

CHAPTER 2

CHE STANDING COMMITTEES, TASK TEAMS AND PROJECTS

Since its inception CHE activities have been undertaken through Task Teams and Projects. A CHE workshop of its new members in August 2002, however, decided that three different kinds of structures were necessary for CHE activities - *CHE Standing Committees, Task Teams and Projects*.

1. STANDING COMMITTEES

Standing Committees are devoted to key HE policy areas and issues that require the ongoing attention of the CHE. The Chair and members of Standing Committees are appointed by the CHE. Provision is made for the participation of non-CHE members with the approval of the Council. While Standing Committees are directed and supervised by CHE members, the CHE Secretariat handles their management and administration.

Three Standing Committees have been established.

Higher Education Legislation

This Standing Committee attends to the preparation, tabling for discussion and eventual adoption, at the full committee meeting of the CHE, of all CHE advice on proposed higher education legislation. Such legislation may take the form of new Acts on or related to higher education, amendments to the existing *Higher Education Act* and legislation related to higher education and all higher education regulations.

During the past year the CHE had advised on the Higher Education Amendment Bill of 2002 and regulations for the registration of private providers of higher education and training.

The Chair of the Standing Committee is Prof. G.J. Gerwel, with Ms J.A. Glennie, Adv. M. Hoekstra and Prof. S. Badat as members.





Shape and Size

The Shape and Size Standing Committee deals with the issues of the overall capacity (size in terms of number of institutions, enrolments and participation rate) of the higher education system in relation to the need to develop the high level and varied intellectual and conceptual knowledge, abilities and skills to meet the local, regional, national and international requirements of a developing democracy. This standing committee also deals with the development of intellectual and conceptual knowledge and skills as well as ongoing develop-

ment of professionals at different levels, for different economic and social sectors, in different fields and disciplines and through different types and kinds of higher education institutions and educational and pedagogic modes (*shape*).




The Standing Committee is headed by Dr K Mokhele and comprises of the following members: Ms T January-McLean, Prof. M Ramashala, Mr J Mamabolo, Prof. SF Coetzee, Mr SBA. Isaacs and Prof. S. Badat.

During the past year the Standing Committee has provided the background work to enable the CHE to advise on:

-  The proposals of the National Working Group, established in March 2001 by the Minister of Education to 'investigate and advise him on appropriate arrangements for consolidating the provision of HE on a regional basis through establishing new institutional and organisational forms, including the feasibility of reducing the number of HE institutions';
-  The Ministry of Education's criteria for the determination of the programme profiles of public higher education institutions;
-  The Ministry of Education's proposals for the institutional restructuring of higher education; and
-  The nomenclature of the proposed comprehensive institutions.

The advice given to the Minister of Education is confidential, unless the Minister decides otherwise. The CHE has applied its mind to the issues put to it for consideration and has based its advice on the historical development of its own understanding of institutional restructuring and its commitment to ensuring that the higher education system makes a powerful contribution to the achievement of economic and social development, social justice and democracy in South Africa and Southern Africa and Africa.

A key current task of the Standing Committee is to produce a policy report that will assist the CHE to advise the Minister of Education on the conditions and criteria under which (private) higher education institutions may be recognised as:

-  Universities or technikons or institutes of technology, etc. and/or
-  Undergraduate degree offering and/or awarding institutions, and/or
-  Postgraduate degree, diploma or certificate offering and/or awarding institutions.

This in turn will assist the HEQC to formulate policy and practice around the specific accreditation requirements that institutions need to meet in order to be permitted to provide undergraduate degree programmes or/and postgraduate degree, diploma and certificate programmes (as opposed to only undergraduate certificates and diplomas).



The rationale for the project is that, increasingly, private higher education institutions are seeking to offer undergraduate degree programmes, as well as postgraduate programmes up to the level of the doctoral degree. There are

also private higher education providers that are seeking to use the designation 'university'. In this regard, concerns have been expressed around the need to protect and regulate the use by higher education institutions of the designations 'university', 'technikon', 'institute of technology', etc., and ensure that private providers of higher education and training have the requisite capabilities and capacities to offer undergraduate degree programmes and postgraduate degree, diploma and certificate programmes that 'are not inferior to standards at a comparable public higher education institution' (Higher Education Act, 1997).

The specific aims of the project are to:

- a) Identify and analyse the possible substantive criteria and conditions in terms of which (private) higher education and training institutions may be recognised as Universities, Technikons, Institutes of Technology, etc. and to make recommendations in this regard.
- b) Identify and analyse the possible processes and procedures in terms of which (private) higher education and training institutions may be recognised as Universities, Technikons, Institutes of Technology, etc. and to make recommendations in this regard.
- c) Identify and analyse the possible mechanisms through which (private) higher education and training institutions may be recognised as Universities, Technikons, Institutes of Technology, etc. and to make recommendations in this regard.
- d) Identify and analyse the possible substantive criteria and conditions in terms of which (private) higher education and training institutions may be recognised as Undergraduate degree offering and/or awarding institutions or/and Postgraduate degree, diploma or certificate offering and/or awarding institutions and to make recommendations in this regard.
- e) Identify and analyse the possible processes and procedures in terms of which (private) higher education and training institutions may be recognised as Undergraduate degree offering and/or awarding institutions or/and Postgraduate degree, diploma or certificate offering and/or awarding institutions and to make recommendations in this regard.
- f) Identify and analyse the possible mechanisms through which (private) higher education and training institutions may be recognised as Undergraduate degree offering and/or awarding institutions or/and Postgraduate degree, diploma or certificate offering and/or awarding institutions and to make recommendations in this regard.

The investigation will:

-  Survey the South African higher education legislation and policy documents with reference to the aims of the project;
-  Review the literature on higher education policy and practice related to the usage of the designations 'university' and 'university of technology' or 'institute of technology' in select countries;

- ❖ Review the literature on higher education policy and practice related to the offering of undergraduate degree programmes and postgraduate degree, diploma and certificate programmes in select countries;
- ❖ Invite submissions from such organisations as the South African University Vice-Chancellor's Association, the Committee of Technikon Principals, the Alliance of Private Providers of Education and Training and Development, higher education institutions, student organisations, etc. around the aims of the project; and
- ❖ Interview select officials, if necessary, from organisations such as the Department of Education, the Council on Higher Education, the South African University Vice-Chancellor's Association, the Committee of Technikon Principals, the Alliance of Private Providers of Education and Training and Development, professional councils and SETAs, higher education institutions, student organisations, etc. around the aims of the project.

The recommendations that are advanced around the criteria and conditions that private institutions should satisfy to be permitted recognition as 'universities' and 'technikons' and to be permitted to offer undergraduate degree programmes and postgraduate degree, diploma and certificate programmes must be equitable. That is, public higher education institutions, notwithstanding their status as 'universities' and 'technikons' and as degree offering institutions, must equally meet the criteria and conditions. They should not apply to private institutions alone.

The CHE hopes to advise the Minister in late-2003.

Funding and Financing

The CHE Funding and Financing Standing Committee deals with all aspects of the funding and financing of higher education. *The Higher Education Act* and the *White Paper* allocate specific responsibilities to the CHE in this regard, such as advising on 'the policies, principles and criteria that should govern the allocation of public funds among higher education providers', 'a mechanism for the allocation of public funds', 'student financial aid', 'policy regarding public and private financing and provision, the level and distribution of public subsidies to higher education' and 'forms of student financial assistance'.

Prof. S.J. Saunders chairs the Standing Committee and its members are Prof. B. Figaji, Prof. M. Ramashala, Prof. S. Badat and Prof. R.H. Stumpf (invited non-CHE member).

Funding is viewed by the National Plan as a crucial steering mechanism in the transformation of the HE system and in March 2001 the DoE released its proposed new funding framework for discussion. The CHE's advice to the Minister was submitted in October 2001 and made public in early 2002. The CHE response critically analysed whether, the extent to which and how the new funding framework advanced the objectives of the National Plan.

Specifically:

- ✿ The achievement of increased systemic and institutional efficiencies;
- ✿ The achievement of increased institutional diversity;
- ✿ The achievement of the desired graduate profiles;
- ✿ The sustaining and promotion of research; and
- ✿ The achievement of equity and redress.

The Funding and Financing Standing Committee has also been involved in initiating and supervising an investigation into institutional redress policy and strategy as well as the planning, implementation and funding of such a policy and strategy for the purpose of advising the Minister in this regard. The specific aims of the project are to:

- a) Conceptualise the meaning that should be attached to 'institutional redress' in the context of creating a new HE landscape;
- b) Analyse the place of 'institutional redress' policy in an overall policy of redress and equity;
- c) Analyse institutional redress policy and strategy in the context of proposed mergers between HDIs and HDIs and HAIs;
- d) Identify and discuss the strategies that could contribute effectively to institutional redress in the context of creating a new HE landscape;
- e) Analyse issues related to financing effective institutional redress strategies - the duration of strategies; required budgets, possible sources of finances, etc;
- f) Analyse issues related to the planning and implementation of redress strategies and funding - determination of areas for institutional redress; the basis of redress allocations; the required infrastructure; the monitoring of implementation, etc; and
- g) Advance specific recommendations on institutional redress policy and strategy and its planning, implementation and funding.

The Standing Committee has considered two draft reports and the investigation is to be completed by mid-2003, with the provision of advice to the Minister scheduled for late 2003. The Reference group for the investigation includes Prof. Nkondo, Prof. Mosala and Mr Herman Rhode.

2. TASK TEAMS

Task Teams are focused on systemic or major HE policy issues on which the Minister has requested the CHE's advice or the CHE wishes to provide advice proactively. They are established according to need. The members of Task Teams, including the Chair, are appointed by the CHE and non-CHE members may participate with the approval of the Council. CHE members direct and supervise Task Teams with the CHE Secretariat responsible for their management and administration.

Governance

As a result of widespread and increasing concern around leadership and management of public higher education institutions, at the beginning of 2001

the CHE established a Task Team on the governance of HEIs. The Task Team had three main objectives:

- ❖ To describe and analyse the state of governance at HEIs with special focus on the role of councils, senates, institutional forums and executive management and the relationship between these four structures;
- ❖ To monitor the implementation, efficacy and the consequences of co-operative governance at HEIs in South Africa; and
- ❖ To make recommendations on how to improve efficiency, effectiveness and accountability in higher education governance.

The investigation was to be conducted within the framework of the principles, values and goals defined for higher education in the government's various policy documents since the mid-late 1990s.

Arising out of his own concerns, at a meeting with the CHE in May 2001, the Minister of Education requested the CHE to advise him on the governance of HEIs by June 2002, giving new urgency to the work of the Task Team.

Prof Martin Hall of the Centre for Higher Education Development at the University of Cape Town was commissioned to conduct research under the supervision of the Task Team. The CHE invited various people from within and outside higher education to also participate in its Task Team. The Task Team, supplemented by non-CHE members with expertise in governance, met as required to discuss and approve the research methodology and the draft reports of Prof Hall and his team.

The outcomes of the work of the Task Team and consultants were two documents: a Research Report, *Governance in South African Higher Education*, authored by the consultants and published under the auspices of the CHE and a Policy Report, *Promoting Good Governance in South African Higher Education*. Instead of receiving the Policy Report, the Minister of Education requested the CHE to distribute the Policy Report for public comment, analyse the comments and provide him with advice. This process will be finalised by late 2003.

The Research Report, *Governance in South African Higher Education*, is based on substantial empirical research and analysis by the consultants. A representative sample of twelve higher education institutions was carefully selected and agreed to participate in the investigation. Institutions provided key documentation such as the minutes of council meetings that allowed the consultants to analyse the actual practices of governance. In addition, site visits were conducted to interview a cross-section of members of the different governance structures of the institutions. Thus, field work, analysis of primary documents, analysis of legislation and policy and documentary analysis of the secondary literature on governance was combined to produce a research report that situates the governance of South African higher education institutions in the broader contexts of changes in higher education institutions and the socio-cultural and politico-economic transformations dubbed as globalisation.

With the completion of its work, the Governance Task has been disestablished. The areas of further work that have been identified - such as consideration of the governance of merging institutions and a 'code' of good governance practice will be undertaken as a CHE project.

Other Task Teams







Two other Task Teams, on Academic Policy and Language Policy, were also disestablished.

The Academic Policy Task Team, which included representatives of the key national stakeholders, completed its work in late 2001. The CHE-approved report on new Academic Policy was handed over to the DoE in late 2001 and subsequently released by the DoE as a public discussion document in January 2002. The CHE now awaits a policy document from the DoE on which it will advise the Minister of Education.

The advice of the CHE Language Policy Task Team was approved by the CHE and submitted to the Minister of Education in mid-2001. The Ministry has since released its policy on language in higher education, which draws substantially on the CHE advice.

3. PROJECTS

Issues that are not related to the immediate policy advice responsibilities of the CHE are, with the approval and guidance of the CHE, directed, supervised and managed by the CHE Secretariat as Projects. These include:

-  Research and investigations that give effect to and/or inform the diverse work of the CHE. The results of these may, following discussion by the Council, lead to advice to the Minister;
-  Reporting on the state of South African higher education;
-  The annual Consultative Conference;
-  CHE conferences and discussion forums;
-  CHE publications and other media; and
-  The production of the Annual Report to parliament.

The projects of the CHE seek to give effect to the responsibilities that have been accorded to the CHE. The requirement to contribute to the development of higher education provides considerable leeway for the CHE to identify systemic and national HE issues that deserve critical reflection and to initiate projects in this regard. The privileged vantage point that the CHE enjoys with respect to national HE and HE-related developments also facilitates identifying issues for investigation.

The CHE is convinced that its own ability to provide considered, independent and especially proactive advice is dependent on promoting and helping to sustain high quality critical scholarship on South African HE and HE in general. In the

South African context this requires encouraging and helping to develop and nurture a community of HE scholars and policy analysts within and outside HE institutions. Through a number of its projects - monitoring and evaluation, critical triennial review of HE, the role of HE in social transformation to mention just a few - the CHE seeks to involve established and emerging academics and researchers and contribute to building institutional capacity for HE studies.

Building Relationships between Higher Education and the Private and Public Sectors to respond to Knowledge and High-Level Human Resource Needs in the context of Inequality and Unemployment.

The purpose of the 'responsiveness' project was to give effect to the CHE's statutory responsibility 'to formulate advice to the Minister on stimulating greater institutional responsiveness to societal needs, especially those linked to stimulating the South African economy such as greater higher education-industry partnerships'.

The project aimed to understand labour market needs, the fit between graduates' skills, competencies and attributes and employers needs while reviewing the theoretical and methodological approaches that underpin the issue of responsiveness. In addition, the project was intended to bring together leaders of higher education and leaders from the private and public sector and labour unions to talk about expectations, needs, and, especially, the possibility of relationships that were not only beneficial for higher education and employers, but also appropriate for the economic and social needs of the country.

Following a lengthy period of planning and organising, representatives of higher education institutions, business and government officials came together in a colloquium held on 27-28 of June 2002 at the Sandton Convention Centre. The Ministers of Education, Trade and Industry and Arts, Culture, Science and Technology addressed participants on different aspects of the relationship between higher education and employers of high-level skills.

Since the interest of the CHE was to encourage dialogue, a colloquium was chosen as the appropriate format. The dialogue was supported by five research papers commissioned by the CHE, which discussed different aspects of the relation between education and the labour market, higher education and employers, and higher education and industry.

Discussion at the colloquium centred on the following issues:



Relations between labour market and higher education

There was a high level of dysfunctionality between the outputs of education and the demands of the labour market, a situation that could be seen from the failure of higher education graduates to obtain employment. This was the direct consequence of the 'poor' and 'irrelevant' education that higher education institutions were providing.

Unemployment among higher education graduates means that institutions of higher learning were not meeting students' expectations. This had the effect of

lowering the demand for higher education because potential students did not think that higher education would guarantee their absorption into the labour market. Non-absorption of graduates in the labour market was attributed to the poor quality of the programmes offered at private and public institutions of higher education. The solution to this problem lay in part in curriculum change and in the development of graduates.

Contextual changes affecting the relationship between higher education and business

It was necessary to distinguish between issues of context within higher education and those of a more general nature. Among the former was the impending restructuring of the HE system, which was pointed out as the 'single most important issue', and the international trends of primacy of the market and the commodification of education. Among the broader contextual issues, participants mentioned the impact of new technologies, the government's macro-economic framework and the challenge of job creation that was implied in government's Growth, Equity and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy. Other contextual factors such as the sectoral composition of services - the change from primary to tertiary services; and the concomitant need for more skilled labour; were also referred to. The view was expressed that business itself was not fully cognizant of these changes nor was it able to respond to these adequately. These contextual changes called for a new framework within which the relationship between HE and business had to be constructed.

Knowledge and the Research Problem

There is a need to envision teaching and research in new ways in order to produce a new research community and to define the nature of the research problem differently. The country faces new socio-economic challenges and R&D capacity had to be developed in the context of the post-apartheid economy, unemployment, poverty, the rapid changes in the communication technology environment and in global economic relations, etc.

At the same time, it is critical to expand the research community and 'intellectual capital' more generally. For national development it is extremely important to sustain, renew and expand national research capability. There is still a considerable backlog in the production of a new and diverse research community because of the legacy of apartheid on the development of such a community.

It is necessary to develop a 'sustained conversation' between partners in research and knowledge production through the idea of enlightened self-interest, and government incentives.

Partnerships between HE and business

It is widely accepted that partnerships are both necessary and unavoidable to enhance the relationship between HE and business and that these partnerships required a commitment on all sides. In particular, there are different roles to be played by members of the partnership. Conversations about the relationship can only be constructive if HE and business are not posited as

opposites and if both parties could transcend 'the vocabulary of condemnation' to construct a sound relationship. There is a need for continued dialogue to explore how HE and the economic actors could be brought closer together to develop a mutually reinforcing relationship. This relationship has to be more than a formal one and had to become a substantive one. The partnership has to be voluntary, based on mutual interest and has to evince intellectual integrity.

The relationship between HE and business has to understand the different 'cultures of institutions' and be based on common purposes and nationally agreed objectives, such as:

- To encourage science, maths and technology;
- To improve retention and throughput rates;
- Strategic long-term partnerships for national development;
- Regional economic development;
- A focus on small companies;
- Sharing responsibilities to develop continuous dialogue for specific outcomes to enhance enlightened self-interest; and
- The need for both HE and business to mobilize greater resources for institutional [including curriculum] change.

The relationship could also enhance the importance of interdisciplinary studies and make it possible for natural science students in particular to understand the social context of their knowledge better. It is important to think of inter-disciplinarity especially at the postgraduate studies level.

The partnership between HE and business should not be a process to 'takeover' and silence the voices of 'critical' academics. Similarly, selective partnerships based on historical and racial relationships and social and cultural networks have to be replaced by relationships based on a new democratic framework.

The deliberations at the CHE colloquium indicated that the actors that needed to come together in building strong, healthy and durable relationships between higher education and the public and private sectors operate in particular spaces, often have particular preoccupations and may work according to different rhythms.

In terms of the higher education system, representatives agreed on the following points:

1. The key functions of higher education institutions today are the production and dissemination of knowledge and the induction of learners into knowledge, skills and competencies that ensures that they are equipped to be economically and socially productive as well as critical and democratic citizens.
2. Unless higher education institutions are organised to undertake these functions effectively and efficiently and with close attention to equity and quality, they are unlikely to be innovative, dynamic and responsive institutions. This will inhibit their ability to make a powerful and critical contribution to the economic, social, cultural and intellectual development of South Africa.

3. The national challenge of the reconstruction and transformation of the economy and society requires responsive higher education institutions.

It was also widely acknowledged that if there was no fundamental renewal, reconstruction and transformation, the functions that are today played by higher education institutions, and especially public higher education institutions, would be increasingly undertaken by other knowledge producing institutions as well as private institutions.

The private and public sectors clearly have their own transformation challenges. These include the present pattern of ownership of productive assets, the racial and gender composition of high and middle-level occupations, job creation, reduction of inequalities and poverty, effective and efficient delivery of services, social security and generally creating a better life for all.

Just as with higher education institutions, the legacy of the past continues to manifest itself in the private and public sectors. If there were concerns about the institutional cultures of various higher education institutions, concerns could equally be raised about the institutional cultures of private and public sector organisations.

One of the points that both the research commissioned by the CHE and the discussion during the colloquium made amply clear is that it was unlikely that there would ever be a congruence between the outputs of higher education in terms of graduates and the immediate and specific needs of public and private sector employers. In this regard, if higher education institutions had to become *learning* organisations, private businesses, parastatals, public organisations and government departments needed to become *mentoring* organisations or they would not retain staff with great potential or expertise.

The colloquium brought to the fore a series of future tasks and activities.

- a) Investigating the extent, nature and forms of partnerships between higher education institutions and the private and public sectors.
- b) Developing a principled relationship between higher education and the private and public sectors at the national level. The basis, nature and form of this relationship, the projects that could be undertaken jointly and indicators of its progress, would need to be defined.
- c) Regional interactions as well as individual interactions between a higher education institution and relevant private and public sector bodies could be effective in yielding concrete benefits to both sectors.

These suggestions have been incorporated into the advice that the Council on Higher Education has provided to the Minister of Education. The tasks defined, however, may not necessarily be undertaken by the CHE since they may be more appropriately taken up by other bodies or by other bodies and the CHE together.



The full report on the Colloquium proceedings is available on the CHE website.

The responsiveness project is generously supported by DfID and the Ford Foundation. The Standard Bank made a contribution to the colloquium.

Building a Monitoring and Evaluation System for South African HE

The CHE is required to monitor and evaluate whether, how, to what extent and with what consequences the vision, policy goals and objectives for HE are being realised.

The White Paper specifically refers to advising the Minister of Education on:

-  The performance of the system, having regard to available performance indicators
-  The progress being made towards achieving national equity and human resource development goals and measures to overcome impediments to achieving transformation goals (White Paper 3.25, i, j).

In 2001 the CHE submitted a proposal for funding to the Ford Foundation focused on the development of a system to monitor and evaluate the achievement of higher education policy objectives.

The proposal made a clear distinction between monitoring and evaluation, selecting for monitoring the size and social composition of the HE system, quality and responsiveness and efficacy, and leaving for evaluation specific areas thrown up by the results of monitoring.

Since the proposal was developed the Ministry of Education released the *National Plan on Higher Education* and its proposals for the restructuring of the higher education landscape. In addition, the work of the HEQC has expanded into new areas.

The implementation of HE transformation has been given new impetus with the release of the National Plan and the Ministry's restructuring proposals. From the point of view of the monitoring project this necessitates reconceptualising the scope of the original project to bring it in line with the new priorities and the new areas of work of the HEQC.




The overall aim of the project is to monitor and evaluate how, to what extent and with what consequences national higher education policy goals and objectives have been achieved and restructuring and transformation have been implemented. The project is particularly interested in the analysis of the achievement of policy targets taking into account means, processes and institutional culture in a dynamic socio-economic context.

In view of the recent developments in higher education policy the CHE project will have to address two distinct, though interrelated, areas of higher education reform - higher education restructuring and higher education transformation - as components of the same project. The monitoring of restructuring will focus on the implementation of mergers and other forms of institutional restructuring. The monitoring of transformation will focus on the achievement of the transformation goals defined in the *National Plan for Higher Education*.



The CHE views effective monitoring and evaluation as tools to strengthen social justice and democracy, and as crucial for ongoing dialogue and engagement towards social justice and democracy. A key theoretical consideration that informs this project is the recognition that the monitoring and evaluation of social policy (in this case higher education) cannot be done separately from an analysis of the broader social trends and processes which constitute the conditions within which policy goals are pursued and implementation takes place and which inevitably accelerate, halt, or derail them. In other words, a system of monitoring and evaluation is required that includes complex social analysis, ethnographic studies and interdisciplinary approaches and not merely the construction of performance indicators and quantitative data.

Triennial Review of HE

The triennial review project enables the CHE to:

-  Analyse and crystallise the key trends within South African and international HE;
-  Analyse and identify the major challenges that confront South African HE; and
-  Proactively identify issues and areas that require further investigation for the purposes of advice to the Minister of Education.

The process of producing a triennial *Review of Higher Education* is intended to have some important developmental effects:

-  Identifying and commissioning scholars and policy analysts to undertake research for the triennial review will help to develop a community of critical HE analysts; and
-  Attaching especially young black and women scholars and postgraduate Masters and Doctoral students to the scholars and policy analysts that are commissioned will ensure that the present rather small community of HE analysts is expanded and also becomes more representative in terms of 'race' and gender.

The Rockefeller Foundation has provided a grant of R 1.6 million for this project.





HE and Social Transformation

The general aim of the project is to understand the roles played by HE in radical or large-scale social, economic and political change through a number of country case studies, including South Africa. The Centre for Higher Education Research and Information at the British Open University and the Association of Commonwealth Universities spearhead the project internationally and have made about funds available for the South African investigation.

A National Working Group that supervises the South African research has met twice to conceptualise the research and consider a first draft report of appointed consultants. However, work has been delayed due to a new consultant having to be appointed mid-way through the project.

Review of the NQF

As a result of widespread and strong concerns among some national HE stakeholders, HE institutions, and administrators and academics around the NQF and its implementation in the HE and training sector, a report was commissioned by the CHE in 2001 to assist it to:

-  Advise the Minister of Education on the development of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and its implementation in relation to the HE band;
-  Make an informed and considered submission to the NQF Study Team that was established by the Ministers of Education and Labour to undertake 'a focused study of the development of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF)';
-  Discharge its ETQA responsibilities in an effective and efficient way (through the HEQC); and
-  Contribute to constructive debate around the NQF and its implementation in the HE sector.

The report, considered by the CHE just prior to the release of the report of the NQF Study Team on the Implementation of the National Qualifications Framework, was not further developed by the CHE as a Policy Advice Report. Instead it was decided that the report would be drawn upon to inform the CHE's response to the Study Team Report. The CHE responded extensively to the Study Team Report in August 2002.