaching experience and perceptions of their professional development needs were captured.

The data revealed that lecturers were a diverse grouping, not only in terms of age, gender and population group, but also in terms of personal career histories. Four broad groupings were identified, namely (1) former technical college staff (generally with trade qualifications and work experience, albeit quite dated in most cases); (2) qualified school teachers (usually with no industry workplace experience); (3) recent graduates from the colleges (usually with an N6 qualification) or from Universities of Technology; and (4) recruits from industry.

With the introduction in Colleges of general education courses such as Communication Skills, Life Skills and Mathematics, a loss of technical staff to industry; and poor conditions of service at the Colleges, there had been a significant increase in the numbers of lecturers with little or no industry work experience, so that only half of the College staff numbers had relevant work experience.

A similar picture emerged in relation to educational qualifications, with a majority of lecturers not being formally qualified as educators. In the research report the recommendation was made that professional development strategies needed to be sufficiently flexible to recognise the diverse needs of the existing college lecturers.

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[17] See Sections 6.1.6 - 6.1.9 for details regarding the then-new qualifications and system.

4.3.1.4.2.2 Phase 2: Lecturer interview methodology and findings

In a parallel data collection phase, a selected group of lecturers were interviewed using life history (narrative) methods to develop more detailed pictures of their lives and careers. The interviews and photo-voice techniques used explored the motivations, aspirations and experiences of the lecturers in rich qualitative ways.

The data fleshed out the emerging picture and revealed how stressful the continual reforms had been and how lecturers had been required to develop new professional identities as they engaged with the changes. The life histories also revealed remarkable stories of passion and resilience that provide an inspirational basis for developing the system.

The report pointed to key policy implications related to the need to stabilise the governance and conditions of employment in order to make Colleges attractive employers.

4.3.1.4.2.3 Phase 3: TVET College classroom observation methodology and findings

A third component of the study used video footage of TVET College workshop and classroom interactions, analysis of lesson plans, and observations and note-taking to analyse the pedagogic techniques that vocational educators employ in order to teach the specific skills and content of their disciplines. The research team drew on instructional design theory and curriculum studies to make sense of the data.

The practices of some of the lecturers were found to be exemplary, with strong integration of the specific outcomes required on the one hand, and the less codified aspects needed by students such as general skills for employability, on the other. Generally, however, there was limited support for the new curriculum, usually based on the difficulties faced by the students and not on the content of the curriculum.

4.3.1.4.3 Insights and recommendations from the SAQA-UKZN research into TVET College lecturers

Generally the qualitative part of the study found that there was a poor understanding on the part of the College lecturers of the intentions and rationale for the reforms, particularly in terms of the curriculum changes and the shifts in learner populations. There was also limited evidence of direct linkages between classroom-based activities and employers, although the experienced lecturers in the study demonstrated innovations in their teaching that could provide the basis for a set of 'signature pedagogies' (good example pedagogies) in different disciplines.

The research revealed that the resources available for effective teaching were very uneven across Colleges, despite significant recapitalisation, with lecturers suggesting that the money had been poorly spent and had not improved the capacity of the Colleges to deliver the curriculum.

4.3.1.4.4 Use of the findings from the SAQA-UKZN research into TVET College lecturers

The research was designed around a number of discrete projects, which enabled individual Master's and PhD students linked to the project to pursue their own studies within the broader parameters of the project as a whole[18].

At its broadest level the research revealed some of the complexity and contradictions that underlie the TVET College system. Wedekind (2015)[19] rightly argues that the lecturer is the least understood yet

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[18] The team included two researchers and five postgraduate students at UKZN, researchers at SAQA and commissioned researchers from the Joint Education Trust (JET).
[19] While overarching leadership for the project was provided from within SAQA, Professor Volker Wedekind was the lead

one of the most critical components within the TVET College system.

The project served to shed some light on the communities of practice in which TVET College lecturers are working, and to show some of the ways in which lecturers need to be able to mediate between the codes of the workplace and their identities as artisans and professionals linked to the world of work, the College, national policies and diverse colleagues and students, in order to deliver quality teaching and learning. The perspectives raised by the lecturers have wider implications.

The findings of the research were fed into the development of a new national qualification for TVET College lecturers, and other College-related developments (see the White Paper for Post-School Education and Training, MHET 2013).

The research points to the kinds of support needed by TVET College lecturers as they navigate the boundaries of policy, identity, workplace and classroom. The research also points to the need for further research into curriculum development and articulation in the TVET College context. Lastly, research is needed to understand the diverse student bodies at TVET Colleges.

4.3.2 Getting research into policy and practice (GRIP)

Section 4.3.1 dealt with SAQA-supported individual research programmes, providing details of some of the research conducted towards NQF implementation and further development, how findings from this research have been fed into policy and practice, and how NQF communities have engaged with it. It is clear that this work has assisted and enhanced systemic dialogues and work, and through these interactions, systemic integration.

SAQA hosts an annual NQF research seminar series, and every two to three years, NQF research colloquia and conferences towards the coordination of NQF-related research and enhanced NQF implementation and development. A brief look at these initiatives shows shifts in NQF work over time.

Two NQF colloquia have been hosted by SAQA since the promulgation of the NQF Act (RSA 2008c) in 2009. One, with guest Professor Tara Fenwick, hosted in 2010, focused on the idea of 'socio-material', or the integral nature of (the material) context in social development. These ideas were deeply internalised within SAQA, shaping the SAQA-led development of the suite of NQF policies (see Section 1.1). The second NQF research colloquium was hosted in 2014 with guest Professor Anne Edwards, focusing on the idea of 'relational agency'.

Four ideas are central to relational agency work. Given the centrality of the ideas for NQF development, each is noted here. The first idea is that relational expertise involves additional knowledge and skills over and above specialised core expertise. Second, relational expertise involves understanding and engaging with the motives of others. It allows the expertise (resources) offered by others to be surfaced and used. Third, relational expertise is useful vertically (in authority hierarchies), but it is also relevant for horizontal collaboration across practices at similar levels in authority hierarchies. Lastly, relational expertise respects history, but is focused on the common knowledge created through shared understanding of the different motives of those collaborating, and going forward together. Delegates at the 2014 colloquium on Relational Agency did a collaborative exercise as part of the workshop.

While the numbers of delegates participating in the two research colloquia – in 2010 and 2014 were similar, differences between the audiences are worth noting. The 2010 event attracted delegates from communities across the NQF. For the 2014 event, *leaders* in NQF partner organisations were invited and participated with senior staff from a range of government departments, SAQA and the Quality Councils. This participation, together with the focus of the 2014 colloquium, shows decisive leadership and movement towards capacity building for NQF development.

researcher of this project located within the UKZN.

Five large, national, SAQA-hosted NQF research events hosted since 2009 are sketched briefly in the sections that follow, as comparing them shows movement towards systemic integration.

4.3.2.1 National RPL workshops and conferences, 2010, 2011 and 2014

The hosting of a national RPL workshop in 2010 to identify barriers to the development of a national RPL system in South Africa, the subsequent *National RPL Conference: Expanding existing islands of excellent practice* hosted in 2011, and the RPL Working Document, Ministerial RPL Task Team, national RPL policy development and initiatives that followed, are detailed in Section 3.8.4.

Importantly, the 2011 conference was organised around three streams, with each stream addressing one of three systemic barriers that had been identified at the national workshop hosted in 2010. Essentially, delegates were presenting local and international models to address these barriers to resourcing, implementing and quality assuring RPL. The initiative can be seen as an example of one designed to 'absent the absences' (Bhaskar 1993), using the approach described in Section 4.3.1.1 above.

While the 2011 RPL conference addressed and led to further broad national decisions and initiatives, the 2014 *National RPL Conference: Tried and tested, tools, templates* showcased actual successful RPL initiatives. The 2014 event involved the sharing of hands-on practical advice and models.

Importantly, the numbers of delegates increased over time: just over 300 participated in 2011; this number rose to 400 in 2014. In both cases, delegates represented the full range of types of NQF organisations and all three NQF Sub-Frameworks.

Also significant is the fact that while the 2011 event still included presentations that debated the usefulness (or otherwise) of RPL, all presentations in 2014 were focused clearly on successful ways of implementing RPL. Two books of *RPL Success Cases* have since been developed (SAQA 2015a and 2015b), and the spread of national RPL initiatives has increased.

Comparing the two national RPL conferences shows the shift towards an increased focus on RPL implementation. To continue this trend, more opportunities to share good practices and systematic monitoring and evaluation of progress are needed.

4.3.2.2 National NQF conferences in 2010 and 2013

A similar shift from the inclusion of a mix of debate and implementation successes, towards a focus on implementation, can be seen with the national RPL conferences, when comparing the themes and Books of Abstracts of the *NQF Conference: Towards a map of NQF-related research* (SAQA 2010b) and its counterpart *NQF Conference: Building articulation and integration* (SAQA 2013b).

Presentations in 2010 addressed each of the NQF objectives – access, redress, progression and quality. Around 11 presentations dealt with interpretations of the NQF, and challenges relating to aligning qualifications and provision to the NQF; 12 addressed innovative ideas or initiatives to enhance access; 15 spoke to quality and/ or progression; 30 spoke to integration, all in relation to work and learning; and six touched on the impact of the NQF in the form of the employability of graduates. Many of the presentations were based on research that happened to shed light on achieving NQF objectives rather than being designed specifically in relation to NQF implementation and further development.

In contrast, at the *NQF Conference: Building articulation and integration* (SAQA 2013b), the partnership research outlined in Section 4.3.1 was shared extensively, as was other work on conceptualising or advancing systemic articulation (13 presentations); career advice and development work designed to enhance articulation (10 presentations); alternative access (13 presentations), and the relationship between quality and articulation in specific contexts, including CAT (15 presentations). This focused work was not available in 2011. An expanded version of the same research base was contacted to

participate in the 2013 event. While several delegates voiced uncertainty as to what comprised NQF-related research in 2011, many offered highly relevant inputs in 2014 that were based on work that had commenced between the two events.

There is an urgent need to build on the articulation and integration-related work reported at the NQF conference hosted in 2013.

As for the national RPL conferences (SAQA 2011, 2014), the Books of Abstracts for the NQF conferences (SAQA 2011a, 2014c) and the reports from each, show the state of NQF-related research and thinking in the country at particular moments in time.

4.4 Comment on systemic integration

Chapter 4 has three main sections. The first section presented integration tools associated with the NQF and showed developments regarding the use of these tools. It described communities of practice within the NQF, rules and divisions of labour, and related changes over time. Increasing integration is clearly visible in these elements.

The second part of Chapter 4 addressed learning pathways in 2009 and 2014. While learning pathway opportunities are now mapped, and some pathways are clearly being followed, work on strengthening other pathways in practice is needed. Gaps have been identified in the NQF Level 3-6 range, especially in the occupational sector.

The third part of the chapter sketched NQF-related research and how it has been used. While it is clear that the research has led to considerable advances in the understandings of RPL, lifelong learning, TVET College lecturers, learning pathways and articulation, more work needs to be done to get the research findings into policy and practice.

Similarly, while national NQF research coordination events have brought together communities of NQF practice in useful ways, these communities need to continue to be engaged, over extended time, and between events as well as at the events.

Chapter 5 addresses progress regarding systemic transparency.

5. The impact of moves to transparency: Progress

Chapter 5 presents ways in which systemic transparency has been enhanced since 1995, and some of the challenges. It addresses Research Question 4 of the NQF Impact Study, namely: How has systemic transparency been enhanced, and what are the challenges in this regard? As in the previous chapter, the data, analyses and discussion in this chapter, in providing substance for the NQF aim of systemic transparency, form an important part of the basis for the meta-analysis in Chapter 7.

Transparency in the context of the report refers to the extent to which important information relating to the South African education and training system is available to education and training policy-makers, policy implementers, policy beneficiaries and the public in general. Importantly, transparency relates to the openness and rationality of the processes by which qualifications are determined.

The sub-sections that follow point to the links between transparency and (1) the registration of qualifications and part-qualifications, and official listing of professional designations, (2) the accreditation of providers of education and training, and the recognition of professional bodies, (3) the verification of learner records, (4) the evaluation of foreign qualifications, (5) career advice initiatives, and (6) public knowledge in 2014 of these transparency-related initiatives available in the education and training system.

5.1. Registration of qualifications and professional designations

Prior to the onset of democracy in South Africa the public had to rely on details supplied by providers and career advice agencies or agents, when seeking information about qualifications, assessments, learning pathways, other aspects of education and training provision and opportunities following the successful achievement of qualifications. Decisions relating to qualifications and their status had no transparency; the interests and influences at play were opaque. The processes by which qualifications were determined were hidden from public view. All of this changed when the SAQA Act (RSA 1995) was implemented.

Up to 2010 career advice services in South Africa were usually linked to providers or to individual agencies or counsellors. There were usually conditions attached to career advice, in that it was available to the prospective students of particular institutions, or offered for a fee.

This environment made it possible for fly-by-nights to flourish. There was no national system for the quality assurance of qualifications and providers, or to ensure that qualifications did not lead to dead-ends.

The SAQA Act (RSA 1995) ushered in the requirement for existing qualifications to be registered on the NQF and to meet specified criteria in order to be registered, and for the transparent national development of new qualifications (see Section 4.1.2.1.3). All registered and legacy qualifications were included in the NLRD and all related information became available to the public via the NLRD (see Section 3.1).

With the transition to the NQF Act (RSA 2008c) the top-down approach to quality assurance was replaced by the differentiated quality assurance model of the three inter-linked NQF Sub-Frameworks. The availability of information continued. Currently learners, providers and the public at large can access information about all qualifications and part-qualifications registered on the NQF, and all professional designations listed there, via the NLRD and the NQF Advice Service. Career Development Services are offered to the Department of Higher Education and Training.

The fact of registration in the case of qualifications, and listing in the case of professional designations, signals to the public that the items have been quality assured and are in line with the access, redress, progression and quality requirements of the NQF Act. Learning and work pathways in this integrated system are visible to the public via the NLRD which can be accessed by anyone, via SAQA's website (see Section 3.1). This greatly increased availability of information makes the offering of inappropriate curricula visible.

The pie charts in Section 3.1 show the extent to which information has been available in the NLRD at selected moments in time. At any given time, the fullness of information depends on those supplying it, and its quality is dependent on its management by SAQA.

National career advice services were established in 2010. The extent to which these services were successful in their start-up phase is analysed in Section 5.5 below.

All of these initiatives show official moves to enhance transparency since the mid-1990s. Transparency also however depends on the extent to which system users and the public in general are aware of the information and services. A study of the extent to which different public sub-groups are aware of and understand and value the NQF, SAQA and the NLRD is discussed in Section 5.6 below.

5.2 Accreditation of providers and recognition of professional bodies

Another thread of information available via the NLRD is the accreditation status of providers of education and training, and of professional bodies.

The availability of this information in the NLRD enables the public to see the accreditation status of providers and whether or not professional bodies are officially recognised. It also enables the detection by the public of fly-by-night institutions. There are currently few if any fly-by-nights in the Higher Education and Trades and Occupational sectors.

In the General and Further Education and Training (GENFET) sector however, non-quality assured providers of extra lessons and supporting tuition – especially in relation to schooling – have mushroomed and remain a challenge. There are currently four particular challenges.

Firstly, there is a burgeoning home schooling sector, and centres that offer tutorial support to parents and learners are emerging as an additional kind of provider often presenting as a 'cottage school' where learners gather for support.

Secondly, online provisions in this sector are growing. Thirdly, provincial Departments of Education continue to register private schools of poor quality that are not accredited. Gaps between registration and accreditation in these instances must be addressed as a matter of urgency.

Fourthly, 'Matric Re-write' centres are emerging as a kind of 'school for adults' to support those who have failed matric, or adults who wish to write matric. Many of these centres only provide tuition for two or three subjects, such as Mathematics and Physical Science; others provide tuition for a full range of subjects. The *Policy and Criteria for the Quality Assurance, Accreditation and Monitoring of Independent Schools and Private Assessment Bodies* (DBE 2012c: Clause 28) requires the following from such centres:

> *Institutions offering the National Senior Certificate or Senior Certificate as a second chance opportunity to unsuccessful Grade 12 learners must ensure that they have been accredited by Umalusi and that their institutions have been registered by the Provincial Departments of Education as independent schools. These institutions must also be registered as examination centres with either an accredited private assessment body or the state.*

These centres however are not applying for registration or accreditation as required, and to a large extent are operating outside the regulatory requirements. Umalusi has working closely with the DBE and the provincial Departments of Education in an effort to resolve these matters and a guideline was developed for implementation.

From time to time in public communication channels it is claimed that there is too much regulation. This comment is to be expected from quarters desiring to operate under the radar in their own interests. The aim of regulation is transparency in the interests of public justice and fairness. The structures and processes needed to align the system to the NQF Act (RSA 2008c) were fully established by 2014. In the next period, 'administrative justice' – the efficiency of the system – needs to be the focus of development and evaluation.

5.3 Verification of learner records

Services for verifying the authenticity of learner records (qualifications and part-qualifications held by learners) have existed in South Africa since 1997. These services and the use of the services are described below.

5.3.1 Verification Services

Learner records, or records of learner achievements of qualifications and part-qualifications – for all successful achievements in the country – are included in the NLRD[20]. This information is available as follows:

- All learners can request an NLRD transcript of their own personal learning achievements via a specified process.
- Employers can submit requests for verification of the learning achievements claimed by prospective employees, as part of their job application processes (these being 'pre-appointment verifications').
- Organisations can request "bulk verifications" for groups of, or all of, their existing employees. These submissions can consist of hundreds or even thousands of records at a time.

All of these processes are fully compliant with the Protection of Personal Information (POPI) Act, Act 4 of 2013[21].

Examples of the types of organisations that utilise SAQA's Verification Services include schools, banks, employment agencies and private companies.

'SAQA VeriSearch', consisting of pre-appointment and bulk verification reports offered online, is only available to subscribing clients. This service allows clients to log into the reporting system using the username and password allocated for the purpose, to access information regarding the verification of records they have submitted (it is not possible to access the records requested by an organisation other than one's own). As at January 2014, the number of records contained in SAQA VeriSearch was 389 000.

5.3.2 Use of the Verification Services

Requests made to the NLRD for NLRD transcripts and services relating to the pre-appointment verification of learner achievements have been increasing over time. Bulk verifications peaked in 2011 and have been decreasing since then.

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[20] A verification record is a single achievement: for example, one person with five qualifications will have five records.
[21] For individual, bulk and employer-requested verifications, individuals need to provide authentic proof of identity and to agree to the verification processes. No information whatsoever is shared beyond that agreed.

5.3.2.1 Numbers of requests for NLRD transcripts over time

Figure 87 shows the total numbers of requests for transcripts for the seven most recent financial years. The annual increases in these requests points to increased knowledge of the verifications function at SAQA. Indications are that this upward trend will continue.

Figure 87: Numbers of Individual verifications requests across seven financial years
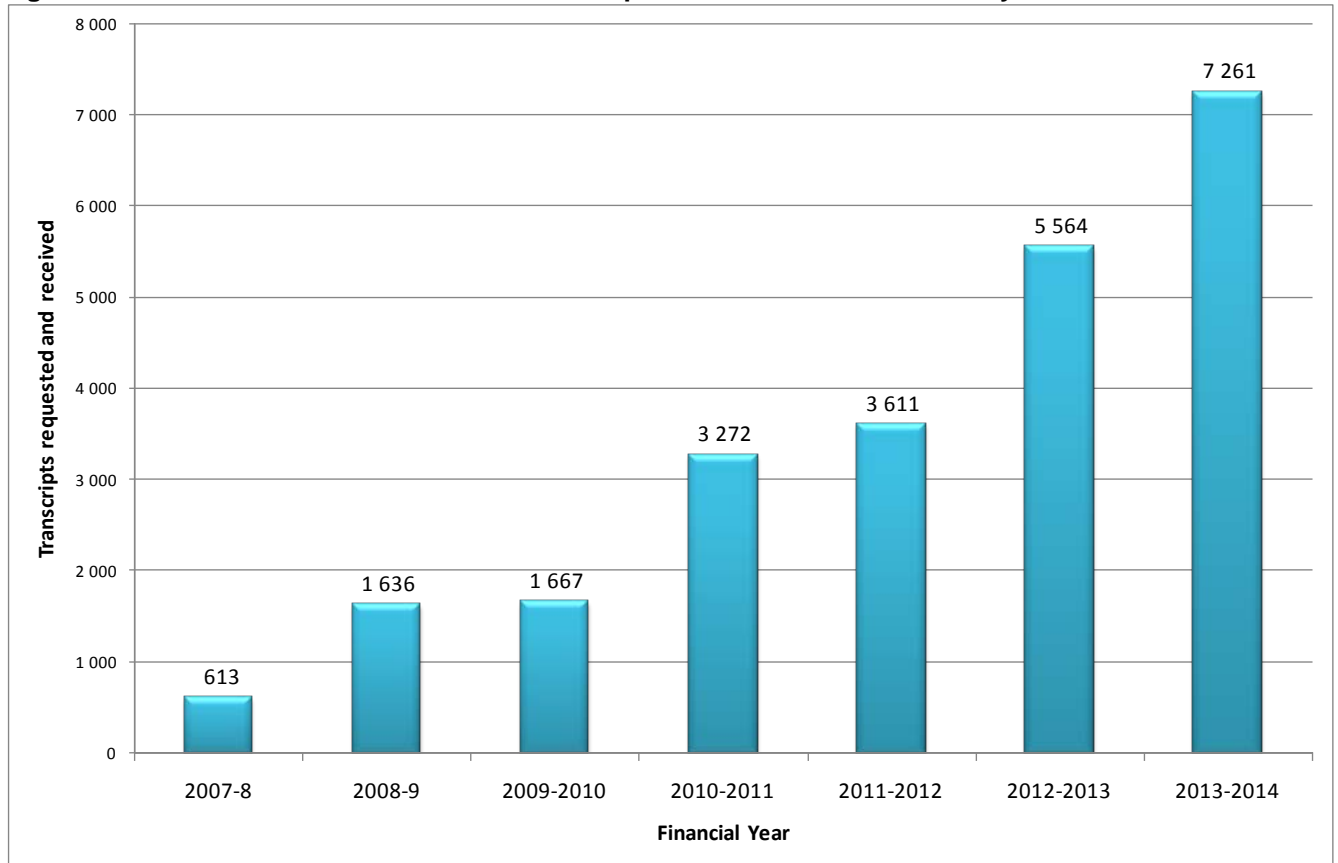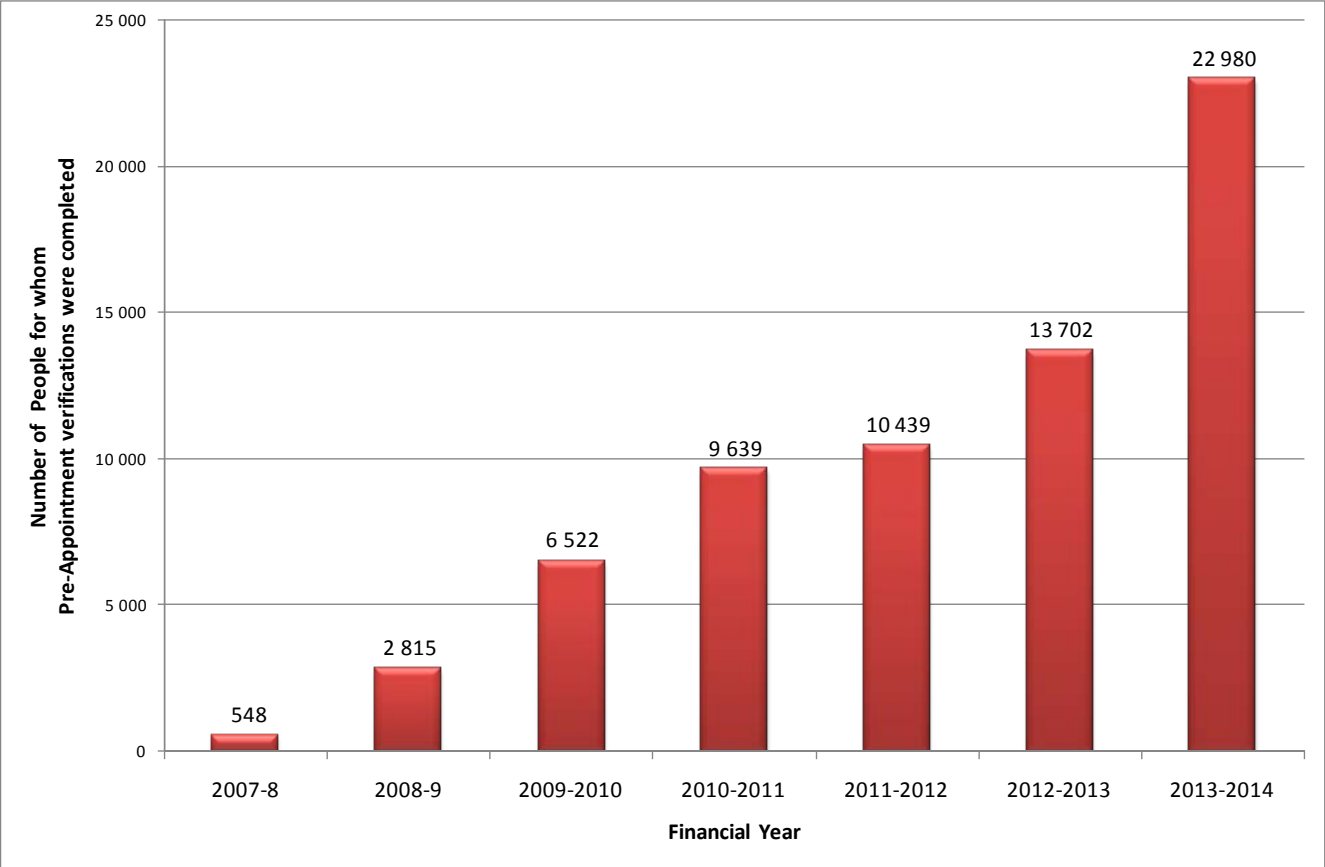

(Source: Verifications, November 2014)

5.3.2.2 Numbers of third-party requests for verifications over time

Figure 88 shows the total numbers of third-party requests for verifications for prospective employees for the three most recent financial years. As for the individual requests, the numbers of third-party requests increased at rates higher than those at which the population increased in the same period. Again, indications are that this trend will continue.

Figure 88: Numbers of people for whom pre-appointment verifications were completed, across seven financial years

(Source: Verifications, November 2014)

5.3.2.3 Numbers of requests for bulk verifications over time

Figure 89 shows the numbers of individuals for whom bulk verification requests were received over time.

Figure 89: Number of bulk verification records received and processed across five financial years
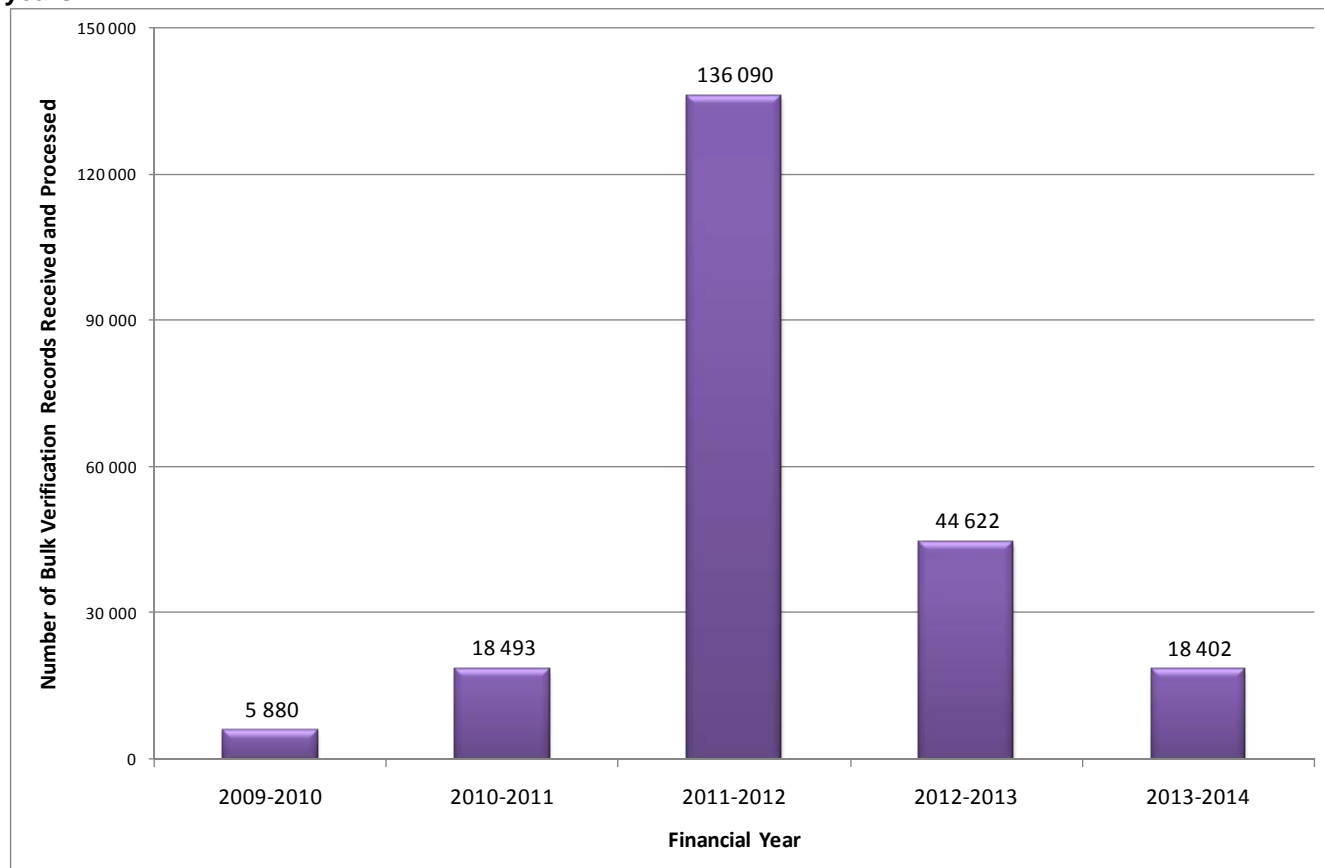
(Source: Verifications, November 2014)

Figure 89 shows that the numbers of requests for bulk verifications fluctuated considerably.

The 94% increase in the numbers of records between the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 years was largely due to three factors. First, the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) made it compulsory for all Public Service verifications to be carried out via SAQA as opposed to allowing verifications through a range of agencies. A second factor contributing to this increase was the 2011 National Census, for which Statistics South Africa verified the matric certificates of census enumerators. Third, the South African Police Services (SAPS) submitted the qualifications of most of its employees for verification in the 2011-2012 financial year.

The Minister of Public Service and Administration made it a requirement after 2009 for the qualifications of all employees in the Public Service to be verified. An instruction was also given to SAQA by the DPSA in October 2009 to undertake "fieldwork" (research) concerning all of the records not found in the NLRD. This included locating relevant information sources even when the awarding institutions had closed down.

The purposes of these verifications have been to improve the reliability of PERSAL data and to establish a comprehensive and reliable aggregated database of the qualifications of public service employees (DPSA 2010). The government departments have been the biggest clients of SAQA's verifications service since this time.

The total numbers of subscribing organisations in four selected financial years are shown in Figure 90. The increase in numbers of organisations subscribing over time – at rates higher than increases in the general population – possibly suggests increasing awareness of the services over time. The drop in 2015 is due to the implementation of an updated client agreement in 2013 (mostly with reference to a revision of the verifications pricing framework), after which not all of the private clients renewed their agreements.

Figure 90: Numbers of organisations subscribing to the verifications service in selected financial years
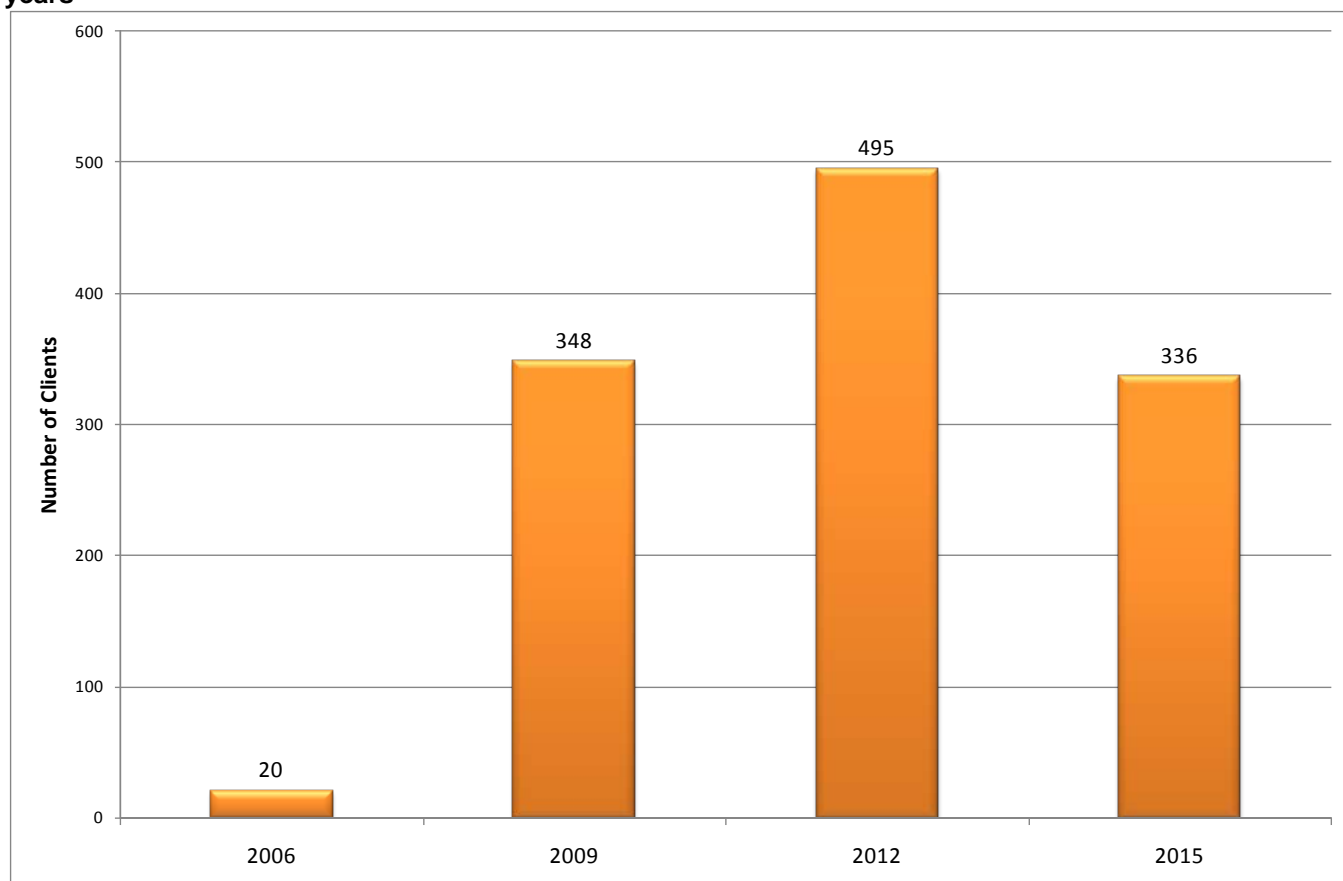
(Source: Verifications, November 2014)

5.3.3 Verification services and the detection of fraud

The incidence of fraudulent qualifications identified via the SAQA verifications processes is substantially lower than the 15%-20% alleged by other verifications organisations (Shapiro 2013).

Table 73 shows the analysis of all pre-appointment verifications up to 5 November 2014, to establish the proportion of fraudulent qualifications overall.

The percentage of fraud from 1 October 2009 (when recording of fraud began) to 5 November 2014 was 1.1% of all people whose qualifications were submitted for pre-appointment verification and for which a definitive "Yes" or "No" response could be found, and 0.7% of all records submitted for pre-appointment verification and for which a definitive "Yes" or "No" response could be found.

Table 73: Summary analysis of fraudulent qualifications found via the SAQA verifications process from 1 October 2009 to 5 November 2014

Number of people who have been found to have fraudulent qualifications	
Number of people with one or more fraudulent qualifications	671
Total people	63 663
% People with one or more fraudulent qualifications	1.1%
Number of fraudulent records found in all records submitted for verification	
Number of fraudulent records	700
Total records	98 051
% Fraudulent records	0.7%

(Source: Verifications, November 2014)

5.4 The evaluation of foreign qualifications

The evaluation of foreign qualifications clearly enhances access to, and progression in, learning and work. It is included in the chapter on transparency because it *makes possible* increased access and progression *through increasing transparency*. For holders of qualifications to be able to progress to further study and work across countries – cross-country articulation –transparency across countries is required, and tools to build trust and collaboration within and across countries and between different communities of practice.

Section 13(1) (m) of the NQF Act, Act 67 of 2008 (RSA 2008c) mandates SAQA to provide an evaluation and advisory service for holders of foreign qualifications. This service is provided by SAQA's Directorate: Foreign Qualifications Evaluation and Advisory Services (DFQEAS). It includes the verification and comparison of foreign qualifications with South African qualifications.

The set of criteria applied in the evaluation of foreign qualifications is contained in the Policy and Criteria for Evaluating Foreign Qualifications within the South African National Qualifications Framework (SAQA 2015c). In this sub-section of the report, the requirements are sketched for the evaluation of foreign qualifications and those of the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) and other communities of practice SAQA engages with for the evaluation of foreign qualifications. The fact that these criteria are all specified and known helps to build transparency.

5.4.1 Foreign Qualifications Evaluation and Advisory Services offered by SAQA

The purpose of SAQA's Foreign Qualification Evaluation and Advisory Services is to verify the authenticity of qualifications obtained outside South Africa, and to determine the location of these qualifications within the NQF in South Africa.

SAQA receives applications for, and evaluates, foreign qualifications at all levels and across all three Sub-Frameworks of the South African NQF. The evaluation process commences with *verification* of the authenticity of the qualification as well as of the award made to the person[22]. Once verification has been completed and the required authenticity established, the next phase of *comparison* begins. This phase involves analysing the learning outcomes of a foreign qualification as per the level and qualification descriptors of its home system, and comparing these features with those in the South NQF Level Descriptors and closest South African qualification, in order to locate it within the South African NQF.

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[22] Verification involves undertaking a range of checks to confirm the status of an institution and a qualification in the applicant's home system, as well as the authenticity of related documents and of the award to the person applying for the evaluation.

After the verification process and meeting verification criteria successfully, and comparison of the foreign qualification and its position in its system of origin, a qualification qualifies for the issuing of a SAQA Certificate of Evaluation (SCoE).

5.4.1.1 Verification of a foreign qualification

A foreign qualification is only recognised if all the verification requirements are met. These requirements include that the awarding institution needs to have been accredited in its home country at the time of the enrolment and certification of the learner. The qualification needs to have been part of the formal education and training system in the country of origin at the time. The documentation must be genuine, with no tampering or inconsistency.

5.4.1.2 Comparing foreign and South African qualifications

If there is a recognition agreement between South Africa and a foreign country, the recognition decision from the comparison will reflect the recognition agreed to in the formal bilateral agreement[23].

Where no cross-country agreements exist, an analysis is done of the nature and position of the foreign qualification in its home system. This information is compared with NQF Level Descriptors, qualification descriptors and learning outcomes linked to the closest qualifications in South Africa. When a country does not have a qualifications framework, or does not provide for qualifications developed before the existence of its framework, the relative position of the qualifications in the national education and training systems concerned are used for comparison and similarities are *inferred.*

Candidates submitting foreign qualifications for evaluation with the aim of furthering their studies or working in the country need to ensure that they meet the criteria for admission to study, professional registration or work, *in addition to* SAQA evaluation of their qualifications. These other processes are not part of SAQA's work.

5.4.1.3 Use of NQF apparatus for comparing qualifications across countries

The verification and comparison processes in the SAQA foreign qualification evaluation procedure described show the links between NQFs, NQF Level Descriptors, qualification descriptors and learning outcomes on the one hand, and transparency on the other. Comparing qualifications across countries is made easier when there is clarity around what is being evaluated and the NQF apparatus provides this clarity.

SAQA has found the existence of NQFs and learning outcomes-based approaches in other countries useful for the evaluation of foreign qualifications obtained in those countries. NQFs, NQF Level Descriptors and learning outcomes in particular, have assisted SAQA in terms of evaluating the nature and complexity of foreign qualifications. The South African NQF is similarly useful for the evaluation of South African qualifications abroad (see Section 5.4.3-5.4.4).

Table 74 shows the status in 2012 of NQF development in the top 30 countries from which SAQA receives requests to evaluate foreign qualifications. Of the top 30, five had no NQF but did have some kind of outcomes-based content, whether through a partial framework or participation in Tuning[24] or other initiatives (SAQA 2012).

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[23] Bilateral agreements are reviewed periodically, given that national education and training systems change over time.
[24] Tuning is a collaborative, consultative process involving academics working in subject groups with employers and other stakeholders in curriculum development to enhance student competencies (source: SAQA 2014: 15).

Table 74: NQF developments in the top 30 countries from which SAQA receives most requests to evaluate foreign qualifications in 2012

Rank[25]	Country	%[26]	No NQF	NQF in early stages	NQF legislation being finalised	NQF established	Tuning initiatives under way[27]	Certified to Bologna Framework[28]	Referenced to EQF[29]
1	Zimbabwe	26.9			X		X		
2	India	11		X					
3	Nigeria	9.3		X			X		
4	UK	7.9				X		X	X
5	DR Congo	4.4		X			X		
6	Lesotho	3		X					
7	Pakistan	3		X					
8	Swaziland	3		X					
9	USA	2.6	X				X		
10	Ghana	2		X			X		
11	Cameroon	1.8	X				X		
12	Zambia	1.7			X		X		
13	Kenya	1.4			X		X		
14	Botswana	1.4			X		X		
15	Uganda	1.1		X			X		
16	Namibia	1.1				X			
17	Angola	1.1		X					
18	China, PR	1	X						
19	Malawi	1		X			X		
20	Germany	0.9				X	X	X	
21	Australia	0.8				X	X		
22	Ethiopia	0.8		X			X		
23	France	0.7				X	X	X	X
24	Gabon	0.7	X				X		
25	Bangladesh	0.6		X					
26	Netherlands	0.6				X	X	X	X
27	Thailand	0.5				X			
28	Tanzania	0.5			X		X		
29	Canada	0.4		X					
30	Congo, Republic of	0.4	X				X		

(Source: Directorate: Foreign Qualification Evaluation and Advisory Services, SAQA 2014)

5.4.1.4 Learning and work pathways involving foreign qualifications

Figure 91 shows learning and work pathways to be followed in South Africa when foreign qualifications are involved.

[25] Countries are ranked in relation to numbers of requests received by SAQA for evaluations of foreign qualifications, from highest to lowest, using the top 30 requesting countries.
[26] Percentages refer to numbers of requests for evaluations of foreign qualifications from the country, in relation the total number of requests received by SAQA.
[27] See footnote 24.
[28] The Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA) also known as the Bologna Framework is a product of the 'Bologna process' that involves 47 countries. A 'self-certification' methodology has been developed to formalise the relationships between the 47 countries and the QF-EHEA. In many instances countries with NQFs simultaneously reference to the EQF and self-certify to the QF-EHEA as the two methodologies share similar criteria.
[29] Referencing is a formal link between a qualifications framework and an overarching or regional qualifications framework (Jaftha *et al.* 2013: 20). The European Qualifications Framework (EQF), which is limited to the 27 EU Member States, has developed a 'referencing' methodology to define the correspondence between the eight levels of the EQF and the NQFs of the 27 states.

Figure 91: Pathways regarding foreign qualifications in South Africa
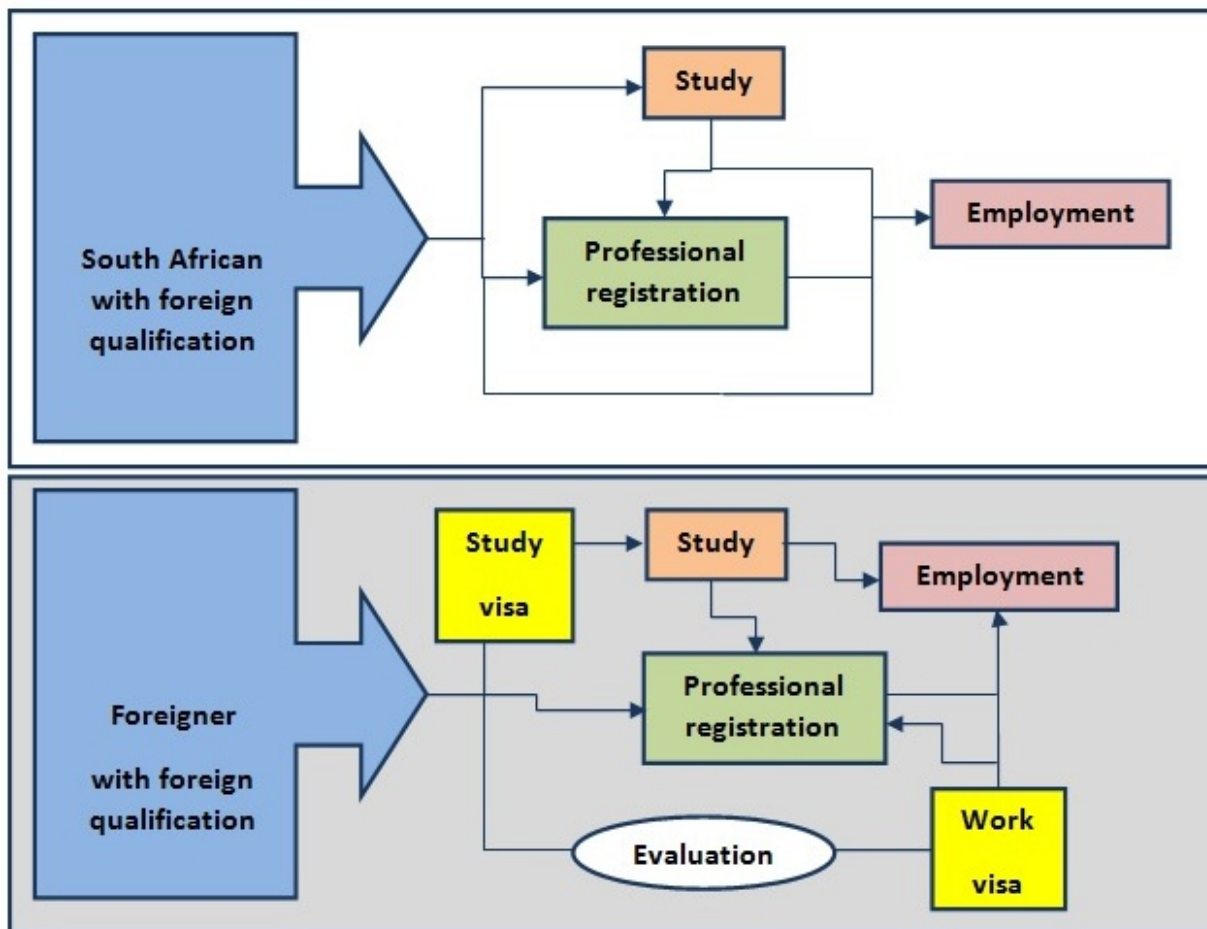
(Source: Directorate: Foreign Qualification Evaluation and Advisory Services, SAQA)

The South African Immigration Regulations, 2014 (Department of Home Affairs 2014) require SAQA qualification evaluations, work visas for employment and study visas for further study. Where employment involves a regulated profession, both South Africans and foreigners must first be registered/ certified/ licensed with the relevant professional body before being considered for employment. In addition, there are usually also Professional Body and government department requirements.

Importantly, SAQA collaborates mainly with four communities of practice in the evaluation of foreign qualifications, namely:

- the Department of Home Affairs (DHA), regarding work and study visas;
- institutions of learning, regarding further study;
- Professional Bodies, regarding registration and licensing; and
- Employers, regarding work.

Some of the requirements are sketched in the sections that follow, to illustrate how transparency is developed.

5.4.2 Building transparency through Foreign Qualification Evaluation and Advisory Services: progress

This sub-section of the report indicates how transparency has been built through the alignment of legislation and collaborative work between SAQA and the South African Department of Home Affairs [DHA], and institutions of learning, professional bodies and employers in the country respectively, over

237

time.

5.4.2.1 Building transparency with the Department of Home Affairs

According to the Immigration Regulations, 2014 (DHA 2014), SAQA Certificates of Evaluation (CoE) are required for General Work visas, Critical Skills visas and Intra-Company visas. All these visas require proof that foreign qualifications have been evaluated by SAQA. Consequently, the evaluation outcomes are reflected in the CoE provided by SAQA.

The SAQA Certificates of Evaluation make transparent or clear to the DHA the authenticity or otherwise of the documentation related to foreign qualifications, and where the foreign qualifications are positioned in relation to the South African education and training system. This information is used by the DHA in the determination of skills flowing into the country.

Trends in requests for SAQA Foreign Qualification Evaluation and Advisory Services over time are shown in Figure 93.

5.4.2.2 Requests for SAQA Foreign Qualifications Evaluation and Advisory Services

Figure 92 shows an increase in the numbers of foreign qualifications evaluated by SAQA between the 2001-2002 and 2012-2013 financial years.

The steep rise in the number of evaluations since 2005 can be linked to the publication of the Immigration Regulations of 2005 (DHA 2005), which made it mandatory for all applications for work and quota permits and permanent residency to include an evaluation of their foreign qualifications by SAQA.

What is clear from this picture is that increasing numbers of people have requested evaluations in the period investigated.

Figure 92: Numbers of foreign qualifications evaluated, 2001-2013
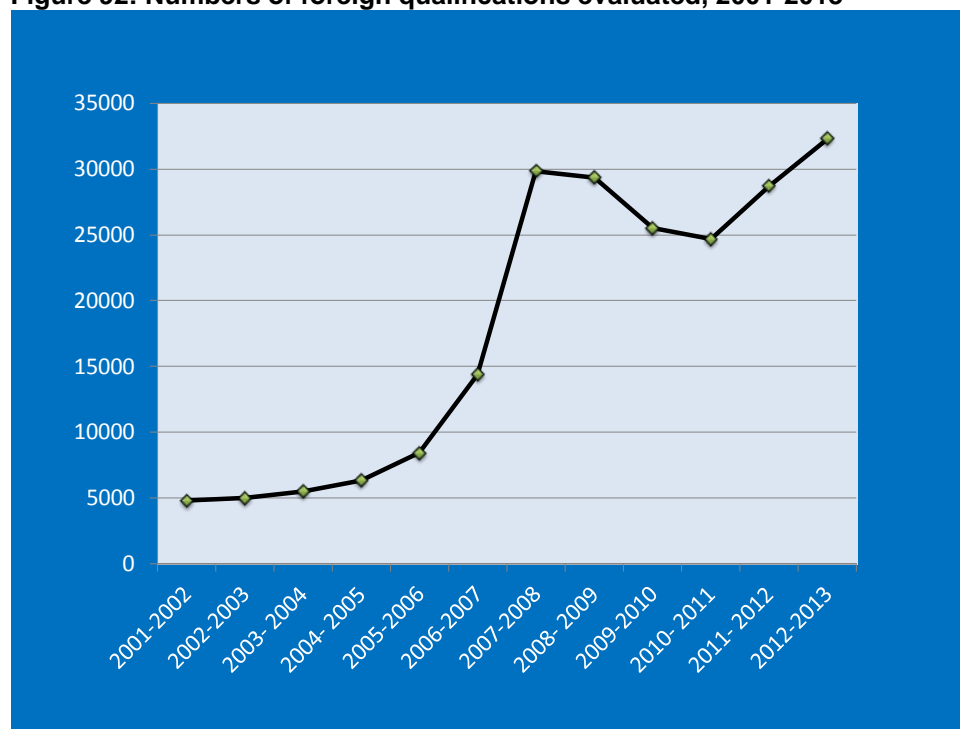
(Source: Directorate: Foreign Qualification Evaluation and Advisory Services, SAQA)

5.4.2.3 Building transparency with institutions of learning

According to the South African Immigration Regulations, 2014 (DHA 2014), foreign nationals requiring study permits must submit an 'official letter' from the institution at which they plan to study, confirming 'provisional acceptance' at that institution, and the 'duration of the course'.

Higher Education South Africa (HESA) is the Higher Education sector body responsible for determining the requirements for foreign qualifications for entry into first degree studies in South Africa. There is not an officially agreed position on the matter, but in practice, which is influenced by the Immigration Regulations, 2014 (DHA 2014), HESA refers foreign school-leavers who want to study for Diploma and Certificate purposes to SAQA for evaluation.

It is known that many Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in South Africa use SAQA's Certificate of Evaluation (CoE), especially for the admission of foreign qualification holders to postgraduate study. In 2013, SAQA sought to ascertain the extent to which this was the case for public HEIs. SAQA conducted an informal investigation into the admission requirements of the 23 South African public HEIs[30] to explore the use of the SAQA CoE by the institutions. It was found that 16 of the HEIs required the SAQA CoE for admission; in three institutions, the SAQA CoE was welcomed but was not compulsory unless the HEIs were unable to make meaningful assessments themselves[31]; and in the remaining four institutions the requirements for the SAQA CoE were not clearly specified.

In another stakeholder survey undertaken by SAQA in 2013, 83% of the HEIs and Professional Bodies surveyed indicated that they made use of the SAQA CoE. Further, 84% of the *organisation*s stated that a SAQA certificate added value to their admission, registration or employment requirements.

These percentages suggest that the Foreign Qualification Evaluation and Advisory Services assist Higher Education Institutions in their selection of suitable students by verifying information relating to candidates' existing foreign qualifications. It would be important in future reports to analyse the extent to which these services are used over time.

5.4.2.4 Building transparency with Professional Bodies

In South Africa regulations pertaining to professional practice are implemented by a number of Professional Bodies, statutory and non-statutory. Professional Bodies set requirements for membership, professional registration, licensing and the regulation of professional conduct. These requirements are shaped by legislation, professional conventions and formal agreements.

Professional Bodies can determine whether foreign qualification holders possess sufficient skills and competencies to pursue particular professions or careers in the country. The criteria by means of which these judgments are made need to be transparent.

The *Policy and Criteria for Recognising a Professional Body and Registering a Professional Designation for the purposes of the NQF* (SAQA 2012b) were designed to enhance fairness and the availability of related information to the public. When an individual's qualification is obtained at an institution of learning in a foreign country, the individual applying to a professional body for a professional designation in South Africa must ensure that the qualification has been evaluated by SAQA and found to be comparable to the local qualification underlying the desired designation (SAQA 2012b: 8).

By the end of 2014, 77 Professional Bodies and 190 professional designations had been recognised by SAQA, and a further 100 Professional Bodies had commenced the recognition process. In addition, SAQA is aware that some of the Professional Bodies, while not yet registered, are already complying

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[30] At the time there were 23 public Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the country. Two additional public HEIs were established in 2014 bringing the current number of public HEIs in South Africa to 25.
[31] Some universities have in-house evaluation services and can provide the service themselves.

with SAQA's requirement for Certificates of Evaluation. These numbers show that transparency in this field is growing. Increases in the percentages of Professional Bodies and professional designations recognised over time would further enhance transparency.

5.4.2.5 Building transparency with employers

Since 2009 employers in the public sector have been required to ensure that the qualifications of their existing and prospective employees have been verified or evaluated, in line with a directive issued by the Minister for the Public Service and Administration in terms of Section 3(2) of the Public Service Act, Act 103 of 1994 (DPSA March 2010) (see also Section 5.3)[32].

The directive makes provision for government departments to use SAQA's Verification Services for the bulk verification of existing employees' qualifications, verification of the qualifications of prospective employees and the evaluation of foreign qualifications[33]. These services are being used increasingly over time (see Section 5.3).

5.4.3 Deepening transparency through collaboration, legal agreements and accords

The importance of links between South Africa and the world – international articulation – has been noted. Bilateral Agreements, Multi-Lateral Agreements and Professional Accords are important instruments for deepening transparency and collaboration between South Africa and other countries on the one hand, and between professional entities on the other.

Examples of Bilateral and Multi-Lateral Agreements, and Professional Accords, in which South Africa is involved are sketched briefly below[34].

5.4.3.1 Bilateral and Multi-Lateral Agreements between South Africa and other countries

Agreements are an example of a process whereby detailed evaluations are conducted for specific qualifications in advance, following agreement by the countries involved to commence with this process. Once qualifications are found to be equivalent, holders of the respective qualifications receive recognition for their qualifications in the respective countries to which they are travelling or immigrating, in the period specified.

5.4.3.1.1 South Africa's Bilateral Agreements regarding education and training

In March 2013 South Africa signed a mutual recognition agreement with the Russian Federation. According to this agreement the relevant qualifications issued in the state format in the Russian Federation, and the corresponding qualifications registered on the NQF in South Africa, will be recognised as being equivalent from March 2013.

Currently, other countries where South Africa has Bilateral Agreements in the education landscape relevant to SAQA include the People's Republic of China and Malaysia.

5.4.3.1.2 Education and training-related Multi-Lateral Agreements of which South Africa is part

In November 2014 SAQA convened a Verifications Seminar *Building trust: Promoting genuine qualifications in Africa through effective verification* for the African countries from which South Africa

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[32] Circular No. HRP1 signed in April 2010 (DPSA 2010) contains the directive on the verification of public service employees' qualifications by the SAQA. The directive replaces the circular issued on 25 May 2009 entitled *Request for Departments to Undertake the Bulk Verification of Employee Qualifications with the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)*. The 2010 directive took effect on 1 March 2010.

[33] At the time of writing, according to the 2010 directive, the DPSA required the evaluation of foreign qualifications for high-level posts only. However, the directive was being revised to include all public servants with foreign qualifications.

[34] For the purposes of the present report the example of a professional accord from the engineering profession is used. There are other professional agreements not mentioned here.

receives the most applications for immigration.

The purpose of the event was to bring together key stakeholders on the African continent and set up a network for the verification of qualifications, so that fraudulent practices could be countered through formal trust relationships combined with quick, innovative (digital) and effective processes, including the reduction of costs.

The objectives of the seminar were to provide a platform to:

1. develop a joint declaration among participating countries to combat qualifications fraud on the continent through structured relationships;
2. set up institutional arrangements between SAQA and recognised bodies responsible for verification of learner records in the respective English-speaking countries in the African continent; and
3. develop innovative and cost effective means to verify qualifications, including digital processes.

The main output of the event was a Joint Declaration adopted by all 15 participating countries[35]. This agreement is a landmark in the development of transparency on the continent. Going forward, SAQA will be seeking Service Level Agreements with national agencies in particular countries to enhance processes for the mutual verification of qualifications.

5.4.3.2 Professional Accords

Transparency is enhanced by Professional Bodies entering into international recognition agreements to enable the recognition and mobility of professional skills internationally.

These agreements are significant international processes in their own right, but are also important for SAQA's Foreign Qualification Evaluation and Advisory Services as they show that benchmarking has already taken place. The agreements signify that the learning outcomes of the qualifications involved are already aligned. SAQA foreign qualification evaluation processes take these agreements into account.

An example is provided here of engineering accords for specific qualifications: the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) is a SAQA-recognised Professional Body and is signatory to the Washington (1989), Sydney (2001) and Dublin (2002) Accords, among others (see Table 75). According to these agreements, foreign engineering graduates of accredited programmes in signatory countries are regarded as having met the academic requirements for entry to the practice of engineering (International Engineering Alliance 2013).

Table 75: Examples of rights established through selected Engineering Accords

Signatory country	Washington Accord (1989)	Sydney Accord (2001)	Dublin Accord (2002)
Australia	Full rights	Full rights	***Provisional
Bangladesh	***Provisional	*None*	*None*
Canada	Full rights	Full rights	Full rights
Republic of China	Full rights	***Provisional	*None*
Germany	***Provisional	*None*	*None*
Hong Kong China	Full rights	Full rights	*None*
India	***Provisional	*None*	*None*
Ireland	Full rights	Full rights	Full rights
Japan	Full rights	*None*	*None*
Republic of Korea	Full rights	***Provisional	*None*
Malaysia	Full rights	*None*	*None*

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[35] The participating countries were, in alphabetical order, Botswana, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Signatory country	Washington Accord (1989)	Sydney Accord (2001)	Dublin Accord (2002)
New Zealand	Full rights	Full rights	***Provisional
Pakistan	***Provisional	*None*	*None*
Russia	Full rights	*None*	*None*
Singapore	Full rights	*None*	*None*
South Africa	Full rights	Full rights	Full rights
Sri Lanka	***Provisional	*None*	*None*
Turkey	Full rights	*None*	*None*
United Kingdom	Full rights	Full rights	Full rights
United States	Full rights	Full rights	***Provisional

(Source: Jaftha, Zuzani, Burger 2013: 60)

In addition to making visible – transparent – the extent to which qualifications are comparable and are recognised, such Accords also enhance the mobility of learners and workers across countries.

The movements of South Africans to other countries and perceptions of selected South African qualifications internationally, are addressed in Section 5.4.4 below.

5.4.4 Movements of South Africans to other countries: benchmarking potential

Analysis of the movements of South Africans out of the country offers some benchmarking potential for education and training obtained in South Africa, although the measurement of emigration patterns is challenging (Jaftha, Zuzani and Burger 2013). Studies reveal a large gap between recorded departures and legal settlement of South Africans in other countries (Jaftha *et al*. 2013).

This section of the report touches briefly on the emigration patterns of South Africans, perceptions of South African qualifications in Australia, and the potential for benchmarking and building transparency of these aspects.

5.4.4.1 Movements of South Africans to other countries

There is an absence of readily available emigration data. Research by Segatti and Landau (2011) provides an idea of emigration destinations chosen by South Africans between 1989 and 1997. It is worth noting that there are Engineering Accords between South Africa and these destinations. According to the Southern African Migration Programme (2000) as reported in Segatti and Landau (2011), in 1989-1997, 233 000 South Africans left the country for five main destinations: the United States of America, Australia, the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Canada. The percentages of South Africans emigrating to these countries are shown in Table 76[36].

Table 76: Percentages of South Africans emigrating to top five destination countries, 1989-1997

Top five destination countries for emigrating South Africans, 1989-1997	% of South Africans emigrating
United States of America	24%
Australia	22%
United Kingdom	15%
New Zealand	12%
Canada	11%
Other destinations	16%
Total number of South African emigrating, 1989-1997	**100%**

(Source: Segatti and Landau 2011)

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[36] These 2011 data were used in the absence of readily-available data for the recent period.

Emigration patterns are useful indicators of the recognition of South African qualifications abroad. While emigration itself is linked to a range of contextual and personal factors, the perceptions of South African qualifications in destination countries are potentially useful benchmarks of the South African system.

One such perceptions study has been conducted to date, focusing on Australia (SAQA 2012). Repeating similar studies with other countries would be useful.

5.4.4.2 Perceptions of South African qualifications in Australia

Using a two-component research framework, namely (1) forms of recognition, and (2) recognition methods, a study was undertaken by SAQA in 2012 to investigate how South African qualifications are recognised in Australia. This study was part of a growing interest on the part of SAQA, regarding how qualifications are recognised in other countries. The findings are relevant for the evaluation of foreign qualifications in South Africa, transparency-related work, learner progression and the quality of South African qualifications.

The relevant findings are as follows:

1. Australia's recognition model differs across four contexts, namely (1) academic recognition by individual universities, (2) migration recognition by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, (3) employment recognition by Professional Bodies and workplaces, and (4) registration or licensing recognition by State/ Territory boards. Different recognition models are used in each of the four contexts.
2. Requirements in the four recognition contexts are set by competent recognition authorities. Consequently, a South African, like migrants from all other countries, would need to go through more than one recognition process when immigrating to Australia; the *competence* of an applicant can be assessed more than once.
3. The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and its policies and quality standards form the *benchmarking* tool against which foreign qualifications – including South African qualifications – are measured. Australia assesses alignment between the South African NQF and the AQF to determine the extent to which a South African qualification is *comparabl*e to an AQF qualification.
4. The Australian Education International/ National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) is the National Information Centre in Australia. It researches country profiles, provides information on the evaluation of qualifications and provides a *credential evaluation* service. NOOSR recommends the *comparability* of the majority of South African qualifications on the South African NQF with qualifications on the AQF. NOOSR's decisions are not binding.
5. Investigating the *social uses* of the South African school-leaving qualification – the National Senior Certificate (NSC) – showed that the 39 Australian university websites generally do not have accurate information on the NSC. The universities use *credential evaluation* and *assessments* to determine *comparability*, *equivalence* and *competence.*
6. *Recognition agreements* between South Africa and Australia occur in five professional fields - in these fields South African applicants are accepted directly.

These findings suggest that the recognition process in Australia is complex and stringent, and that of South Africa appears to be more streamlined. The South African NQF was seen as a useful recognition tool and was used in the recognition processes. South African qualifications in some fields were recognised via agreements. The content of the findings points to the beginnings of transparency and recognition, and possibilities for learner progression between the countries.

5.4.5 Perceptions of SAQA's Foreign Qualification Evaluation and Advisory Services

The numbers of people using SAQA's Foreign Qualification Evaluation and Advisory Services are shown in Section 5.4.2.2. These people were seeking access to study and/ or work. Their perceptions of the services point to their impact. In this section, brief sketches of initiatives to ascertain stakeholder satisfaction are presented.

5.4.5.1 Once-off study to ascertain stakeholder satisfaction

In the 2013-2014 year an attempt was made to assess the external experiences of users of SAQA's Foreign Qualification Evaluation and Advisory Services. A questionnaire was sent to public and private Higher Education Institutions, Professional Bodies and public service departments. Respondents were invited to give feedback and suggestions on various aspects of the services. In broad terms, respondents were requested to rate the following:

- Credibility: integrity, authority, reliability, consistency.
- Competence: know-how, expertise, professionalism.
- Service orientation: effectiveness, attitude, transparency, delivery on promises.

Possible scores ranged from '5' as the highest and '1' as the lowest. The 34 responses received are shown in Figure 93.

Figure 93: Responses to the 2013-2014 SAQA survey of its Directorate: Foreign Qualification Evaluation and Advisory Services
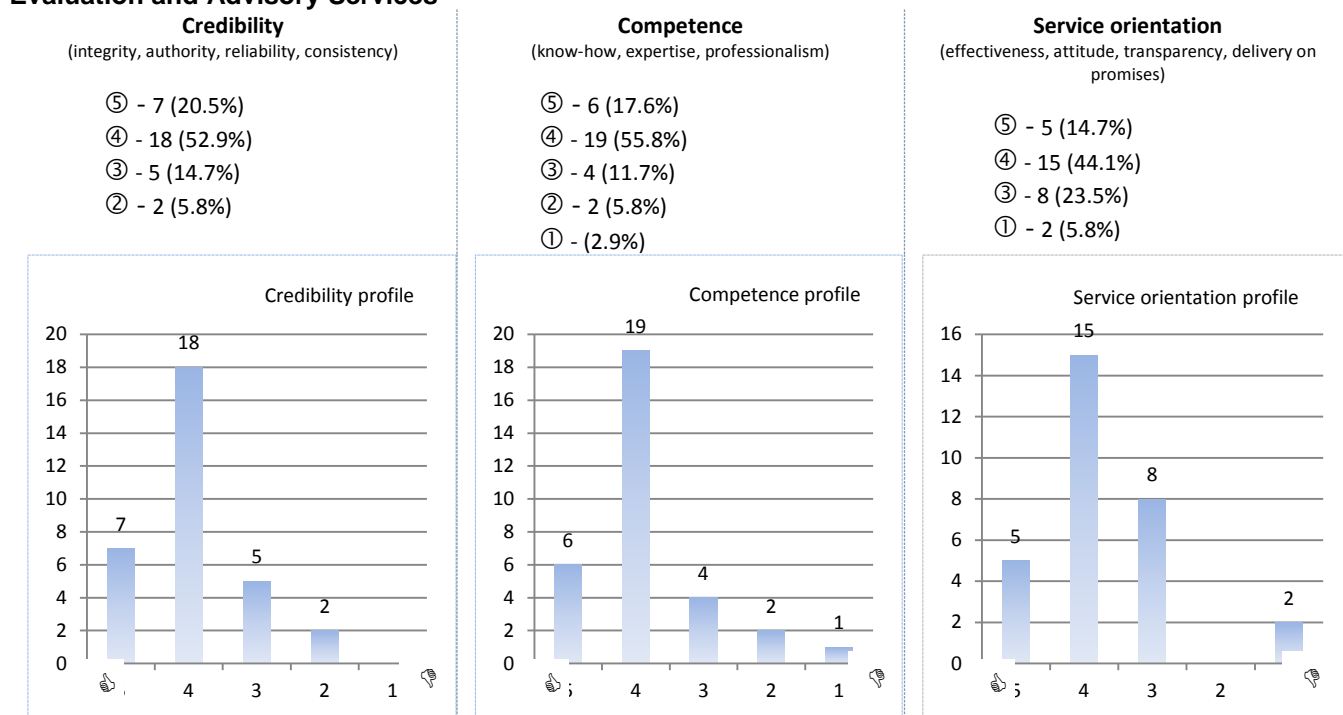

Figure 93 shows that while respondents felt neutral regarding the service-orientation of the evaluation services, they scored the credibility and competence-aspects of the services quite highly.

5.4.5.2 Routine tools to gauge customer satisfaction

Customer feedback is routinely actively solicited by the Directorate Foreign Qualification Evaluation and Advisory Services in three ways:

- via the online application system, which measures satisfaction regarding the service provided,

and the online application tool;

- a comments book in the Client Service Centre; and
- the organisation's system - 'Goldmine' - for significant queries.

Relatively little feedback – to the order of 2% of the requests for evaluations - is received. Most of the feedback relates to queries regarding the evaluations with a very small number of complaints about the service.

5.5 Visits to the NLRD, and transparency

Table 77 shows the average numbers of visits per month to the searchable databases of qualifications and part-qualifications in the NLRD, from 2007 when usage statistics were first measured. These numbers provide some indication of public awareness of the NQF and the NLRD, which in turn provide some indication of the transparency of the system.

Table 77: Average numbers of visits per month to the searchable databases of qualifications and part-qualifications in the NLRD

Year	Average numbers per month
2007/8	92 000
2008/9	80 000 (approximate)
2009/10	184 677
2010/11	187 903
2011/12	140 220
2012/13	Not measured
2013/14	199 400

(Source: NLRD)

5.6 Career Advice Services

Career advice is linked to learner progression in the system for education, training, development and work. It is also linked to the transparency of the system, or the extent to which information is available. Prior to the onset of democracy in South Africa the public relied on information supplied by providers when seeking information about qualifications, assessments, learning pathways and opportunities following the successful achievement of qualifications.

Career advice services were available. These services were usually linked to providers or to individual counsellors. There were usually conditions attached to career advice, in that it was available to the prospective students of particular institutions, or offered for a fee.

National Career Advice Services developed in 2010 sought to make this kind of information easily available to the public via walk-in (in-person queries), telephone, email, career exhibition events, radio, television, print and social media channels. A Memorandum of Agreement between SAQA and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) resulted in the establishment of the NQF and Career Advice Services Project to provide, by means of a multi-channel service, expanded affordable access to information, advice and guidance on the NQF and careers, to people. The Project was funded by the National Skills Fund, commenced on 1 September 2010 and continued until 31 October 2013.

Over the three-year period SAQA was able to meet and, in some cases, exceed the target of beneficiaries set at the start of the Career Advice Services Project. The project was able to reach around two million people per year.

Table 78: Numbers of people reached through the National Career Advice Services, 2010-2013

Channel	2010/11		2011/12		2012/13	
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
Telephone	12 000	13 044	18 000	16 180	18 000	41 775
Website/mobisite[37]	72 000	59 496	120 000	153 960	120 000	379 809
Radio	1 800 000	1 900 000	1 800 000	1 900 000	1 800 000	1 900 000
Exhibitions	15 000	85 910	20 000	117 549	20 000	203 220
Estimated number of people reached	1 899 000	2 058 450	1 958 000	2 187 689	1 958 000	2 524 804

(Source: SAQA-DHET 2013)

What was of critical importance however to the project was the accessibility of the services as well as the quality of information and advice provided to users of the NQF and Career Advice Helpline. Systems and processes were set up for the technology and infrastructure needed to provide members of the public with various access channels and with quality-assured information and services in all 11 official languages. Information management systems were implemented to ensure the development and updating of quality content used by the advisors who interacted with users, published on various platforms and communicated through the radio programmes. Quality assurance processes and continuous quality improvements that were implemented resulted in positive feedback from the beneficiaries of the services[38].

As agreed, these services were incubated within SAQA as Career Advice Services, and then migrated to the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), under the banner National Career Development Services. They are currently located within the DHET.

5.7 Awareness and understanding of, and valuing, the South African education and training system

In an independent study (Quest 2014), 40 interviews were conducted with NQF policy-makers, 370 with NQF policy implementers and 463 with NQF policy beneficiaries, to determine the extent to which the NQF is known, understood and valued.

The study (Quest 2014) found that among policy-makers, 100% of the interviewees knew about the NQF, 67% had deep understanding of the NQF and this 67% valued it.

Of the 370 policy implementers interviewed, 100% were aware of the NQF, 61% had deep understanding and 58% valued it.

The 463 policy beneficiaries, 98% of whom were African and most of whom were in the 16-35 years age group, spoke isiZulu (46%), isiXhosa (27%), Sesotho (11%) or English (12%); and most were students (60%) or unemployed (24%). Thirty-nine percent of the policy beneficiaries were found to be 'somewhat familiar with the NQF', a further 39% were found to be 'familiar with the NQF', and 12% were 'very familiar'. Most had been exposed to the NQF at career festivals. Just over 10% of respondents were 'not familiar with the NQF'.

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[37] The mobisite became active during the second year of the project.
[38] This finding originates in an independent evaluation conducted by UWESO on behalf of the DHET and SAQA in 2013-2014.

6. Building quality: Quality Council voices

In Chapter 6 the Quality Councils describe their quality assurance work over time, and some of the effects and impact of this work. Sections 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 have been developed by Umalusi, the Council on Higher Education (CHE) and the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) respectively. This work is linked to the trends shown in Chapter 3, and the systemic integration and transparency discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, in the meta-analysis in Chapter 7.

'Voices' in Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) (Engeström 2001) refer to points of view, traditions and interests. The divisions of labour in an activity system create different positions for different role-players, who carry their diverse histories in the tools they use, the rules they follow, their conventions and their actions. The voices of the Quality Councils in this chapter feed directly into the meta-analysis in Chapter 7, where they are used in the analyses of the impact of the NQF on Communities of Practice, tools, rules, and actors and their roles, in the education and training system.

Chapter 6 addresses Research Question 5 of the NQF Impact Study, namely: What is being done to enhance quality in the system, and how effective have these initiatives been?

6.1 Measuring the impact of quality assurance in Basic Education: Umalusi 2001-2014, from certifying body to Quality Council

Inputs in this sub-section were provided by senior Umalusi staff members.

The purpose of this sub-section of the report is to sketch the impact of Umalusi's quality assurance initiatives in General and Further Education and Training (GFET) over time, from 2001–2014. It continues the historical overview published by Umalusi in 2006 (Umalusi 2006bb) and in so doing further develops the institutional record of this part of the system.

The section covers Umalusi's mandate; the GFET context; the scope of Umalusi's mandate in GFET; Umalusi's journey towards defining quality; standards and quality, and Umalusi's standard setting responsibilities; understanding and evaluating standards; enhancing quality in GFET; reporting against indicators; and concluding comments from Umalusi.

6.1.1 Umalusi's mandate, 2001–2014

This sub-section sketches shifts in Umalusi's mandate between 2001 and 2014. It expands on Sections 1.1.1 – 1.1.2 of this- report.

6.1.1.1 GENFETQA Act, Act 58 of 2001: establishing Umalusi

In 2001 Umalusi, the Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training, was mandated by Parliament through its founding Act, the *General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance (GENFETQA) Act, Act 58 of 2001* (RSA 2001a), to be the quality assurance body for Levels 1–4 of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF)[1].

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[1] At the time this framework for qualifications at NQF Levels 1-4 was known as the Qualifications Framework for General and Further Education and Training (Umalusi 2007d). It is currently known as the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-Framework (GFETQSF) and comprises an expanded set of offerings.

Umalusi's responsibilities included monitoring and reporting on the performance of provincial Departments of Education, and the adequacy and suitability of qualifications and standards in the sector. Umalusi also quality assured exit point assessments, certified learner achievements, and accredited private schools, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges and Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) centres, as provided for under the following Acts:

- South African Schools Act, Act 84 of 1996 (RSA 1996c).
- Further Education and Training Colleges Act, Act 16 of 2006, as amended (RSA 2006a, 2012).
- Adult Basic Education and Training Act, Act 52 of 2000 (RSA 2000, 2012).

Umalusi was also authorised to accredit private assessment bodies, at its discretion.

6.1.1.2 National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act, Act 67 of 2008

The promulgation of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act, Act 67 of 2008 (RSA 2008c) constituted Umalusi as the Quality Council for General and Further Education and Training, as provided for in the GENFETQA Amendment Act, Act 50 of 2008 (RSA 2008a). Umalusi currently serves as one of three Quality Councils, alongside the Council on Higher Education (CHE) and the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO). Umalusi is required to collaborate with the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) and the other Quality Councils, subject to the National Education Policy Act, Act 27 of 1996 (RSA 1996b), the NQF Act (RSA 2008c), and its founding Act (RSA 2001a).

With the promulgation of the NQF Act, Umalusi's mandate was extended to include responsibility for the development and management of the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-Framework (GFETQSF). In terms of Paragraph 27 of the NQF Act (RSA 2008c), as a Quality Council, Umalusi must:

- develop and manage its Sub-Framework of qualifications;
- advise and make recommendations related to the Sub-Framework to the relevant Minister;
- consider and agree to NQF Level Descriptors, and ensure that these descriptors remain current and appropriate;
- propose policy for the development, registration and publication of qualifications for its Sub-Framework, in accordance with requirements outlined in the NQF Act;
- ensure the development of such qualifications and part-qualifications as necessary for the sector, along with indicators of appropriate measures for the delivery and assessment of learning achievements and recommendations to SAQA for registration;
- propose policy for quality assurance within the Sub-Framework;
- ensure the autonomy, integrity and credibility of quality assurance for qualifications registered on its Sub-Framework;
- maintain a database of learner achievements and related matters;
- conduct or commission, and publish, research on issues relevant to the development and implementation of the Sub-Framework;
- provide information regarding the Sub-Framework to the public; and
- perform any other functions required by the NQF Act, or functions consistent with this Act, which the relevant Minister may determine.

6.1.1.3 2008 Amendment to the GENFETQA Act, Act 58 of 2001

The General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act (RSA 2001a), as amended in 2008 (RSA 2008a), confirms the above-mentioned responsibilities, and also requires Umalusi, in terms of its quality assurance of assessment, to:

- ensure the necessary quality assurance work is undertaken by the Quality Council itself or by a body to which such powers have been delegated, and that the outcomes of such work are reported;
- develop policy for assessment – including internal assessment where such contributes to the final marks – and standardisation;
- ensure and verify the implementation of such policy by the assessment bodies responsible;
- report irregularities which may jeopardise the integrity of an assessment or its outcome to the relevant Director-General; and
- issue certificates to learners who have achieved qualifications or part-qualifications.

Umalusi is further required to undertake the following in respect of quality assurance of provision:

- develop policy, which must be regulated by the Minister (of Basic Education) for the accreditation of assessment bodies other than Departments of Education, and accredit assessment bodies accordingly;
- develop policy and criteria for the quality assurance of private education institutions, including independent schools, private colleges and private Adult Education and Training (AET) centres; and
- ensure that any institution required to register as a private school, TVET College or AET Centre complies with the policy and criteria determined by Umalusi, and affirm or withdraw the accreditation status of the private institution concerned as applicable.

6.1.2 General and Further Education and Training (GFET) in the context of the GFET Amendment Act of 2008

Both the GENFETQA Act (RSA 2001a) and the NQF Act (RSA 2008c) make reference to 'General and Further Education and Training', terminology that appears in the Constitution of South Africa (RSA 1994). In Section 29 of the Constitution, the Bill of Rights states that everyone in the country has a right to:

- basic education, including adult basic education; and
- further education, which the state through reasonable measures must make progressively available and accessible.

In taking on the quality assurance of General and Further Education and Training in 2001, Umalusi understood that in the context of Adult Education, 'basic' education designated all learning that took place below, up to, and including NQF Level 1. In schooling at the time, 'basic education', included the reception year (Grade R) and the first nine years of school (up to Grade 9 level), and was referred to as 'General Education'. 'Further Education' at the time referred to learning that took place from NQF Level 2 to 4 (Grades 10 – 12), whether in schools, TVET colleges or workplaces.

In the years following 2001, this terminology and what the terms represent have shifted in the waves of education and training reform that have taken place in the country. It is thus important to understand what is meant by these terms in the present environment[2].

6.1.2.1 Basic Education

The term 'Basic Education' has had two divergent histories. In Adult Education, the idea of Basic Education has taken on negative connotations and has been subsumed by 'Adult Education and Training' (AET), for which the relevant legislation is the Adult Basic Education and Training Act, Act 52 0f 2000 (RSA 2000).

In terms of schooling, however, the term 'Basic Education' is currently understood as meaning education offered in schools from reception year to Grade 12, and excludes other forms of education and training in the General and Further Education and Training sector. This new usage of the term is reflected in the naming of the Department of Basic Education (DBE). It is also reflected in the policy documents emanating from the DBE where the distinction between general and further education is downplayed. All 12 years of schooling are regarded as being of a piece, part of Basic Education, and as leading to the National Senior Certificate (NSC). In *this context*, 'Further Education and Training' refers to the last phase of Basic Education. It applies to Grades 10 –12 at school.

The term 'Basic Education' has taken on a distinctly school-based overtone. But in doing so, it has become a much larger entity, one that accords with the public perception of schooling being 12 years and ending with formal assessment and an exit certificate.

6.1.2.2 Further Education and Training

As for Basic Education, changes associated with the term 'Further Education and Training' are far-ranging.

In the White Paper for Post-School Education and Training (MHET 2013) the DHET redefines the post-school environment. In this document (MHET 2013: xi) the DHET describes 'Post-School Education and Training' (PSET) as encompassing "all education and training for those [who] have left school or have never been to school".

Further, the White Paper proposes two institutional types: Technical and Vocational Education and Training Colleges (TVET Colleges) and Community Education and Training Colleges (CET Colleges). The amendments proposed in the White Paper seek to convert Further Education and Training (FET) Colleges established under the FET Colleges Act, Act 16 of 2006 [RSA 2006]) into TVET Colleges, and Adult Education and Training (AET) Centres established by the ABET Act (RSA 2000) into CET Colleges.

Umalusi understands the intention in the White Paper (MHET 2013) as being to enable the CET Colleges to provide qualifications in each of the Adult Education, Basic Education and Further Education and Training sectors – and possibly Worker and Popular Education. TVET Colleges could *inter alia* offer qualifications and part-qualifications registered on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-Framework (GFETQSF) and the Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework (OQSF), as well as Higher Certificates (at NQF Level 5) in partnership with Higher Education Institutions.

Noting that the corresponding international institutions such as those in the Australian Technical Adult and Further Education (TAFE) model do not have this strict division of learning, Umalusi cautions against creating silos of learning in the South African context where articulation is needed. Umalusi supports the

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[2] Understanding of the terminology is further clarified in the Umalusi policy 'Standards and Quality Assurance for General and Further Education and Training' (Umalusi 2013d).

move in the White Paper to enable TVET Colleges, which were previously discouraged from offering qualifications from NQF Level 1, to expand their qualification offerings to range from NQF Levels 1-5, inclusive of these levels.

Given these changes, some supported by Umalusi more than others, it is important for Umalusi to state clearly its own developing understanding of the educational space in which it holds itself and others accountable.

6.1.3 The scope of Umalusi's mandate in General and Further Education and Training

It is clear from Umalusi's history as reflected in the report, that Umalusi is currently responsible for quality assuring the following:

- State schooling from Grade R to Grade 12 in the form of quality assurance of the National Senior Certificate (NSC), and accredited independent schools that offer the national Curriculum and Assessment Policy (CAPS) syllabi that lead to the NSC, through the accreditation process.

- Formal adult learning insofar as it is associated with the acquisition of certified General and Further Education. This learning includes the acquisition of literacy and numeracy in ABET Levels 1, 2 and 3, the General Education and Training Certificate (NQF Level 1), and the newly-registered National Senior Certificate for Adults (NASCA) to be implemented in 2016-2017 and newly amended Senior Certificate, both NQF Level 4 qualifications. It is proposed that the CET Centres will offer these qualifications, and will be recognised through an accreditation process (MHET 2013).

- Vocational Education, as exemplified by the National Certificate: Vocational (NCV) at NQF Levels 2–4 inclusive, in TVET colleges and in schools, and such private colleges that offer the NCV, through an accreditation process (MHET 2013).

- The White Paper (MHET 2013) also creates an opportunity for Umalusi to develop qualifications at NQF Level 5.

The forms of learning that Umalusi is mandated to quality assure differ clearly – in ways that are made clear in the sections that follow below – from learning associated directly with workplace education and training, as well as from that offered in universities and universities of technology. As stated clearly in the White Paper (MHET 2013), and as reflected in the differentiated qualifications registered on the NQF, there are *other* qualifications and part-qualifications for Trades and Occupation at NQF Levels 1– 4, as well as those existing or with potential to exist at NQF Level 5.

6.1.4 Journey towards defining quality: SAFCERT to Umalusi

This section sketches approaches to quality assurance in the 1992-2008 period, in the contexts of the South African Certification Council (SAFCERT) and Umalusi: Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training, and the shift between the two.

6.1.4.1 South African Certification Council (SAFCERT)

After the advent of the new democratic state in 1994, the South African Certification Council (SAFCERT), established in 1992 under the previous regime[3], found itself subject to the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), established in 1995 through the promulgation of the SAQA Act (RSA 1995). Changes

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[3] *Apartheid* South Africa, which was already transitioning to a democratic state in 1992.

towards systemic integration were under way. The SAQA Act established the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and the education and training system moved into the newly conceived outcomes-based approach to setting standards. Quality assurance mechanisms were established in the form of Education and Training Quality Assurers (ETQAs). These developments ushered in a review of statutory bodies such as SAFCERT.

By 2001 SAFCERT had been terminated and Umalusi, the Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training, was established as a Band ETQA under the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act (RSA 2001a) (see further detail regarding this change in Section 6.1.1 of this report).

Until its termination in 2001, SAFCERT had quality assured and certificated qualifications for all then-Departments of Education – National and Provincial[4] - and private assessment bodies established during the previous regime. These qualifications included:

1. Qualifications offered in schools:
   - Senior Certificate (SC)

2. Qualifications offered in technical colleges, which were rationalised in the post-1995 system:
   - National Technical Certificate (N3)
   - National Senior Certificate: Colleges (NSC: Colleges)

3. Qualifications offered in Adult Learning Centres (commencing in 2001):
   - General Education and Training Certificate (GETC for Adults).

SAFCERT's quality assurance regime focused primarily on national exit examinations set for large-scale assessment of the qualifications mentioned in Section 6.1.4.1 above. SAFCERT's work included the quality assurance of examination products (such as exam and test papers and marking memoranda), quality assurance of marking, and monitoring of the administration of national examinations for each of these qualifications at their exit points.

The quality assurance regime also included standardisation of learner achievements across provincial examining bodies (the provincial Departments of Education each set examinations) as well as two private assessment bodies, namely the Independent Examinations Board (IEB) and the Beweging vir Christelike Volkseie Onderwys (BCVO).

All of these processes culminated in SAFCERT certification of learner achievements in the aforementioned qualifications.

It is worth noting that the Senior Certificate (SC), the N-programmes and the NSC (Colleges) were curriculum-based (as opposed to being unit standard-based[5]) qualifications and performance was tested through large-scale national examinations. The GETC (for Adults) that emerged in 2001 was the first, and as it turned out, the only unit standard-based qualification that SAFCERT/ Umalusi ever quality assured.

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[4] These Departments of Education included those under the House of Representatives, the House of Delegates, and the House of Assembly. The House of Assembly administered four provincial education departments for Whites and the Department of Education and Training for Africans, a department for independent schools and ten homeland education departments – there were 18 racially segregated education and training departments in the apartheid system in all.

[5] Outcomes-Based Education, an approach with a particular historical trajectory favoured at the time (Allais 2010), was often linked to a unit standards-based approach in South Africa and internationally, an approach not embraced by constituencies basing qualifications on curricula. In later years, the value of emphasising learning outcomes came to be generally acknowledged in South Africa, but these learning outcomes were and remain linked to curricula.

The GETC, so to speak, was the crossover qualification from the traditional to the new unit standard-based approach to setting standards within qualifications, and the decentralising of curriculum development and implementation to sites of learning introduced by the SAQA Act (RSA 1995).

From its inception, the GETC did not fit well into the established approaches adopted by SAFCERT/ Umalusi in respect of the other qualifications. The lack of an explicit curriculum to support outcome statements in the GETC created problems regarding the consistency of standards in the sector from the beginning[6]. This disjunction[7] was made explicit in a number of research projects undertaken by Umalusi after 2002.

6.1.4.2 Umalusi's approach to quality assurance

In taking over from SAFCERT and shouldering the extended mandate of a Band Education and Training Quality Assurer (ETQA) as required by the GENFETQA Act (RSA 2001a), Umalusi found itself in a crowded and contested terrain of other newly established ETQAs within the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs).

In her report to the third meeting of the Umalusi Council in 2002, Dr Peliwe Lolwana, Umalusi's CEO at the time, stated: *"The contestations that exist in the field in which we operate are very energy draining and this must be taken into consideration in reviewing the speed [at] which new developments can take place"* [8].

Besides 'clearing a patch' in which to operate, Umalusi began to develop its quality assurance approaches and practices.

Dr Lolwana stated, clarifying Umalusi's priorities:

> *The policy development of quality assurance of qualifications and learning programmes has started with the research that has been discussed [at] the Council workshop. A consultation workshop with stakeholders is being planned for January next year. The outcomes of this research and discussions are: (a) to establish the role that Umalusi should play in quality assuring the qualifications and learning programmes of the General and Further Education and Training bands; (b) to establish the criteria against which qualifications and learning programmes should be evaluated in order to satisfy the requirements established by Umalusi; and (c) to identify all other processes that must be put in place to ensure that quality qualifications are in place [and] delivered and [that] quality outcome[s] are attained by learners[9].*

It is therefore clear that from the start, Umalusi envisaged interrogating the nature and standards of the qualifications (and the associated curricula and assessment) that it certified. The research reported in the remainder of this section shows the extent to which Umalusi's quality assurance approach and processes are founded on strong evidence-based research.

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[6] The extent of the inconsistency of standards within the Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) sector as it was then known, was made clear in the reports (Allais and Bolton 2008a, 2008b) based on an investigation into curricula available nationally, provincially and locally in Departments of Education and at Public Adult Learning Centres (PALCs) respectively in the Adult Education and Training (AET) sector.

[7] A concept referred to in an unpublished Umalusi report (Young and Allais 2005: 16).

[8] Dr Lolwana's statement at the third meeting of the Umalusi Council (Chief Executive Officer's Report, 28 November 2002).

[9] Dr Lolwana's statement at the third meeting of the Umalusi Council (Chief Executive Officer's Report, 28 November 2002).

6.1.4.2.1 Umalusi's first investigations towards enhancing quality

Umalusi's first investigation towards enhancing quality in the qualifications it quality assures led to the report, *Framework for Qualifications and Programmes in Further Education and Training: Current thinking and possibilities* (SAIDE 2002).

This report was commissioned to inform Umalusi in its engagement with other role-players in the Further Education and Training Band. The report explored the implications of SAQA's 1996 regulations in relation to the provision of qualifications in the GFET Band at that time. When considering the GFET Band of the NQF at the time, it is clear that there were divergent approaches to qualifications within this band.

Ideally a qualifications framework needs to provide common reference points for people involved in setting standards, developing programmes and quality assuring diverse qualifications. A focus on this kind of common knowledge was to emerge after 2008 with the promulgation of the NQF Act (RSA 2008c), determination of the three associated and differentiated NQF Sub-Frameworks (2012-2013), and the extensive communication, cooperation and collaboration around these developments (see Section 1 of the report for more details). However, Umalusi's (2002) report served as a basis for discussion of the issues that had emerged from the various policy processes and practices in the sector in South Africa. It also examined systems and practices internationally. In particular, the document explored different approaches to the following questions.

- What broad categories of qualifications should there be in the sector?
- What should the purpose of the qualifications be, in broad terms?
- What target groups should the qualifications serve?
- How should these qualifications be organised?
- How should the qualifications articulate with each other?
- How should the qualifications articulate with higher levels of education and training?

6.1.4.2.2 Umalusi's second investigation towards enhancing quality

In 2003, shortly after the first report (Umalusi 2002), Umalusi commissioned an investigation into the standards of the Senior Certificate examinations, the examination with potential to provide learner-access to Higher Education and thus the most critical qualification Umalusi certified at the time.

When the research was commissioned, there had been noticeable variations in the overall pass rates in the Senior Certificate examinations in the previous 10 years. The pass rate had fallen from 56% in 1992 to a low of 47% in 1997. It had then climbed rapidly to 73% in 2003, an improvement of 26% in a six-year period.

This significant increase in the pass rate had fuelled public speculation that the standard of the Senior Certificate was dropping. These perceptions were prominent in media reports at the time. In view of these perceptions, and as part of Umalusi's quality assurance regime, research was undertaken to evaluate the standards of the Senior Certificate examinations.

This investigation was Umalusi's first experience in grappling with the notion of "standards": what educational standards are, where standards are held and how standards should be set and measured.

The intention was that the investigation would assist Umalusi in coming to grips with the changing nature and character of the Senior Certificate examination as it had been set, administered and moderated up to the time of the research. Under Umalusi's guidance, teams of researchers, both internal and external to Umalusi, investigated several aspects of the matric examinations between 1992 and 2003, resulting in a

report titled, *Investigation into the Senior Certificate examination: Report on the Evaluation of the Senior Certificate examination* (Umalusi 2004).

The first part of the investigation comprised a qualitative evaluation of the matric examination papers and marking procedures in 1992 (when education was still divided into 18 different departments in the sunset years of the *apartheid* regime), in 1999 and 2003 (when pass rates were at their highest). Subjects focussed on in the research were English First Language, English Second Additional Language, Biology, History, Mathematics and Physical Science. The purpose of this part of the investigation was to evaluate the relative assessment standards as reflected in the examination instruments between 1999 and 2003.

This work was followed by an evaluation of the statistical moderation process used to standardise the results, to establish whether there had been any changes in the standardisation processes over time and if so, how the changes might have affected the standards of the examinations.

The impact of Umalusi's practice of language compensation whereby 5% compensation is awarded for African first-language candidates who write the examinations in their second languages was also evaluated. Related aspects of the examinations such as pass rates, rules, processes and procedures used in the administration of the examination were examined[10] (see Section 6.1.8.6 for more details regarding this work).

6.1.4.2.3 Selecting a suitable quality assurance model: Umalusi's focus on examinations and accreditation

While post-*apartheid* public debates around qualifications and standards were noted by Umalusi, strategic decisions were made around Umalusi's approach to quality assurance.

In its approach to quality assurance, Umalusi always took into account the different histories and existing provision of education in schools and Further Education and Training (TVET) Colleges, and the emerging provision for Adult Education and Training (AET). For example, it took cognisance of the new TVET College curricula, the General Education and Training Certificate (GETC), the National Curriculum Statements (NCS) for the National Senior Certificate (NSC), and Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) funded unit standard-based programmes.

Given the historical fragmentation in South African education and training and the urgent need for development in many areas of the system, Umalusi saw the need for a discussion document that focused on mechanisms to encourage shared understanding of the meaning of 'quality'. The document, *Approaches to Quality Assurance in the GET and TVET Bands* (Young and Allais 2004), explored strategies Umalusi could adopt in fulfilling its responsibilities. A key concern was how to ensure that quality, and not merely procedural compliance, was monitored.

The discussion document (Young and Allais 2004) considered the origins and purposes of the idea of quality assurance and why, in spite of all the problems it had generated, it had been so widely adopted internationally. The argument was made (Young and Allais 2004) that quality assurance in South Africa was closely associated with other ideas that had gained credibility in the country. These ideas included the notion of the key role of qualifications as drivers of education policy; the idea that qualifications could be expressed explicitly in terms of statements of standards (in many cases as unit standards); and the idea that the curriculum was best represented as a set of outcome statements rather than in the form of syllabi or learning programme guidelines.

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[10] Report on the Evaluation of the Senior Certificate examination (Young and Allais 2004).

It was argued (Young and Allais 2004) that these ideas, together with the prevailing approach to quality assurance, reflected a common underlying set of assumptions. One of these assumptions, that quality could no longer be taken for granted, but needed to be enhanced and maintained through a separate system of quality assurance, had to be understood in relation to a particular overall approach to reforming curriculum, qualifications and assessment.

It was not the purpose of the discussion document (Young and Allais 2004) to criticise this kind of development. In some sense it was found that the shift to this understanding of quality assurance existed in all countries trying to modernise their education systems. The aims of the discussion document were (a) to understand these developments; (b) to identify the interdependence and common roots of the related ideas; and (c) to explore implications for South Africa in general and for Umalusi in particular. Finally, on the basis of its analysis, the aim of the discussion document was to advise Umalusi regarding approaches that would best serve its mandate.

In particular, the discussion document (Young and Allais 2004) drew on a number of approaches to quality that had been developed internationally and indicated how each approach was related to qualifications and curriculum. Broadly speaking, it was possible to distinguish between four main approaches to ensuring the quality of education:

- The *Examination Model* is closely related to a knowledge-based model of curriculum. Its focus is on the assessment of individual students. It treats qualifications as being primarily concerned with certification. It necessarily involves syllabi or some other way of specifying content on which the examinations are based. It does not preclude the more general specification of educational outcomes as the basis for guiding selection and interpretation of content.

- The *Accreditation Model* focuses on the accreditation of institutions, rather than on individual students. It can be combined with an Examinations Model in ensuring that institutions have the resources (human and material) to offer programmes leading to particular qualifications. It is also used in combination with forms of delegated assessment leading to standards-based qualifications, such as the General Education and Training Certificate (GETC): ABET Level 4 (NQF Level 1), a qualification which is in the process of being replaced, as explained below. So, for example, one private assessment body has for many years taken responsibility for offering this qualification alongside state provision. Another assessment body is also in the process of earning the relevant accreditation to be able to assess this qualification, and more pertinently, the GETC's curriculum-based successor, the General Education and Training Certificate for Adults (GETCA).

- The *Inspection Model,* which pre-dates current attempts at qualification or curriculum reform internationally. This model originated in the evaluation of schools in the United Kingdom, but has been extended to include evaluation of any institution or organisation providing education, such as universities and colleges.

- The *Systemic Evaluation Model,* which is concerned with assessing the effectiveness of a system as a whole, or parts of the system in relation to the whole.

Based on an analysis of these models, Young and Allais (2004) concluded that the main approach to quality assurance of qualifications and learning programmes in the TVET band in South Africa should be through an Examination Model and the accreditation of institutions (which includes inspection). Young and Allais (2004) argued for a greater focus on inspection and less focus on examinations in the GET than in the TVET Band. The discussion document noted that it was also important for Umalusi to take into account the

differences between the school and college sectors, and between the demands of general education and vocational qualifications.

The discussion document (Young and Allais 2004) went on to recommend that quality assurance of qualifications should take place primarily through the systems already in place to monitor the standards of question papers and marking, as well as the systems in place to monitor curricula and syllabi. The suggestion was however that these processes needed to be supplemented by additional processes to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning taking place in institutions. The role of inspectorates as important components of monitoring and improving quality was emphasised, and it was suggested that Umalusi should play a role in 'inspecting the inspectors'.

The discussion document (Young and Allais 2004) also suggested that Umalusi should consider firstly, accrediting assessment bodies to conduct assessment against prescribed syllabuses, and secondly, moderation bodies, which could moderate assessment at site level. What was important in the system as a whole was ensuring that the different components of quality assurance described here worked together, and that information flowed between them; there needed to be a relationship between the moderation of question papers, inputs into syllabus design and inspection/accreditation of providers.

In short, the report by Young and Allais (2004) substantially informed the approaches adopted by Umalusi at the time, and has continued to frame its work, both in developing qualifications and in quality assurance.

6.1.4.2.4 Developing and consolidating quality assurance in GET and TVET

In 2005 Dr Peliwe Lolwana, the Chief Executive Officer of Umalusi, developed the first of many versions of the policy entitled *A Quality Assurance Framework for General and Further Education and Training* (Umalusi 2006a)*. This document expressed Umalusi's approaches to quality assurance. In it (Umalusi 2006b: 2]) Dr Lolwana stated Umalusi's priorities:

> *First, a framework for qualifications, through which the integrity, adequacy and suitability of qualifications are interrogated, is required. The next requirements are clear procedures on how the quality assurance procedures will be operationalised, based on sound and tested quality assurance procedures in education and training.*

2005 was also the year in which Umalusi developed the first version of its *Qualifications Framework for General and Further Education and Training* (Umalusi 2006b).

Between 2005 and 2008, Umalusi conducted several related research projects that served to mature, refine and deepen its thinking around the nature of standards and quality in education. Some of the reports are described below.

- *Apples and Oranges? A comparison of school and colleges subjects* (Umalusi 2006a) was a comparative report investigating the relative standards of selected school and TVET College subjects at NQF Level 4. The research was conducted in an attempt to understand the relative standards of four subjects offered at TVET colleges (then Technical Colleges) and high schools in South Africa, and to understand the extent to which these different courses prepared learners for Higher Education. The research focused on Mathematics, Physical Science, English and Hospitality Studies courses. It found that there were some overlaps but also some critical differences between the courses. Importantly, the research began to inform Umalusi's future positions around credit accumulation, credit transfer and articulation.