

The ideal of an integrated national qualifications framework

Thesis

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SUMMARY

This study deals with the extent to which the South African education and training system reflects in principle, perception and practice, the ideal of an integrated national qualifications framework. It examines the uses and meaning of 'integration' through a number of lenses. These lenses include policy symbolism and a guiding philosophy for the emerging system; pragmatic and technical considerations; communities of practice; the complementarity of education and training; and curricular integration. In relation to the first two lenses, it is evident that an integrated framework is a powerful symbol of the break from a past system characterised by inequality, unfairness and deliberate mediocrity, to the extent that 'integration' has become the underpinning guiding philosophy for a new education and training system. However, such socio-political aspirations tend to place unreasonable demands on the system. The second set of lenses indicate that the 'comprehensiveness' of the system could work against the notion of integration, and in South Africa, has led to acute paralysis of the system. The strongest evidence of integration emerges from the last set of lenses namely, the grounded, meaningful practice through principled partnerships, as reflected in the development of sub-frameworks and communities of practice and the necessary collaboration needed for curricular integration and education and training delivery. Thus, it seems, to make integration meaningful, the persuasive logic of innovative, grounded practice, could be enabled and facilitated by less, not more, regulation and could be enhanced by structures that reflect the grounded practice.

KEY WORDS

National Qualifications Framework (NQF)	Policy symbolism
Guiding philosophy	Parity of esteem
Scope	Architecture
Policy breadth	Communities of practice and trust
Continuum of learning	Curricular integrability

ACRONYMS

A

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
ANC	African National Congress
ASDSFSA	Association of Skills Development Facilitators of South Africa

C

CAT	Credit Accumulation and Transfer
CHE	Council on Higher Education
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CTP	Committee of Technikon Principals (now part of Higher Education South Africa – HESA)
CUMSA	Curriculum Model for South Africa

D

DoE	Department of Education
DoL	Department of Labour

E

ECSA	Engineering Council of South Africa
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
ERS	Education Renewal Strategy
ETQA	Education and Training Quality Assurance Body
EU	European Union

F

FASSET	Financial and Accounting Services Sector Education and Training Authority
FET	Further Education and Training

G

GET General Education and Training

H

HDI Historically Disadvantaged Institution

HEQC Higher Education Quality Committee of the Council on Higher Education

HET Higher Education and Training

HPCSA Health Professions Council of South Africa

HRD Human Resource Development Strategy

HSRC Human Sciences Research Council

HWSETA Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority

I

ILO International Labour Organisation

IMWG Inter-Ministerial Working Group

INSETA Insurance Sector Education and Training Authority

N

NAPTOSA National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa

NQF National Qualifications Framework

NSA National Skills Authority

NSDS National Skills Development Strategy

O

OECD Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

R

RAU Rand Afrikaans University (now University of Johannesburg)

RPL Recognition of Prior Learning

S

SACP South African Communist Party

SADC	Southern African Development Community
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers' Union
SANQF	South African National Qualifications Framework
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SAUVCA	South African Vice-Chancellors' Association (now Higher Education South Africa - HESA)
SCQF	Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
SGB	Standards Generation Body

V

VET	Vocational Education and Training
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W

WITS	University of the Witwatersrand
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U

UCT	University of Cape Town
UMALUSI	Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Unlike the other development areas, which are concerned with quite practical matters, [integration] is still at a conceptual level. It is suggested, however, that it is of considerable symbolic importance and that there is a need to clarify and come to a common understanding of the notion of an integrative approach. The question of what 'integration' really means has been with the NQF since its inception and remains a barrier to achieving consensus on the direction the NQF should take¹.

This study aims to investigate the extent to which the South African education and training system reflects in principle, perception and practice, the ideal of an integrated national qualifications framework. It examines the uses and meaning of 'integration' through a number of lenses. The first and second lenses are of policy symbolism, reflecting a particular ideology and a philosophy of the education and training system emerging from the legacy of apartheid. The third, fourth and fifth lenses view integration from the perspective of pragmatic and technical approaches that embody the philosophy underpinning the system, specifically by examining the relationships between sub-systems, levels and types of qualifications registered on the South African National Qualifications Framework (SANQF). The sixth and seventh lenses are used to view the extent to which the macro sub-systems, namely education and training, converge and increasingly become complementary and the ways in which espoused policy is enabled at the level of institutions and classrooms in curricula and learning programmes.

The central research problem is discussed in 1.1. This is followed by a discussion of the purposes and significance of the study for the implementation of an integrated national qualifications framework in South Africa (1.2). The research questions are briefly introduced in 1.3. In 1.4, the characteristics of the study are described. Finally, the structure of this dissertation is outlined in the conclusion of this chapter (1.5)

¹ SAQA, 2005, p. 87

1.1 Problem in its Context

In 2001, only six years after the promulgation of an Act of Parliament that intended to completely overhaul the South African education and training system the then Ministers of Education and Labour, Minister Kader Asmal and Minister Membathisi Mdladlana, called for a review of the South African National Qualifications Framework (SANQF). The Study Team responsible for the review was given ‘a clear brief by the Ministers of Education and Labour to recommend ways in which the implementation of South Africa’s National Qualifications Framework, established in terms of the South African Qualifications Authority Act, 1995, could be streamlined and accelerated’ (Department of Education (DoE) and Department of Labour (DoL), 2002, p. i). This stemmed from ‘strong consensus on the many problems of implementing the NQF’. These problems included the pace of implementation, the complexity of structures and language and the apparent lack of leadership at all levels of the system ‘despite this being the flagship project of the democratic government’ (DoE & DoL, 2002, p. ii). Amongst other recommendations emanating from the review, the recommendation that ‘the policy on integration of education and training should be reaffirmed and elaborated’ (DoE & DoL, 2002, p. iii), is the central concern of this study. The idea of an integrated national qualifications framework came to embody the new government’s strategy to overcome major divisions inherited from the apartheid system, namely racial divisions in the management, funding and resources within and across education and training sub-systems; divisions between sectors of learning, for example general education and training and adult basic education; and the divisions between theory, seen to be in the domain of academic qualifications and application, associated with vocational and occupationally based training. These divisions were seen to be inhibiting the progression and the concomitant life opportunities of learners, particularly learners in previously oppressed communities, within the system. Thus, ‘the integration of the education and training systems to ensure maximum flexibility for horizontal and vertical mobility between different levels of the education and training system, both formal and in-formal’ (Education Department, African National Congress, 1994, p. 5), was seen as a solution to the many social ills associated with the apartheid regime. Education ‘was for a long time a major source of discontent in apartheid South Africa, and was often a rallying point in

the broader struggle against it' (Allias, 2003, p. 307). An integrated framework was thus meant to remove disparities of esteem, give value to learning wherever it may occur and aid in progression within education and training. Yet, while all public statements about the SANQF affirm the centrality of an integrated framework, and while there is 'this huge buy-in to the objectives...everything from the body of the article or the paper goes on to split [an integrated framework] up' (SAQA Board Member, Annexure 1, p. 20).

This was the central puzzle that led to this inquiry. Why, if an integrated framework is so widely supported, both politically and at all other levels of the system, is there no real progress in achieving integration? Is it because some policies are not intended to change practice? (Jansen, 2004). In other words, could the policy on integration be a symbol - an important symbol - but one that nonetheless was never intended to effect any large-scale changes in the education and training system? Is this the reason for the apparent intention to reverse the policy on integration? Or are there other (non-political, non-emotionally charged) reasons for the difficulties experienced in attempting to implement this first objective of the SANQF? And, if so, are these difficulties unique to South Africa, given its legacy of an unjust and inequitable system?

1.2 Purposes and Significance of the Study

It is with these puzzles in mind that the study aimed to determine *to what extent the South African education and training system reflects in principle, perception and practice, the ideal of an integrated national qualifications framework*. The purpose of this study was thus firstly, to understand integration:

One of the reasons for the limited progress in the achievement of this objective is that there does not seem to be a common understanding of what is meant when we talk about "an integrated framework". The consequence of this lack of understanding is that the drivers of the NQF and their partners have interpreted this concept in different ways (Heyns & Needham, 2004, p. 30).

Secondly, the study aimed to determine what the inhibitors are that may be preventing this principle from being implemented. Many commentators blame the non-achievement of integration on the lack of political will, 'this divide between education and labour'

(SAQA Board Member, Annexure 1, p. 22). This is understandable as even the Minister of Labour, Minister Membathisi Mdladlana, in a speech at the Northwest Growth and Development Summit in August 2004, voiced his apparent frustration with the lack of progress in this regard ‘All we are doing is fighting for turf. There is a need to have education and training under one roof’ (Cape Times, 31 August 2004, p. 6).

The political impasse that has been stretching over a period of more than four years since the review of the SANQF in 2001/2002, is real and important, particularly in relation to the principle of integration. ‘The feature of the [SANQF] that most distinguishes it from other systems is its location in the political and social transformation of South Africa’ (Granville, 2004, p. 4). The awareness that ‘participants in the NQF are imbued by the ideals and the rhetoric of the project’ (Granville, 2004, p. 4), particularly in relation to an integrated framework as ‘an emblem and an instrument of the single national high-quality education and training system that democratic South Africa aspired to create’ (DoE & DoL, 2002, p. xi) serves as a backdrop to the investigation.

The significance of the study lies in its aims to clarify the conceptual muddle that is an integrated framework. It further hopes to separate rhetoric from the practical problems associated with the implementation of such a framework. Finally, it hopes add to the scholarly debate about the emerging education and training system in South Africa and thus contribute to an improved understanding of qualifications frameworks being developed and implemented throughout the world.

1.3 Research Questions

This inquiry therefore intends to answer the question *To what extent does the South African education and training system reflect in principle, perception and practice the ideal of an integrated national qualifications framework?*

Four supporting research questions unpack the main research question:

Is the objective of an integrated SANQF an example of policy symbolism?

Can the relationships between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful through an integrated framework?

Can the development of communities of practice as a key element of an integrated framework, enhance trust amongst partners in education and training?

Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning?

The first supporting question investigated ‘policy symbolism’ and ‘the guiding philosophy for the SANQF’, which represent the strong social justice rationale for the development and implementation of an integrated national qualifications framework. The attempt of the new African National Congress (ANC) government to make a clean break from a past unjust and inequitable education and training system is reflected in the need for powerful symbols that signalled a new beginning. An integrated framework is thus seen to be the guiding philosophy of the emerging system that embodied the symbolism of the SANQF in systemic ways.

The second supporting research question explores the pragmatic approaches that will enable large-scale reform to take place, in keeping with the guiding philosophy of the framework. These approaches include the structure and the design of an integrated framework, as well as other measures, both within and outside of the framework that will enable the structure of the framework to come to life.

Research question three scrutinises these measures, including the development of communities of practice and trust, which evolve out of the need of sub-sectors to meet the needs and requirements of the sector.

Research question four seeks to investigate the persuasive logic emerging from a pragmatic need of sectors and institutions to embody the principles of the SANQF at the level of institutions and classrooms. This question deals, firstly, with the seemingly opposing epistemologies characteristic of education and of training, which ‘have co-existed uneasily within the common qualifications framework’ (DoE & DoL, 2003, p. 6) and, secondly, with the emergence of curricula, which increasingly combine theory and

practice, to better reflect the needs of learners and workplaces in relation to developing solid theoretical groundings, complemented by practical application.

Combined, the four questions hope to reflect the different understandings of an integrated framework.

1.4 Characteristic of the Study

This inquiry took place against the background of a global trend of the development and implementation of qualifications frameworks as a means to regulate and improve the quality of the education and training system of the country implementing the framework. However,

...while the development of qualifications frameworks is an international phenomenon, there is something unique about the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) in South Africa. It is the scale and the ambition of the NQF rhetoric and its perceived centrality to the reconstruction of society in the political and social context of a post-apartheid regime that marks the [SANQF] out from other such initiatives around the world (Granville, 2004, p. 3).

Therefore, while the problems associated with the implementation of an integrated framework, in terms of 'technical and professional concerns' (Granville, 2004, p. 3), are not unique to South Africa, the central role of an integrated framework in social transformation, and the extent to which the education and training system stands proxy for the aspirations of a different and better society, are unique. The most important feature of the SANQF and its attempts in achieving integration is thus located in the drive to correct the social ills of apartheid, particularly in the emphasis on the value of learning and the social esteem of learners. This socio-political rationale for an integrated framework, on the one hand, has mobilised 'hundreds of people from across fields and sectors, and from all parts of the population to build the NQF and give meaning to this "social construct"' (Jansen, 2004, p. 90) but, on the other hand, has complicated the development of pragmatic approaches to integration owing to the 'mad, irrational fury within the NQF project' (Granville, 2004, p. 3) which seems to preclude criticism of the assumptions and objectives of an integrated framework. Whereas contestation and debate

are normal and necessary feature of an emerging system, the particular characteristic of the South African system is that an integrated framework purposed to undertake ‘a complete societal restructuring of how and where learning is recognised, structured and rewarded’ (Mehl, 2004, p. 23). An integrated framework in South Africa, therefore cannot be viewed without the acknowledging of the socio-political aims of the framework that are embodied in the five objectives of the SANQF, namely to create an integrated national framework for learning achievements; facilitate access, mobility and progression; enhance the quality of education and training; accelerate the redress of past injustices; and enable each learner to fully develop within a system that is available to all (SAQA, 2001).

1.5 Structure of the Thesis

Chapter 2 presents a review of the literature on qualifications frameworks. The literature review firstly places the SANQF within the international context of the development and implementation of qualifications frameworks and then traces the different interpretations of integration as reflected in other jurisdictions. A typology of qualifications frameworks, to the extent that this relates to integration, is introduced, and the historical development trajectory of the SANQF is presented. This chapter concludes with the contestations that have marked the implementation of an integrated national qualifications framework since its inception.

The conceptual framework for this inquiry is presented in Chapter 3. The different lenses or perspectives to be used for this study, are discussed. These lenses include policy symbolism; a guiding philosophy; the scope and architecture of the framework and qualifications; policy breadth; a continuum of learning; and curricular integrability.

Chapter 4 deals with the research design and methodology for the study. This inquiry undertook a further and deeper analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data collected for two concluded cycles of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Impact Study commissioned by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA). In addition, the public responses to proposals for changes to the SANQF, published in *An Interdependent*

National Qualifications Framework System: Consultative Document (DoE & DoL, 2003) were analysed. Further data, collected to confirm and support the data collected for the two cycles of the NQF Impact study, was undertaken.

Chapter 5 is the first of the findings chapters. The results of the first supporting research question are presented in this chapter. These results reflect the extent to which the SANQF as an integrated framework is a symbol and the guiding philosophy for an education and training system attempting to make a clean break from a previous unjust and inequitable system.

The results of the second and third supporting research questions are presented in Chapter 6. The extent to which relationships between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the South African National Qualifications Framework (SANQF) are enabled through an integrated framework is discussed in the first part of the chapter, while the development of communities of practice as a key element of an integrated framework, is discussed in the second part.

The final findings chapter, Chapter 7, presents the findings in relation to the fourth supporting research question. This chapter discusses a continuum of learning as a reflection of the different epistemologies characteristic of education and of training, and then moves on to investigate the ways in which curricula increasingly seem to take cognisance of the convergence of education and training and of theory and application.

Chapter 8 concludes the study. It provides a summary of the main findings, and discusses the main research question in relation to the ideal of an integrated framework. It also reflects on the methodology and the conceptual framework for the study and makes suggestions for further research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The NQF, which came into being through the South African Qualifications Authority Act (1995), is a conceptual framework, setting the boundaries (principles and guidelines) within which the development and implementation of an education and training system are carried out. The primary objective of the NQF is to achieve an integrated approach to education and training in one national system, while opening up both access and possibilities for articulation and mobility within the system, through the portability of accumulated credits. In acknowledging that learning is not restricted to a single or limited learning sites, it allows for multiple pathways to the same learning ends...In addition, the NQF emphasises the importance of the recognition of all learning, including learning acquired through informal and non-formal means. This is of special importance given the intent to advance the redress of past discrimination and contribute to the personal development of each learner. But the NQF also wants to contribute to optimal development of society at large and therefore works towards enhancing the quality of education and training¹.

In this chapter, an 'integrated framework' is placed within the context of the international developments and implementation of national qualifications frameworks (2.1). In 2.2, in addition to the general introduction to the national qualifications framework movement, the converging purposes of qualifications frameworks internationally, are discussed. Section 2.3 introduces the key terms and possible differences in interpretation and uses of the notion of integration for an education and training system. In 2.4, the emerging typology of national qualifications frameworks, in particular in relation to integration, is presented. The history and context of the South African National Qualifications Framework (SANQF) in 2.5 attempts to show the particular trajectory of the emerging South African system, while 2.6 introduces the contestations that marked its establishment by discussing the review of the SANQF that has been conducted. This chapter concludes with a summary of the main issues identified through the literature review (2.7).

¹ SAQA, 2004, Annexure 2, p. 2

2.1 Introduction

This review analyses national and international literature dealing with national qualifications frameworks (NQFs), but focuses particularly on the South African National Qualifications Framework (SANQF) in relation to international trends regarding the integration of education and training. While it is evident that NQFs are becoming a global phenomenon, very little debate in either policy or research literature about national qualifications frameworks in general, and integrated frameworks specifically, is available. On the one hand, this may be owing to the fact that the NQF movement is a relatively new trend in education and training systems. On the other hand, NQFs in many countries are associated with one sector of the education and training system – most often the vocational sector. This seems to mean that, in the past, NQFs were not considered a topic for academic debate (Young, 2003). Further, in traditional systems, until the first NQFs, there was no attempt to bring together academic and vocational qualifications, school and university qualifications or the different types of professional and vocational qualifications within a single framework (Young, 2005) and thus, emerging systems do not have the benefit of experience from other systems. Nevertheless, in South Africa, the SANQF is seen to be the primary driver for education reform, and an integrated framework is seen to be an important lever to enable improved access and progression within the system. The purpose of the literature review is thus to place the SANQF within the context of the international trend towards the development and implementation of national qualifications frameworks. Specifically, in terms of this inquiry, the emergence of ‘unified’ systems is investigated, as an integrated framework for South Africa is considered a key tenet for the reform of the disparate and unequal system of the past.

The concept of NQFs, in particular in terms of a coordinated education and training policy at national level, has spread to all continents and is gathering strength (Department of Education (DoE) & Department of Labour (DoL), 2002). Further, the national qualifications framework movement has attracted powerful endorsements from the world education and training community, for example, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). These organisations all support the notion of integrated,

coordinated qualifications systems in one form or another, and there seems to be a convergence of aims across all countries implementing qualifications frameworks. One of the main aims seems to be the development of a national, accessible system where education and training provision is aligned to the skills and knowledge needed by 21st century societies. Other aims include the enhancement of the mobility of the workforce, which is seen to be enabled by an integrated or unified approach, particularly in regions where much workforce mobility is evident (for example, the European Union, the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Pacific Islands Forum and the Caribbean Community) (DoE & DoL, 2002).

Against the background of the emergence of a knowledge-based global economy, national and international articulation between different systems of education and training, whereby portability of learning across these sub-systems is enhanced, seems to become more important. In addition, greater market influences, and the call for regular up-skilling and multi-skilling of individuals in relation to modern workplace requirements, seem to underlie the need for an increased convergence across education and training sectors and levels, including strengthening school-to-work programmes. Further, the dichotomy between education and training seems to have become blurred and this has led to a greater emphasis on quality assurance and accountability as the basis of trust amongst national and international partners, particularly between partner organisations that are offering ‘formal education’ and ‘workplace based training’. In some cases, for example, the South African system, the system also targets equity group participation in education and training (Faris, 1995). These global trends have a profound influence on the emerging structure of education and training systems. Systems are increasingly attempting to find ways in which education and training could become more complementary. The divide between these two main sub-systems no longer seems to hold in a modern society.

National qualifications frameworks are seen to have important benefits for national and international harmonisation of qualifications, and are now being developed and implemented across the globe. One such benefit includes the comparability of qualifications attained in the sub-sectors of the system. Systems are therefore increasingly attempting to align their education and training sectors, that is, to

integrate (or unify) these sectors. The literature identifies 1st generation, 2nd generation and 3rd generation NQFs. (Tuck, Keevy & Hart, 2004) (Figure 2.1).

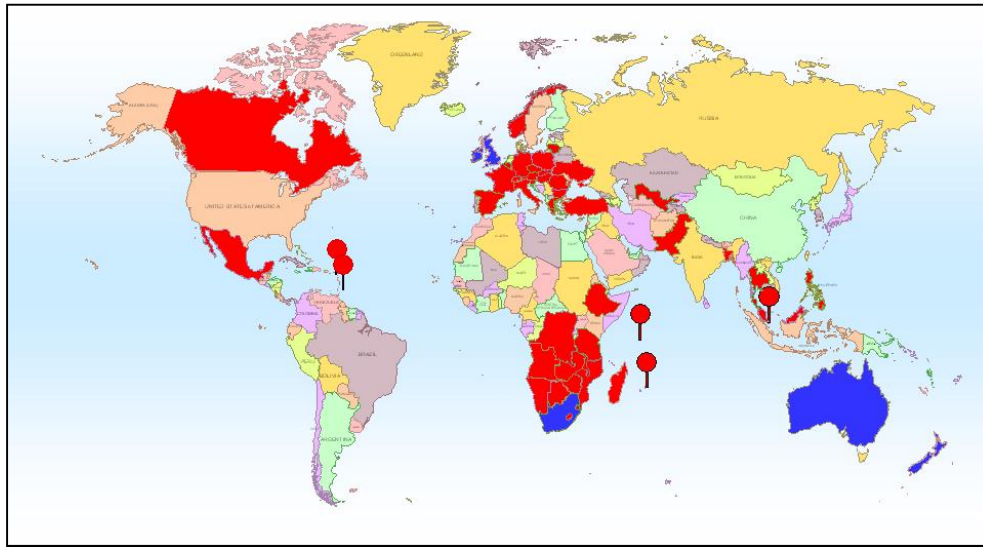


Figure 2.1. Distribution of NQFs

Key:

Blue – first generation NQFs

Red shading and red signposts – second and third generation NQFs

Table 2.1 presents a time-based categorisation of NQFs (Keevy, 2006, p. 2):

Table 2.1.

Time-based Categorisation of NQFs

1st Generation NQFs (Implemented since 1995)	2nd Generation NQFs (Implemented in the late 1990's, early 2000)	3rd Generation NQFs (Currently under consideration)
Australia, England, Wales and Northern Ireland, New Zealand, Scotland, South Africa	Ireland, Mauritius, Malaysia, Mexico, Namibia, Singapore, Trinidad and Tobago	Angola, Barbados, Botswana, Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, Caribbean (regional), Democratic Republic of the Congo, EU (regional), France, Jamaica, Lesotho, Macedonia, Malawi, Mozambique, Pacific Islands (regional), Philippines, SADC (regional), Slovenia, Uzbekistan, Tanzania, Turkey, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe

While not all NQFs are unified or integrated frameworks, it is evident that in most cases there is a desire to achieve integration in parts, or all, of the education and training system. The extent to which a system is unified or integrated is linked to the purpose of the NQF. In addition to improving the understanding of the education and

training system and the progression possibilities within such a system, Tuck et al. (2004) cluster the main purposes as follows – (1) addressing issues of social justice; (2) improving access to the qualifications system; increasing and improving credit transfer between qualifications; and, improving the recognition of prior learning (RPL). To achieve these objectives, it seems important to (3) establish common learning standards to achieve greater comparability between sub-sectors of the system, and to enable intra-national or international benchmarking. Common standards defined and applied consistently in turn, are seen to be enhancing quality assurance, which supports the international recognition for national qualifications.

While some definitions of emerging qualifications frameworks are explicit in their descriptions of integration, in others the integration of education and training is implied through the extent to which the system is coherent and interrelated. The South African, the proposed SADC and the Lesotho frameworks respectively, for example, describe their frameworks as follows:

...[A] set of principles and guidelines by which records of learner achievements are registered to enable recognition of acquired skills and knowledge, and thereby using an integrated system that encourages lifelong learning (SAQA, 2001, p.1)

...[A] set of agreed principles, practices, procedures and standardised terminology intended to ensure effective comparability of qualifications and credits across borders in the SADC region, to facilitate mutual recognition of qualifications by Member States, to harmonise qualifications wherever possible, and to create regional standards where appropriate (Technical Committee on Certification and Accreditation, 2005, p. 7).

A NQF is a structure of defined and nationally accredited qualifications, which are awarded at defined levels. It indicates the interrelationships of the qualifications and how one can progress from one level to another. NQF, therefore, is the route through which the country brings education and training together in a single Unified System (Lesotho, 2004, p. 7).

Likewise, the emerging European Qualifications Framework (EQF), as an example of a regional (or meta-) framework, much like the proposed SADC framework, envisages the EQF ‘as a meta-framework that will enable qualifications frameworks at national and sectoral level to relate and communicate to each other’ (Scottish Executive, 2005, p. 8). Other purposes of the EQF include ‘integrating vocational education and training (VET) and higher education more closely’ and ‘strengthening

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the links between national and sectoral qualifications systems' (Scottish Executive, 2005, p. 8).

Young (2005, p. 1) maintains that the growing interest in national qualifications frameworks has less to do with educational reasons than with political reasons:

Examples of such reasons are (a) the scope they are seen to offer governments for making their national systems more accountable - England is a good example; (b) the importance for the governments of countries in transition of demonstrating that they have made a 'break with the past' [post apartheid South Africa is an obvious example]; (c) the hope that what appears to be a reform that is relatively straightforward (in the sense that establishing an NQF does not of itself require major institutional changes) and does not challenge local interests...

Nevertheless, all qualifications frameworks, according to Young (2005, p. 13), have as their common purpose to 'communicate':

All NQFs have a 'communication' role, in the sense that they provide a map of qualifications; they give some indication of progression routes between levels and, at least in principle, across sectors. The 'communication' potential of an NQF means that at a minimum it can assist both learners and those involved in career and training guidance in making choices.

In addition, there are compelling arguments for developing an integrated framework (Young, 2005, p. 32):

There are both administrative and political reasons for integrating all qualifications within a single framework. Administratively, a single integrated framework should be more coherent, easier to manage and ought to make all kinds of progression simpler. Politically, integration is tied to the idea of promoting *parity of esteem* between academic and vocational learning (emphasis in the original).

However, an integrated national framework is fraught with contestation and, in South Africa, particularly associated with the socio-political aspirations of a large part of the population who felt that they were unfairly excluded and discriminated against under the apartheid regime. This is evident from the vehement defence of an integrated approach from all sectors of education and training when it seemed that the two departments (Education and Labour), which politically are responsible for the implementation of the SANQF, intended to reverse the policy of an integrated framework (see Annexure 4), perhaps because it represents a powerful persuasive logic for a reforming system (Jansen, 2004, p. 92):

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The NQF presents to South Africa what is arguably the most cogent and progressive set of ideas for transforming the education and training system. These core ideas have mobilised and inspired millions, and offered hope to those long excluded from this system.

South Africa in particular, and other countries in general, which have, or are in the process of implementing a national qualifications framework (NQF), seem to consider integration central to the idea of an NQF (Heyns & Needham, 2004).

2.2 The Centrality of Integration and the Convergence of Purpose

An integrated framework purports to enable effortless progression and seamless articulation of learners and learning between different components of an education and training system. Yet, particularly in South Africa, the notion of an integrated framework is one of the most hotly contested ideals of the emerging system. While existing literature hints at reasons for the contestation – ranging from political power struggles between the two departments responsible for the implementation of an NQF in South Africa (the Department of Education and Department of Labour), epistemological differences between education and training, and the linkages between theory and practice in curricula (Heyns & Needham, 2004) – few possible solutions are provided that will enable the system to take the ideal of an integrated system forward.

Moreover, research into the ways in which the integration of education and training is to be achieved is almost non-existent and is addressed to only a limited extent in a recent study in South Africa (NQF Impact Study, 2004 and 2005) and in Scotland ('Higher Still' initiative, 2000) (and then only on the periphery of these studies, as both investigated more than an integrated approach). From the literature it seems therefore that 'integration' as a concept has not been thoroughly problematised. In a review of the implementation of the South African NQF in 2002 (DoE and DoL), the research team (known as the 'Study Team'), for example, observed that the Departments 'have made no attempt to analyse in further detail [beyond the initial political statements] how the integrated approach to education and training should be operationalised, especially in areas where the departments do not see eye to eye' (p. 67).

This state of affairs may have important implications for the emerging system. It seems that unless attempts *are* made to operationalise integration, it is possible that the ideal of an integrated framework will remain in the realm of policy symbolism (refer to Chapter 5).

2.3 Terminology Used in Relation to Integration

Various terms have been used in relation to the concept of integration but, owing to greatly differing contexts, are not synonymous. These terms, depending on which system uses the concept, include ‘integration’, ‘unification’, ‘comprehensiveness’, ‘seamlessness’, ‘systemic coherence’, ‘all-encompassing’, ‘inter-dependence’, ‘inter-related’ and ‘coordinated’. However, a common thread that runs through all of the emerging education and training systems is that of the need to ‘unify’ academic and vocational learning in keeping with the converging purposes of qualifications offered in different sectors. In South Africa, this is commonly understood ‘in terms of linking or unifying *education* and *training*’, in ‘continental Europe the debate uses the terms *general* and *vocational*; in many English-speaking countries the former is subdivided into *academic* and *general* and [the] latter into *professional* and *vocational* (Raffe, 2005, p. 22).

Three pressures, according to Raffe (2005, p. 23), impact on the need for integration:

- I. Economic pressures: ‘the economic challenges of globalisation’ and ‘[c]hanges in work practices are perceived to require new types of skills and knowledge and new modes of learning which transcend the traditional distinctions between academic and vocational, for example by emphasising the integration of theory and practice’.
- II. Democratic pressures: these are ‘perceived to extend the egalitarian principles of comprehensive education’. Unified systems are therefore ‘seen as a way to include learners who are disaffected, disadvantaged or at risk of social or economic exclusion’. This pressure is particularly felt in South Africa’s new democracy.
- III. Systemic pressures: ‘the unification of academic and vocational learning is a response to the increased scale and complexity of education and training systems, to the wider range of economic and social purposes...and to systemic problems such as credentialism and academic drift’.

All of these pressures, but systemic pressures in particular, encourage the development of systems that will use common governance, regulation, funding and quality assurance, as well as attempt to enhance articulation between sub-systems to support learner progression and transfer of skills between different sub-sectors of the education and training system. Also common to all the systems are measures to enhance the status of vocational education and training relative to academic education to enable seamless articulation between such sub-systems (Raffe, 2005). This seems important because the SANQF came into being, in particular, to address issues of inequity of opportunity and the status of vocationally oriented qualifications. This stems from the recognition that any system that divides education and training ‘disvalues vocational programmes as inferior and second-rate’ (Young, 1996, p. 33) and is seen to be an important area for reform in countries where ‘social differences and inequalities are acute’ (Young, 1996, p. 33).

However, while much of the focus in South Africa on integration is the legacy of the profound inequalities of the apartheid education and training system, other countries hope to achieve the ‘unification’ of academic and vocational learning at a much more incremental pace than in South Africa – as an eventual outcome of the development of the system rather than the key tenet of the new system.

The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF), for example, is a comprehensive, unified and ‘enabling or descriptive framework’ that aims to ‘encompass all qualifications delivered in Scotland’ (Raffe, 2003, p. 4) with ‘comparable’ (not equivalent) credit ratings at the different levels of the framework. The SCQF (2001, pp. 1–2), therefore, intends to make the relationships between qualifications clearer; clarify entry and exit points and routes for progression; maximise the opportunities for credit transfer; and, assist learners to plan their progress and learning.

Raffe (2003, p. 17) points out that ‘unification’ in Scotland encompasses three trends: ‘the integration of general and vocational curricula; the reduction or elimination of differences between educational tracks; and the development of “seamless” opportunities for access and progression in lifelong learning’, with Scotland focusing particularly on the last of the three.

The term 'integration' is most commonly used in South Africa and it refers at a political level to the integration of education and training, with the hope that it would result in changes in the relationship between these two main sub-systems (Raffe, 2005). The integration of education and training was to be particularly embodied in the integration of these two sectors in one ministry at a political level. However, rather than combine the two ministries, (Education and Labour), in post-apartheid South Africa they were kept separate as in the past. Why the decision was made to keep the system separate is unclear (French, 2005) and is seen by some commentators as one of the main reasons for the lack of integration (Jansen, 2004). However, in the initial conceptualisation of the SANQF, a much closer relationship was envisaged. In the African National Congress (ANC) *Policy Framework for Education and Training of the Reconstruction and Development Programme: A policy framework*, 'integration' was explained as follows:

By establishing a national qualifications framework which *integrates all elements* of the education and training system, we must enable learners to progress to higher levels from any starting point. They must be able to obtain recognition and credits for qualifications and toward qualifications *from one part of the system to another*. The system must enable assessment and recognition of prior learning and skills acquired through experience. To this end curricula should *cut across traditional divisions of skill and knowledge* (emphases added) (ANC, 1994, p. 62).

However, from the outset 'integration', as defined above, led to contestation and the term 'an integrated approach' to education and training seemed more palatable to critics. On the face of it there is not much difference between the two, that is 'integration' and 'an integrated approach', but Isaacs and Nkomo (2003, p. 80) noted that it is more than a nuance change: 'For some, [an integrated approach] is actually an integrated system. For others, it is two systems running side by side and if you occasionally look over the fence dividing the two, that's the integrated approach'. It appears, in the latter interpretation of an integrated approach, that it means the existence of two or more learning tracks, for example, a discipline-based track, a vocationally oriented track and an occupationally based track in education and training with links between them. The notion of three tracks became evident chiefly in a consultation document produced by an inter-departmental task team (of Education and Labour), namely *An Interdependent National Qualifications Framework System*:

Consultative Document (DoE & DoL, 2003), which is one of the reviews² of the SANQF that may have a profound impact on the way integration is operationalised in South Africa (more about this in section 2.6).

‘Unification’ is a term most commonly used in Scotland. Unification means the linking or unifying of academic and vocational learning, or discipline-based and work-based (or practice-based) learning. In a study commissioned by the Scottish Executive (2005, p. 11), it was noted that the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) aims to ‘bring together all Scottish mainstream qualifications into a single unified framework’:

[The SCQF] utilises two concepts: amount or volume of learning outcomes, and level of outcomes of learning. The concepts of volume and level can be used together to describe all appropriately assessed learning, wherever or however achieved; *they can also clarify the relationships and links between different qualifications and programmes of learning* (emphasis added).

In addition, a ‘comprehensive qualifications framework’ is a term recently introduced in the South African debate on integration. In a number of informal proposals emerging from the Department of Education the term ‘comprehensive’ seem to be replacing or superseding the term ‘integration’ (Blom, 2006). ‘Comprehensive’ in these proposals means that while other national qualifications frameworks typically separate their industry (vocational and workplace-based) and academic sectors (schools and higher education), the SANQF is a ‘comprehensive’ framework including all types and levels of qualifications. Thus, unlike many systems, which have ‘partial frameworks’ (Raffe, 2005), perhaps including only one or two of the sub-sectors of the system, for example, vocational and industry-based learning, the South African system has included all sectors and sub-sectors. However, according to Raffe (2005, p. 21), ‘comprehensiveness’ is not synonymous with ‘integration’:

² Report of the Study Team on the Implementation of the National Qualifications Framework (DoE & DoL, 2002)

An Interdependent National Qualifications Framework System: Consultative Document (DoE & DoL, 2003)

A third review, undertaken by the European Union, as the main funder of the SANQF in its formative years, was technical in nature in relation to the work of the South African Qualifications Authority, and will not be discussed.

The fourth publication, The Higher Education Qualifications Framework: Draft for discussion (Ministry of Education, 2004) is not strictly a review, but proposes to implement changes recommended in the other publications, with implications for an integrated framework.

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An integrated qualifications framework is more than just a comprehensive one. A comprehensive framework, as distinct from a partial framework, includes all types of learning: academic and vocational, formal and informal, education and training. Being comprehensive is a necessary condition of an integrated framework, but is not a sufficient condition.

A comprehensive framework could be a mere list, or a loose coupling of distinct sub-frameworks with “just an occasional look over the fence dividing the two” (Isaacs and Nkomo, 2003: 80).

Table 2.2 is an analysis of the different interpretations of integration as espoused in a number of emerging education and training systems:

Table 2.2.

Different Interpretations of an Integrated Framework

Name of country	Interpretation of integration/unification	Scope of integration/unification
Scotland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How qualifications relate to each other ○ Comparable (not equivalent) learning, but with parity of esteem ○ Portability of learning and credit transfer ○ Meaningful progression between different components of the system ○ Articulation of units of learning between vocationally oriented and academic programmes 	Post 16 school- and college-based provision Academic and vocational subjects Links with higher education (Raffe, 2003)
Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establishing equivalencies ○ Develop routes of credit transfer ○ Paths of progression between different components of the system ○ Parity of esteem between different components of the system 	Vocational education and training Further and higher education and training sectors, other than universities (Granville, 2003)
New Zealand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Registered qualifications with common components ○ Relationship between qualifications ○ Credit transfer ○ Learning pathways ○ Reduce artificial distinctions between academic and vocational knowledge and qualifications 	Academic and vocational provision Strong school-industry links Excludes universities, but degrees are on the register of qualifications (Philips, 2003)
Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pathways linkages; seamless pathways ○ Improved coherence and articulation within vocational education and training (VET) ○ Horizontal articulation between VET certificates and degrees ○ Credit transfer between schools and VET in upper secondary education ○ Dual awards ○ Cross-sectoral articulation and alignment with VET qualifications 	Vocational education and training, including technical colleges, schools and institutes, but excluding higher education and autonomous school sector Some credit transfer between post-school VET and higher education (Keating, 2003)

Table 2.2 (Continued).

Different Interpretations of an Integrated Framework

Name of country	Interpretation of integration/unification	Scope of integration/unification
South Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Equity and social justice ○ Opening up access to education and training ○ Rejection of divisions between academic and applied, theory and practice, knowledge and skills and head and hand ○ Rejection of old occupational and social class distinctions ○ Standardisation, equivalence and portability of qualifications ○ Promoting coherence and better articulation ○ Credit accumulation and transfer ○ Parity of esteem 	Schooling, higher education (including public universities) and industrial and vocational education and training (Ensor, 2003)

The commonalities across these systems seem to be:

- Meaningful *progression* between different components of the system
- *Articulation* possibilities between different components of the system (particularly between vocational and academic streams)
- *Parity of esteem* of qualifications attained in different sectors of the system

However, as noted above, ‘the spread of NQFs cannot be seen separately from the increasingly central role that many national governments are giving to qualifications themselves as measures of educational productivity’ (Young, 2005, p. 3). As noted earlier, there is limited literature about NQFs as an education phenomenon. The descriptions and purposes of the qualifications frameworks thus seem, at present, to be primarily an espoused policy, rather than practice. The typology of these frameworks unpacks the meaning of integration to a much greater extent.

2.4 Typology of National Qualifications Frameworks

Young (2005, p. 10) says that qualifications frameworks seem to share a set of common elements. Qualifications are described in terms of (1) a *single set of criteria* or a single definition of what is to count as a qualification. A *single hierarchy* (2) expressed as a single set of levels is used, each with distinct level descriptors which describe the depth and breadth of learning at that particular level. Qualifications are (3) *classified* (in the case of vocational qualifications) in terms of a comprehensive set of occupational fields. Further, qualifications are described in terms of (4) *learning*

outcomes that are independent of the site, the form of provision and the type of pedagogy and curriculum through which they may be achieved. The framework of qualifications provides a set of (5) *benchmarks* against which any learning can be assessed in terms of its potential contribution to a qualification and finally, all qualifications are defined in terms of elements (sometimes referred to as units or unit standards) and ascribed a volume in terms of notional learning hours expressed as quantifiable credit (6). A learner has to achieve a given number of credits to gain a qualification.

The first four points above relate chiefly to integration. Where qualifications follow a corresponding structure, it would, in theory, be easier to transfer credits from one qualification to another. A single set of level descriptors describes the depth and breadth of learning at a particular level and, again, would facilitate recognition of learning across contexts. ‘Families’ of qualifications would have a high degree of shared purpose and thus could enhance articulation; and independent learning outcomes (that is, independent of the institution offering the qualification) would enhance parity of esteem between sectors and institutions.

Raffe (2003) takes this further and maintains that qualifications frameworks can be understood in terms of five broad characteristics: the *purpose* of the NQF; the *scope* of the NQF; the level of *prescriptiveness*; the rate at which an NQF is implemented, or the *incrementalism* of the implementation; and the *policy breadth* of the reforms. Briefly, *purpose*, *scope* and *level of prescription* relate to the debates about integration, while *incrementalism* and *policy breadth* are associated with the leadership and governance in relation to the implementation of an NQF (SAQA, 2005), in particular in terms of the operationalisation of a concept, such as integration, in practice.

Further developments of the typology were undertaken by Keevy (2005, p. 125), and three more characteristics of NQFs were added: the *guiding philosophy* of an NQF, its *architecture* and its *governance*. These are included as the *guiding philosophy* and *governance*, in particular, are relevant to this study. In short, the typology of national qualifications frameworks is summarised in Table 2.3 (from Keevy, 2005, pp. 40–42).

Table 2.3.

The Typology of National Qualifications Frameworks

Characteristic	Description
Guiding philosophy	The underlying thinking that implicitly, often covertly, underlies the development and implementation of an NQF
Purpose	The explicit, usually overt, reasons for the development and implementation of the NQF – purpose is usually reflected in the objectives of the NQF
Scope	The measure of integration of levels, sectors and types of qualifications as well as the relationships between each on the NQF
Prescriptiveness	The stringency of the criteria which qualifications have to satisfy in order to be included on the NQF
Incrementalism	The rate and manner in which the NQF is implemented
Architecture	The configuration of structural elements that make up the design of an NQF
Governance	All the activities that can be seen as purposeful efforts to guide, steer, control or manage institutions, sectors or processes associated with the NQF

The *guiding philosophy* of an NQF is the ‘underlying thinking that implicitly, often covertly, underlies the development and implementation of the NQF’ (Keevy, 2005, p. 125). The guiding philosophy of the South African National Qualifications Framework (SANQF) seems to have been influenced by the work of Paolo Freire (1999 and 2000), but also by Mezirow’s (2000) constructive-developmental approach to transformative learning (Blom and Keevy, 2005) and the egalitarian ideology implicit in these works. Others, such as Allais (2003), say that the establishment of the SANQF was influenced by neo-liberal economic policies, which is a far cry from the egalitarian purposes espoused by Freire. It seems that in the conceptualisation of the SANQF, these aspects were not considered to be mutually exclusive. However, according to Allais (2003), in the current context, neo-liberal policies and the increasing marketisation of education and training are overtaking the original socio-political purpose of the NQF.

Nevertheless, the *purpose* of an NQF is directly linked to the guiding philosophy of the system and the guiding philosophy of the SANQF still seems to be rooted in the

sociopolitical impetus of a post-apartheid society, namely to remove the impermeable barriers to quality education and training and the social value given to such qualifications. The purpose is ‘the explicit, usually overt, reasons for the development and implementation of the NQF’ (Keevy, 2005, p. 125). What qualifications frameworks are intended to achieve is clearly tied to the political and cultural context of the country developing the framework. As noted earlier, reasons for the development of a national qualifications framework include addressing issues of social justice, improving access and progression and establishing standards to enhance comparability (Granville, 2003). Granville (2003) points out that South Africa is the main (or perhaps sole), example of a framework primarily intended to contribute to a national programme of social reconstruction.

The purpose of an NQF in turn, influences the other characteristics of the system.

The third characteristic of an NQF that has a bearing on integration is *scope*. Scope is defined as ‘the measure of integration of levels, sectors and types of qualifications as well as the relationships between each on the NQF’ (Keevy, 2005, p. 125). Scope includes at least two dimensions (Keevy, 2005, p. 148):

The *first dimension* refers to the integration of levels (e.g. inclusion of university qualifications); sectors (e.g. occupational sector and geographical region); and types (e.g. academic, vocational, private, public)...[t]his dimension of scope can be seen as a continuum ranging from *partial* to *comprehensive* (Raffe, 2005).

The *second dimension* of scope is the relationships between the categories or systems...[i]n some cases these relationships are explicitly defined, even prescribed, whilst in others they are left for roleplayers to negotiate.

Howieson and Raffe (1999, p. 2) give a useful classification of *scope*, namely a ‘tracked’, ‘linked’ or ‘unified’ system:

In a “tracked system” each of the separate components of the education and training system has distinctive purposes and a different ethos [is] associated with each track; in a “linked system”, there are common elements across tracks and the purposes and ethos overlap; a “unified system” displays multiple purposes, has a pluralistic ethos and integrates academic and vocational learning (SAQA, 2005, p. 32).

In Table 2.4, the first dimension of scope in relation to a ‘tracked, linked or unified’ system is portrayed.

Table 2.4.***Scope of a National Qualifications Framework***

Tracked system	Linked system	Unified/integrated system
Vocational and general education are organised in separate and distinctive tracks.	Different tracks exist with emphasis on similarities and equivalence Common structures to qualifications Credit transfer between tracks	No tracks Single system

In terms of this perspective on integration, qualifications frameworks can thus be placed on a continuum from ‘tracked’ to ‘unified’. However, according to Tuck, Hart and Keevy (2004), it is doubtful if a completely tracked system can be considered to be an NQF (refer to Chapter 6).

Closely associated with the ‘tracked, linked, unified’ continuum, is the notion of ‘loose’ or ‘tight’ frameworks, referring to the level of prescription for qualifications to be included on the framework, the quality assurance measures to be used, and the key system features (SAQA, 2005).

In Table 2.5, these additional features are shown (SAQA, 2005, p. 32):

Table 2.5.***Loose and Tight Frameworks***

Tight	Loose
Prescriptive about qualification design and quality assurance	Based on general principles
Regulatory purpose	Seek to communicate
Aim to achieve wider social goals	Regulate to some extent
Tend to apply common rules and procedures across all sectors	Accept differences between sectors

It seems evident that a ‘tight’ framework will facilitate an integrated approach much more than a ‘loose’ framework. This may hint at the strong initial support for an integrated approach in South Africa: tighter, regulatory specifications are in keeping with the ‘duty of government’ to steer the direction of the emerging system (Jonathan, 2001, p. 77).

Figure 2.2 portrays some qualifications frameworks discussed in this literature review in relation to the scope and prescriptiveness continuum (from SAQA, 2005, p. 33). Some frameworks seem to be *loosely linked*, while others are *loosely unified*. The South African framework is currently considered *tightly unified*, meaning that it has a regulatory purpose, it uses a single description for qualifications to be included on the framework and it tends to use common rules and procedures across all sectors.

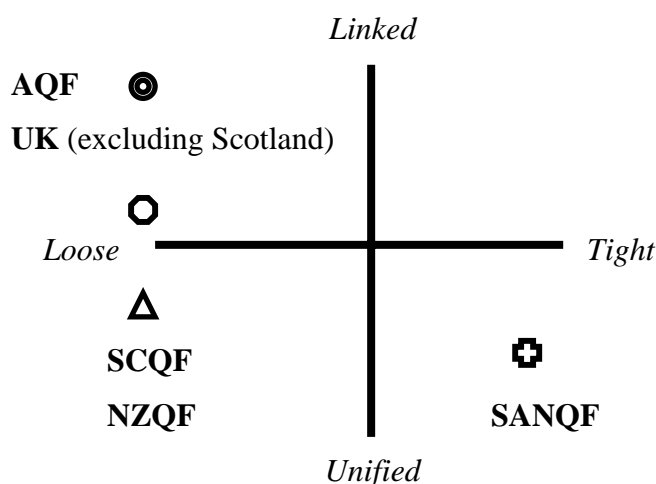


Figure 2.2. Scope and Prescriptiveness of National Qualifications Frameworks

Key:	●	AQF - Australian Qualifications Framework
	●	UK - United Kingdom (excluding Scotland)
	○	SCQF - Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework
	△	NZQF - New Zealand Qualifications Framework
	+	SANQF - South African National Qualifications Framework

The best examples of the ‘first generation NQFs’ (that is Scotland, the UK, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa) in terms of these characteristics are:

- Linked: Australia and the UK (excluding Scotland)
- Unified: South Africa

A hybrid of a unified and linked system has emerged in New Zealand and Scotland. Scotland’s school and college-based vocational education and training are unified, but the relationship with higher education and work-based training is more loosely linked,

while New Zealand's vocational education and training is unified, but schools and universities are loosely linked with the rest of the system.

Most countries favoured a tracked system before NQFs came into being ... 'because school education, university education, vocational education and vocational training were seen as distinct and largely unrelated' (ILO, 2006, p.14). However, internationally this view seems to be challenged and, certainly in South Africa, 'the question of the need for greater articulation or mobility between academic and vocational education and training sectors has been on the South African educational agenda since the early 1980s' (Kraak, 2004, p. 53).

Qualifications frameworks therefore vary in their focus and aims, but all, to a lesser or greater extent, seem to attempt to improve progression of learners within the system and to ensure comparable quality, depth and breadth of learning in order to enable the recognition of learning regardless of where (and how) the learning has been achieved – these are, in my view, different dimensions of integration.

2.5 The History of the South African National Qualifications Framework

The history of the SANQF is a short one. The South African Qualifications Authority Act was promulgated in 1995, and the organisation came into being in 1997 with the appointment of an Executive Officer. However, the idea of national qualifications frameworks is rooted in two reform impulses in Scotland and the United Kingdom (Young, 2003). The Scottish 16+ Action Plan, launched in 1984, and the National Vocational Framework (NVQ), launched in 1986 in England, formed the basis for a succession of reforms culminating in the concept of a qualifications framework. These initiatives led to similar movements in New Zealand, Australia and South Africa, where in some cases, the developments were limited to vocational education and training (DoE & DoL, 2002).

Not all of these countries have chosen to, or are planning to develop an all-encompassing education and training system similar to the South African system (see Figure 2.2). Where this has been attempted, for example in New Zealand, there has been a retreat from the original plan for a comprehensive system, where all sectors and levels of education and training are included, to a compromise position of

allowing higher education and general schooling to function as separate entities, but with higher education qualifications registered on the framework (Philips, 2003). Other countries have developed qualifications frameworks only for vocational education and training (for example, Australia) (Keating, 2003) or for higher education.

Thus, while ‘it is common knowledge that the South African National Qualifications Framework originated from the strong need of the post-1994 African National Congress (ANC) government to reform a disparate and unequal education and training system’ (SAQA, 2005, p. 23), the reform impulse started much earlier – in the aftermath of the 1976 school riots in Soweto, south of Johannesburg. McGrath (1997, p. 7) notes:

At the centre of the emergent formulations is the notion of an integration of education and training into a single National Qualifications Framework (NQF). This notion appeared in the South African policy debates at the beginning of the 1990s largely through elements of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). Their work itself drew on similar thinking in the other countries of the old Commonwealth, notably Australia and England. Such a vision was also partly developed in a response to the continued policy direction of the former state from the De Lange Report to the Curriculum Model for Education in South Africa (CUMSA) and the Education Renewal Strategy (ERS).

The fact that organised labour played such an important role in the development of the idea of an NQF is significant and hints at some of the contestations about integration. The De Lange Report and subsequent work undertaken to investigate how education and training could alleviate the economic difficulties in the 1980s were overlaid with ‘the rise in political opposition to the apartheid regime from both worker and student movements across the country’ (Kraak, 2004, p. 46). As a ‘site of the struggle’ education and training under a new dispensation were meant to overcome the ‘lack of co-ordination’ and a ‘fragmented and divisive’ qualifications structure (Kraak, 2004, p. 47).

Therefore, in the early discussions of education and training in post-apartheid South Africa, the new system was meant to address a multitude of problems in education provision. First, ‘[e]ducation was for a long time a major source of discontent in apartheid South Africa, and was often a rallying point in the broader struggle against

it' (Allais, 2003, p. 307). The SANQF 'was [thus] set up to redress the effects of a hated order, and to promote new paths to recognition and access' (French, 2005, p. 54). Education and training in South Africa became emotionally charged with the passion to transform a disparate system to a system that would 'be an instrument for human dignity and human rights' (French, 2005, p. 54).

Thus, the idea of a comprehensive and integrated NQF was born. In October 1995, the proceedings of a workshop on the proposed NQF were published by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), where the passion of the thinkers in education and training was reflected as follows (HSRC, 1995, pp. 5–6):

First and foremost, we need to create an *equitable system* of education and training which serves *all* South Africans well. Such a system will need to accommodate those people who are in conventional schools, colleges and training programmes. It will also need to find ways to include the learning needs of the many South Africans who have not enjoyed formal education and training [referring to the recognition of prior learning (RPL)] (emphasis added).

Later, at a conference hosted by the Inter-Ministerial Working Group (IMWG) in April 1996 (IMWG, p. 2), the point was made that the underlying concept of the new education and training system is *an integrated approach*.

The introduction and acceptance of this concept [namely an integrated approach] was a breakthrough in the development of thinking on the National Qualifications Framework. It is progressive and developmental, not prescriptive and dogmatic.

Integration was thus vested with the responsibility to address at least four problems: the racially-based fragmentation of the education and training system and the lack of opportunities to access education and training; the low status of vocational education and training; the lack of articulation between sectors; and parity of esteem between academic and vocational studies (Kraak, 2004).

It is evident that there would be no question of an incremental approach to the implementation of the SANQF, which through the gradual development of trust relationships, and communities of practice, could enhance the establishment of an integrated framework (refer to Chapter 6). French (2005), notes that there was no trust, and that the previous system was completely discredited. Thus, the new system

had to deal with these problems in a 'revolutionary' manner (Young, 2005), unlike Scotland, where the Scottish NQF has developed over a period of 20 years (Tuck et al., 2004). There was an urgent need to make a decisive break from the apartheid past. The SANQF became the symbol of such a break. The South African Qualifications Authority Act (Act 58 of 1995) came to symbolise 'the move from the old to the new: from a patchwork of systems, [characterised] by division, inequality, segmentation, centralisation and poor accessibility, to a coherent and integrated national system characterised by openness, articulation, devolution, high participation, creativity and built-in quality assurance' (IMWG, 1996, p. 2).

However, perhaps because of the strong involvement of organised labour, the academic, high-status sector faced two constraints. On the one hand, if the arguments against an integrated approach came across as too strong, they would be labelled as 'stone-age resisters [or be attributed] with racial or ideological motives' (Jansen, 2004, p. 90). On the other hand, not too much could be made of the seemingly increasing vocationalisation of education, because vocationalism has a powerful logic for those who have been excluded on an economic and political front. French (2005, p. 56) notes:

If [the Department of Education and Training and the Committee of University Principals] had done so, it was unlikely that their voices would have been respected. Indeed, it became a strong point in the advocacy for the NQF to emphasise the rationally designed "national standards" were to become the arbiters of all recognition of learning, not institutions. The influence of the universities on the curriculum on aspirations and choices, was seen as unfortunate given the development needs of the country and the learning needed by people with no prospect of going into higher education or training.

Thus, 'the development and implementation of the NQF has been favoured by *political impetus*, and hampered by *political contestation*' (SAQA, 2004, Annexure 2, p. 10) and an integrated framework, nine years after the establishment of the South African Qualifications Authority, still seems to be at the level of espoused policy, rather than practice. This is despite the acknowledgement that in South Africa, as elsewhere in the world, education and training have been separated, both by the way they are organised and by the way society thinks about them (HSRC, 1995) and that only through a dedicated strategy which is not vested with political symbolism, but

that approaches the problem from a systemic point of view, an integrated framework could become a reality.

Furthermore, in spite of policy adaptation by, for example, higher education and the schooling system, ‘the original political and moral passions continue to inspire, vex, limit and shape debates and decisions within the NQF’ (French, 2005, p. 58). This seems to be an important reason for the fact that the reviews of the SANQF, which were initiated in 2001 by the then Minister of Education, Kader Asmal and the Minister of Labour, Membathisi Mdladlana, have, five years later, not yet been concluded.

2.6 The Reviews of the South African National Qualifications Framework

The SANQF has been the subject of debate and contestation from the outset, partly perhaps as a result of the lack of trust that existed at its inception: ‘[T]he NQF was created in a context in which there was no trust between the proponents of the new order and the providers of the old order’ (French, 2005, p. 55). Contestations thus emerged from key stakeholder groupings: the state (old and new), employers, organised labour and education and training institutions. The HSRC (1995, pp. 33–34) notes that these roleplayers were ‘locked into battle over many issues’, including the issue of an integrated framework, and summarises the contestations as follows:

- **State concerns:** here state includes the old Departments of Education and Manpower and the new or “shadow” state. According to the HSRC (1995), issues in the former (pre-1994) state centred around the Departments of Education and Manpower resisting integration, having come from a history where “they literally never spoke to each other”. The shadow state, on the other hand, represented the view that any new education and training strategy should address the concerns of economic reconstruction and growth, should lead to active labour market policies and should address past injustice.
- **Employers** were concerned about economic growth and global competitiveness, and viewed education and training as a means to improve productivity through worker training.
- **Labour’s** concerns revolved around the need for employment security and employment growth, as well as the need for progression or career paths and a strongly articulated need for [Adult Basic Education and Training].
- **Providers** were concerned about a fragmented system of learning that prevented continuous learning pathways (SAQA, 2004, Annexure 2, p. 11).

Interestingly, the original proposal for a new system of education and training system in South Africa was that of an ‘articulated system’ and not an ‘integrated system’ (French, 2005, p. 54):

An environment that was intensely critical of all education and training provision led to a dramatic, briefly contested, decision in 1993 that South Africa would not have an articulated system, but an integrated system. The Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and its alliance partners were the main proponents of the move, on which they took a strong line. On the whole they were supported by alternative providers. Business, which also took a leading role in promoting the NQF, resigned itself to the decision. The representatives of the Department of National Education argued for an “integrated approach” rather than an “integrated system”, but this was rejected by the supporters of an “integrated system” on the belief that an “approach” would become merely cosmetic.

The main reason for the decision to establish an integrated framework, rather than an articulated system, was the belief that ‘segregated institutions and processes of education provision...were for the most part centres of privilege and exclusion, were backward and corrupt, and were scarcely worthy of notice’ (French, 2005, p. 55). Again, it is evident that an incremental approach, where ‘some provisions of the old order that were motivated by hard-won experience and legitimate considerations could be used to build a new system, was not possible and in fact was regarded ‘as being inappropriate to “the political moment”’ (French, 2005, p. 56).

However, despite being silenced, the contestations about an integrated framework have been, and still are with the SANQF (HSRC, 1995, p. 34):

It is important to grasp differences of opinion that lie behind arguments for an “integrated approach” for when temporary consensus is reached in any negotiation process, it does not mean that differences miraculously disappear. Some stakeholders decide to “sit on the fence” for a while; some continue to push for interpretations and meanings that are congruent with their needs and interest; other withdraw and move to negotiation forums which better serve their interests.

With this as the background, it was possibly inevitable that the new system would, a few years after implementation, be reviewed. Mehl, (2004, p. 21) makes the point that:

New concepts and new entities cannot be introduced into complex adaptive systems such as education and training structures without the system realigning its components, regrouping existing structures and protecting transitional and existing interests. It is often thought that

changes introduced into a system will be seamlessly incorporated for the greater good, particularly if, as was the case with the NQF in 1995, they enjoy national and ideological acclaim.

Jansen (2004, p. 50), however, notes that the review of the SANQF was more than 'part of the normal cycle of administrative review associated with government bureaucracies throughout the world'

Reviews also represent...a political intervention intended to revisit, revise or even reverse policies around which the political agenda has shifted. Such reviews are often conducted in response to political pressures from above or below (or both) to deal with an unsatisfactory situation. Reviews are often facilitated by a change in political leadership, e.g. a new Minister of Education. It would be a mistake, therefore, to read the review of the National Qualifications Framework as simply a logical event following time-honoured procedures of reviewing, refining and affirming policy. Inevitably, therefore, such reviews generate intense political turmoil, within and outside government bureaucracies.

Four years after the publication of the first report dealing with the review of the SANQF, while there is still no clarity as to the direction the system will take, the implications of the reviews for an integrated framework are substantial.

The first review, entitled *Report of the Study Team on the Implementation of the National Qualifications Framework* (DoE & DoL, 2002), starts to conceptualise integration as 'a continuum of learning' (refer to Chapter 7). The response in 2003 of the two sponsoring departments (Education and Labour) to this review, in the form of the publication *An Interdependent National Qualifications Framework System: Consultative Document* (DoE & DoL, 2003), agrees with the notion of a continuum of learning, but in its operationalisation thereof, dis-integrates the system into three tracks. The third publication, *The Higher Education Qualifications Framework: Draft for discussion* (Ministry of Education, 2004), makes no attempt to address integration except in the loosest of forms. The shifting understandings of integration emerging from these three documents are shown in Table 2.6 (derived from SAQA, 2005, p. 35):

Table 2. 6.

Shifting Understandings of Integration

Current conceptual model	Study team report (DoE & DoL, 2002)	Consultative Document (DoE & DoL, 2003)	Draft Higher Education Qualifications Framework (Ministry of Education, 2004)
An integrated framework	A linked framework, with education and training viewed as opposite points of a 'continuum of learning'	A tracked framework, with links between the tracks through articulation 'spaces'	Tracks, not necessarily linked and with an emphasis in the differences in purpose, content, outcomes or equivalence, but with similarity in terms of levels

The conceptual shifts could have a profound effect on the implementation of integration as a principle. The Study team report (2002, p. iii) explains integration as follows:

The idea that a qualifications framework is integrated means that it is a single framework that includes all qualifications, and that academic and vocational qualifications represent a continuum of education and training, not a division between them.

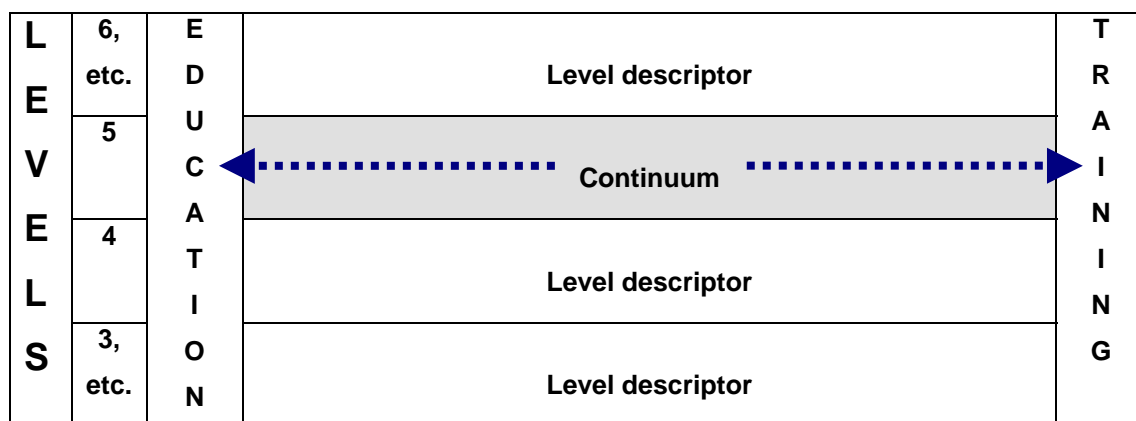
While the subsequent response by the Departments in the *Consultative Document* (DoE & DoL, 2003) seems to agree with the notion of 'a continuum of learning', and notes that education and training 'are not in fact opposites but equally essential facets of the same national learning system', its interpretation of this continuum is 'an articulated system' (French, 2005, p. 12), namely: '...a National Qualifications Framework with three inter-related but distinguished learning modes or typical pathways: discipline-based, career-focused/general vocational and occupational context-based'. The further development of the SANQF should thus be approached 'in such a manner that respects the different modes of learning and encourages collaboration and inter-dependence among the various structures, without compromising the unique value each learning perspective brings to the whole' (French, 2005, p. 7). The solution offered in the *Consultative Document* to 'respect the different modes of learning' is to develop unique level descriptors for each mode, with articulation routes between them (DoE & DoL, 2003, p. 13):

Instead of attempting to bridge the conceptual divide with level descriptor statements of broader and broader generality, it may well be necessary to consider fit for purpose level descriptors for each learning mode that are

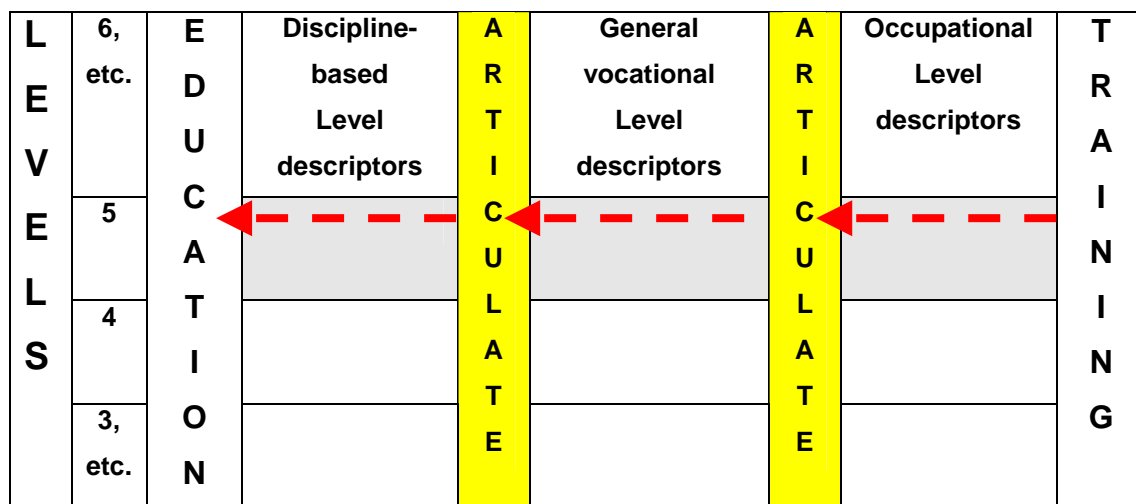
University of Pretoria etd – Blom, J P (2007)

nevertheless sufficiently compatible with one another, level by level, that they assist the articulation of qualifications within and between pathways.

The draft Higher Education Qualifications Framework (HEQF) (Ministry of Education, 2004), takes this further by considering the proposed framework for higher education as a separate framework for qualifications all together, and which provide the basis for ‘integrating all higher education qualifications into the National Qualifications Framework’ (Ministry of Education, 2004, p. 1). Diagrammatically, these conceptual shifts are represented in Figure 2.3:



The Study Team report (2002)



The Consultative Document (2003)

Figure 2.3. Diagrammatic Representation of the Shifts in the Conceptual Understanding of Integration

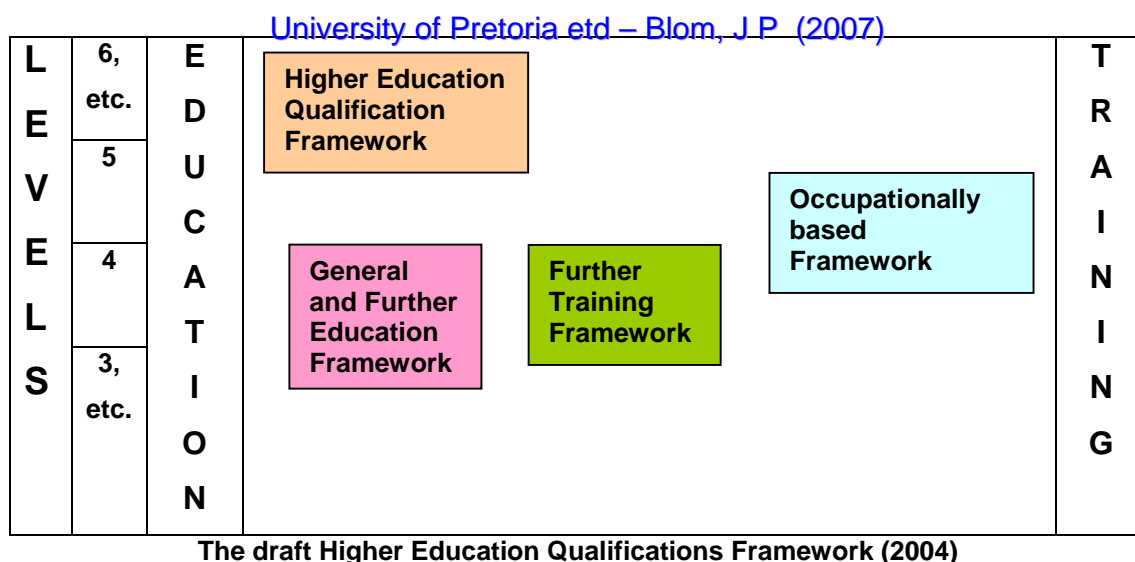


Figure 2.3 (Continued). Diagrammatic Representation of the Shifts in the Conceptual Understanding of Integration

However, while finalisation of the review initiated in 2001 is still awaited, the idea of an integrated framework still seems to be considered a key tenet of the system, albeit in terms of different interpretation of integration – at least as an espoused principle.

With so much hinging on an education and training system, it is perhaps not surprising that the two sponsoring departments in their response to the 2002 review are so careful to affirm the original intent of the SANQF and are sensitive to the strong support for an integrated framework of education and training. In their introduction to the response to the review of 2002 (DoE & DoL, 2003, p.1) they noted: ‘Despite the difficulties of implementing changes of such magnitude the idea of an integrated framework of quality assured qualifications is a reference point for all new developments in our national learning system’.

The SANQF therefore, and then in particular, an integrated national framework of education and training, has rightly or wrongly, become vested with a national programme of ‘social transformation’ (Granville, 2004, p. 3). The power of emotion behind the new philosophy for education and training in South Africa is so strong that it seems to be ‘insulated from serious critique’ (Allais, 2003, p.321), and the political heads of the system currently seem to want to avoid, rather than confront the very real issues of the implementation of an integrated framework. Jansen, (2004, p. 59) maintains that the ‘recommendations in both reports could arguably be read as a

review of policy and not simply a statement of improved implementation’ and yet no substantial changes have been effected (SAQA, 2005, p. 27):

Differences continue to hold sway between those who maintain the ideal of a fully integrated system, those who believe that there are significant differences between modes of learning that make even the loosest form of integration a remote possibility, and those who recognise these differences but argue that they represent points on a continuum.

2.7 Conclusion

From the literature it is evident that the development and implementation of national qualifications frameworks, as an attempt to achieve greater coherence in national education and training systems, is a global phenomenon. This seems to stem from the recognition that education and training systems, in the past, had limited progression routes within the system, and that the mobility of learners and/or workers was constrained as a result of poor links between education, training and the workplace.

Further, increasing globalisation and the emergence of regional conventions, such as the Bologna (Europe) and Arusha (Africa) conventions, clearly influence the need for common benchmarks and comparability between countries in a particular region – hence the proposed European Qualifications Framework, the SADC framework, the Pacific Islands Forum and the Caribbean Community, to name a few.

In individual states, systemic pressures, most notably the increased complexity of education and training and the relationships of the system with the world of work, and the increasing diffusion of formal (in institutions) and non-formal education and training (in workplaces) seems to need the development of a closer relationship between these different components of the system.

In addition, the traditional divide between the status and value of ‘educational qualifications’ and ‘training’ is increasingly challenged. The vocational component of the system is seeking to achieve parity of esteem with the academic component of the system and is looking for improved ways in which the learning achieved in the vocational component could articulate meaningfully with the academic component.

Linked to the higher status of vocational learning is the belief that education, in its traditional form, is no longer relevant to the needs of the workplace and that, in order to attain greater economic growth and global competitiveness, education and training should be market-related and should include not only appropriate theory, but also workplace practice.

It is therefore not surprising that integration, in one form or another, is actively encouraged by states – either as a comprehensive or partial framework. Such are the perceived systemic pressures on many countries developing and implementing national qualifications frameworks.

However, while South Africa is subject to the same systemic and global pressures, the history of education and training in this country has vested the emerging system with the sociopolitical aspirations of a large number of individuals who were denied opportunities for learning under the apartheid regime. The NQF policy in South Africa is thus also given the responsibility to redress lack of opportunity for the disenfranchised. Integration in South Africa, therefore, cannot be seen separately from the context within which it is being implemented, and this is probably partly the reason for contestations between the different factions in the emerging system. In a country where education and training were seen to have been the privilege of the few, the main original proponent of a new system, namely organised labour, is possibly seen as a threat to the ‘positional good’ of formal, institutional learning (Raffe, 2005, p. 27) traditionally only available to the white minority. Thus, while there may be valid educational and epistemological reasons for the view that education and training is ‘incommensurable’ (Raffe, 2005), these reasons are overlaid by the socio-political aspirations of the new order.

In addition, unlike a system such as the Scottish NQF, which reflects strong, well-established and trusted sub-frameworks, the previous system in South Africa, was completely discredited, and any possible strengths that may have facilitated the development of an integrated approach to education and training, were disregarded.

This seems to explain the vehement defence of integration as the central principle upon which the South African system should be built. It would, therefore, be much

more difficult for politicians who intend to ‘reverse’ the NQF policy in South Africa (Jansen, 2004, p. 50), to do so without alienating the very people who have put them in power.

Finally, and this is evident in all national qualifications frameworks, a national policy will have no effect unless it is supported by the surrounding ‘institutional logic’ (Raffe, 1992), which focuses on enabling changes espoused in policy, in practice. The SANQF, in its formative years, seems to have fought the battle almost primarily at a policy and structural level. In South Africa, but also elsewhere in the world, an integrated or unified framework thus still seems to be at a conceptual level. The ideal of integrated frameworks seems to be something to be achieved in the future. From the literature it is becoming evident that a national policy could seriously be constrained if ‘the diversity of implementation pathways followed in practice’ (Jansen, 2004, p. 90) is not considered – hence the many different permutations of qualifications frameworks. This diversity may hint at some of the obstacles and impediments to the implementation of an integrated framework, but this is not clearly evident from the literature. While the benefits of an integrated approach to education and training are strongly supported and described in the literature, except at a general level, the literature does not provide examples of practice, where the contexts, timeframes, types of support and difficulties are described. Young (2005, p. 8) says that the introduction of national qualifications frameworks ‘is not a superficial reform that leaves most existing education and training provision able to go on as before’. It seems that integration as a principle, still lacks ‘a credible theory of action that would take these good ideas and implant them in educational practice’ (Jansen, 2004, p. 89). An integrated framework seems to require a completely different approach to ‘the way qualifications have traditionally been organised...and in the deeply embedded practices that underpin them’ (Young, 2005, p. 8). This inquiry hopes to contribute to the debates on integration and review the feasibility of an integrated framework for education and training systems.

**CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK:
THE USES AND MEANINGS OF INTEGRATION**

The National Qualifications Framework was established as an emblem and an instrument of the single national high-quality education and training system that democratic South Africa aspired to create. The NQF is a transformatory project, closely identified with the objective of ridding South Africa of its apartheid legacy and opening the doors of learning to all. This accounts for much of the passion that is invested in NQF implementation, and also for the depth of the disappointment that so few signs of progress are yet apparent.¹

The aim of this study is to investigate the extent to which the South African education and training system reflects in principle, perception and practice the ideal of an integrated national qualifications framework. Four operational research questions inform the conceptual framework: Is the objective of an integrated South African National Qualifications Framework (SANQF) an example of policy symbolism? Can the relationships between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful through an integrated framework? Can the development of communities of practice as a key element of an integrated framework, enhance trust amongst partners in education and training? Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning?

In 3.1 a general introduction to the conceptual framework is given. Section 3.2 deals with the first lens (or perspective) of an integrated framework – policy symbolism. Integration as the guiding philosophy of the SANQF is discussed in 3.3 while integration as the scope of the framework is dealt with in 3.4. The architecture of the framework and of qualifications, seen to enhance articulation between different components of the education and training system, is discussed in 3.5. Policy breadth (3.6) deals with the factors that are seen to be necessary for the meaningful implementation of large-scale reform of education and training in this country. In 3.7 and 3.8 integration is discussed on a meso- and micro level that is at the epistemological and curricular level. The uses and meanings of integration as a conceptual framework for this study are dealt with in 3.9. This chapter concludes with the ways in which the different perspectives of integration influence the conceptual framework and the research questions (3.10).

¹ DoE & DoL, 2002, p. xi.

3.1 Introduction

From the literature it is evident that the national qualification framework movement has become a worldwide trend. National qualification frameworks have been, or are being implemented in all four corners of the globe, in developed countries, as well as in developing countries. The persuasive logic for the movement seems to reside in systemic and global pressures: firstly, to improve the understanding of an education and training system within a country and in making progression routes and access to different parts of the national system explicit; secondly, to meet the needs of governments to make education and training more accountable by bringing all of the system in line with national policy; and thirdly, to provide for comparability across borders, particularly in regions where there is much mobility of students and workers.

It is a young movement. The oldest of the frameworks is seen to be the Scottish system, but it is important to note that the Scottish system has evolved from distinct and well-established sub-systems, which were completely autonomous. Only recently (in 2001) did the Scottish system formally establish its Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework. In most of the first generation national qualification frameworks (Scotland, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, England and Wales), which, with the exception of South Africa were established in developed countries, the sub-systems of education and training were intact and relatively strong. The need for 'integration' thus evolved from emerging practice, and possibly the recognition that in a modern education and training system it is increasingly difficult to maintain a clear dichotomy between the different components of the system, and between those components and modern workplaces. While most of the established and emerging frameworks (partial and comprehensive) thus espouse the need for the unification of disparate components of the system, the ways in which integration/unification are interpreted, and the impacts that integration may have on the systems, are vastly different. Also, in South Africa, the interpretation of 'integration' as a key tenet of the new system is interpreted from different perspectives. The conceptual framework for this study is thus an exploration of the different meanings of 'integration' in order to elucidate the main research question, namely: *To what extent does the South African education and training system reflect in principle, perception and practice, the ideal of an integrated national qualifications framework?*

The SANQF ‘became a point of convergence for organisations representing different interests and political orientations’ in a new South Africa, and ‘a strategic patch of common ground’ (DoE and DoL, 2002, p. 5). However, despite the belief that systemic articulation appears to be the best way to facilitate equity under conditions of differentiation (National Education Policy Investigation, 1992), an ‘integrated national framework’ is probably one of the most hotly contested ideals of the SANQF. Yet none of the critics of the SANQF is willing to say that integration is not central to the idea of the qualifications framework. The Study Team² that was responsible for the first review of the implementation of the SANQF, for example, suggested ‘there is general concern that the integration of education and training has not been achieved’ (DoE & DoL, 2002, p. 22), but without stating what ‘integration’ would imply. It seems that one of the reasons for the limited progress in the achievement of this objective of the SANQF is that there is no common understanding of what it is that we mean when we talk about ‘an integrated framework’. The unintended consequence of this lack of common understanding is that the drivers of the SANQF and their partners have interpreted this concept in different ways (Heyns & Needham, 2004), which has led to contestation at its worst and systemic paralysis at the least. The contestation is most evident in the political impasse on the shape and the form of the NQF between the two sponsoring departments of the SANQF: the Department of Education and the Department of Labour. The review of the SANQF, which was initiated in 2001 by the then Minister of Education, Kader Asmal, has five years later, not yet been concluded. Systemic paralysis, owing to the unresolved tensions between these two Departments has resulted, for example, in contestations about responsibilities for standards setting and quality assurance, and the status of Education and Training Quality Assurance bodies (ETQAs) in relation to each other. This, in turn, has made the ETQAs unwilling to engage in the development of agreements around standards and quality assurance and the establishment of communities of practice. In the *SAQA National Qualifications Framework Impact Study* (SAQA, 2005, p. 73), for example, the lack of agreement is seen to be a major stumbling block in the further development and implementation of the SANQF:

The tension between ETQAs due to overlapping responsibilities is keenly felt and this seems to be compounded by the feeling that some ETQAs are

² *Report of the Study Team on the Implementation of the National Qualifications Framework* published by the Department of Education and the Department of Labour in April 2002.

more powerful than others [for example]: “There is the perception that CHE is the authority and that they have more power”.

In my view, these problems are symptomatic of the poor conceptualisation of ‘integration’ as a workable idea. However, the problems of ‘who is responsible for what’ in terms of quality assurance, and ‘whose standards are considered to be the benchmark’ and more importantly, ‘who has the power’, reflect only some of the meanings of integration for the South African education and training system. The conceptual framework highlights at least seven meanings of integration:

1. Integration as policy symbolism
2. Integration as the guiding philosophy³ for the framework
3. Integration as the scope⁴ of the framework
4. Integration as the architecture⁵ of the framework
5. Integration as policy breadth⁶
6. Integration as a continuum of learning
7. Integration as curricular ‘integrability’⁷

These seven meanings, starting with ‘policy symbolism’ as evidence of the attempt by the new African National Congress (ANC) government to make a clean break with the past, have profoundly influenced the ‘guiding philosophy’ that underlies the development and implementation of a new education and training system for South Africa. The guiding philosophy of the SANQF deals with the social justice issues that were associated with apartheid education and training, but then progressively move from the abstract of an integrated framework at the conceptual level to attempts to come to grips with what an integrated framework means for the system. Integration then means ‘systemic comprehensiveness’, where the SANQF is intended to cover all levels and sectors of education and training, and deepens to mean the relationship between formal learning and the world of work and the perceived opposing epistemologies associated with discipline-based learning and workplace-based learning. Finally, integration has meaning for classroom practice. The conceptual

³ Based on the work of Raffe (2005), Granville (2003 and 2004), Young (2005), Tuck, Hart and Keevy (2004) and Keevy (2005).

⁴ As above

⁵ Keevy (2005)

⁶ As above

⁷ Keevy, (2006)

framework therefore encompasses every dimension of education and training, from a macro-political, to a micro-classroom level.

3.2 Integration as Policy Symbolism

The development of the SANQF is tied to the political and cultural context of a country that was marked with possibly the most disparate education and training system in the world. The previous system under apartheid was not the result of ‘benign neglect’, but a response to a purposeful and deliberate attempt to keep millions of people ‘in their place’ (Blom, 2006b, p. 1). French (2005, p. 54) makes the point that

...the South African NQF was set up to redress the effects of a hated order, and to promote new paths to recognition and access that would be real, and not merely symbolic corrective acts. The NQF was to be an instrument for human dignity and human rights. It was to encompass the whole provision of education and training, not merely post-secondary preparation for work. It was intent on revolutionising both the curriculum and the institutions of provision.

The integration of education and training was thus proposed as ‘one of the central pillars in our Reconstruction and Development Programme’ (Manganyi, 1996, p. 3) and ‘was seen as a mechanism to acknowledge in no small measure the workers’ contribution to the struggle for freedom’ (Heyns & Needham, 2004, p. 33).

In his discussion of a ‘systemic discourse’, Kraak (1998, p. 4) says that the SANQF is a response to the ‘egalitarian pressures over the past three decades to reduce the gross social inequalities in South Africa’ and that a single national qualifications framework is meant to replace the highly differentiated and divisive education and training structures of the past.

An important part of the rationale for an integrated framework is the political support for the idea by education and labour. In the promulgation of the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act, (Act No 58 of 1995), for example, Manganyi (1996, p. 1) noted that the Act ‘was recommended to Cabinet by two Ministers, not one, as a combined product’ and that it ‘won unanimous support of all political parties in Parliament’.

In view of the above, it would be easy to conclude that the idea of a national qualifications framework, and in particular the idea of integrating education and labour, is an example of policy symbolism. Given South Africa's history of prejudice and unfairness, it is perhaps not surprising that the first democratically elected government of the country saw the importance of creating symbols of a new order (Blom, 2006b) but, at the time, it certainly did not seem to be reduced to political symbolism:

The underlying concept is *an integrated approach to education and training*. The introduction and acceptance of this concept was a breakthrough in the development of thinking on the National Qualifications Framework. It is progressive and developmental, not prescriptive or dogmatic. It is not empty rhetoric. We take it seriously, both as a working concept within the Department of Education, and as the guiding concept in our relations with the Department of Labour and other departments with education and training responsibilities (Manganyi, 1996, p. 2)

Nevertheless, the difficulties experienced in balancing the interests of education and labour and the apparent power struggles between the two departments responsible for the SANQF may ultimately lead to 'dis-integration' (Heyns and Needham, 2004, p. 37). Several commentators, for example, Jansen (2004) and French (2005), have noted that the NQF was compromised from the beginning:

It does not take much logic to recognise that installing a department of education separate from a department of labour would immediately cancel out any profound expectation of creating "an integrated national framework for learning achievements" (Jansen, 2004, p. 88).

[A Ministry of Lifelong Learning was intended to] overcome the fierce historical division between education and training that was reflected in the territorial animosity of the former Department of Education and Training and the Department of Manpower (French, 2005, p. 56).

The power struggles evident between the two departments are well documented but, until recently, not openly acknowledged. However, in a response to the *Higher Education Qualifications Framework – Draft for discussion* (Ministry of Education, 2004) the National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa (NAPTOSA) (2004, p. 1) states:

NAPTOSA finds it perplexing and frustrating that the tensions between the Departments of Education and Labour are such that there is a very real danger that the rift will result in "territorial" imperatives and protection of sectoral interests (along the DoE/DoL, education/training,

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academic/vocational divide) at the cost of integration across education and training and across formal, non-formal education and training opportunities.

In terms of the inquiry, I will investigate to what extent there is political will to enact the idea of an integrated framework, or whether indeed, ‘integration’ is one of those intractable ideals for the system.

3.3 Integration as Guiding Philosophy for the Framework

‘Integration’ is not only the first objective of the SANQF, but is also the first underpinning principle of the framework. Integration can thus be seen as the *guiding philosophy* of the SANQF, namely ‘the underlying thinking that implicitly, often covertly, underlies the development and implementation of [an] NQF’ (Keevy, 2005, p. 2).

In a response to the Study Team’s (DoE & DoL, 2002) review of the SANQF, for example, the Departments reiterate

‘[d]espite the difficulties in implementing ... the idea of an integrated framework of quality assured qualifications is a reference point for all new developments in our national learning system’ (DoE & DoL, 2003, p. 1).

As a principle, ‘integration’ therefore purposes to (SAQA, 2001a, p. 9): ‘...form part of a system of human resources development which provides for the establishment of a unifying approach to education and training’.

In addition to this statement by the Departments, which confirms the centrality of ‘integration’ in the development and implementation of the SANQF, a set of underpinning principles expands on the guiding philosophy (SAQA, 2001a). The principles include *relevance, credibility, coherence, flexibility, standards, legitimacy, access, articulation, progression, portability, recognition of prior learning and guidance of learners*. In terms of the guiding philosophy as an aspect of the conceptual framework, all of these principles, in a sense, describe and unpack what is meant by the first principle: integration. The argument is that when integration is achieved, social value is assigned to all learning achievements (DoE & DoL, 2002, p. 12), that is learning attained in education *and* training environments, which enhances parity of esteem of the learning regardless of where it was achieved. This in turn is

meant to lead to improved coherence of the system by valuing learning equally, and by recognising such learning in different contexts, which means that learners do not need to redo comparable aspects of programmes already achieved elsewhere. Such recognition of learning depends on the agreement on standards within a nationally agreed framework, which, if applied consistently, enables articulation between ‘different components of the [learning] system’ (SAQA, 2001a, p. 10), thereby facilitating meaningful progression through various ‘appropriate combinations of the [learning] system’ (SAQA, 2001a, p. 10). A coherent system using a commonly agreed framework of standards enables credits to be transferred between different sites of learning, that is it enhances the establishment of ‘multiple pathways to the same learning ends’ (SAQA, 2001a, p. 10) including pathways consisting of the recognition of prior learning (RPL). In the draft *Higher Education Qualifications Framework* (Ministry of Education, 2004, p. 1), this understanding is expressed as follows:

The [draft] policy...provides the basis for integrating all higher education qualifications into the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and its structures for standards generation and quality assurance. It improves the coherence of the higher education system and facilitates the articulation of qualifications, thereby enhancing the flexibility of the system and enabling students to move more efficiently over time from one programme to another as they pursue their academic and professional careers.

Figure 3.1 demonstrates this understanding (from SAQA, 2001a, pp. 9–10).

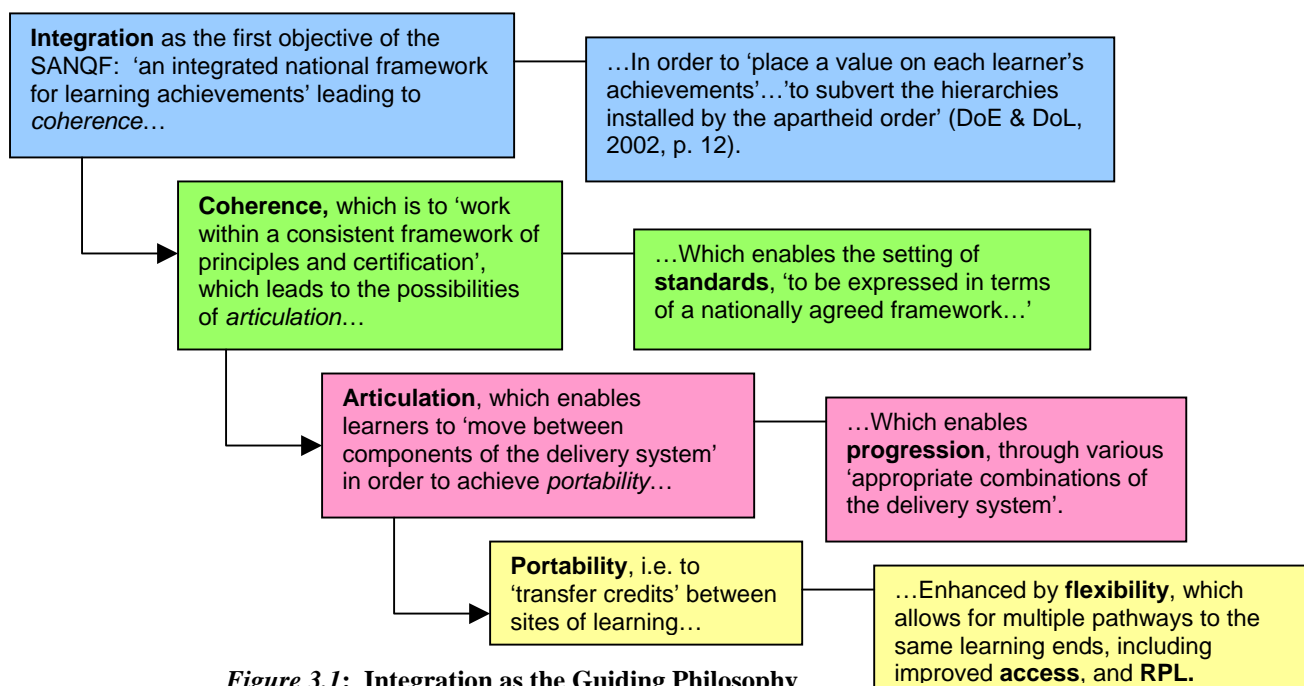


Figure 3.1: Integration as the Guiding Philosophy

While this understanding of integration seems to be the most enduring in terms of a guiding philosophy, ironically, it also seems to lead to the most acute paralysis of the system, perhaps because it means that the system as a whole has to be in agreement with more than only the single principle of an integrated framework. For this understanding to become meaningful, policy-makers and stakeholders have to agree that, in principle, all learning is valued equally and that it is possible to reach consensus on what (and whose) standards will be used to benchmark the learning against in order to facilitate articulation, progression and portability. In a discussion document (Ministerial Committee for Development Work on the NQF, 1996, p. 18), it was noted, for example:

The education sector was concerned that education would lose its “soul”, that it would become narrow in focus, concentrating only on teaching that was required by the world of work – training, in other words. At the centre of their concern was the fear that education standards would decrease rapidly if training was to prescribe to education...The training sector, on the other hand, was afraid that the integration of education and training would lead to unreasonable demands for “high” academic standards in the training world; an imposition, it was claimed, that would make it difficult, if not impossible, for those who trained workers to adjust rapidly to employment demands when required.

In terms of my inquiry, this understanding of integration is very important. It is evident that this understanding emerged from the acknowledgement by the original thinkers about the SANQF, that in South Africa there exists, as a result of the Apartheid policies, ‘the most pernicious inequalities in the world in terms of human resource development’ (Mehl, 2004, p. 22). Mehl calls this ‘the great integrating vision of the NQF’, which

...stemmed from the recognition that if there is no change in the way in which qualifications are awarded in society, then little else will change easily. The way in which society recognises, rewards and measures learning achievement is through qualifications. It is society that provides the ultimate validation of qualifications and accords respect to the bearer. Society awards status and also opportunity and privilege.

The implications of this understanding for my inquiry could be that, were integration as a guiding philosophy abandoned, two things might result. (1) The attempt to lift the value of all learning, particularly learning attained through less formal, academic routes, could, if it were not successful, alienate the training sector and result in a philosophical ‘dis-integration’ of the system. (2) The proponents of integration could

see this as a betrayal of a large part of the population for whom integration was a key principle of the new education and training system. This is because an integrated framework was to ‘redress the effects of a hated order’ as an ‘instrument for human dignity and human rights’ (French, 2005, p. 54).

3.4 Integration as the Scope of the Framework

The first understanding then refers to integration as a symbol of the ‘[subversion] of the hierarchies installed by the apartheid order’ (DoE & DoL, 2002, p. 12). However, such passion does not necessarily lead to a workable approach to the integration of education and training. The scope of the activities encompassed by the NQF could provide some answers and perhaps a more pragmatic understanding of integration.

Scope is ‘the measure of integration of levels, sectors and types of qualifications as well as the relationship between each on the NQF’ (Keevy, 2006, p. 2). In terms of the conceptual framework for this study, scope refers to *systemic coherence* of an education and training system. This understanding of integration has also been called the ‘macro’ level of the system (Heyns and Needham, 2004, p. 31), referring to the political decision by the post 1994 government to replace the then fragmented education and training system with a unitary system. The purpose to incorporate all of education and training, ‘...[h]aving all sectors of learning within one framework, subject to the same overall scheme of recognition, reflects the government’s policy that each sector relates to others and must be equally valued’ (DoE & DoL, 2002: p. 12). Integration in this context, therefore, deals with the relationship between academic and vocational sub-systems and levels and the extent to which parity of esteem between such sub-systems is achieved. On the face of it, this understanding of integration is not much different, and does not lead to any less problematic implementation, than integration as the guiding philosophy. The key difference lies in the term ‘unitary’. While the sub-systems remain relatively intact, that is education on the one hand, and training on the other, all such sub-systems and levels are captured and described within one framework, with links between the systems facilitated by systemic mechanisms such as joint planning, particularly learning and career pathway planning, but also budgeting and funding. Figure 3.2 reflects this understanding.

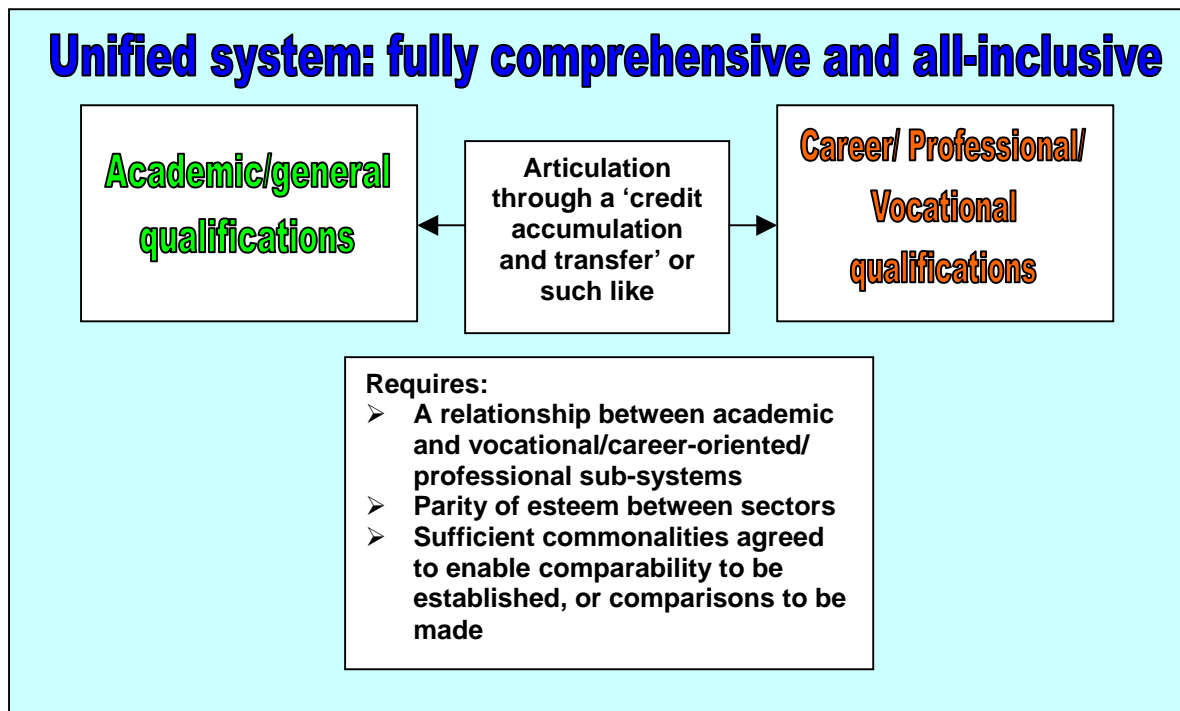


Figure 3.2: Integration as the Scope of the Framework

This understanding refers particularly to the ‘intrinsic logic’ of the education and training system (Raffe, 2003, p. 242). Intrinsic logic refers to ‘design features, such as flexible pathways and the establishment of equivalences between different qualifications’ (Tuck et al., 2004, p. 8). It is essentially a technical or instrumental approach to an education and training system, which requires that links between sub-sectors are developed, including learning and career pathways, to enable progression and credit transfer between the sub-systems.

‘Coherence’, ‘Articulation’ and ‘Portability’ (see Figure 3.1) then take on a structural dimension. Where qualifications, at a systemic level, for example, achieve equivalence in terms of the level at which they are offered, it is considered possible to articulate meaningfully with the other sub-sectors. The draft *Higher Education Qualifications Framework* (Ministry of Education, 2004), for example, places the proposed ‘Advanced Diploma’ and ‘Bachelor’s Degree’ at the same level of the NQF, that is level 7, with the Advanced Diploma offered in a vocational/professional sector, but with links to the academic Bachelor’s Degree and vice versa.

Theoretically, the structural features of the system will then enhance parity of esteem between the sub-systems, where the articulation of credits attained in different contexts is agreed, jointly designed and mutually recognised (Heyns, 2005).

This form of integration leans towards a ‘linking’ of sub-systems. It is perhaps a more pragmatic view of integration in that there is the recognition that education and training have different purposes, and that such purposes are valid and valuable, but that each occupy a particular place in the system. A linked system entails separate sub-systems but with common structures for transferability. In the typology of NQFs (Tuck et al., 2004) (see Literature Review), systemic coherence in the form of links between sub-systems seems to be more prevalent.

In terms of this inquiry, perhaps this means that integration is to be understood as a comprehensive framework, with loose arrangements in terms of systemic coherence specifying links between sub-sectors, such as the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF): ‘[T]he SCQF is a comprehensive framework...[that] includes higher education and academic and vocational qualifications, and aims to include informal learning’ (Scottish Executive, 2005: p. 1), with the intention to (SCQF, 2001, pp. 1 - 2):

- Make the relationships between qualifications clearer
- Clarify entry and exit points, and routes for progression
- Maximize the opportunities for credit transfer
- Assist learners to plan their progress and learning.

3.5 Integration as the Architecture of the Framework

The *architecture* of a national qualifications framework refers to the degree of prescriptiveness and ‘the stringency of the criteria which qualifications have to satisfy in order to be included’ on the framework (Raffe, 2003, in Tuck et al., 2004, p. 5). Such prescription is intended to be ‘precise enough to achieve coherence in the learning system but broad enough to permit maximum flexibility in the design of programmes depending on learning context’ (DoE & DoL, 2003, p. 8). Prescriptiveness also has other purposes, such as comparable quality assurance and standards setting procedures and, consequently, increased accountability. The *architecture* in the context of integration is the extent to which diversity of learning in

different contexts is managed in order to enhance learner mobility and progression within the system. The argument is that if qualifications, regardless of where and by whom they are offered, meet the same minimum criteria, credit transfer is enhanced and quality assurance is facilitated. If the architecture is strictly specified then, according to Tuck et al. (2004, p. 9):

...common rules and procedures can be applied to different sectors of education and training [that enhances] a unified scope, particularly when they apply the same regulatory mechanisms across all sectors.

This understanding of integration utilises agreed standards, applied in a consistent and coherent manner, to enable participants to ‘transfer credits of qualifications or unit standards from one learning institution and/or employer to another’ (SAQA, 2001a, p. 9). One respondent in the SAQA NQF Impact Study Cycle 1 report (2004) spoke about a ‘credit matrix’, based on commonly agreed standards that would make the value and comparability of learning across contexts more explicit, that is ‘[w]e need to have a credit matrix that is formalised and managed outside the institution’s autonomy ...’ (2004, p. 41).

In South Africa, all qualifications have to meet a set of criteria in order to be considered a qualification. All qualifications at the same level, for example, have fundamental components, core components and elective components with the same or similar number of credits associated with each component⁸ with the purpose of achieving comparability between different sites and sectors of learning.

In the SAQA Cycle 1 report of the NQF Impact Study (2004, p. 41), for example, the comment was made that:

There was a high degree of agreement among providers that qualifications [i.e. the design] themselves were conducive to [coherence, articulation and] portability – “...in terms of the outcomes, both specific outcomes or exit level outcomes of qualifications, I think there is portability and [the possibility of subsequent] mobility [of learners]”

⁸ Fundamental – usually language, literacy and mathematical abilities

Core – the compulsory learning required in situations contextually relevant to the purpose of the qualification

Elective – usually a form of specialisation

Integration viewed in this manner is seen to be enhanced by common level descriptors which, as a first criterion, specify the depth and breadth of learning required at a particular level, for example:

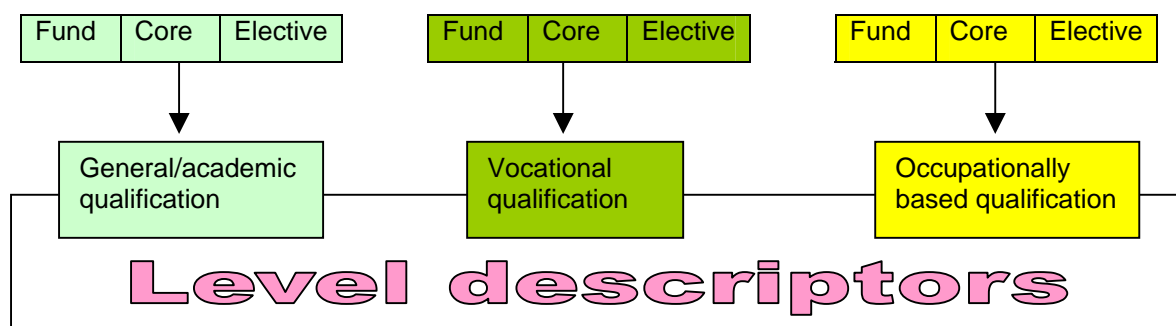


Figure 3.3: Integration as the Architecture of Qualifications

However, as in most other understandings of integration, this is contested terrain. A so-called one-size-fits-all approach to qualification design is seen to ignore ‘how the two forms of learning [academic and vocational/professional/occupationally based] might find distinct expression within a single framework’ (DoE & DoL, 2003, p. 8). My inquiry will thus investigate to what extent common qualification design enables integration.

3.6 Integration as Policy Breadth

Policy breadth, according to the typology of national qualifications frameworks, refers to ‘the extent to which an NQF is directly and explicitly linked with other measures that influence how the framework is used’ (Keevy, 2006, p. 2). In South Africa, the NQF is seen to be one of the three pillars of the Human Resource Development Strategy (HRDS) of the government and it links with a series of statutes that were meant to support and complement the HRDS⁹. Raffe (2003, p. 242) also refers to this understanding of integration as ‘institutional logic’, meaning all the

...opportunities, incentives, and constraints arising from such factors as the policies of educational institutions (in their roles as providers and selectors), funding and regulatory requirements, timetabling and resource constraints, the relative status of different fields of study and the influence of the labour market and the social structure. A qualifications framework may be ineffective if it is not complemented by measures to reform the

⁹ For example, the South African Qualifications Authority Act (No 58 of 1995), the Skills Development Act (No 97 of 1998), the Higher Education Act (No 101 of 1997) and the Further Education and Training Act (No 98 of 1998).

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surrounding institutional logic, for example, local institutional agreements to promote credit transfer, or encouragement to employers to reflect credit values in their selection processes.

This understanding of integration reflects how the sub-systems of the education and training sector could collaborate towards the achievement of a common ideal and the extent to which such systems' policies, regulations and implementation is congruent with the other partner's system. It deals with the development or expansion of communities of practice and the establishment of trust amongst partners. It encourages cooperation across sectors (for example, between the departments of education and labour), the formation of partnerships (for example, between education institutions and workplace-based providers and/or public and private education) and the sharing of the responsibility for the delivery and quality assurance of education and training provisioning (for example, sector education and training quality assurance bodies (SETAs) and band quality assurance bodies (higher education and general and further education and training bands). It therefore seeks ways in which the different components of the system could be complemented and enhanced through congruent regulation, budgeting, funding, shared responsibility and accountability. Again, it is evident that this understanding of integration is influenced by the guiding philosophy of the SANQF. Figure 3.4 takes the three pillars of the human resource development strategy (HRD, NSDS and NQF) to demonstrate this understanding:

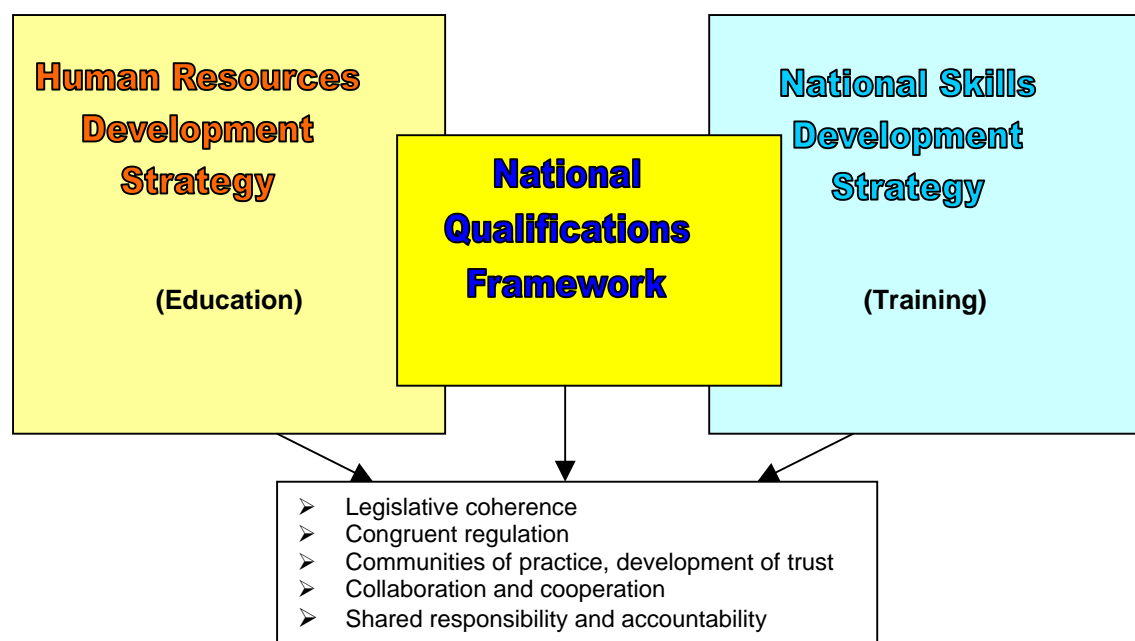


Figure 3.4: Integration as Policy Breadth

In the response to the Study Team's review of the SANQF, the two sponsoring departments of the NQF proposed a formal structure to deal with these links, namely a permanent Inter-departmental NQF Strategic Team with the responsibility to 'transcend the line function responsibilities of the two departments with a clear set of national priorities for which they are jointly responsible' (DoE & DoL, 2003, p. 5), including responsibilities such as:

- [B]e a permanent point of liaison between [the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)] and the two departments
- Develop a broad national plan for the implementation of the NQF...
- Promote the alignment of NQF implementation with the government's [Human Resource Development (HRD)] strategy...
- Consult regularly with the National Treasury on the funding of NQF implementation...

These responsibilities were intended to 'consolidate the policy-making process, integrate the planning function, and thus eliminate the void that encouraged jurisdictional dispute and strategic drift...' (DoE & DoL, 2003, p. 39).

The meaning of this understanding of integration provides a different lens for my inquiry. If integration means 'collaboration, co-operation, joint planning and funding', then the study will investigate whether the current system is progressively achieving such goals. This is an objective strongly espoused by all the players in education and training. For example, in *An Interdependent National Qualifications Framework* (DoE & DoL, 2003, p. 26), one of the responsibilities of the proposed Qualifications and Quality Assurance Councils (QCs) is to

...collaborate with other QCs on all matters of mutual interest [thereby] promoting communities of trust in qualifications design, standards generation and quality assurance within its sector.

3.7 Integration as a Continuum of Learning

The phrase 'continuum of learning' was first used by the Study Team responsible for the review of the SANQF (DoE & DoL, 2002) to indicate the position of the two main epistemologies, that which deals with education and that with training. It was used to show that learning occurs on a continuum (or several continua according to Raffae (2005, p. 23)) that may start at learning of the abstract (primarily theory in institutionally based environments) and learning of the praxis (in workplace-based

environments) and vice versa, depending on the purpose and context of the qualification. In the response to the review of the SANQF, the departments were of the opinion that:

In South Africa, as elsewhere, the two worlds of discipline-based learning (mainly in institutions) and skills development (mainly in the workplace, including professional practice), have co-existed uneasily within the common qualifications framework. There is an implicit tension between the two perspectives (DoE & DoL, 2003, p. 6).

However, in establishing an integrated approach to education and training, the departments noted that ‘... in fact, [they are not] opposites but equally essential facets of the same national learning system’. Moreover, they observed that the SANQF ‘is a vital mechanism for holding the tension between them and bringing out the complementary and mutually reinforcing attributes of institutional and workplace learning’ (DoE & DoL, 2003, p. 7). This understanding of integration has also been dubbed the ‘meso-level’ of integration (Heyns & Needham, 2004, p. 35).

The extent to which the purposes and rationale of a qualification are defined by the pursuit of discipline-based learning (education) or by the utility value in the workplace (training), places a qualification (or set of related qualifications) in a particular place along the continuum. The yellow star in Figure 3.5, for example, indicates that a particular qualification is mostly about the development of discipline-based knowledge, but with some tentative connectivity to the world of work. The red star, for a qualification at the opposite end of the continuum, would therefore be much more occupationally oriented.

Both the departments (DoE & DoL, 2003) and Raffe (2005) however, note that there are not only these two extremes. The departments mention a third dimension, a ‘career-focused’ or ‘general vocational’ qualification, which ‘looks both ways’. This type of qualification is reflected as the green arrow below.

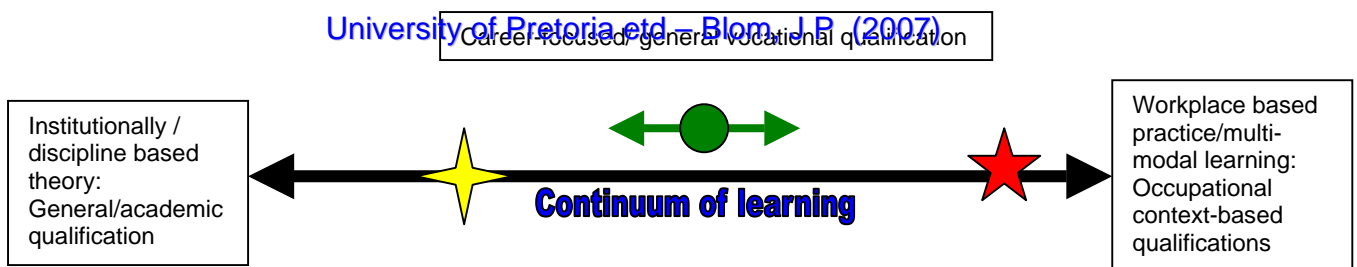


Figure 3.5: Integration as a Continuum of Learning

An attempt to clarify the continua of learning, and the complementarity of the two main epistemologies, was made in *An Interdependent National Qualifications Framework* (DoE & DoL, 2003, p. 21) by acknowledging that in the design of qualifications ‘both disciplinary specialists and expert workplace practitioners are needed’, which will result in three broad types of qualifications:

- *Partnered pairs of qualifications.* These are linked by a common purpose, but separately assessed [for example occupational and professional training]. Learners first get a discipline-based qualification, irrespective of where it may be required, and then those who wish to achieve full occupational recognition proceed to structured practice in the work situation which is formally assessed by industry trade bodies or professional bodies.
- *Stand-alone discipline-based qualification with a component of workplace practice.* This is the traditional co-operative education model (which the technikons [universities of technology] have exemplified), where the practice is integrated and does not lead to a stand-alone qualification but may or may not carry occupational recognition, depending on the field; and
- *Stand-alone occupational context-based qualification with a component of discipline-based study.* The new Learnership programmes illustrate this type of partnership. The theoretical component of the qualification is fully integrated with the occupational context-based programme.

In terms of this study, this perspective of integration may be the most workable systemic solution but, as it stands, it does not make provision for a general formative qualification where neither workplace practice, nor a partnered qualification leading to professional registration is present. For this reason, the final understanding of integration, that of curricular integrability, is defined.

The last of the understandings is closely associated with the sixth, but brings the meaning of integration to a classroom practice level. This understanding of integration deals with ‘the measure of integration of theoretical and practical components as contained in the ... curriculum’ (Keevy, 2006, p. 9) and the most appropriate mix of theory and practice in the learning programme. This understanding has also been referred to as the ‘micro’ level of integration (Heyns & Needham, 2004). With the emergence of ‘mode 2’ knowledge (Kraak et al., 2000) and the acceptance of the notion of ‘applied knowledge’¹⁰ (SAQA, 2001a) in South Africa, *curricular integration* is becoming more prominent. Raffe (2005, p. 24), for example, notes that ‘curricular integration’ intends to

...encourage learners to combine different types of learning (e.g. applied and theoretical), to develop integrated forms of learning and knowledge, to promote transferable and generic skills, or to promote parity of esteem.

The *National Commission on Higher Education Report: A framework for Transformation* (1996, in SAQA, 2001b), for example, notes:

The demands of the future and the situation of South Africa as a developing country require that programmes, while necessarily diverse, should be educationally transformative. Thus they should be planned, coherent and integrated; they should be value-adding, building contextually on learners’ existing frames of reference; they should be learner-based, experiential and outcomes-oriented; they should develop attitudes of critical enquiry and powers of analysis; and they should prepare [learners] for continued learning in a world of technological and cultural change.

Integration in this context then means the level and extent to which curricula and learning programmes are designed in terms of cooperative programmes that may include, on the one hand, structured learning in the workplace following exposure to theory at an institution and, on the other hand, advanced study in the workplace. Terms such as ‘internships’, ‘experiential learning’ and, more recently, in South Africa, ‘learnerships’, reflect the move towards curricular integration, which intends to enable learners to apply what they have learnt. Figure 3.6 explains this notion.

¹⁰ Applied knowledge is defined as a combination of foundational knowledge, practical knowledge and reflective understanding.

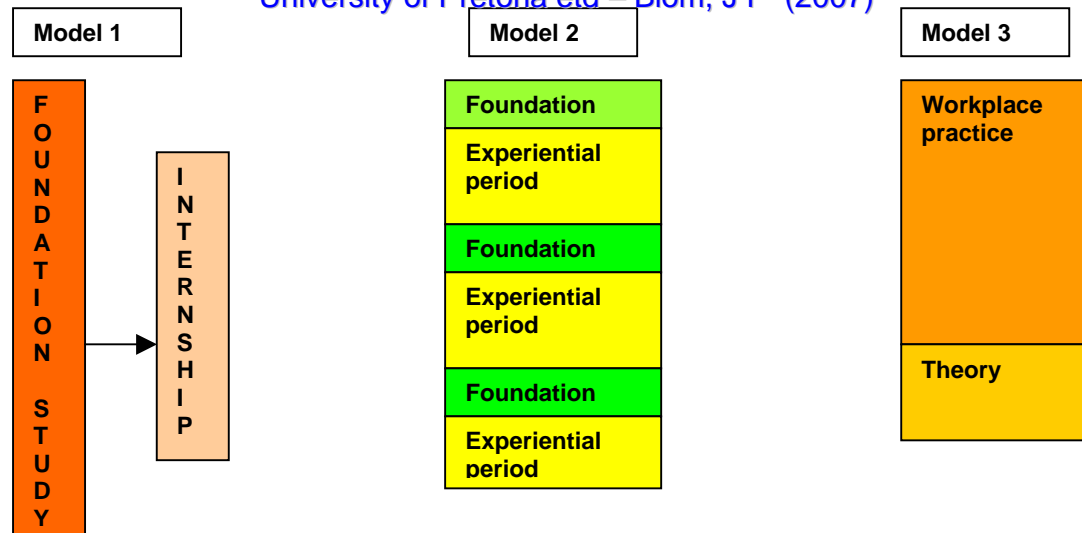


Figure 3.6: Integration as Curricular Integrability

Much of the debate about integration in the South African education and training system has centred on the view that ‘education and training [epistemologies] respectively represent distinct knowledge structures, distinct modes of learning and distinct social relations. They are ‘incommensurable’, and they cannot be sensibly combined with a single framework (Raffe, 2005, p. 22) but, according to Pring (in Raffe, 2005, p. 22), this is a ‘false dualism’, because education and training ‘describe distinct purposes of learning, but as practices they are not mutually exclusive.’

Curricular integrability and the partnerships to be formed between education and training institutions, and education and workplace-based institutions, to enable curricular integration to take place, seems, according to Heyns and Needham (2004, p. 44) to hold the greatest promise for the achievement of the integrative intent of the SANQF if ‘[a]n integrated approach implies a view of learning which rejects a rigid division between “academic” and “applied”, “theory” and “practice” (DoE & DoL, 2002, p. 67) and it ‘seeks to promote an integrated learning of theory, practice and reflection’ (DoE, 2002, p. 6).

This view of integration provides yet another perspective on the inquiry. If ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ are not directly correlated with ‘education’ and ‘training’ or, rather, ‘caricatures of education and training’ (Raffe, 2005, p. 26), and if learning is seen to be multidimensional, then there is much persuasive logic in teaching and learning that reflect such practices.

In conclusion, the conceptual framework intends to throw light on integration from different, but related perspectives. While it is evident that these perspectives are interrelated, the different lenses, sharpens the integrative possibilities and constraints of an integrated framework. It hopes to determine the feasibility of an integrated framework by looking critically at each of these dimensions as interdependent notions of an integrated framework. The conceptual muddle that is ‘integration’ is described in this inquiry in its symbolic, structural and pragmatic forms, as well as in practice, with the purpose of adding to the widely supported principle of an integrated framework. Table 3.1 summarises the different perspectives.

Table 3.1.

Summary of the Different Meanings of Integration

	Lens/perspective	Meaning in relation to integration
1	Political symbolism	The extent to which integration is seen as a symbol of the break with the past
2	Guiding philosophy	The extent to which integration enables parity of esteem through valuing all learning equally
3	Scope	The extent to which all the sub-systems, levels, types of qualification and sectors are included on the framework
4	Architecture	The extent to which common design features for qualifications and quality assurance procedures enable progression in learning and career paths
5	Policy breadth	The extent to which legislation, regulation, planning and funding are congruent with partner organisations’ legislative and regulatory frameworks
6	Continuum of learning	The extent to which the two main epistemologies are considered complementary to each other
7	Curricular integrability	The extent to which the curriculum reflects the teaching of theory, supported by practice

3.9 The Uses and Meanings of Integration as a Conceptual Framework for the Study

The different meanings of integration will be used as a conceptual lens to explore the main research question: *To what extent does the South African education and training system reflect in principle, perception and practice, the ideal of an*

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integrated national qualifications framework? In summary, the conceptual framework and the research questions are represented in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2.

Conceptual Framework

MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION	
To what extent does the South African education and training system reflect in principle, perception and practice, the ideal of an integrated national qualifications framework?	
<i>Supporting questions</i>	<i>Conceptual framework</i>
Is the objective of an integrated SANQF an example of policy symbolism?	Integration as political symbolism and the guiding philosophy of the SANQF
Can the relationships between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful through an integrated framework?	Integration as the scope of the SANQF and the architecture of qualifications
Can the development of communities of practice as a key element of an integrated framework, enhance trust amongst partners in education and training?	Integration as policy breadth
Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning?	Integration as continua of learning Integration as curricular integrability

Viewing integration through the lens of a *political symbolism* and the *guiding philosophy* could provide an answer to the supporting question: *Is the objective of an integrated SANQF an example of policy symbolism?* Jansen (2004, p. 88) says that the SANQF ‘promised what it could never deliver in practice’ because

...it has a lot to do with the idealism and euphoria of policymaking in the years immediately preceding and following the formal installation of a democratic government in 1994. Put bluntly, we got carried away. ...some of us have called [this] the over-investment in policy symbolism [while] others have observed [this] as the tremendous moral imperatives that underwrote the education and training policies of the first post-apartheid government....[W]e believed in the redemptive power of policy, and we are paying the price.

Yet, in many other countries where national qualification frameworks are being implemented, but where the ‘moral imperatives’ are not the same as in South Africa, and therefore there is no need to venture into political symbolism, an integrated framework is an ideal that is pursued. Keevy (2005, p. 163), for example, says that

most NQFs are migrating towards a linked, or even unified framework, (as is the case with the SCQF):

This category [of frameworks] presents the best position of compromise for governments: such NQFs are regulatory and can therefore be used to effect large-scale transformation; they...offer some progress towards greater parity of esteem between general education and vocational training.

It seems therefore that, while integration certainly is a political symbol of the break with the apartheid past and the guiding philosophy for the SANQF, it is also more than that: it is a stated intent and, in South Africa, is strongly espoused by all policy-makers. This is evident in every new interpretation of what the SANQF should look like. For example, in a number of draft discussion documents emanating from the Departments of Education and of Labour (2005 and 2006) on the new configuration of the SANQF, the principle of an integrated approach to education and training is confirmed and described as a holistic view of learning, where the value and esteem of knowing and doing are acknowledged and the need for bridges between the workplace and the classroom is considered crucial. In addition, the integrated approach is closely associated with the democratic project in order to affirm the dignity of all socially useful learning and the redress of past inequalities (Blom, 2006a). This lens will therefore attempt to elucidate how ‘a profound philosophy of education and training wrapped up in [the] five simple statements of ambition¹¹ [for the system] ...could enable these good ideas to take root and flourish with the education and training system’ (Jansen, 2004, p. 90).

The third and fourth meanings of integration, namely the *scope* of the system, and the *architecture* of qualifications, could provide a perspective on how integration is intended to work on a practical level. The SANQF and the SCQF are possibly the only two examples of qualification frameworks where all levels, sectors and types of qualifications (and how they relate to each other), are included on the framework. If integration means *comprehensiveness*, *all-inclusiveness* (see Figure 3.2 preceding),

¹¹ Create an integrated national framework for learning achievements;
Facilitate access to and mobility and progression within education, training and career paths;
Enhance the quality of education and training;
Accelerate the redress of past unfair discrimination in education, training and career paths;
Contribute to the full personal development of each learner and the social and economic development of the nation at large

then this lens is starting to make clear what the technical aspects of the SANQF should be. Integration, from this perspective, ‘refers to systemic coherence’ (Keevy, 2006, p. 3), and also to commonalities in the design of qualifications. The study will therefore ask: *Can the relationships between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful through an integrated framework?*

The fifth understanding of integration, *policy breadth*, in my view, deepens and expands on *scope* and *architecture*, as it takes the possibilities of connectivity between different components and different types of qualifications further and elaborates on how sub-systems in education and training could collaborate through congruent legislation, regulation, planning and funding. The question: *Can the development of communities of practice enhance trust amongst partners in education and training?* will be viewed through this lens.

The sixth and seventh meanings of integration have been separated for the conceptual framework to highlight two issues: the debate about the ‘incommensurability’ of a framework encompassing different epistemologies and; the increasing emergence of curricular integration which intends to reduce the distance between theory and practice, between theoretical and applied knowledge. However, in using this lens, it is evident that these two understandings are difficult to separate: the purpose of qualifications cannot (and should not) be seen as separate from the curricula and learning programmes that will enable the achievement of the purpose of the qualification. The research question that will deal with this understanding of integration is: *Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning?*

3.10 Conclusion

Eleven years after the promulgation of the South African Qualifications Authority Act (Act No 58 of 1995) and nine years following the implementation of the South African National Qualifications Framework, it is becoming increasingly evident how difficult it is to implement large-scale reform of an education and training system, particularly, as is the case in South Africa, when there is an intense sense of urgency. This conceptual framework has developed from the deeply (and dearly) held beliefs of what an ideal education and training system should be like, and which are often a

muddle of emotions, passions and emerging practice. Integration, as a principle, is encouraged in most national qualification frameworks, but in South Africa it is seen to be ‘completely central’ (Heyns and Needham, 2004) to the transformatory project. This seems to be because integration means many different things and is vested with much symbolism, but at the same time is also attempting to be pragmatic in relation to systemic reform. In the *Implementation Plan for Education and Training* (Education Department, African National Congress, 1994, p. 15), the perspectives on integration, namely policy symbolism, guiding philosophy, scope, architecture, policy breadth, continua of learning and curricular integrability, are all present, albeit not explicitly stated:

The ANC’s policy discussion document gives a firm commitment to a single National Qualification Framework:

“South Africa will have a national system of education and training which enables citizens to become progressively qualified in a lifelong process. By integrating education and training in one system with a credit-based qualifications framework, all citizens’ chances to develop their capacities will be radically increased, whether they are in full-time or part-time study, employed or unemployed, in general education or in occupational preparation. The system will be learner-centred and achievement led” (ANC, 1994, p.15).

According to the ANC’s policy statement, a single national qualifications framework purposes to be a key part of a strategy designed to overcome divisions inherited from the apartheid system of education and training. These divisions include racial divisions in the management, funding and provision of education and training; divisions between sectors of learning such as general education, training and adult basic education and training; and, divisions between theory, associated with academic education and, practice, associated with vocational and occupationally directed training. The new ANC policy (1994) therefore aimed to overcome the stunted view of industrial education as inflexible, narrow and task-based, and primarily suitable for manual workers, and enable the vast majority of South Africans to re-enter and progress through the education and training system. Further, it intends to recognise and value all learning and make education and training more accessible to those who have not followed formal routes of education and thus, remove the barriers to progression for youth and adult learners from ‘lower order skills, often acquired in the “training” system to professional skills acquired in the tertiary “education” system’ (ANC, p. 15). This is what an integrated national qualifications framework is

required to achieve. However, commentators (such as Granville, 2004 and Jansen, 2004) note that such high expectations of an education and training system seem unreasonable, and that perhaps this ‘has a lot to do with the idealism and euphoria of policymaking in the years immediately preceding and following the formal installation of a democratic government in 1994’ (Jansen, 2004, p. 88). This study therefore explores the different meanings of integration in order to determine the extent to which such meanings are reflected in practice and, indeed, whether the ideal of an integrated national qualification framework is achievable, or whether it will remain an unattainable goal.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

The Impact Study project of SAQA is easily one of the most sophisticated measurement and monitoring systems that I have yet witnessed to emerge in South Africa. Its sophistication lies in its self-critical posture and its consciousness of the limits and potential of impact studies, especially in its more quantitative conception.¹

This chapter deals with the research design and methods used for the study. The design and methods are based on a cyclical, longitudinal study undertaken by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), the NQF Impact Study, which was initiated to determine the extent to which the implementation of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) impacts on the transformation of education and training in South Africa. For that reason, my position as researcher in relation to the two concluded cycles of the NQF Impact Study is presented upfront and in detail in 4.1. The background to this study, as it relates to the NQF Impact Study, is discussed in 4.2. The research questions are dealt with in 4.3 and the specific design that informed the study is described in 4.4. Sampling and data collection, including additional data collection subsequent to the conclusion of Cycle 2 of the NQF Impact study, are presented in 4.5. The data sources for the study are briefly discussed in 4.6, including data from sources other than the data collected for the NQF Impact Study and the additional interviews conducted for this study. Data analysis is described in 4.7. In 4.8 the validity and reliability of the study are discussed. This chapter concludes by indicating the relationship between the Research Questions and the findings chapters (4.9).

¹ Jansen, 2004.

4.1 The Investigator's Position

I currently hold the position of Deputy Director: Research, at the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), heading up the research division. I was thus intimately involved in the conceptualisation, development and implementation of the two concluded cycles of the NQF Impact study, which is the basis for this study. My responsibilities included the management of the project, which entailed the drafting of a concept document, terms of reference for the study, financial management, allocation of resources and the management of external local research consultancies. However, the project was a team effort that involved not only the Research Unit, and myself as the head of the Unit in particular, but also an internal Working Group², an Advisory Group³, and two international consultants⁴. In addition, a small group of academics critiqued the draft Impact Indicators, commented on the research instruments, and prepared commissioned papers⁵ after the conclusion of Cycle 1, while respondents in focus groups interrogated and made inputs to the development of the draft Impact Indicators. All of these were involved at different stages of the development of the concept of the Impact Study, the Impact Indicators, the research design and the methodology. The conceptualisation stage required much interaction with the different groups, but their involvement became less in Cycle 2, largely because the research design and Impact Indicators had been piloted in Cycle 1.























Figure 4.1 illustrates the involvement of the different parties (from Keevy, 2006b).

² Members of staff representing the different directorates of the South African Qualifications Authority: the Directorate Quality Assurance and Development; the Directorate Standards Setting and Development; the Directorate National Learners' Records Database.

³ Consisting largely of SAQA Board members and members of the Executive Office of SAQA

⁴ Prof. Gary Granville from Ireland and Mr Ron Tuck from Scotland

⁵ Prof. Gary Granville, Prof. Jonathan Jansen and Mr Botshabelo Maja

	Conceptualisation	Initial research design, proposals and impact indicators	Pilot study (Cycle 1)	Baseline study (Cycle 2)
SAQA Board				
Advisory Group				
Working Group				
Research Unit				
International consultants				
Local consultancies				
Academic community				
Other NQF stakeholders				




Key:  Champion  Direct involvement  Indirect involvement

Figure 4.1. Involvement of Different Groups in the NQF Impact Study

At the time of the conceptualisation of the study (2002/2003) and the first application of the research design (2004/2005) the Research Unit consisted of only two full-time staff, one staff member at 50% time and a temporary research assistant. Beyond the conceptualisation of the study, the Research Unit was therefore responsible for most of the data collection in Cycle 1 and for a large part of the data collection in Cycle 2 (see shaded areas in Table 4.1).

Table 4.1

Data Collection Responsibilities: Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 of the NQF Impact Study

Cycle 1	Data collection	Cycle 2	Data collection
External literature review	Paul Musker and Associates (PMA)	Survey questionnaire ⁶	SAQA Research Unit
Contextualisation interviews	SAQA Research Unit	ETQA interviews	SAQA Research Unit
Analysis of new qualifications	Community Agency for Social Enquiry (CASE)	Departmental interviews	SAQA Research Unit
Employer interviews	SAQA Research Unit	Provider interviews	SAQA Research Unit

⁶ The SAQA Research Unit administered 77 questionnaires as an audit component for the outsourced survey conducted by an external research consultancy.

Table 4.1 (continued)***Data Collection Responsibilities: Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 of the NQF Impact Study***

Cycle 1	Data collection	Cycle 2	Data collection
Focus groups	SAQA Research Unit	Organised labour interviews	SAQA Research Unit
Departmental interviews	SAQA Research Unit	Quantitative analysis of NLRD data	The SAQA Directorate: NLRD
Organised labour interviews	SAQA Research Unit	Survey questionnaire	Education Foundation Trust (EFT)
Provider interviews	SAQA Research Unit	Analysis of new qualifications	Education Foundation Trust (EFT)
		Literature review	SAQA Research Unit

In terms of the data collection, in addition to administering the survey questionnaire across all stakeholder groupings (see ‘Sampling’ discussed later), I was personally responsible for a third of the semi-structured interviews and focus groups of both cycles. In addition, in Cycle 1, I was responsible for the data analysis of the ‘provider interviews’, taken up in the Cycle 1 report as Annexure 9 (18 interviews) as part of my contribution to the Cycle 1 report (SAQA, 2004, pp. 1–36). In Cycle 2, in addition to conducting the literature review and writing chapter 3 (‘Second Cycle Contextualisation’, SAQA, 2005, pp. 23–35), I was once again responsible for the analysis of the ‘provider interviews’, taken up in the Cycle 2 report as Annexure 4 (19 interviews) (SAQA, 2005, pp. 1–92) against a set of codes jointly agreed by the team members (SAQA, 2005, Appendix 3, pp. 92, 93). Each member of the main research team⁷ also had the responsibility of triangulating the findings from the quantitative and qualitative data sources (see Table 4.1 above), according to the Impact Indicators and in writing up the findings. I was personally responsible for presenting the findings of the following Indicators:

- #6 Integrative approach (SAQA, 2005, pp. 52–54)
- #7 Equity of access
- #8 Redress practices
- #11 Assessment practices
- #15 Quality assurance practices

Finally, particularly in Cycle 2, the overall coherence and logic of the report benefited from the engagement and inputs from the three SAQA researchers and the international consultant. While the research report can thus be considered a team

⁷ Ronel Blom, James Kevvy, Seamus Needham from South Africa and Ron Tuck from Scotland

effort, my contribution, conceptually, related to ‘an integrative approach’ and the related Impact Indicators, such as ‘portability of qualifications’ (see Table 4.2) and ‘parity of esteem’⁸.

My direct and intimate involvement in the two cycles of the NQF Impact Study may influence this study in two ways. Firstly, as an employee of an organisation responsible for developing and implementing a macro policy intended to reform education and training in this country, my personal commitment to the South African National Qualifications Framework (SANQF) may inhibit a critical interrogation of the assumptions upon which such a reform is based. Indeed, in Report 1, the research team explicitly states that the two concluded cycles of the NQF Impact Study do not ‘attempt to evaluate the rationale, aims or Objectives of the NQF as such. These remain as a given...’ (SAQA, 2004, p. 11). Secondly, in the light of the contested nature of the SANQF and the proposed changes to the governance of the SANQF and the role of the organisation that I work for in the sector, my inclination could be to ‘defend’ SAQA’s position and, more particularly, the findings of the two Impact studies. Nevertheless, the research team felt that the conceptualisation, design and audit processes were sufficiently robust to stand by the validity of the study – to the extent that a deliberate decision was taken by the research team to stay outside of the current debates and to focus on the empirical evidence emerging from the studies (SAQA, 2004, p. 67):

Although NQF *architecture* and *processes* remain an important part of the contextualization of future cycles of the Study, it is important that the Study is not drawn into a debate that at the time of measurement may be in the public domain, but that will offer very limited researchable evidence.

Nevertheless, while social research is always located within a particular context and therefore represents a particular perspective, the emerging evidence should speak for

⁸ See Heyns and Needham (2004), *An Integrated National Framework for Education and Training in South Africa: Exploring the issues*; Blom, (2005). *Integration, Portability and Articulation: Policy Symbolism or Policy Practice? Lessons from the NQF Impact Study – Cycle 2*. Paper prepared for the Learning Cape Festival, 2 August 2005, Cape Town; Blom, (2006b), *The South African National Qualifications Framework: An integrative and socially cohesive approach to the alignment of qualifications and skills*. Seminar held at the Scottish Executive Education Department, Edinburgh, 25 April 2006; and Blom, R. (2006c). *Parity of esteem: Hope or despair?* Paper prepared for the 4th annual SADC conference: Assessment in Education, 25 – 30 June 2006, University of Johannesburg.

itself, even if the evidence seems to contradict my own beliefs, or point to weaknesses in the underlying assumptions of the education and training reform impulses that inform the development and the implementation of the SANQF. SAQA, as an organisation, has always claimed that it is committed to ‘intellectual scrutiny’. This study hopes to contribute to such scrutiny and I trust that I will be able to present the findings honestly and with the minimum of bias.

4.2. Background to the Study

This study is a further and more detailed analysis of data collected for the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) study conducted and concluded in 2004 and 2005, chiefly in relation to the notion of an integrated framework and associated principles such as portability, progression and articulation. The NQF Impact Study is a longitudinal, cyclical study of the impact of the NQF, with the purpose ‘to achieve the effective measurement of the impact of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) on the transformation of education and training in South Africa’ (SAQA, 2004, p. 3). Two cycles of the study have been completed – Cycle 1 in 2004 and Cycle 2 in 2005. Cycle 1 had as its purpose ‘to establish the criteria against which to measure the progress of the NQF’ (SAQA, 2004, p. 8) and Cycle 2 ‘to establish the baseline against which to measure the progress of the NQF’ (SAQA, 2005, p. 3). The study is an indicator-based study, which took as its central point of departure the five NQF objectives, which are to (SAQA, 2004, p. 8):

1. create an integrated national framework for learning achievements;
2. facilitate access to and mobility and progression within education, training and career paths;
3. enhance the quality of education and training;
4. accelerate the redress of past unfair discrimination in education, training and employment opportunities; and
5. contribute to the full personal development of each learner and the social and economic development of the nation at large.

The first cycle was concerned with the establishment of a research design and the piloting of the draft *Impact Indicators*, which were defined as (SAQA, 2004, p. 16):

...a policy relevant, quantitative and/or qualitative statistic designed to provide a profile of the current condition, the stability or change, the functioning, and/or effect of the NQF on the transformation of education and training in South Africa.

The main purpose of the Impact Indicators is ‘to give information to policy makers about the state of the education system to help them in policy analysis, policy evaluation and policy formulation’ (SAQA, 2004, p. 16).

The second cycle was concerned with the establishment of a baseline of information in relation to the Impact Indicators against which future measurements of the impact of the NQF on education and training will be made (SAQA, 2005).

This research design for the NQF Impact Study is illustrated in Figure 4.2.

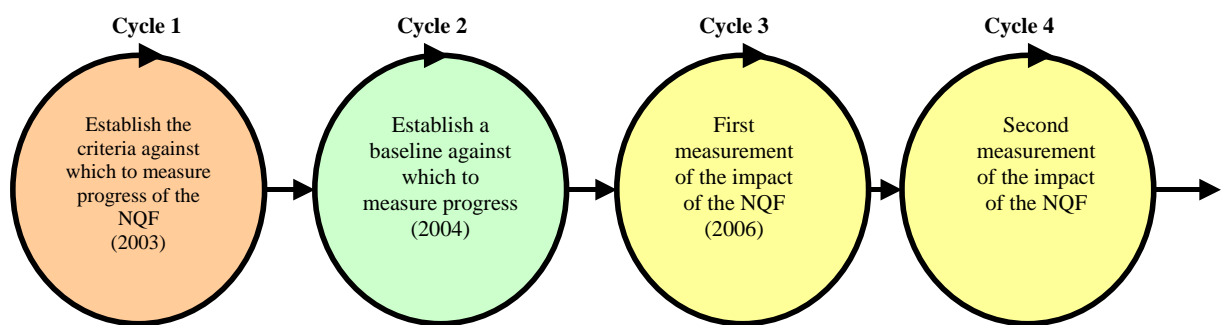


Figure 4.2: Research Design for the NQF Impact Study

Based on three important considerations that underpinned the research design, namely *replicability*, *cost-effectiveness* and *credibility*, the research design of Cycle 2 of the NQF Impact Study comprised the following components (Blom & Keevy, 2005):

- Premised on the five NQF objectives
- Longitudinal and comparative
- Three common components, namely contextualisation, data gathering and findings and recommendations
- Indicator-based methodology
- Purposive quota sampling
- Data collection through interviews, analysis of qualifications and a national survey

In the development of the research design, the five NQF objectives formed a fixed point of reference that would allow the research design to evolve yet remain relatively stable. Importantly, this decision also meant that the research design was underpinned by the assumption that the NQF objectives were valid and well supported.

The research design evolved from a critical engagement with the five NQF objectives. The research team argued that the objectives were ‘too broad and generalised’ (SAQA, 2004, p. 13) to be used as a basis for quantitative and qualitative work and thus derived three research questions as lenses for the ‘NQF in operation’ (SAQA, 2004, p. 14). These questions are (SAQA, 2004, p. 14):

- To what extent has practice changed as a result of the implementation of the NQF?
- To what extent have mindsets changed as a result of the introduction of the NQF?
- To what extent has the NQF enabled the development of education and training relevant to a changing world?

The application of these three questions to the NQF objectives resulted in an extensive pool of 200 potential impact indicators, which was finally reduced to a suite of 23 draft impact indicators, organised into four sets.

Thus (SAQA, 2004, p. 13):

...the research design that emerged...has as a central spine the relationship between the NQF objectives and the Impact Indicators. The development of the Research Questions and the categorisation of the draft Impact Indicators into four Sets were tools used by the team to facilitate the research process.

The relationships are described in Figure 4.3 (from SAQA, 2004, p. 14)

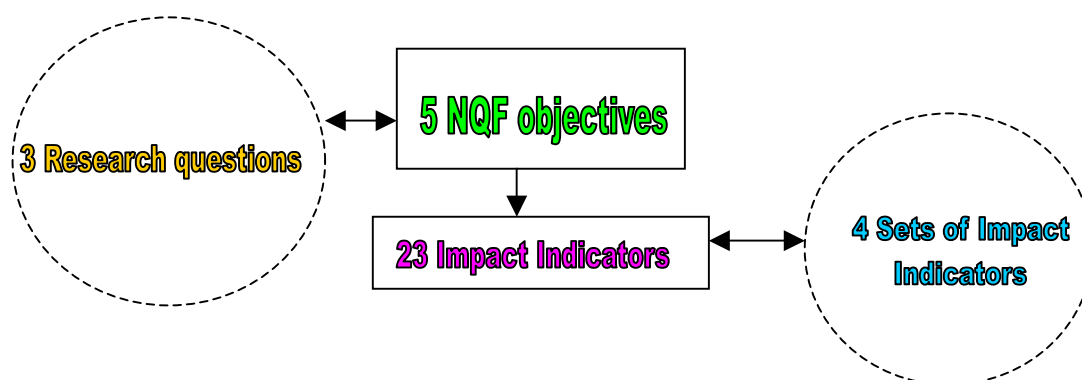


Figure 4.3. Relationships within the Research Design

Three common components are to be included in each new application of the research design:

- *Contextualisation* – the purpose of the contextualisation is to outline the current issues of NQF implementation both in South Africa and internationally. It defines a context for interpreting and using findings from the NQF Impact Study.
- *Data gathering* – using structured sampling methods.
- *Development of findings and recommendations* – based on the analysis of the data gathered, and related to the context and the period in which the study takes place.

After extensive piloting in Cycle 1, the twenty-three impact indicators used in Cycle 1 were reduced to seventeen impact indicators in Cycle 2 (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2

Impact Indicators: Cycle 2

	Impact Indicator	Level of Impact
Set 1	<i>The extent to which qualifications address the education and training needs of learners and the South African society</i>	
1	Number of qualifications	
2	Effectiveness of qualifications design	
3	Portability of qualifications	
4	Relevance of qualifications	
5	Qualifications uptake and achievement	
6	Integrative approach	
Set 2	<i>The extent to which the delivery of learning programmes addresses the education and training needs of learners and the South African society</i>	
7	Equity of access	
8	Redress practices	
9	Nature of learning programmes	
10	Quality of learning and teaching	
11	Assessment practices	
12	Career and learning pathing	
Set 3	<i>The extent to which quality assurance arrangements enhance the effectiveness of education and training</i>	
13	Number of registered assessors and moderators	
14	Number of accredited providers	
15	Quality assurance practices	
Set 4	<i>The extent to which the NQF has had a wider social, economic and political impact in building a lifelong learning culture</i>	
16	Organisational, economic and societal benefits	
17	Contribution to other national strategies	

4.2.1 Sampling – Cycle 1

As noted above, Cycle 1 piloted the research design and the Impact Indicators. For the pilot, the decision was to utilise a representative sample of the respondents who would be approached in the subsequent cycles. The categories of respondent are indicated in Table 4.3 (SAQA, 2004).

Table 4.3

Sample for the NQF Impact Study – Cycle 1

Category	Type	Number
Providers of education and training (including large, medium and small)	Public institutions	82 individuals through interviews and focus groups
	Private institutions	
Employers	Anglo Platinum	17 individuals through interviews and focus groups
	Edgars	
	Foschini	
	JDG Trading	
	Sasol	
	First National Bank	
	South African Bureau of Standards	
	Eskom	
	Business South Africa	
Organised Labour Organisations	South African Breweries	14 individuals through interviews and focus groups
	National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa (NAPTOSA)	
	South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU)	
	Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU)	
	South African Metal Workers Union (SAMWU)	
	South African Council for Educators (SACE)	
Government Departments	Department of Education (National and Provincial)	12 individuals through interviews and focus groups
	Department of Labour (National and Provincial)	
Education and Training Quality Assurance bodies (ETQAs)	Sector Education and Training Authorities	4 individuals through interviews
Other	South African Vice-Chancellors' Association (SAUVCA)	19 individuals through interviews and focus groups
	National Access Consortium of the Western Cape (NACWC)	
	Inter-Ministerial Working Group members	
	SAQA Board members	
	SAQA staff	

4.2.2 Research Instruments – Cycle 1

Data collection for Cycle 1 was undertaken through a range of instruments⁹, including

- A contextualisation interview schedule
- Schedule 1: Provider Interviews
- Schedule 2: Employer Interviews
- Schedule 3: Department of Education /Department of Labour Interviews
- Schedule 3: Focus Groups for Learners
- Schedule 4: Focus Group for Unions

4.2.3 Sampling – Cycle 2

The sampling approach for Cycle 2 of the NQF Impact Study was based on pragmatic considerations (SAQA, 2005, p.17):

The need to develop a research design that would be repeatable was deemed more important than representing all sectors and groupings on *a proportional basis*. It was therefore decided to use purposive quota sampling (emphasis added).

Faced with budgetary constraints and pragmatic considerations, the research team decided on purposive quota sampling, which entailed predetermining categories of respondents and thus determining and filling the quotas of such respondents (Figure 4.4) (SAQA, 2005, p. 9).

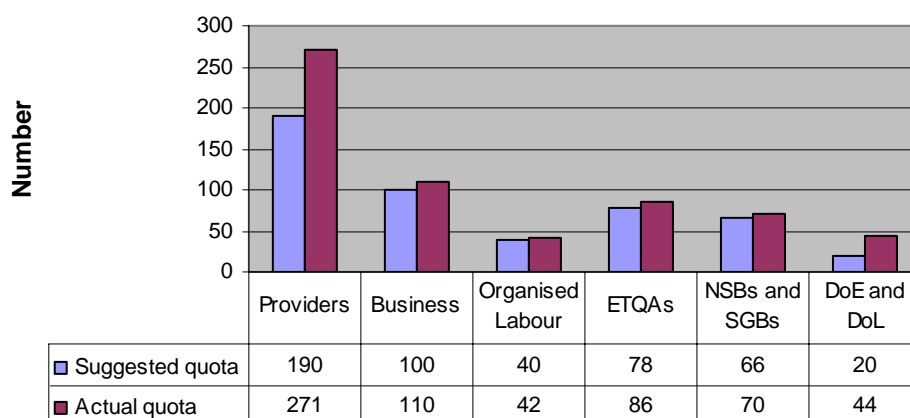


Figure 4.4. Quotas for Cycle 2 of the NQF Impact Study

⁹ See Annexure 6

As in Cycle 1, during Cycle 2 data was collected according to the NQF stakeholder categories as reflected in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4

Sample of Respondents – NQF Impact Study Cycle 2

Category	Strata	Quota
Providers	General Education and Training (GET), including Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) and secondary schools	143
	Further Education and Training (FET) band	79
	Higher Education and Training (HET) band	49
Business	Large	71
	Small, medium and micro enterprises (SMME)	39
Organised labour	Education	10
	Other	32
Quality assurance bodies	Education and Training Quality Assurance bodies (ETQAs)	54
	Professional bodies	32
Standards setting bodies	National Standards Bodies (NSBs)	32
	Standards Generation Bodies (SGBs)	38
Government departments	Department of Education (DoE)	26
	Department of Labour (DoL)	18

4.2.4 Research Instruments – Cycle 2

A questionnaire¹⁰ was developed and piloted and adjusted before being sent to potential respondents. In Cycle 2, data collection comprised three components (SAQA, 2005):

- *Stakeholder interviews and focus groups* – 111 interviews and 12 focus groups across all nine South African provinces in the period June to November 2004. The interviews and focus groups were transcribed and thereafter analysed. A quantitative analysis was completed on MS Access and Excel. A qualitative analysis was performed with ATLAS.ti using 91 codes¹¹ premised on the 17 Impact Indicators.
- *Analysis of qualifications on the National Learners' Records Database (NLRD)* – a quantitative summary of qualifications (including unit standards) and learner data on the NLRD as it was available on 31 January 2005. This quantitative summary was supported by a qualitative analysis, performed by an independent expert, of a sample of qualifications on the NLRD. The analysis aimed in particular to investigate the extent to which the current qualifications registered on the NQF addressed the education and training

¹⁰ See Annexure 6

¹¹ See Annexure 5

needs of learners and South African society, chiefly in relation to three of the underpinning principles of the SANQF, namely portability, relevance and redress. The qualitative analysis was limited to regular¹² qualifications in three specific sectors: Physical Planning and Construction; Mining and Minerals; and Hospitality, Travel, Tourism and Gaming.

- *National survey* – an independent research company was contracted to administer a national survey.

However, the purpose of an indicator-based study is to provide (SAQA, 2005, p. 86)

...an *indication* of the main trends in the system and [that] can offer the “big picture” view over time. They do not provide the “fine grain” of practice or point to solutions except in the most general terms.

This study, therefore, undertook a deeper and more detailed analysis of the data collected for the two cycles of the NQF Impact Study, and focused primarily on those aspects that relate to an integrated framework. In the conclusion of the Cycle 2 report, the project team¹³ noted that (SAQA, 2005, p. 87)

[u]nlike the other development areas, which are concerned with quite practical matters, [integration] is still at a conceptual level. It is suggested, however, that it is of considerable symbolic importance and that there is a need to clarify and come to a common understanding of the notion of an integrative approach. The question of what “integration” really means has been with the NQF since its inception and remains a barrier to achieving a consensus on the direction the NQF should take.

In addition to the data collected for the two cycles of the NQF Impact Study, new empirical data was collected through unstructured interviews with a range of current policy makers in education and training. The purpose of more data collection was to explore whether the perceptions and positions evident through the 2004 data collection are still valid and, possibly, provide more nuanced interpretations of integration, primarily in relation to the main research question: ***To what extent does the South African education and training system reflect in principle, perception and practice, the ideal of an integrated national qualifications framework?***

¹² ‘Regular’ qualifications refer to qualifications generated through a standards generating body (SGB), as opposed to qualifications submitted for registration on the NQF which were developed by providers of education and training

¹³ Ronel Blom, James Keevy, Ron Tuck and Seamus Needham

4.3 Research Questions

My interest in ‘integration’ or ‘an integrated framework’ for education and training emanated from my direct involvement with the two concluded cycles of the NQF Impact Study. Respondents to both cycles almost overwhelmingly supported the notion of an integrated approach to education and training, as did the respondents to other studies undertaken to review the South African National Qualifications Framework (SANQF)¹⁴. Yet integration is the one objective of the NQF that is least visible and least operational. Despite this, integration is considered completely central to the idea of the SANQF. The research questions therefore hope to investigate what is behind the notion of an integrated framework and whether, in fact, it is a feasible and appropriate conceptual framework for a national education and training system.

The main overarching research question was therefore formulated as follows:

To what extent does the South African education and training system reflect in principle, perception and practice, the ideal of an integrated national qualifications framework?

A number of supporting questions aim to unpack the main research question:

- *Is the objective of an integrated SANQF an example of policy symbolism?*
- *Can the relationships between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the South African National Qualifications Framework (SANQF) be made meaningful through an integrated framework?*
- *Can the development of communities of practice enhance trust amongst partners in education and training?*
- *Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning?*

The first of these supporting questions was investigated through the lens of the first two meanings of integration as discussed in the conceptual framework for this study (Chapter 3), as outlined in Table 4.5.

¹⁴ For example, *The Report of the Study Team on the Implementation of the National Qualifications Framework* (DoE & DoL, 2002).

Table 4.5***Supporting Research Question 1***

Main research question	
To what extent does the South African education and training system reflect in principle, perception and practice, the ideal of an integrated national qualifications framework?	
Supporting question	Conceptual framework
Is the objective of an integrated SANQF an example of policy symbolism?	Integration as policy symbolism and the guiding philosophy of the SANQF

The second of the questions relates to the third and fourth meanings of integration in terms of the conceptual framework, as delineated in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6***Supporting Research Question 2***

Main research question	
To what extent does the South African education and training system reflect in principle, perception and practice, the ideal of an integrated national qualifications framework?	
Supporting questions	Conceptual framework
Can the relationships between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful through an integrated framework?	Integration as the scope of the SANQF and the architecture of qualifications

The third question deals with the fifth understanding of integration, as described in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7***Supporting Research Question 3***

Main research question	
To what extent does the South African education and training system reflect in principle, perception and practice, the ideal of an integrated national qualifications framework?	
Supporting questions	Conceptual framework
Can the development of communities of practice enhance trust amongst partners in education and training?	Integration as policy breadth

The fourth and final supporting question is investigated through the lens of the sixth and seventh meanings associated with integration, as set down in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8***Supporting Research Question 4***

Main research question	
To what extent does the South African education and training system reflect in principle, perception and practice, the ideal of an integrated national qualifications framework?	
Supporting questions	Conceptual framework
Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning?	Integration as continua of learning Integration as curricular integrability

4.4 Research Design

Cycles 1 and 2 of the NQF Impact Study essentially utilised a mixed method design: quantitative data and qualitative data were collected and were triangulated to develop the findings. Cycle 1 used more qualitative methods (SAQA, 2004, p. 19):

The importance of qualitative measures, especially at the early stages of a longitudinal study, lies in their capacity to make sense of, or to interpret, data and phenomena in terms of the meanings that people bring to them. In a complex environment like that of the NQF, different stakeholders will have different perspectives on and understandings of common issues.

However in Cycle 2, a large-scale survey, as a quantitative research instrument, was used in conjunction with structured interviews and focus groups. The different sets of data were triangulated, that is where the quantitative data provided evidence of support for a particular aspect in the survey questionnaire, this was checked against the number of positive comments emerging from the interviews and focus groups. For example, in the survey questionnaire the statement was made that *‘Learners, in particular those learners who were previously excluded, are able to gain access to NQF qualifications’*. Of the survey questionnaire respondents, 79% indicated that they believe ‘access’ has improved (SAQA, 2005, p. 55). The quantitative data was checked against qualitative responses. In this case, the qualitative data supported and confirmed the view that access had improved (SAQA, 2005, p. 55):

On the general question about access to NQF qualifications by previously excluded groups, some respondents identified significant improvements. For example, there had been a huge influx of previously disadvantaged people into the Human Resources (HR) sector:

“The applications for professional registration are practically 80% from previously disadvantaged people...”

Triangulation was used to ensure that the nuances evident through qualitative responses that might be lost through a predefined set of questions such as in a survey questionnaire were given equal prominence (SAQA, 2005). In general, the survey responses and qualitative interviews and focus groups, seen together, supported and enhanced the findings.

This study has undertaken a deeper and more detailed analysis of a selection of the qualitative and quantitative data that relate to integration and the concepts associated with integration, such as portability, progression and articulation, collected through the two cycles of the NQF Impact Study.

The instruments for Cycles 1 and 2 are available in Annexure 6. Table 4.9 presents extracts from the Cycle 1 instruments that particularly relate to *this* inquiry.

Table 4.9

Extracts from Research Instruments for the NQF Impact Study Cycle 1

Cycle 1 Instrument		Question(s)
1	Contextualisation Interview Schedule	3.9) Can the NQF enable an integrated approach to education and training in SA?
		3.21) In your opinion, is the NQF currently representing and holding true to the principles outlined in the initial conceptualisation of the NQF?
2	Provider Interview Schedule	1.3 (a) Has the implementation of the NQF facilitated the portability of NQF registered qualifications between institutions?
		(b) How portable are NQF registered qualifications between streams (vocational/professional and academic)?
		<u>Prompts (if required)</u> Do qualifications articulate with each other intra- and inter-institutionally?
		4.1 Has the implementation of the NQF contributed to a national acceptance of an integrated approach to education and training? <u>Prompts (if required)</u> To what extent is there integration between education and training? Inter-organisational agreements, e.g. between institutions and workplaces How is practical application and experiential learning reflected in curricula and learning programmes?

Table 4.9 (continued)***Extracts from Research Instruments for the NQF Impact Study Cycle 1***

Cycle 1 Instrument		Question(s)
3	Employer Interview Schedule	1.2 How portable are NQF registered qualifications between streams (vocational/professional and academic)?
		<u>Prompts (if required)</u>
		Are academic qualifications accepted in the workplace?
		4.1 Has the implementation of the NQF contributed to a national acceptance of an integrated approach to education and training?
		<u>Prompts (if required)</u>
4	Department of Education; Department of Labour Interview Schedule	Seamless integration
		Agreements with academic providers and other employers?
		3.3 Please rate the objectives to indicate the progress that has been made with the implementation of each to date?
		<u>Prompts (if required)</u>
		Briefly explain each objective
5	Learner Focus Group	3.8 Can the NQF enable an integrated approach to education and training in SA?
		<u>Prompts (if required)</u>
		The focus is on 'approach' – the establishment of a unified approach to education and training
		3.3 To what extent do your courses combine educational theory with training practice and experience?
		3.3 To what extent do your courses combine educational theory with training practice and experience?

Tables 4.10 and 4.11 show extracts from the Cycle 2 instruments that particularly relate to this enquiry:

Table 4.10***Extracts from the Survey Questionnaire for the NQF Impact Study Cycle 2***

The extent to which qualifications facilitate the mobility of learners (horizontally, vertically, diagonally) within the South African education and training system						
		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
2.2.2	Learners with NQF qualifications are able to move between vocational, professional and academic streams of the education and training system					Too soon to say
2.2.3	NQF qualifications offered by some institutions are seen to be more portable than NQF qualifications offered by other institutions					
2.2.4	NQF qualifications are seen to be more portable than non-NQF qualifications					
2.2.5	Recognition (credit transfer) is given for incomplete NQF qualifications when learners move from one institution to another					

Table 4.10 (continued)*Extracts from the Survey Questionnaire for the NQF Impact Study Cycle 2*

The extent to which NQF qualifications promote and integrative approach to education and training and the nature of such qualifications		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Too soon to say
2.5.1	The NQF enables learners to move between academic qualifications and vocational qualifications						
2.5.2	Providers of education and training value each other's qualifications						
2.5.3	The NQF promotes/leads to greater cooperation between the formal education system and the world of work and training						
2.5.4	Educational qualifications and vocational qualifications are viewed as equally important						
2.5.5	Both theory and practice are included in NQF qualifications						
2.5.6	South Africa has adopted a unified approach to education and training						
2.5.7	The integration of education and training has improved career and learning pathing						
The extent to which quality assurance practices enhance the quality of learning, teaching and assessment		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Too soon to say
4.1.4	NQF quality assurance ensure that qualifications are based on nationally agreed standards						
The extent to which the implementation of the NQF supports and contributes to the achievement of national strategies such as the Human Resource Development, National Skills Development Strategy and Tirisano		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Too soon to say
5.2.1	The objectives of the NQF are aligned with the objectives of the National Human Resource Development (HRD) strategy						
5.2.10	NQF qualifications contribute to the achievement of the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) targets						

Table 4.11***Extracts from the Focus Group Schedules for the NQF Impact Study Cycle 2***

Cycle 2 Instrument	Question(s)
The extent to which NQF qualifications address the education and training needs of learners and the South African society	
Focus Group Schedule: Practitioners	3.) Are NQF qualifications portable across vocational, professional and academic streams? 5.) Are NQF qualifications promoting greater cooperation between education and training agencies? 6.) Do NQF qualifications promote the integration of theory and practice?
Focus Group Schedule: Learners	6.) To what extent can you transfer credits from this institution/provider/learning site to other institutions/providers/learning sites without having to re-do large parts of the qualification? a. All credits are recognised b. Credits are transferred but on a level lower than the exit level of this qualification c. None at all
Focus Group Schedule: Organised Labour	6.) To what extent can you transfer credits from this institution/provider/learning site to other institutions/providers/learning sites without having to re-do large parts of the qualification? d. All credits are recognised e. Credits are transferred but on a level lower than the exit level of this qualification f. None at all

The Cycle 2 instruments were piloted with 15 individuals and experts who were also involved in the Cycle 1 data collection, and refined before being administered (Table 4.12).

Table 4.12***Panel for the Review of the Cycle 2 Questionnaire Survey***

Name	Organisation
Melissa King	Independent Examinations Board (IEB)
Mamsie Sebolai	Association of Private Providers of Education and Training (APPETD)
Rachel Prinsloo	Technikon Southern Africa (TSA)
Kathy Munro	University of the Witwatersrand
Dorette van Ede	University of South Africa (UNISA)
Anthea Saffy	Human Resources: AMPLATS
Rob van der Schyff	Human Resources: South African Breweries
Inge Dougans	Vacuflex (SMME provider)
Gerard Smith	ETQA Manager: Construction Education and Training Authority (CETA)
Maire Kelly	Organising Field 09: SAQA staff
Erik Hallendorf	Assessment Standards Generation Body (SGB)
Tommy Baloyi	South African Council for Educators (SACE)
Bennie Anderson	Human Resources: First National Bank
Karlien Murray	Professional Accreditation Body

4.5 Sampling and Data Collection

The sampling for Cycle 1 was representative of the stakeholder groupings that were to be approached in Cycle 2 and subsequent cycles, but the numbers were quite small, as this was a pilot study (see Background to the study). For this study, the full sample of Cycle 1, in relation to the selected questions (see Table 4.10), was utilised for the analysis.

The sampling for Cycle 2 was much larger, utilising a purposive quota sampling approach (see Background to the study). This means that while the data that was collected according to stakeholder categories ‘would be sufficient to determine the impact of the NQF...it was accepted that although generalisations across the population as a whole would be possible, strata-specific generalisations would be inappropriate’ (SAQA, 2005, p. 17)¹⁵. This has implications for the analysis for this inquiry, particularly as the analysis was undertaken specifically of only 77 survey questionnaires (out of 623 questionnaires) and 111 interviews and 12 focus groups. The reason for this data sample was that it made it possible to link the quantitative and qualitative data directly, in keeping with a mixed method design. This is because the survey questionnaires were either completed before, during or after an interview with the respondent. The interviews enhanced the respondents’ understanding of the research instrument and provided supporting comments to the survey questions. The sample for the analyses is presented in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13

Sample for Further Analysis of Cycle 2 Data

Stakeholder category	Number
Providers of education and training	26
Employers	27
Department of Education and Department of Labour (National and provincial)	15
Education and Training Quality Assurance bodies (ETQAs)	6
Organised Labour organisations	3
Total	77

The 77 responses to the survey questionnaire were compared with the whole population for Cycle 2 in relation to the selected questions in order to check whether

¹⁵ However, I will look at some of these categories and determine the extent to which the different stakeholder groupings differ in their responses to the questionnaire questions investigated for this inquiry

the smaller sample responses correlate with the larger sample. This was found to be the case (refer to Annexure 2) (Figure 4.5).

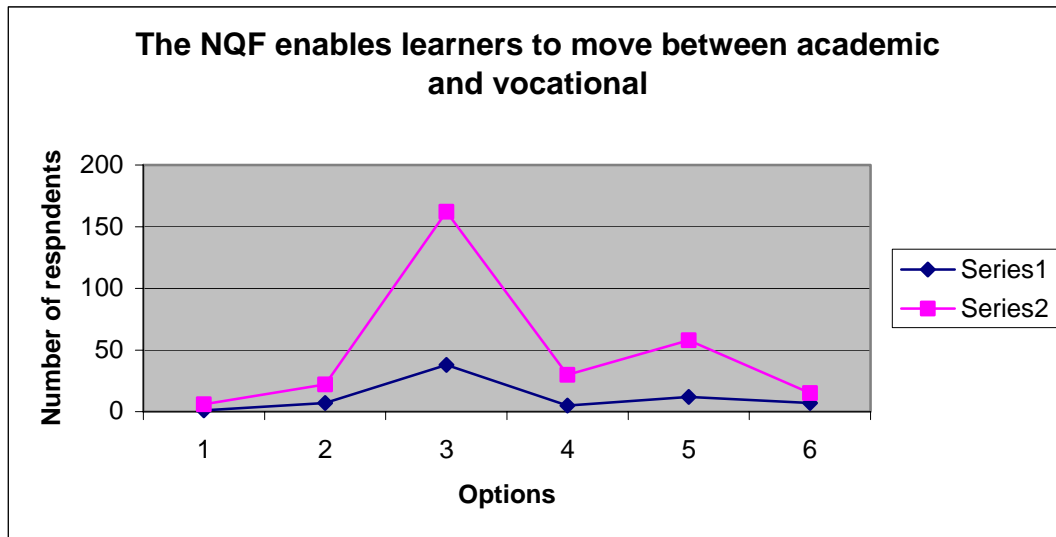


Figure 4.5. The Correlation of Responses between the Small and Large sample for Cycle 2 of the NQF Impact Study

Key: Series 1: 70/77 survey questionnaire responses
 Series 2: 293/623 survey questionnaire responses
 Option 1: Strongly disagree
 Option 2: Disagree
 Option 3: Agree
 Option 4: Strongly agree
 Option 5: Don't know
 Option 6: Too soon to say

The sampling for the additional empirical data – the unstructured interviews – was a combination of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. Convenience sampling was used when an opportunity arose to interview six members of the SAQA Board in May and June 2006. All the respondents are individuals who are intimately involved with the development and implementation of the SANQF (Table 4.14).

Table 4.14

Sample for Additional Semi-structured Interviews

	Name	Organisation/Stakeholder representation
1	M van Rooyen	SAQA Board member, representing the Association of Private Providers of Education and Training (APPETD) and chairperson of the Education and Training Quality Assurance committee of the Authority
2	K Hall	SAQA Board member, representing Business South Africa (BUSA) and acting Chairperson of the Board

Table 4.14 (Continued).***Sample for Additional Semi-structured Interviews***

	Name	Organisation/Stakeholder representation
3	S Muller	SAQA Board member, representing the National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa (NAPTOSA) and chairperson of the Qualifications and Standards committee of the Authority
4	A Paterson	SAQA Board member, representing the Department of Science and Technology (DST)
5	S Isaacs	SAQA Executive Officer
6	S Badat	SAQA Board member, and Chief Executive Officer of the Council on Higher Education (CHE)

4.6 Additional Data Sources

Over and above the data collected through sets of interviews, focus groups and the large-scale survey, and the additional unstructured interviews, a number of other data sources were utilised for this study. These included qualitative analyses for Cycle 1 and 2 of a sample of qualifications registered on the NQF; public inputs and responses to three documents¹⁶ published by the Department of Education and the Department of Labour dealing with the review and recommendations for an improved SANQF, (see Chapter 2, Literature Review) and a number of internal SAQA discussion documents.

4.7 Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted utilising the key elements of the conceptual framework (see Chapter 3) as a set of themes and codes and sub-codes. These are:

- Integration as policy symbolism
- Integration as the guiding philosophy for the framework
- Integration as the scope of the framework
- Integration as the architecture of the framework
- Integration as policy breadth
- Integration as a continuum of learning
- Integration as curricular integrability

¹⁶ *The Report of the Study Team on the Implementation of the National Qualifications Framework* (DoE & DoL, 2002); *An Interdependent National Qualifications Framework System Consultative Document* (DoE & DoL, 2003); *The Higher Education Qualifications Framework. Draft for Discussion* (Ministry of Education, 2004)

The themes and codes correspond with the Research Questions (Figure 4.6). (Refer to Annexure 1 for the full list of themes, codes and sub-codes.)

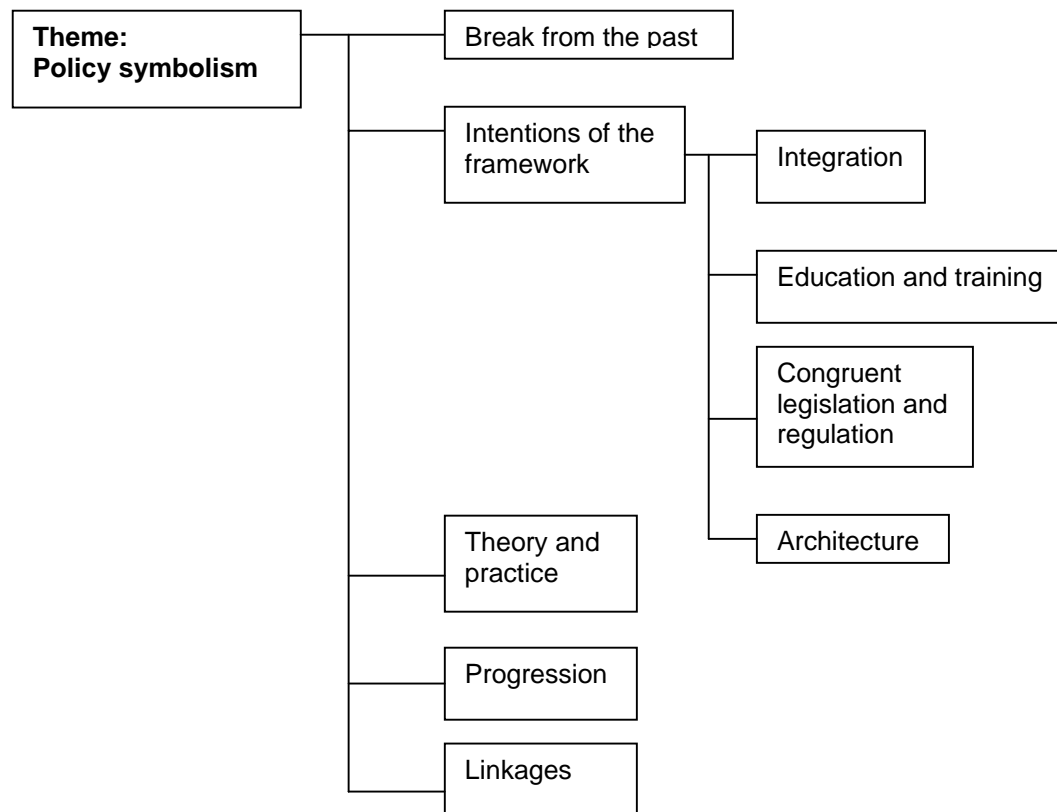


Figure 4.6. The Development of Themes, Codes and Sub-codes for Research Question 1

The same themes, codes and sub-codes were used, first to group emerging evidence and then to analyse the qualitative and quantitative data. The quantitative data for the questions in the survey questionnaire, for example, is grouped in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15

The Relationship between Codes and Survey Questionnaire Questions

Theme: Guiding philosophy of the SANQF		
Codes	Sub-codes	Question
Conceptual framework for the education and training system	Mobility and articulation	Question 2.2.2 Learners with NQF qualifications are able to move between vocational, professional and academic streams of the education and training system.
	Portability	Question 2.2.3 NQF qualifications offered by some institutions are seen as more portable than NQF qualifications offered by other institutions.
	Integration	Question 2.2.5 Recognition (credit transfer) is given for incomplete NQF qualifications when learners move from one institution to another.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic/vocational Education/training 	Question 2.5.1 The NQF enables learners to move between academic qualifications and vocational qualifications.
Parity of esteem	Value all learning	Question 2.5.5 Both theory and practice are included in NQF qualifications.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutions Qualifications Academic/vocational 	Question 2.2.4 NQF qualifications are seen as more portable than non NQF-qualifications.
		Question 2.5.2 Providers of education and training value each other's qualifications.
		Question 2.5.4 Education qualifications and vocational qualifications are viewed as equally important.

Similarly, the qualitative analysis of a sample of regular qualifications registered on the NQF was analysed using the same themes, codes and sub-codes (Table 4.16).

Table 4.16

The Relationship between Codes and the Qualitative Analysis of a Sample of Regular Qualifications (Annexure 3)

		Theme: Architecture
Codes	Sub-codes	Sample Analysis
Portability	Structure of the qualification <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Transferability 	Very few of the qualifications analysed (4 of the 15 high-scoring qualifications, i.e. those which were most likely to contain statements on portability and transferability) provided any specific detail...in the main qualifications either did not address the issue at all, made some token effort at addressing portability and transferability (often by including or paraphrasing the relevant sections from the SAQA Act) or misinterpreted the meaning...

Further, the qualitative analysis of public comments about the SANQF review documents and SAQA internal discussion documents was treated in a similar manner (Table 4.17).

Table 4. 17

The Relationship between Codes and the Qualitative Analysis of a Sample of Public Comments on SANQF Review Documents (Annexure 4)

		Theme: Policy breadth
Codes	Sub-codes	Sample Analysis
Establishment of trust	Collaboration of sub-structures	The inability of all key players to enact memoranda of understanding and create a free flow of information and funding between SETAs has seriously hampered the establishment and implementation of cross-sectoral learnerships. An additional learning path and uncertain new roles for quality assurance bodies might create new conflicts to thwart the achievement of learnership targets.

4.8 Validity and Reliability

In this study, the validity and reliability of the research were dealt with in a number of ways, most of which relate to the two cycles of the NQF Impact Study conducted on behalf of SAQA. The development of the research design and Impact Indicators, for example, was subject to a number of rigorous processes involving participants from within SAQA (including the project team), the governance structures of the Authority, and a range of experts and respondents from the education and training sectors. The

conceptualisation of the study included the requirement that, as a longitudinal, comparative study, it was necessary for future applications of the Impact Study that the research design could be carried out by agencies other than SAQA, should that be appropriate (SAQA, 2004, p. 8). This meant that all decisions and actions had to be documented carefully, and that these had to be supported by a replicable approach to data collection, analyses and interpretation (Merriam, 1998, p. 166) for the studies to enable comparative analyses over time.

These two studies can thus claim that they have made use of an ‘audit trail’ (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 128) to ensure validity. In addition, extensive triangulation (Merriam, 1998, p. 168) was utilised. Further, owing to the longitudinal nature of the two studies, the extensive exposure to the research sites supported validity and reliability. Through ‘thick, rich description’ (Creswell and Miller, 2000, p. 128), the credibility of the studies is supported. Also, ‘peer debriefing’ (Creswell and Miller, 2000, p. 129) was an integral part of the studies. At least three groups interrogated the studies at the different phases of conceptualisation, development and analysis, namely the Working Group, the Advisory Group and members of the SAQA Board¹⁷.

In addition, and this is important in terms of the deeper analysis of the data collected through Cycle 1 and 2 of the NQF Impact Study, the ‘investigator’s position’ (Merriam, 1998, p. 172), is clarified (see 4.1 Investigator’s position).

4.9 The relationship between the Research Questions and the Findings Chapters

The Research Questions for this inquiry are addressed in the following findings chapters:

¹⁷ Annexure 7

Table 4.18***The Relationship between the Research Questions and the Findings Chapters***

MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION		
To what extent does the South African education and training system reflect in principle, perception and practice, the ideal of an integrated national qualifications framework?		
<i>Supporting questions</i>	<i>Conceptual framework</i>	<i>Findings chapter</i>
Is the objective of an integrated SANQF an example of policy symbolism?	Integration as political symbolism and the guiding philosophy of the SANQF	Chapter 5
Can the relationships between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful through an integrated framework?	Integration as the scope of the SANQF and the architecture of qualifications	Chapter 6
Can the development of communities of practice as a key element of an integrated framework, enhance trust amongst partners in education and training?	Integration as policy breadth	
Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning?	Integration as continua of learning Integration as curricular integrability	Chapter 7
To what extent does the South African education and training system reflect in principle, perception and practice, the ideal of an integrated national qualifications framework?	An integrated framework	Chapter 8

In Chapter 5 the extent to which an integrated framework as an example of policy symbolism has become the guiding philosophy for the implementation of the SANQF, is addressed. Research Question 1 is dealt with in that chapter.

Scope, architecture and policy breadth address the structural and technical arrangements, that is the ‘intrinsic logic’ of a qualifications framework, as well as the communities of practice that are enabled through the ‘institutional logic’ (Howieson and Raffe, 1999) of an education and training system. Research Questions 2 and 3 are dealt with in Chapter 6.

Chapter 7 argues that, while distinct epistemologies are important in an education and training system, in curricula there is an increased convergence of ‘theory’ and ‘practice’, which may have particular implications for an integrated framework. Research Question 4 is addressed in this chapter.

The main research question: *To what extent does the South African education and training system reflect in principle, perception and practice, the ideal of an integrated national qualifications framework?* is revisited in the conclusions chapter, drawing together the arguments of all the preceding chapters (Chapter 8).

CHAPTER 5

INTEGRATION AS SOCIAL JUSTICE: POLICY SYMBOLISM AND A GUIDING PHILOSOPHY

One needs to remember that when you tamper with the NQF you are tampering with the aspirations of the people of South Africa – we are a fledgling democracy and therefore require a system that inculcates the associated value system.¹

This chapter presents the results of the first supporting research question for this study, namely Is the objective of an integrated South African National Qualifications Framework (SANQF) an example of policy symbolism? The two main themes are ‘policy symbolism’ and ‘the guiding philosophy for the SANQF’, representing the strong social justice rationale for the development and implementation of an integrated national qualifications framework. The new African National Congress government’s attempt to make a clean break from a past unjust and inequitable education and training system is reflected in the need for powerful symbols that will signal a new beginning. An integrated SANQF is such a symbol. The discussion of ‘policy symbolism’ is based on three data sources: interviews with board members of the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), a set of interviews undertaken for Cycle 1 and 2 of the National Qualifications Framework Impact Study², and responses from a wide range of NQF stakeholders to ‘An Interdependent National Qualifications Framework System: Consultative Document’³.

The ‘guiding philosophy for the SANQF’ reflects the systemic attempts to embody the symbolism of the SANQF. ‘A guiding philosophy’ uses the same data sources, but is also supported by a quantitative analysis of questions relating to this particular aspect of the study.

In the introduction (5.1), the relationship between the research question and the conceptual framework is shown. The SANQF, as a symbol of the break from the apartheid legacy of education and training, is discussed in 5.2. In 5.3, the discussion explores integration as the guiding philosophy of the emerging education and training system. In 5.4 the chapter is concluded with a summary of the findings in relation to this lens on an integrated framework.

¹ The South African Democratic Teachers’ Union’s (SADTU), Annexure 4.

² SAQA, 2004 and SAQA, 2005.

³ Department of Education (DoE) and Department of Labour (DoL), 2003.

5.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the extent to which an integrated national qualifications framework is a policy symbol for a new education and training system in South Africa, and the extent to which the South African National Qualifications Framework (SANQF) came into being as a result of an unjust and inequitable system under apartheid. The social justice issues, which led to the conceptualisation of the SANQF as an integrated national qualifications framework, have become embodied in new powerful symbols and underpin the philosophy for the emerging education and training system in this country. The symbolism of the policy therefore seems to inform systemic attempts to develop an integrated framework, which is discussed under ‘guiding philosophy’ in this chapter. Further, throughout this study it will become evident that the different lenses on integration (refer to Chapter 3) are inextricably linked and that the passion for an integrated SANQF can be understood as the meshing of ideology and attempts to develop pragmatic approaches that will reflect such an ideology. In addition, the concomitant problems associated with the confluence of ideology and practical solutions, becomes evident. Table 5.1 portrays the relationship between Research Question 1 and the first two of the conceptual lenses on integration namely policy symbolism and a guiding philosophy.

Table 5.1

The Relationship between Research Question 1 and the Conceptual Framework

Main research question	
To what extent does the South African education and training system reflect in principle, perception and practice, the ideal of an integrated national qualifications framework?	
Supporting question	Conceptual framework
Is the objective of an integrated SANQF an example of policy symbolism?	Integration as policy symbolism and the guiding philosophy of the SANQF

This chapter will thus attempt to show that an integrated SANQF, as a symbol of the break from the past, has profoundly influenced the way in which the qualifications framework has been structured.

The data upon which these findings are based emerged from the following four sources (refer to Chapter 4 – Sampling):

- Unstructured interviews

- Contextualisation interviews conducted for Cycle 1 of the NQF Impact Study
- The questionnaire survey for Cycle 2 of the NQF Impact Study, and the interviews that followed on the questionnaire
- Public comments on '*An Interdependent National Qualifications Framework System. Consultative Document*' (DoE & DoL, 2003)

Unstructured interviews were conducted with six board members of the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA). The questions put to the members were *What do you understand by an integrated framework?* (and/or) *What do you understand by 'integration'?* (Annexure 1). In addition, responses to the 'contextualisation' interviews for Cycle 1 of the NQF Impact Study, were analysed (Annexure 1). The questions relevant to this chapter from these interviews included 3.9) *Can the NQF enable an integrated approach to education and training in South Africa?* 3.21) *In your opinion, is the NQF currently representing and holding true to the principles outlined in the initial conceptualisation of the NQF?* A number of 'Provider' and 'Employer' interviews for Cycle 1 of the NQF Impact Study also produced valuable data. (Annexure 1). The question posed to these categories of respondents is 4.1) *Has the implementation of the NQF contributed to a national acceptance of an integrated approach to education and training?* Further, Department of Education and Department of Labour (Annexure 1) respondents for Cycle 1 of the NQF Impact Study were asked 3.8) *Can the NQF enable an integrated approach to education and training in South Africa?* In addition, responses to the survey questionnaire for Cycle 2 of the NQF Impact Study and the interviews that followed these quantitative responses included responses to statements such as (Annexure 2 and 1):

2.2.3) *NQF qualifications offered by some institutions are seen to be more portable than NQF qualifications offered by other institutions.*

2.5.1) *The NQF enables learners to move between academic qualifications and vocational qualifications.*

2.5.2) *Providers of education and training value each other's qualifications.*

2.5.4) *Educational qualifications and vocational qualifications are viewed as equally important.*

Finally, the responses to the *Consultative Document* (DoE & DoL, 2003) from a wide range of stakeholders provided the final data source for this chapter. These responses were particularly interesting as they were ‘spontaneous’ reactions, that is sector responses, in relation to proposals made in the consultation document (DoE & DoL, 2003), which were perceived to drastically move away from the guiding philosophy of the South African National Qualification Framework (SANQF). These responses are available in Annexure 4.

5.1.1 Emerging Themes

The emerging themes from the data confirm the fact that the new education and training system for South Africa would have a strong socio-political flavour in its conceptualisation and development. The first and most obvious theme discussed under ‘policy symbolism’ is the resistance and reaction to apartheid education and training rooted in, and influenced by the notion of a broadly based ‘People’s Education’ inspired by diverse influences such as Paulo Freire’s ‘Pedagogy of the Oppressed’ (Kraak, 1998). The second theme sees the emergence of the idea that an education and training system should be ‘socially inclusive’, that is, it should afford equal esteem and respect to learners and learning and remove unnecessary barriers to education. The SANQF as a ‘social construct’ is the third theme, encompassing the particular social purpose of the South African system, including a ‘transformation agenda’ dealing with the social uses and value of learning. In theme four, the frustrations with the lack of progress in relation to the implementation of an integrated framework become evident.

As noted in the introduction, the symbolism of a new system became embodied in the guiding philosophy of an integrated framework. In the two themes that emerge under the discussion of ‘integration as guiding philosophy for the SANQF’, ‘integration as a meta-theme’ and ‘parity of esteem’ seem to be attempts to ‘make integration practical’ (SAQA Board Member, Annexure 1, p. 18). These themes indicate a move beyond policy symbolism to a guiding philosophy that has begun to permeate all thinking about South Africa’s education and training system.

5.2 Policy Symbolism

The SANQF, at its inception, was ‘primarily a political movement which viewed the school classroom as a central site of the struggle against Apartheid’ (Kraak, 1998, p. 1) with an emerging pedagogy that aimed to provide an alternative to that of ‘Bantu Education’, perceived to be the mainstay of the apartheid regime’s policies. The political movement demanded ‘a single non-racial national system of [Education and Training], and the dilution of the deep historical divisions between mental and manual labour, and between education and training’ (Kraak, 1998, p. 2). The SANQF thus came to represent a powerful symbol of the break with the past, particularly in representing resistance to apartheid education.

5.2.1 Resistance and Reaction to Apartheid Education

An integrated approach came to represent a drastic alternative to the old system. A respondent to Cycle 1 of the NQF Impact Study expressed the view that:

[p]rior to the advent of the NQF there was no sign of education and training system, there was darkness in a sense. Now people believe there is education. It is an important achievement to have such a symbolic coming together of minds. We might disagree about the mechanisms that are put in place but in terms [of] symbolism there is change (Senior Department of Education official, Annexure 1, p. 7).

The deeply felt passion for a new, equitable education and training system seems to be unlike anything else in the world. Granville (2004, p. 3) comments ‘[t]he stakes set by the South African project and the passions and emotions displayed by both its proponents and its critics are much higher than most equivalent discourses in other jurisdictions’.

In its response to the substantial changes to the SANQF, in particular in relation to integration, proposed by *An Interdependent National Qualifications Framework System: Consultative Document*, the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) (Annexure 4, p. 8) maintained that ‘if we now begin to establish a new NQF [i.e. not integrated] we are detracting from the mandate of the people of this country and revisiting a past we best leave behind’.

An explanation for the almost blind commitment to the new education and training system seems to be the ideology that underlies the development of such a system:

...[P]erhaps in the heady days of People's Education and People's Power ... we dissolved complex binaries too easily. The People's Education and People's Power part of it and the education and training part of it. And I think that was at a point where we were highly optimistic and we thought that we will ... really show the world... (Executive Officer, Council on Higher Education (CHE), Annexure 1, p. 9).

In addition, the fact that the new education and training system was the result of a political settlement, still carries much weight:

We need to remind the role players in the task team that the National Qualifications [Framework] is the product of hard, serious and difficult negotiations amongst the strong positioned nationalists and democrats. It further emanated from the alliance's strong engagements with the opposition [to] change at the time and as such must be respected (Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), Annexure 4, p. 2).

Further, the SANQF was seen as an important part of the struggle for 'national liberation' (South African Communist Party (SACP), Annexure 4, p. 2) and is still seen as the most appropriate means to achieve the objectives of the SANQF:

The CHE and the HEQC are and remain committed to an integrated approach to education and training as an important inheritance of the national democratic struggle of the pre-1994 period and as the most appropriate means to achieve the goals of the NQF: namely an education and training *system* characterised by equity of access, opportunity and outcomes; high quality provision, learning and teaching; learner mobility and progression; and, articulation between programmes, qualifications and institutions (CHE, Annexure 4, p. 3).

While acknowledging that the idea of an integrated framework was rooted in a particular ideology, one interviewee felt that this strong ideological position is the correct starting point:

I still want to argue 20 years later that this is the correct starting point. I don't accept affordability, for example, as the correct starting point. I believe that your goals, principles and values...including the context within which you pursue these things are what shape [the system] (Executive Officer, CHE, Annexure 1, p. 10).

Thus, the integrated framework has as its intention to enhance access, redress, equity and quality:

...[W]e want to get the majority of our people that were marginalized by the system, and are outside of the formal education system, out of no fault of their own, who have accumulated skills and experience in the workplaces and in the communities. We will provide them with access back into [the] education system and provide them with opportunities for them to progress

from a sweeper to an engineer (National Department of Education official, Annexure 1, p. 7).

An integrated framework therefore, has to overcome the historical prejudices against manual and practical learning and work:

There is much historic prejudice against practical skills and craft knowledge and much elitism surrounding subjects and disciplines. Both forms of prejudice have origins in the class structure of capitalist societies and both need to be criticised (CHE, Annexure 4, p. 33).

The SANQF was thus vested with the responsibility of being not only symbolic of the new order, but ‘an instrument for human dignity and human rights’ (French, 2005, p. 54).

5.2.2 *Social Inclusion*

A logical progression from the idea of the SANQF as an instrument for human dignity is the notion of social inclusion. Parker (2006, p. 35) suggests that the main difference between the SANQF and other national qualifications frameworks elsewhere in the world is the strong ‘normative orientation’ of the system. This provides another clue for the symbolic value of the SANQF:

It would be naïve to believe that one can construct an inclusive NQF in a society fractured by exclusions, or, to recall the language of the liberation struggle, to have normal education in an abnormal society. Education and training and by implication the construction of an NQF are part and parcel of making a democratic South Africa and face challenges similar to those prevalent in the broader society.

An integrated framework therefore also has the task to enhance social inclusion. The SANQF has to enable people to access education and training because ‘there was a whole lot of people that were left out and that is no longer acceptable in society’ (Executive Officer, SAQA, Annexure 1, p. 11). The South African Democratic Teachers’ Union (Annexure 4, p. 3) agrees, and argues that ‘[t]he inclusion of social partners was an attempt to further the interests of the broader civil society and negate the elitism and non-inclusive approach that characterised the education and training system under apartheid’. This is also given as the rationale for the stakeholder approach to standards and qualifications development promoted by the SAQA. Thus, not only should previously excluded people enjoy greater access to education and training but the standards setters and qualification developers should reflect the macro civil society, which under the previous dispensation were kept out of decisions about education and training policy:

It is our view that stakeholder engagement is the way to go as this process is political. Political in that it is a transformation process of the apartheid education and training system characterised by social strata silos (COSATU, Annexure 4, p. 3).

Social inclusion is expressed, in particular, through the idea of equal esteem and respect. A number of respondents commented that an integrated framework was conceived to give recognition for the value of individuals' contribution to society and that the framework was meant to articulate such value:

We have a kind of conception of equality, which is "sameness", right? Whereas the equity conception, which is about fair and just treatment, is about recognising the worth of each human being and individual and his or her contribution to the economy and society...(Executive Officer, CHE, Annexure 1, p. 14).

Integration then becomes a means whereby 'equivalent status' is made possible (SAQA Board Member, Annexure 1, p. 15):

...[T]he only thing that was an objective of the NQF [was] to give equal status and recognition to vocational studies on the same level as academic studies... The status being a recognition of ability, of authority, of responsibility... a person who looks after a multi-million rand power station, to be recognised as worthwhile.

It therefore seems that the integrated framework intended to enhance social esteem. Mehl (2004, p. 22) says that it is this recognition, namely the status, that is awarded by society for learning achievements, which raises the esteem and respect for individuals:

The way in which society recognises, rewards and measures learning achievement is through qualifications. It is society that provides the ultimate validation of qualifications and accords respect to the bearer. Society awards status and also opportunity and privilege.

Integration thus was not meant to 'make all things equal', but to 'establish peers' and accord 'equal respect' (SAQA Board Member, Annexure 1, p. 9) because

...our economy is held up by people who don't have these fancy qualifications but they are able to run our factories, run our banks, they are able to do a whole lot of things that are valuable to our society and somehow we are not recognising that (Executive Officer, SAQA, Annexure 1, p. 11).

It is thus becoming increasingly evident that the SANQF 'was seen as a mechanism to acknowledge in no small measure the workers' contribution to the struggle for freedom' (Heyns and Needham, 2004, p. 33). The apartheid legacy, in particular the lack of opportunities and the non-recognition for learning attained in contexts outside of formal

education that was largely inaccessible to a large proportion of the population, resulted in an attempt to overcome the ‘impermeable barriers’ (CHE, Appendix 4, p. 3) to improve the life chances of an individual:

...I[I]n South Africa, we are trying very hard to deal with ... the issue of the integration of people, you know, the bigger project, where you are saying that the reason why you are bringing people together ...is also about systemic transformation, where you are trying to break down other barriers, where most of your semi-skilled workers were black...(Executive Officer, SAQA, Annexure 1, p. 11).

The Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA), in its response to the *Consultative Document* made it clear that an integrated framework approach is already making inroads into the barriers that existed in the past (HPCSA, Annexure 4, p. 4):

It is beyond any question that the institution of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) has ushered in a viable and sustainable educational, training and development dispensation. This dispensation has indeed begun challenging the traditional notions of education, training and development in a way that seeks to break down the artificial barriers caused by inflexible and narrow focus...

Likewise, the Council on Higher Education (CHE), responding to the same consultation document, is of the opinion that the recommendations to ‘dis-integrate’ the SANQF by creating three quite different pathways, will (CHE, Annexure 4, p. 32)

...lead to the perpetuation of inequalities, and impermeable boundaries between what will be perceived to be superior “educational” institution based qualifications, and what will be perceived to be inferior “training” workplace based qualifications.

Further, they believe that ‘dis-integration’ will lead to a ‘dumbing down’ of workplace learning and reduce the possibilities of access and articulation with other components of education and training (CHE, Annexure 4, p. 2).

This translates into life opportunities for individuals, that is in terms of the choices that are made available and the ease with which people can ‘cross learning pathways’ (CHE, Annexure 4, p. 10). A SAQA Board Member maintains that ‘an integrated framework is important, but not for creating equalness, but for giving people routes to the top...’ (Annexure 1, p. 11). Another SAQA Board Member agrees, and says that integration is ‘the goal that every person, every citizen in the society can move to the highest level, should they so wish, [and that they] can do that with the minimum of impediments – that

is integration’ (Annexure 1, p. 11). The notion of not being locked into a particular pathway is closely associated with an integrated framework: ‘so, you don’t get the situation that if you did not go into a particular stream, that your life chances are drastically affected forever’ (Executive Officer, SAQA, Annexure 1, p. 25). The notion of choice, of freedom, and ease of movement within the education and training sphere and equal esteem is thus still strongly supported, for example (SADTU, Annexure 4, p. 6):

The initial purpose of the NQF was to integrate education and training giving both, Labour and Education, equal weighting...Many argue the new proposed system takes us back to the apartheid years where learning on the shop floor was considered inferior and out of the realm of Higher Education. In addition, those progressing through the Higher Education pathways are usually advantaged, with better resources and guaranteed better life opportunities – the NQF was intended to break this elitist status quo that was perpetuated by the apartheid regime in order to create a cheap and poorly skilled black labour force.

To conclude, interviewees and respondents, maintain that ‘[n]o one disagrees that the integrated approach is more difficult to achieve. Its benefits however, for our society are greater than any that our past system has provided’ (Insurance Sector Education and Training Authority (INSETA), Annexure 4, p. 5).

5.2.3 A Social Construct

Yet another explanation for the symbolic importance of an integrated framework is the notion that the SANQF is considered a ‘social construct’. A social construct ‘is constructed and sustained by mutual agreement between people’ (Metcalf, 2006, p. 1). In the African National Congress’ (ANC) *Policy Framework for Education and Training* (1995, pp. – 9), the SANQF as a social construct emerges:

- In democratic systems of government, policies must be arrived at through open social and political processes which involve all major stakeholders and interest groups, and which citizens feel free to influence...[they] can only succeed if the affected organs of civil society feel that they are partners with a stake in the outcome.
- For a policy to have a chance of success, a sufficient number of people must be persuaded that it is right, necessary and implementable. Almost any education and training policy will come to grief in practice if it does not win the support of two essential constituencies: those who are expected to benefit from it, and those who are expected to implement it.
- It follows that flexible and adaptable policies are likely to be the most successful. Rigid and dogmatic policies will be brittle and easily broken.

Metcalf (2006, p. 5) argues that

[t]he NQF was a construct of social forces operating to achieve a set of social, economic and political goals at a particular historical moment. It was borne of hopes for an education which would empower a populace denied access to education under apartheid for full participation economically and socially.

It is therefore small wonder that the social construct that is the education and training system is so vehemently defended, for at least three reasons: civil society considers itself as a partner in the conceptualisation and development of the SANQF; enough people have been persuaded that it is right, necessary and implementable; and the intended beneficiaries are still holding out for the hope and aspirations the new system holds for them:

The NQF was purported to be a social construct that embodied the aspirations of all the people of South Africa, especially those disadvantaged and deprived by our legacy of apartheid (SADTU, Annexure 4, p. 7).

The first of these three reasons is particularly important for the cherished notion of the SANQF as a social construct. Jansen (2001, p. 42), for example, argues that '[u]ntil 1990, the production of education policy in South Africa was a relatively simple matter. The state maintained control of education policy in ways that were bureaucratically centralised, racially exclusive and politically authoritarian'. Perhaps policy development, so soon after the demise of apartheid, is still too closely associated with liberation, for roleplayers to give up their sense of contribution to a new education and training system and hence, the defence.

In addition, the SANQF is also closely associated with the social purposes it was intended to achieve, for example (SACP, Annexure 4, p. 20), 'It is essential that the country maintain one framework of qualifications, and that the commitment to equity and redress be affirmed'.

In the analysis of the purposes of national qualifications frameworks (see Chapter 2: Literature Review), it is evident that the SANQF is the only qualifications framework that is overtly 'transformative'. SADTU, in its response to the *Consultative Document*, therefore suggests that the proposals in this consultation document should be viewed against the transformative purposes of the SANQF:

...[T]he response by the two Ministries on the Interdependent Consultative Document clearly indicates a radical shift from [the] integration project. In fact, what has occurred [that] the creation of a new NQF system that has detracted from our transformation agenda by making proposals that fundamentally change the NQF?

Thus, unlike other national qualification frameworks, the SANQF has a particular social purpose (Parker, 2006, p. 34 - 35):

Whereas the development of many other NQFs, especially those in the developed world, has been accretive, administrative and technical in an attempt to “co-ordinate” what already exists, South Africa’s NQF has a strongly normative orientation; what is (apartheid education) must be transformed into what ought to be.

This is in keeping with the idea that the SANQF is part of a broader social transformation (Parker, 2006) and thus is also vested with the responsibility to effect changes to the social uses and value of qualifications. It seems, then, that an integrated NQF intends to attach societal value to particular roles filled by people from different backgrounds, and to recognise the value such people have for society:

...[Y]ou almost had the kind of builders and the bridge builders...[who] have always had this different kind of value in society, so you do get these kinds of comparisons [between the two types of builders], and the comparisons also make it important that we in fact start to value different kinds of learning...I wouldn’t say equally, but we have to value different kinds of learning appropriately, so that it is not seen as *de facto* inferior...(Executive Officer, SAQA, Annexure 1, p. 12).

The different societal roles and the values attached to such roles are seen to be legitimate and equally valuable (SAQA Board Member, Annexure 1, p. 12):

You’re a degreed person, I am a technikon-based person. Your academic thinking...is totally different from technikon-based learning, and it has to be, because we have different roles: when I go into a problem, I’m thinking solutions, when you go into a problem, you’re thinking concepts...you see what I mean? There are different roles, different roles in society.

The point, it seems, is that there is an acknowledgement of ‘difference’, but a resistance to ‘different’ equating to ‘better’ or ‘worse’: ‘So, certain engineers actually deal with conceptual design issues and others deal with other issues and they really constitute a team. Now, does that make one person better? Now, that is where our issue comes in’ (Executive Officer, CHE, Annexure 1, p. 50).

5.2.4 *Lack of Progress in relation to an Integrated Framework*

In the *SAQA NQF Impact Study, Cycle 2* (2005), the research team notes that the South African system has not yet sufficiently clarified the integrative intentions of the SANQF. This is in keeping with the comment that ‘conceptual adequacy of the planned reforms’ (Jansen, 2002, p. 2) has not been achieved. Jansen, (2001, p. 49) maintains that

...unless policy evaluation in South Africa provides greater weight to the symbolic functions of education policy, then there is the real danger of social expectations being frustrated and theoretical progress being undermined in explaining education transition after apartheid.

Evidence from the data that frustrations are indeed surfacing, is emerging:

There is no sustainability, no progression, no growth. In that regard we have failed big time, we have betrayed the masses of people. We have had 5 years to implement it, but all we are getting is an increase in the number of the young being unemployed and destitute...it means that there is something we are not doing right (National Department of Education official, Annexure 1, p. 10).

Almost overwhelmingly the blame is placed on the two departments responsible for the implementation of the SANQF. At a macro level, integration is still very much a conceptual and contentious issue. This seems to constrain integration at other levels. A private Further Education and Training (FET) college suggested: ‘I don’t think there is any interaction between education and training and it starts with the two ministers that don’t talk to one another’ (Annexure 1, p. 13). The National Professional Teachers’ Organisation of South Africa (NAPTOSA) (2004, p. 1), in its response to the draft *Higher Education Qualifications Framework*⁴, another document published by the Ministry of Education, agrees and puts it even more forcefully:

NAPTOSA finds it perplexing and frustrating that the tensions between the Departments of Education and Labour are such that there is a very real danger that the rift will result in “territorial” imperatives and protection of sectoral interest (along the DoE/DoL, education/training, academic/vocational divide) at the cost of integration across education and training and across formal, non-formal education and training opportunities.

Education and training institutions, therefore, are feeling constrained by the seemingly different political agendas:

...[T]he ministers, the departments...they seem to have different agendas...the education department say education is for education, but the Department of Labour is saying education is for skills development and those

⁴ Ministry of Education, 2004.

two need to match. The vocational and the general must be married and they must produce offspring that will make our country more full in terms of our skills, and I just wish they would get into bed together. It's not happening (FET college, Annexure 1, p. 13).

Other commentators (such as Jansen (2004) and French (2005)) argue that a 'divided ownership' (CHE, Annexure 4, p. 23) of the SANQF has compromised the ideal of an integrated framework from the outset. Given the socio-political birth of a new education and training system for South Africa, the political impasse is real and important. French (2005, p. 56) comments that in the conceptualisation of the SANQF, it was envisaged that the 'full majesty of the state' was needed:

It is important to remember the assumptions made about the new order in the formative years of the NQF. Firstly, there was the conviction that there would be a single Ministry and Department of Lifelong Learning after 1994. This would overcome the fierce historical division between education and training that was reflected in the territorial animosity of the former Department of Education and Training and the Department of Manpower. Secondly, it was assumed that a new Minister of Lifelong Learning would stand behind the NQF, seeing it as the cornerstone of transformation, with conviction and a clear perception of its role.

Instead, the legacy of two departments was maintained. (Why this happened is still obscure and subject to speculation.)

On the one hand, the reason for the current impasse seems to be that 'integration is too difficult', so it is used as a 'device' to prevent further conceptualisation (Executive Officer, SAQA, Annexure 1, p. 19). On the other hand, the lack of political will is blamed: 'There isn't a political will, which says that this is the way it is going to be – now make it work. And if there isn't that, and the personalities are clashing, then we have a problem' (SAQA Board Member, Annexure 1, p. 20).

SADTU (Annexure 4, p. 8) agrees and says that strong political commitment is needed:

It is clear that the decision on the NQF requires strong political commitment that is based on the aspirations of the people of this country and that it would be ironic if the NQF is dismantled as a response to the personalities of two ministers. Surely the future of this country's potential to heal itself, empower itself and become a key player in the global arena must transcend the tensions and turf contestations of two individuals.

The political heads of the two departments are thus finding themselves in a very difficult position. It seems that it would almost be political suicide if an integrated framework is discredited:

...[T]hey can't be openly critical of something that is obviously in the interest of the country as a whole and so, you get always, this preamble with this huge buy-in to the objectives and then everything from the body of the article or the paper goes on to split [the SANQF] up. In addition to that, although they have supported it, at least in principle, their actions haven't supported the notion of integration...it would be a hell of a loss of face if you suddenly change your mind (SAQA Board Member, Annexure 1, p. 20).

The ideology that gave birth to the idea of an integrated framework, and subsequently the symbolism vested in such a framework, still seems to be the overriding factor. However,

...as much as ideology and visions and principles should drive policies...at some point we have also step back [and] say "but what does the empirical evidence say?" and if the empirical evidence is pointing in a different direction then you have to have an interplay between empirical evidence and ideological dispositions...The idea simply that for the sake of looking ideologically elegant [we have to have an integrated framework]...[but] are we sure we are remaining faithful to the ideological and social commitments we have to redress, equity, justice and so on? (Executive Officer, CHE, Annexure1, p. 8).

5.2.5 *Conclusions: Policy Symbolism*

Jansen (2001, p. 50) points out that 'politicians do not always invent policy in order to change practice'. However, it is evident that the political symbolism of an integrated framework has permeated all the sectors of education and training in South Africa and that, despite seeming political contestations, integration is being conceptualised and supported in many different forms.

From the data it emerges that the SANQF seems to be a symbol of the aspirations for a transformed society, and the integration of education and training is seen to be the key to achieve such aspirations. Unlike other countries, where an integrated framework tends to be of a technical nature, in South Africa integration is associated with the 'fair and just treatment' felt to have been denied to the majority of the population under apartheid. This is reflected in a number of ways. Firstly, it is displayed in the call for inclusion of groups previously excluded from education and training and consequently from improved life opportunities. Secondly, it is indicated by the ability to break through the impermeable barriers to progression characteristic of the previous system. Thirdly, a transformed society has to, in a sense, acknowledge those people upon whose backs the country was built, and recognise and award such people, hence the access and redress foci of the SANQF. Fourthly, integration symbolises the new democracy in two

senses. In one sense, the SANQF came into being by mandate of its citizenry; and the citizenry contributed to its construction and thus feels, perhaps for the first time, that their voices are heard, to the extent that they are called upon to help develop qualifications. The SANQF is thus the ordinary citizen's social construct meant to address historical prejudices against workplace-based learning and the perceived elitism of the previous system and, in aiming to lift the value of vocational education and training, earns the support of those who felt marginalised. According respect to learning, wherever it may occur, is seen to have the potential of giving equal social esteem to all the citizens of the country. In another sense, the SANQF is considered a victory in the fight for freedom on the education and training front and represents national liberation from an oppressive system. An integrated framework is thus an important heritage of the battle for human dignity and human rights.

However, the risks of infusing a qualifications framework with aspirations for a transformed society is that where these aspirations are frustrated, the effects are seen to be devastating. This is evident in the frustrations voiced about the current political impasse. Unfortunately, such symbolism could hide the real difficulties in achieving equal weighting of education and training. It is therefore possible that, at the current conjuncture of the implementation of the SANQF, stakeholders are ignoring the fact that an integrated framework may be very difficult to achieve even in jurisdictions where the moral imperative of a transforming society is not an issue. The data suggests that the problem is perceived to be with the two departments, which historically did not attempt to coordinate their efforts, a situation that consequently resulted in the turf wars between them. The divided ownership of the SANQF is seen to be another possible reason for the lack of implementation, while some ascribe it to the personalities of the two political heads, who are accused of having different agendas to the detriment of the implementation of an integrated approach. Thus, empirical evidence, which may point out, on a non-political level, that it is difficult to achieve an integrated framework, is ignored. Nevertheless, the lack of communication and/or coordination between the departments is seen to be inhibiting the implementation of an integrated approach elsewhere in the system and the respondents clearly articulate the frustrations felt at the coalface of education and training.

However, as Jansen (2001, p. 51) points out: ‘In broad terms, politicians and bureaucrats recognise the need for and the importance of symbolic policy in the production of policy and legislations [but] there is also recognition of the need to move beyond symbolic policy’. Therefore, while policy symbolism is undoubtedly important in reflecting a decisive break from an oppressive past, symbolism is not sufficient to effect major changes in the way in which an education and training system is constructed. However, it is evident that implementers have taken the notion of an integrated framework seriously and honestly attempted to go beyond symbolism, by infusing the framework with principles that will reflect the underlying ideology that resulted in the symbolic coming together of education and training. Social justice and social inclusion through a socially constructed system, is seen to be served by an integrated framework and consequently, integration seems to have become the guiding philosophy for the SANQF.

5.3 Guiding Philosophy

A guiding philosophy is ‘the underlying thinking that implicitly, often covertly, underlies the development and implementation of [an] NQF’ (Keevy, 2005, p. 2).

From the discussion of the SANQF as an example of policy symbolism, it is evident that the notion of integration is strongly driven by an underlying ideology, rooted in the inequities of the previous education and training regime. However, this does not explain the attempts, at the coalface of the system, to implement an integrated approach. A possible explanation for these attempts, despite the perceived lack of political will of the two departments, is that increasingly, integration is seen as a ‘meta-theme’ for the emerging system (SAQA Board Member, Annexure 1, p. 18):

[It is not so much a question of] integration as a value, but for me integration is a meta-theme that includes issues of access, transparency, portability and so on. So, when we say ‘integration’, I think you have to, by definition, unpack it, because what we’ve got is, we’ve got conceptual integration, we want this to be a single integrated NQF. I would call it ‘operationalising integration’.

The first emerging theme for this part of the discussion, therefore, includes the discussion of integration as a meta-theme or a guiding philosophy for the principles underlying the development of the SANQF. The second theme deals with parity of esteem on three different levels: the social value attached to learning and, consequently, the social esteem awarded to holders of qualifications; parity between institutions; and

parity between qualifications, reflecting the social justice issues discussed in the previous section. (The latter will be explored in more depth in Chapter 6. Here the discussion will deal with parity of esteem as an example of the guiding philosophy for the SANQF as it relates to integration.)

5.3.1 Integration as a Meta-theme

One of the reasons for the limited progress in the achievement of integration as a central objective of the SANQF is that there does not seem to be a common understanding of the concept (Heyns and Needham, 2004). Therefore, the ‘unpacking’ and ‘operationalisation’ of integration either has not yet occurred, or it has been interpreted in different ways. As a meta-theme it could mean coherence, articulation and portability at a structural level, which are closely linked to the social purposes of the framework. COSATU, for example, typifies the SANQF as ‘socio-technical’, which is clearly associated with the expectations of the social groups who hope to benefit from an integrated framework (Annexure 4, p. 3):

The social construct nature of the NQF should be upheld, since it creates space for the generation of new knowledge that is socio-technical in character through social dialogue forums. This socio-technical character of the NQF is embodied in the principles embracing the different needs and expectations of constituencies.

This seems to mean that, while the SANQF is driven by social justice issues, it is underpinned by an attempt to make the ‘social’, ‘technical’, or what are called the ‘structural possibilities of the NQF’ (Blom, 2005, p. 11). The set of principles which seem to ‘unpack’ an integrated framework begin to do just that. In the conceptual framework for this study, integration, as the first of the SANQF principles, emerges as the ‘meta-theme’ for the rest of the principles of the framework. An integrated framework purports to enhance the social value of *all* learning achievements, thereby facilitating the achievement of parity of esteem between different components of the system. This in turn is meant to improve articulation and progression through the system in a more coherent manner and recognises that there are multiple pathways to achieve the ‘same learning ends’ (SAQA, 2001a, p. 10).

This is supported by the data. The CHE (Annexure 4, p. 4), in its response to *An Interdependent National Qualifications Framework System: Consultative Document* (DoE & DoL, 2003), for example, uses integration as the meta-theme for the social

justice issues emerging from the rationale of an integrated framework in its comments on the proposals:

The fundamental principle...is a commitment to an integrated approach to education and training...characterised by equity of access, opportunity and outcomes; high quality provision, learning and teaching; learner mobility and progression; and, articulation between programmes, qualifications and institutions.

In the conceptual framework (Chapter 3), integration, as the meta-theme, or ‘guiding philosophy’ for the SANQF, is demonstrated in Figure 5.1.

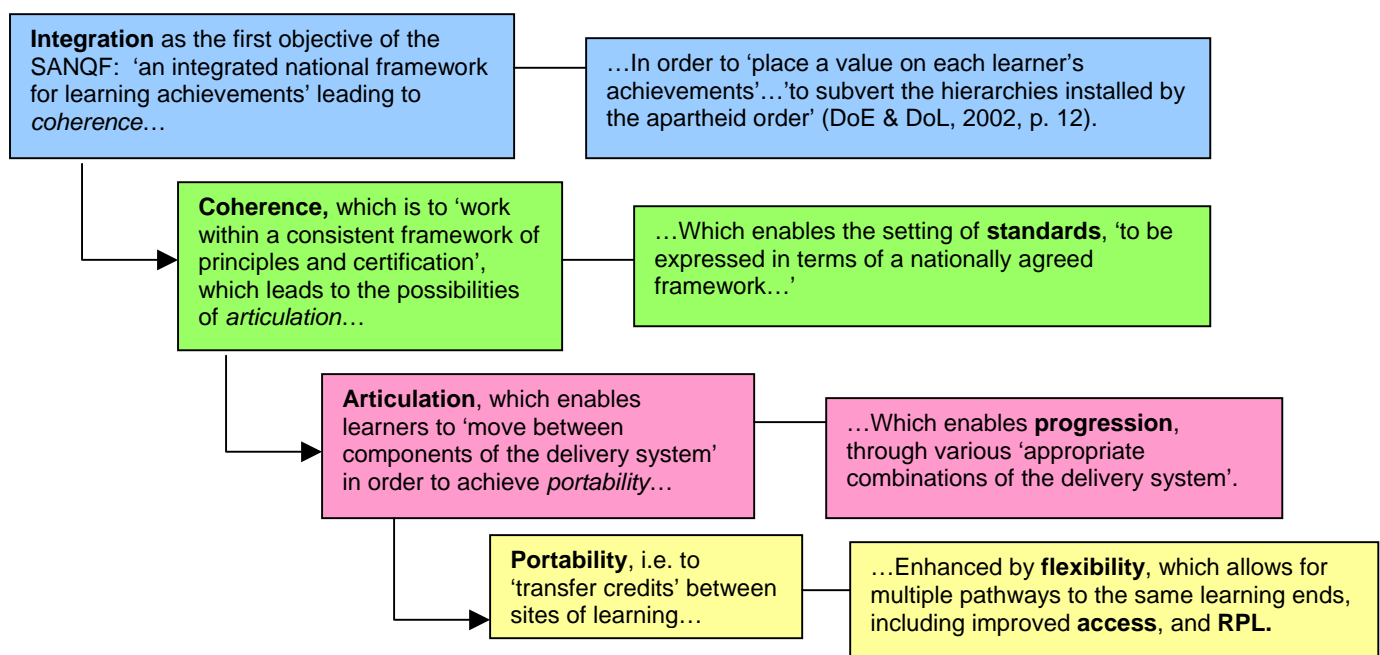


Figure 5.1: Integration as the Meta-theme or Guiding Philosophy for the Framework

Integration is thus seen to be ‘completely central to what is understood to be the [social] purpose of education and training in the country’ (SAQA Manager, Annexure 1, p. 18). Further, because ‘equivalence between [education and training] will not be achieved by political fiat’ (SAUVCA, Annexure 4, p. 12), the data reveals how the system attempts to bring to life the socio-technical nature of integration at a structural level. One of the key tenets of such structural arrangements includes the achievement of parity of esteem between different contexts of the education and training system, with the purpose, in line with international aims for frameworks, to achieve greater coherence, improve progression routes and clarify articulation between qualifications, particularly if these are achieved in different sectors of the system.

5.3.2 *Parity of Esteem*

Parity of esteem is thus closely associated with articulation routes, progression and mobility, as different interpretations of integration. For example (Eastern Cape Labour, Annexure 1, p.19), '...for the first time, we saw a system that was going to allow learners to move from bands and across, vertically and horizontally. That articulation was very important'.

Young, (2003, p. 10) says that 'parity of esteem is not a reality in any country'. The reasons he cites for this are continuing 'social inequalities' and 'differences between types of learning'. However, it is perhaps precisely because of such 'social inequalities' that parity of esteem is considered so important in South Africa, and 'in a context of where you are fighting apartheid and you are critiquing...on the basis that you thought that we are going to build a different economic and social system in the country', the complexities of achieving parity was over-simplified: 'We kind of dissolved complex binaries too easily...we were assuming that a particular COSATU model can dissolve paradoxes and contradictions' (Executive Officer, CHE, Annexure 1, p. 10).

Some of the 'paradoxes and contradictions' become evident particularly in the different ways in which parity of esteem is *not* achieved. Firstly, parity, in terms of the social value of all learning, is a highly contested notion (Ensor, 2003, p. 326):

...[T]he dominant educational thinking in South Africa from the early 1990s...signals a determination to erode three knowledge boundaries: between education and training, between academic and everyday knowledge, and between different forms of knowledge, disciplines or subjects. The erosion of these boundaries was expected to result in the collapse of a fourth: the social boundaries between groups on the basis of race and class.

Umalusi, the Council for Quality Assurance of General and Further Education and Training, agrees, and contests the notion that 'everyday knowledge' is on par with knowledge gained through institutional learning. Umalusi notes in its response to *An Interdependent National Qualifications Framework System: Consultative Document* (DoE & DoL, 2003) (Annexure 4, p. 5):

The difference is not just based on social perception of that workplace-based education and training has not been valued or that elites have used their disciplines to maintain the status quo. The difference is actually a fundamental fact of what education is – about knowledge that is

discontinuous, not continuous with every day experience. It takes people beyond the knowledge available to them through every day life.

This confirms the earlier point that the symbolic nature of the framework is masking the very real difficulties in implementing an integrated framework (see 5.2.5). This state of affairs, according to Umalusi, is partly because of quite practical matters:

The conditions for learning with breadth and depth are, of necessity, found in formal education institutions, because workplaces are unlikely to have the time or the trained and experienced staff to enable such learning to happen. It is not useful...to create a perception of a framework in which all qualifications can be obtained in all three pathways⁵, when in fact it does not seem realistic that higher levels of learning can be reached in the workplace.

However, secondly, while ‘there is a conceptual difference between education and training and...you ignore that difference at your peril’ (Executive Officer, CHE, Annexure 1, p. 45), under the previous regime, the system was designed to favour some people over others: ‘[t]he apartheid system of education and training was not the result of benign neglect, but a response to a purposeful and deliberate attempt to keep millions of people in their place’ (Blom, 2006, p. 3). Thus, while parity of esteem ‘in theory guarantee[s] equal opportunities and progression regardless of the learning pathway chosen’ and that such a strategy ‘would point out how vocational and technical programmes [for example] would need to be improved’ (Young, 1996, p.33), in South Africa, parity takes on a social justice meaning. With social justice as the ideology behind parity of esteem, it is not surprising that most respondents to the survey questionnaire⁶ indicated that, in principle, education and vocational qualifications are viewed as equally important (Figure 5.2).

⁵ Academic (i.e. in institutions), vocational (also in institutions) and occupation-based (workplaces).

⁶ 74/77 survey questionnaires completed in conjunction with structured interviews

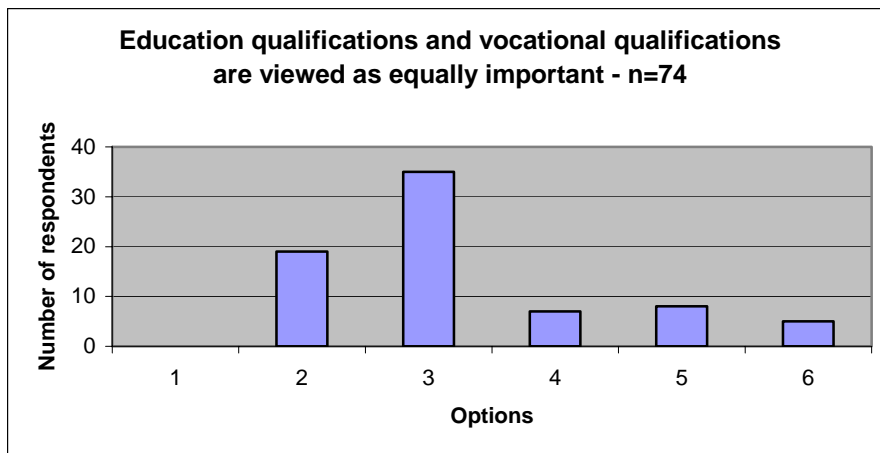


Figure 5.2. The Social Status of Education and Vocational Qualifications

Key: Option 1: Strongly disagree Option 4: Strongly agree
Option 2: Disagree Option 5: Don't know
Option 3: Agree Option 6: Too soon to say

However, while most categories of respondent agree that education and vocational qualifications are equally important, there are differences in opinion between 'Business', 'Professional Bodies' and 'Education and Training Quality Assurance bodies' (Figure 5.3).

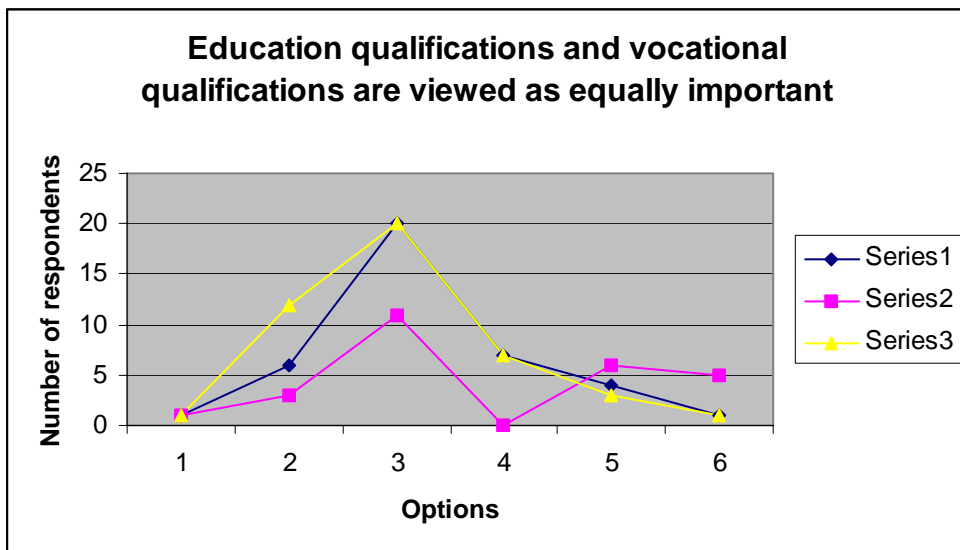


Figure 5.3. Educational and Vocational Qualifications: Business, Professional Bodies and Education and Training Quality Assurance bodies

Key: Option 1: Strongly disagree Option 4: Strongly agree
Option 2: Disagree Option 5: Don't know
Option 3: Agree Option 6: Too soon to say
Series 1: Business
Series 2: Professional Bodies
Series 3: Education and Training Quality Assurance bodies (ETQAs)

Most of the ETQAs (20/44) agree that education and vocational qualifications should be viewed as equally important, but at least a third of this category of respondents also felt strongly that this is not the case (13/44). This is borne out by the comments of some interviewees: ‘...[I]n some quarters vocational qualifications are not seen as equally important as educational qualifications. That kind of integration has not yet happened. Those who have gone through vocational training, their qualifications are seen as low’ (Organised Labour, Free State, Annexure 1, p. 17). Yet, others feel that particularly ‘vocational qualifications are gaining momentum in the country’ (Public HE institution, Annexure 1, p. 15) and that the SANQF is a tool to recognise parity:

...[T]he learning of people [is] recognized on an equal footing, if you like, and that qualifications that one achieves in every corner of the country, there is a mechanism for them to be recognised and to be registered via a tool where equality is given to their qualifications...So, I think...the establishment of this tool and of this mechanism brought about a lot of hope and excitement for people (Dept of Labour, Western Cape, Annexure 1, p. 14).

Nevertheless, the historical inequities influence how respondents and interviewees view parity of esteem as the *social value* assigned to learning.

In the third place, apart from the differences in education and training, and the social value attached to qualifications attained in these sub-sectors of the system, the expectation is also that the SANQF will attempt ‘to bring both the advantaged and previously disadvantaged to the same level’ (Learner focus group, Annexure 1, p. 17). Coupled with the perception that education is associated with privilege and elitism and representative of the old regime, parity of esteem is further complicated (SADTU, Annexure 4, p. 6):

The initial purpose of the NQF was to integrate education and training giving both, Labour and Education, equal weighting. However, the proposed new NQF is certainly skewed in favour of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education. Many argue that the new proposed system takes us back to the apartheid years where learning on the shop floor was considered inferior and out of the realm of Higher Education. In addition, those progressing through the Higher Education pathways are usually advantaged, with better resources and guaranteed better life opportunities – the NQF was intended to break this elitist status quo that was perpetuated by the apartheid regime in order to create a cheap and poorly skilled black labour force.

The Insurance Sector Education and Training Authority (INSETA) (Annexure 4, p. 6) agrees with the view that ‘education’, as the opposite of ‘training’, traditionally resulted in better life opportunities for individuals in the ‘education’ sector. In its response to *An Interdependent National Qualifications Framework System: Consultative Document* (DoE & DoL, 2003) it notes that

[t]he real test for separated systems [such as those proposed by the *Consultative Document*] is whether learners have equal opportunities in reaching their full potential in such systems. For the main part such systems are resourced in such a way that the academic stream is always better endowed and learners who are able to progress in this stream have better life opportunities. The parity of resourcing for the various streams is crucial [for the proposals] to work.

In addition, the perception that some institutions are better than others introduces yet another dimension to parity of esteem: ‘[I]t depends on the historical background. X institution may always be seen as better than Y institution’ (Organised labour, Free State, Annexure 1, p. 16). The previously disadvantaged higher education institutions, in particular, see themselves in a negative light:

I think the university...and other institutions, of course, you would agree with me that it’s one of those...institutions that were established during the apartheid regime and most of its anticipated ideas were to put blacks far away from urban areas, second rated education, Bantu education (Public HE institution, Limpopo).

Thus, the notion that ‘now we have a system where, you know that whatever qualification you have, it will be recognised in terms of mobility’, does not necessarily hold water. Furthermore, learners still prefer certain institutions: ‘I think it is still biased. It’s issues of perception. We haven’t made the shift. I mean [learners] would still prefer WITS⁷ (FET institution, Annexure 1, p. 16). Likewise, inequalities seem to be perpetuated as graduates from some institutions are seen to be better prepared: ‘...[G]raduates from UCT or RAU...are given more preference than the person who comes from a bush university, so to speak’ (Employer, North West Province, Annexure 1, p. 18).

One interviewee for Cycle 1 of the NQF Impact Study (SAQA, 2004), with considerable frustration, comments on the lack of parity between institutions (Public HE institution, Annexure 1, p. 33): ‘We are stuck because institutions have not

⁷ University of the Witwatersrand

demonstrated willingness to recognise [the equivalence between institutions]. The issue of equivalence of institutions and the power play between the institutions is a disadvantage to the learners’.

It is evident from the quantitative data that the perception that ‘everything that comes from the NQF, we all know the same thing, no matter which universities or colleges we come from’ (Public FET college, Mpumalanga, Annexure 1, p. 37) is not entirely correct. In relation to the perception of the quality of learning at some institutions, parity has not yet been achieved. In response to the statement ‘NQF qualifications offered by *some* institutions are seen as more portable than NQF qualifications offered by other institutions’, most respondents agreed that there is a perception that qualifications at some institutions are better than qualifications at other institutions. Integration, as parity of esteem between institutions, has not been achieved (Figure 5.4).

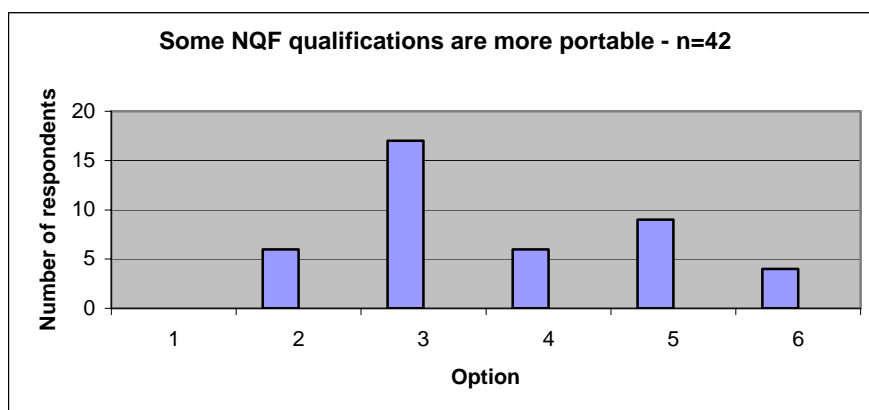


Figure 5.4. Some Institutions’ Qualifications are more Portable

Key: Option 1: Strongly disagree Option 4: Strongly agree
 Option 2: Disagree Option 5: Don’t know
 Option 3: Agree Option 6: Too soon to say

Again, this is borne out by comments by interviewees: ‘Is it really true that somebody can say go from a public FET college to actually a [higher education] institution? I’m not sure. I can’t really see it at the moment’ (Public HE institution, Annexure 1, p. 14).

Other respondents agree. For example, a teacher union commented that: ‘You find that in some areas we are told that we cannot access through this door, that articulation sometimes is limited by rules of combination within providers (Annexure 1, p. 19).

On the one hand, vocational education is seen to have become more valuable: ‘...[T]he approach seems to be widening the scope to structure and recognise on-the-job training, skills and vocational development programs and intermediary qualifications with clear career paths towards fully fledged professionals’ (Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA), Annexure 4, p. 4). Other interviewees agree with this trend, particularly in the black communities (Private GET/ABET institution, Annexure 1, p. 15):

I don’t know in the white communities, but in the black communities the trend is changing now. In the past no black person wanted their children to go for technical training. It was regarded as inferior training. When you say you want to become a builder, people thought of someone, you know, there was the “wheelbarrow syndrome”. People thought of someone shoving a wheelbarrow, they never thought of designing a building structure, that was not part of building to them...that tells you that we are changing...[to] being people who are respected by the communities for being a contractor...you see people did not think that guys who are in technical were actually trained. For instance, you need mathematics, science and everything else, they just thought that [it] is a stupid trade...

On the other hand, many interviewees thought that ‘educational qualifications are still viewed as more important’ (Public HE institution, Annexure 1, p.18). SADTU (Annexure 4, p. 6) maintains that ‘the integration project’ was meant to give ‘workplace based and institution based learning an equal status’ and that the new moves in the system, namely to dis-integrate the framework would mean that

...those qualifications from [Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs)] could be labelled inferior compared to those with qualifications from [Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC)]. This is taking us back to the Verwoerd era whereby those with technikon qualifications were considered inferior as opposed to those with university qualifications. We are worried about issues such as access and articulation at this level.

The challenge to the emerging education and training system, therefore, seems to be how to ensure that the increasing convergence of qualifications ‘to the middle’ enhances parity of esteem of qualifications achieved in different sectors and institutions. SAUVCA (Annexure 4, p. 7), in its comments on *An Interdependent*

National Qualifications Framework System: Consultative Document (DoE & DoL, 2003), argues that

[a]n NQF that is a continuum of different qualifications at each level varying from “pure” general/formative qualifications at one pole, to “fully” vocational/career-focused qualifications at the other, will see most or all higher education qualifications tending to the middle over time...

Thus, instead of the “separate spheres” theology of the previous dispensation’ (SAUVCA, Annexure 4, p. 7), the challenge is to enable meaningful articulation without making a distinction ‘that this kind of education and training is better than *that* kind of education and training’ (Executive Officer, SAQA, Annexure 1, p. 14), but rather that the qualifications are fit for purpose, and not less valuable. It is evident from the quantitative data that respondents are in two minds about whether institutions value each other’s qualifications (Figure 5.5).

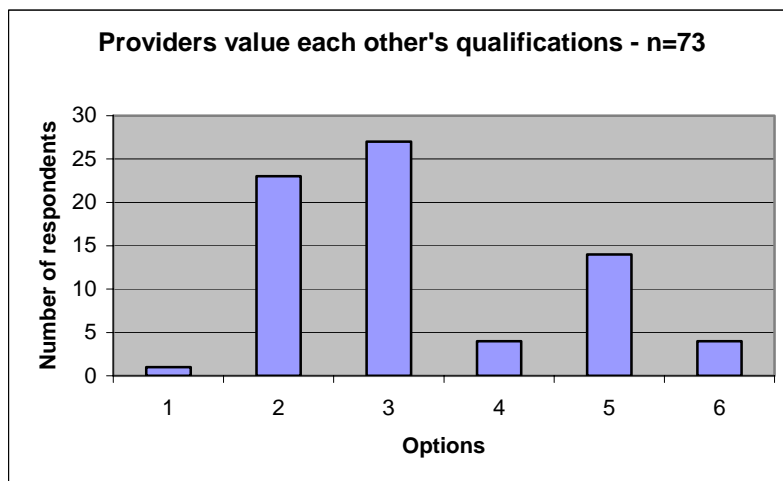


Figure 5.5. Institutions Value each other’s Qualifications

Key: Option 1: Strongly disagree Option 4: Strongly agree
Option 2: Disagree Option 5: Don’t know
Option 3: Agree Option 6: Too soon to say

More than a third of the respondents (27/73) felt that institutions do value each other’s qualifications, but possibly within a particular sector (for example, school to school, college to college), but another third of the respondents (24/73) disagree, or strongly disagree, or simply do not know (14/73). This clearly has implications for integration as the meta-theme for articulation possibilities, progression, portability of learning and

the mobility of learners within the system (Organised Labour, Free State, Annexure 1, p. 18):

With our experience we've seen people who have this certificate from an institution that was considered for [credit transfer], *depending on where they were coming from* and what they were able to produce. In certain cases there have been serious problems, where people had even forms of qualifications that were *not recognised* (emphases added).

It seems that parity of esteem, in any form, is thus still at a conceptual level: 'I think we are still meeting a lot of challenges with regard to mobility and progression. The principles are well stated but in terms of practice there are problems' (Gauteng Department of Education, Annexure 1, p. 19)

5.3.3 *Conclusions – Integration as Guiding Philosophy for the SANQF*

In this section it has become evident that, at different levels of the education and training system, integration is seen as the guiding philosophy for the SANQF, in particular, in the attempts to operationalise the principles of coherence, articulation, progression and portability. However, the guiding philosophy is not separated from the social justice issues that underpinned the development of the SANQF in the first place. Integration as guiding philosophy is thus socio-structural in nature. It is linked to the attempt to collapse social boundaries between groups as much as it is about improving the coherence of the system. However, even at a technical level, the system is grappling with the difficulties in achieving parity between learning routes, institutions and qualifications, and in reducing the difference between the advantaged and the disadvantaged and the associated life opportunities. The differences in esteem between institutions seem to stand proxy for the differences in social status and the esteem awarded to holders of qualifications. Historically disadvantaged institutions (HDIs) and students, therefore, seem to see an integrated framework as a means to raise their social status. Further, it is also evident that even between similar institutions, (for example, university to university) and similar qualifications (for example, a Bachelor of Arts at two different institutions), improved esteem is not guaranteed. It is evident that 'parity of esteem' between institutions and types of qualifications is not simply a question of 'political fiat'.

Nevertheless, vocational education, (but not necessarily workplace-based training), is seen to have gained some status within particular communities.

5.4 Conclusion – Policy Symbolism and Guiding Philosophy

While it is evident that an integrated framework is a central symbol of the attempt to correct the ills of apartheid education, it seems to have become more than a symbol: it seems to represent a ‘social contract’ (Mehl, 2004, p. 22):

...[T]he NQF deals with the outcomes of education and training, namely qualifications, [and] it is an important social contract. Indeed, it goes to the very heart of how society recognises learning achievements in its midst.

As a ‘site of the struggle’ (Kraak, 1998, p. 1), education and training in South Africa had, under apartheid, become infused with the aspirations of those people denied opportunities and tired of the calculated mediocrity of the education available to them. An integrated framework thus has become more than a symbol – it has become the philosophy that underlies all thinking about the education and training system in this country. This may explain why a ‘political intervention intended to revisit, revise or even reverse policies around which the political agenda [may have] shifted’ (Jansen, 2004, p. 50) has met with such resistance to the proposed changes to the original rationale for the implementation of an integrated framework.

In this chapter it has thus become evident that an integrated approach to education and training not only came into being as resistance and reaction to apartheid education policies, but it also came to embody the esteem of learning achieved despite apartheid: ‘Despite these adverse conditions, countless black South Africans took every opportunity they could to learn. Over many years, for many individuals, much of this learning happened in workplaces and other areas of social endeavour’ (Mehl, 2004, p. 23).

Coupled with acknowledgement and recognition for learning attained against all odds, is the deeply felt burden of oppression and social exclusion. An integrated framework, therefore, also came to embody equal social esteem and respect, the value individuals bring to society and the freedom of choice, that is the ability to pursue ‘routes to the top’, regardless of the starting point, should an individual wish to do so.

In addition, the fact that those very individuals who, in the past, were excluded from decisions that influenced their life chances, contributed to and helped shape a vision for a responsive and responsible education and training system, could explain the passion and almost blind commitment to a ‘social construct’ that they feel they helped bring into being. This may certainly also explain the frustrations with the apparent lack of political will of the two departments (Education and Labour), to make the system work.

The central argument in this chapter is that policy symbolism is important, particularly in relation to ‘a caring, compassionate, fair and equitable society with public-interested identities oriented towards ‘collective good’ such as justice, fairness, honesty, human solidarity and respect for the dignity of the “other”’ (Parker, 2006, p. 36), but that it is equally evident that symbolism is not enough. Symbolism does not effect changes, evidently not even at the macro political level. Nevertheless, it is evident that, despite the lack of a ‘credible theory of action’ (Jansen, 2004, p. 89), which would spell out how, and by whom, large-scale changes would be effected in practical ways, there is much support for an integrated framework, to the extent that the symbolism of the integrated framework has become the primary perspective for ‘all new developments in our national learning system’ (DoE & DoL, 2003, p. 1)

However, the hope and aspirations such a framework embodies, in promising to address the social ills of the past system, may mask the real and practical reasons for the difficulties experienced in the development and implementation of an integrated framework. Chapter 6 will view integration through a different, possibly more pragmatic, lens.

CHAPTER 6

THE INTRINSIC AND INSTITUTIONAL LOGICS OF THE SANQF

‘...there is now a doing away of certain gates...gateways and hurdles that need to be overcome have been passed, have now been taken away because there is a national qualifications strategy...in theory it is supposed to take away the problems...but it’s the institutions that aren’t making it work’¹.

In Chapter 5, an integrated framework as a powerful symbol of the break from the past, and the extent to which such a symbol has become the guiding philosophy for all thinking about the new education and training system, emerged. However, it became evident that symbolism and a philosophy do not provide pragmatic approaches that will enable large-scale reform to take place. Chapter 6 investigates such pragmatic approaches, including the structure and the design of an integrated framework, that is the intrinsic logic of the framework, as well as other measures, both within and outside of the framework that will enable the structure of the framework to come to life. The latter refers to the institutional logic or the policy breadth that supports the structural changes to the system. The second research question asks: Can the relationships between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the South African National Qualifications Framework (SANQF) be made meaningful through an integrated framework? This question deals with the scope and the architecture of the framework. Scope and architecture represent the intrinsic logic of a national qualifications framework. The ‘intrinsic logic’ of an integrated framework is discussed in 6.2. The third question, Can the development of communities of practice as a key element of an integrated framework, enhance trust amongst partners in education and training?, deals with the ‘institutional logic’² that has to be considered for any reform to have effect, particularly in relation to ‘policy breadth’³, that is ‘the extent to which the establishment of the framework is directly and explicitly linked with other measures to influence how the framework is used’. The institutional logic of the framework is dealt with in 6.3. This chapter concludes (6.4) with an analysis of the scope, architecture and the policy breadth of an integrated framework.

¹ Public Further Education and Training Institution, Gauteng, Cycle 1 interview, Annexure 1, p. 21

² Raffe, 2003, p. 242

³ Raffe, in SAQA, 2005, p. 33

6.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the ‘intrinsic logic’ and the concomitant ‘institutional logic’ (Raffe, 2003) of an integrated framework perceived to be important for the achievement of systemic coherence of the emerging education and training system in South Africa. The scope and architecture of an integrated framework is the intrinsic logic of such a framework, with scope referring to what is included, for example types of qualifications, the levels at which these qualifications are pitched and sites of learning. A comprehensive scope would include all of these. Architecture refers to the structure of the framework and the design of qualifications that are included on the framework which, in a comprehensive system, attempts to describe similarities in order to enable articulation and progression within the system. The institutional logic of a framework reflects the ways in which measures, including policies and funding, both within and outside of the framework, enable the formation of relationships in keeping with the structure of such a framework. Together scope, architecture and policy breadth reflect the systemic coherence of the system. Table 6.1 draws the relationship between Research Questions 2 and 3 and the conceptual framework for the study.

Table 6.1

The Relationship between Research Questions 2 and 3 and the Conceptual Framework

Main research question	
To what extent does the South African education and training system reflect in principle, perception and practice, the ideal of an integrated national qualifications framework?	
Supporting question	Conceptual framework
Can the relationships between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful through an integrated framework?	Integration as the scope of the SANQF and the architecture of the framework and of qualifications
Supporting question	Conceptual framework
Can the development of communities of practice enhance trust amongst partners in education and training?	Integration as policy breadth

Chapter 6 will thus show the relationship between the scope of the framework, the structure or architecture of the framework and of qualifications, and the extent to

which the intrinsic logic of the framework influences and impacts on the institutional logic of the system.

The data drawn upon for these findings emerge from the following sources:

- Unstructured interviews
- Interviews conducted for Cycle 1 of the NQF Impact Study
- Survey questionnaire data and supporting interviews for Cycle 2 of the NQF Impact Study
- Focus group responses for Cycle 2 of the NQF Impact Study
- Responses to ‘An Interdependent National Qualifications Framework System’
- A qualitative analysis of a sample of qualifications

As in Chapter 5, the unstructured interviews produced valuable data. Full transcripts of the interviews are available in Annexure 7. The questions asked of institutions in Cycle 1 (education and training providers), included 1.3) (a) *Has the implementation of the NQF facilitated the portability of NQF registered qualifications between institutions?* and 1.3) (b) *How portable are NQF registered qualifications between streams (vocational/professional and academic)?* A prompt, to elucidate these two questions, was also used where necessary, namely *Do qualifications articulate with each other intra- and inter-institutionally?* ‘Employer’ interviews asked 1.2) *How portable are NQF registered qualifications between streams (vocational/professional and academic)?* with a prompt *Are academic qualifications accepted in the workplace?*, where the term ‘portability’ seemed unfamiliar. The survey questionnaire and supporting interviews for Cycle 2 of the NQF Impact Study used statements, rather than questions, and respondents were asked to rate these statements on a six point scale (ranging from ‘Strongly disagree’ to ‘Too soon to say’). The relevant statements in the survey questionnaire in this regard are as follows:

2.2.5) *Recognition (credit transfer) is given for incomplete NQF qualifications when learners move from one institution to another*

2.5.1) *The NQF enables learners to move between academic qualifications and vocational qualifications*

2.5.3) *The NQF promotes/leads to greater cooperation between the formal education system and the world of work and training*

- 2.5.6) *South Africa has adopted a unified approach to education and training*
- 2.5.7) *The integration of education and training has improved career and learning pathing*
- 4.1.4) *NQF quality assurance ensure that qualifications are based on nationally agreed standards*
- 5.2.1) *The objectives of the NQF are aligned with the objectives of the National Human Resource Development (HRD) strategy*

The supporting interviews following on the completion of the survey questionnaire focused particularly on the extremes of the scale, for example, where a respondent indicated ‘Strongly disagree’, or ‘Strongly agree’ in terms of a statement. The reason was pragmatic – the survey questionnaire was long and very detailed (refer to Annexure 6) and, therefore, the interview focused on strong views of the respondent. Interview responses are captured in Annexure 1. In addition, a number of focus groups were conducted for both cycles of the NQF Impact Study. The focus groups that produced usable data include ‘Practitioners’ focus groups, where the questions 3.) *Are NQF qualifications portable across vocational, professional and academic streams?* and 5.) *Are NQF qualifications promoting greater cooperation between education and training agencies?*, were asked. In the ‘Learner’ focus group, questions asked attempted to take into consideration that learners will not necessarily have knowledge of technical terms in relation to the education and training system, and included questions such as 6.) *To what extent can you transfer credits from this institution/provider/learning site to other institutions/providers/learning sites without having to re-do large parts of the qualification?* The ‘Organised labour’ focus groups were dealt with along similar lines. As in Chapter 5, sector responses, including comments from all levels of the education and training system to ‘*An Interdependent National Qualifications Framework System*’, produced a rich source of data. The final data source included a qualitative analysis of sample of qualifications that was undertaken for Cycle 2 of the NQF Impact Study. This analysis focused particularly on the extent to which qualifications and their design not only facilitate progression and articulation within a sector, but also across sectors of education and training. This analysis is available in Annexure 3.

6.1.1 Emerging Themes

The emerging themes evident from the data in relation to the ‘intrinsic logic’, that is the scope and architecture of an integrated framework, include meaningful articulation and progression routes in the form of clear learning and career pathways, which are perceived to be the consequence and benefit of integrated qualification frameworks. Further, the relationships between different sectors of the system and parity of esteem between such sectors emerge. The design of qualifications, and the common characteristics within qualifications, in keeping with the prescribed structure of qualifications included on the framework, is seen to facilitate portability of learning across sectors. The design of qualifications is also a feature of the ‘intrinsic logic’ of the new system.

In relation to the ‘institutional logic’, or the policy breadth of an education and training system, the themes emerging most strongly are the perceived lack of legislative coherence that is meant to support the implementation of the South African National Qualifications Framework (SANQF); and the establishment of communities of practice and trust, which are reflected in the extent to which partnerships are formed, collaborative approaches to qualification design and quality assurance are developed, and joint planning is undertaken. The final theme deals with the emerging constraints to the development of meaningful links between the different sectors of the education and training system.

6.2 The Intrinsic Logic of an Integrated Framework

It is evident, from the findings in Chapter 5, that the South African National Qualifications Framework (SANQF) is underpinned by strong socio-political symbolism in relation to the ‘[subversion] of the hierarchies installed by the apartheid order’ (DoE & DoL, 2002, p. 12) and that the symbolic ‘break from the past’ has profoundly influenced the guiding philosophy of the framework. However, there is the acknowledgement that, if the system is approached ‘from a purely ideological [point of view] and you don’t understand the context within which you are implementing, what you are heading for, is disaster’ (Chief Executive Officer, CHE, Annexure 1, p. 24). This seems to suggest that symbolism is not enough, and that structural arrangements to enhance integration should follow in order for the envisaged changes to occur. The intrinsic logic of an integrated framework deals with

design features of the system. In South Africa, these include features such as agreed levels at which qualifications are placed, common criteria for qualifications design and a standards setting system, as well as an agreed quality assurance system. ‘Intrinsic logic’ is described by Tuck, Hart and Keevy (2004, p.8) as ‘design features, such as flexible pathways and the establishment of equivalences between different qualifications’. Thus, the scope of a framework influences the *reach* of the framework across the system (SAQA, 2005, p. 32):

The *scope* of an NQF refers to the education and training sectors included in the framework. While some NQFs mainly function in vocational education and Training (VET), most NQFs seek to eventually increase the scope by developing relationships between all categories of education and training.

In the conceptual framework, scope is seen to be the extent to which the system is ‘unified and comprehensive’ (see Chapter 3). The findings in this chapter seem to be more in keeping with such international practice, where the systemic coherence of the system and pragmatic considerations influencing the way the system is constructed, are more prominent (see Literature Review). From such a point of view, integration seems to mean unified and comprehensive (Figure 6.1).

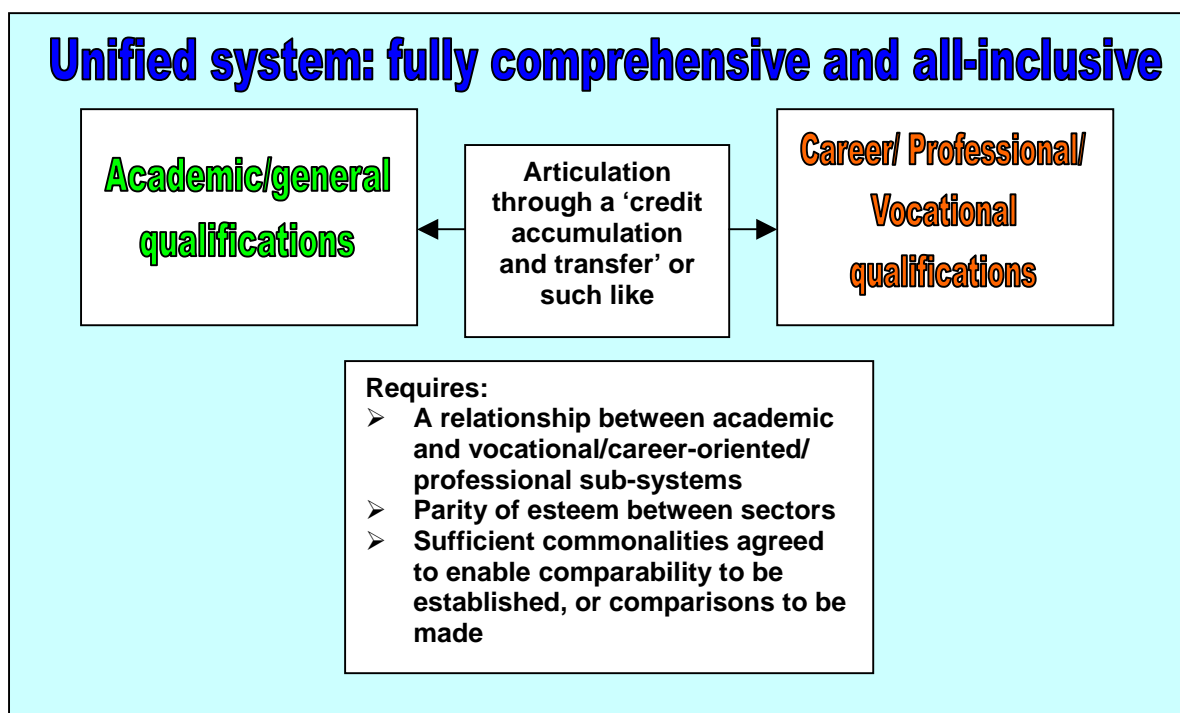


Figure 6.1. Integration as the Scope of the Framework

Hart (2005, p. 34) points out that a unified and comprehensive framework is most likely to achieve the aims of the NQF, but that such a framework would need more work in creating meaningful links:

In some countries, including South Africa and Scotland, the NQF is (or aims to be) fully comprehensive, taking in academic, general, vocational and workplace learning at all levels from basic literacy and numeracy through to post-graduate degrees and top professional qualifications. In others the scope of the NQF is restricted in some way – usually to particular provider sectors. This may mean that the NQF only covers either university education or vocational education and training, or it can mean that there are co-existing, but separate, NQFs for these sectors as in England and New Zealand. The more restricted the scope of the framework the easier it should be to create credit links, but the wider the scope and the more diverse the contents of the framework, the greater the need there may be to establish a [Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT)] system as a means of strengthening, and meeting the aims of, the NQF.

Apart from the socio-political imperatives of the SANQF as discussed in Chapter 5, the system seems to have been conceptualised in the acknowledgement that internationally ‘we are living in a world that needs to be joined up and so, by its very nature, if you think about things in a systemic manner, then you have to accept that ...you can’t draw neat boundaries [around elements of the system]’ (Executive Officer, SAQA, Annexure 1, p. 25). Integration then takes on the meaning that ‘the citizen has the whole system available to him’ (SAQA Board member, Annexure 1, p. 29), and that there are no ‘dead-ends’ (Executive Officer, SAQA, Annexure 1, p. 21):

The issue of no “dead-ends”, you know, that persons can pick up learning later in life...[that] because you had a bad start somewhere, it doesn’t mean that for the rest of your life you are going to be locked into a system that you can’t move.

This view seems to speak particularly to the structural possibilities of the SANQF (Blom, 2005), namely the possibilities of articulation and portability of credits attained for learning in different contexts and the recognition of such credits by different sub-sectors, that is the ability of learners to ‘transfer credits of qualifications or unit standards from one learning institution and/or employer to another’ (SAQA, 2001, p.9). One respondent spoke about a ‘credit matrix’, based on commonly agreed standards that will make the value and equivalence of learning across contexts more explicit (Public Higher Education Institution, Annexure 1, p. 33): ‘We need to have a credit matrix that is formalised and managed outside the institution’s autonomy’.

It is evident from the quantitative responses that there is support for a ‘unified’ approach. Figure 6.2 reflects the responses to the statement ‘South Africa has adopted a *unified approach* to education and training’. More than two thirds of the respondents agree, or strongly agree, that the education and training system is moving towards a unified approach.

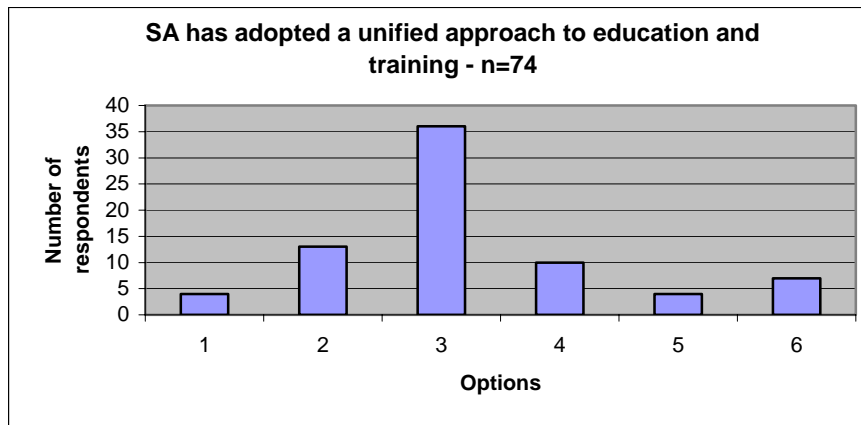


Figure 6.2. A Unified Approach

Key: Option 1: Strongly disagree Option 4: Strongly agree
 Option 2: Disagree Option 5: Don't know
 Option 3: Agree Option 6: Too soon to say

However, it is also evident that much of this support is still at a symbolic level: ‘[I]t is only rhetoric...if there hadn't been this resistance, this divide between education and labour, [then] more of the population would have seen the NQF in action’ (SAQA board member, Annexure 1, p. 22). Nevertheless, the intention with integration was to find a ‘common currency in learning’, by placing ‘all qualifications...on one framework and [finding] ways in which they work together’ (Executive Officer, SAQA, Annexure 1, p. 30). In principle, integration would then allow the kind of structural relationships between qualifications offered in sub-sectors of the system and the progression routes that are made possible through such relationships, to take place.

In some sectors, it seems as if the structure of the framework is indeed enhancing such structural relationships. One of the Education and Training Quality Assurance (ETQA) bodies, for example, indicated that the structure of the framework has facilitated the development of progression routes, including the professional registration of candidates, in their field of learning (Annexure 1, p. 31):

Our [Standards Generating Body (SGB)] has set up a framework of qualifications that flow one into the other, certificate to two year diploma...and then as a professional board we have adjusted our professional registration...to the NQF'

In this case, the intrinsic logic of the framework is 'making [integration] practical' (SAQA board member, Annexure 1, p. 28).

Again, the respondents to the survey questionnaire (Annexure 2) supported this view of the framework. More than half of the respondents agreed, or strongly agreed that learners are able to move between vocational, professional and academic streams (see Figure 6.3). However, as in the ETQA example above, this may be possible only within a particular family of qualifications, or within a broad field of learning. This may account for the number of respondents who disagree, and strongly disagree, (11% of the respondents) or who did not know, or who felt that it is too soon to say, whether such mobility is possible (35%) (Figure 6.3).

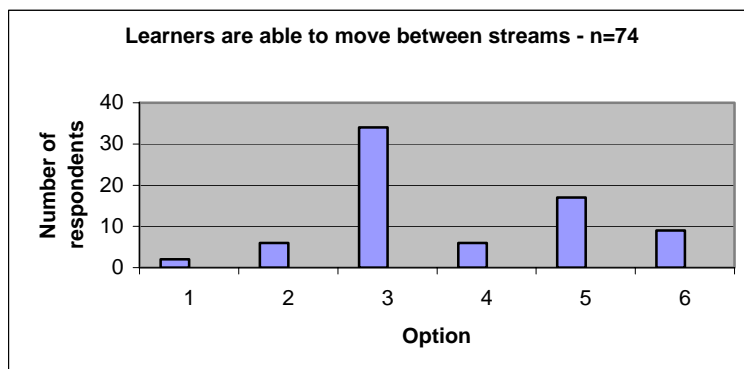


Figure 6.3. Learners are able to move between Vocational, Professional and Academic Streams of the Education and Training system

Key: Option 1: Strongly disagree Option 4: Strongly agree
Option 2: Disagree Option 5: Don't know
Option 3: Agree Option 6: Too soon to say

Likewise, in terms of credit transfer between institutions and contexts, the respondents strongly supported the principle of credit transfer (Figure 6.4) and agree with the Council on Higher Education (CHE) that (Annexure 4, p. 20)

[it]t should be possible for learners to gain qualifications (and even degrees) by completing parts (accumulated in the form of credit) over different lengths of time and combining them in different ways rather than

necessarily being tied to specific sequential programmes over a particular time.

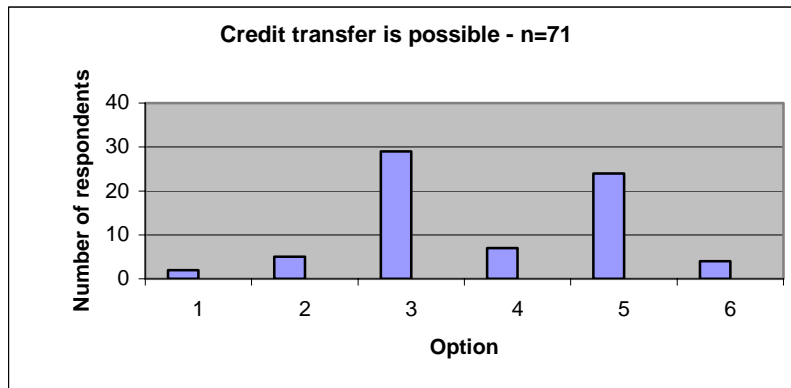


Figure 6.4. Recognition (Credit Transfer) is given for Incomplete Qualifications when Learners move from one Institution to another

Key: Option 1: Strongly disagree Option 4: Strongly agree
 Option 2: Disagree Option 5: Don't know
 Option 3: Agree Option 6: Too soon to say

However, while more than half of the respondents agreed, or strongly agreed that credit transfer is possible, more than a third of the remaining respondents indicated that they did not know whether this is the case (Figure 6.5). Ensor, (2003, p. 328) notes that, in South Africa, the NQF promised to be 'a radical credit accumulation and transfer system, [and] promised to accredit workers for accumulated proficiency', but this seems to be only an indication that the principle is supported and that in a substantial number of cases, this is not yet practice. The 'common currency' mentioned by the Executive Officer of SAQA (Annexure 1, p. 30) does not yet seem to be established. This has implications for the relationships between different sectors of the education and training system and the parity of esteem of such sectors. An analysis of some of the categories of respondents (for example, the departmental responses to the survey questionnaire – see Figure 6.5) in relation to credit transfer, confirms this view.

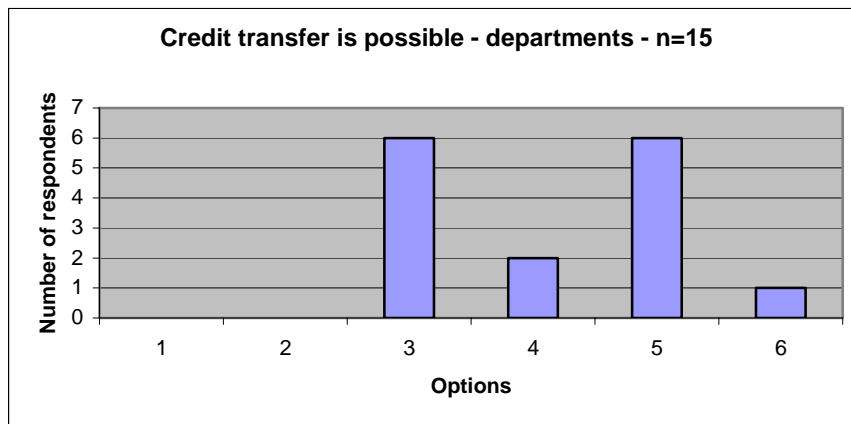


Figure 6.5. Departmental Response - Recognition (Credit Transfer) is given for Incomplete Qualifications when Learners move from one Institution to another

Key: Option 1: Strongly disagree Option 4: Strongly agree
 Option 2: Disagree Option 5: Don't know
 Option 3: Agree Option 6: Too soon to say

While the departmental respondents did not disagree, an equal number of respondents 'agreed' and indicated that they 'did not know'. An important reason for this seems to be the lack of parity of esteem between institutions offering education and training. In addition, the structural arrangements that would enable articulation and credit transfer, are not seen to be available yet, except within particular sub-sectors of the system.

6.2.1 Parity of Esteem

In response to the statement: 'qualifications facilitate mobility between vocational, professional and academic streams and between institutions', a number of interviewees strongly disagreed, in contrast with the quantitative data (Figure 6.3).

This is borne out by comments emerging from the supporting interviews, for example: (Public Higher Education Institution, Annexure 1, p. 33):

Strongly disagree. If you talk with the guys from the university, they have little knowledge about their qualifications, and they will not accept the technikon qualification, so I don't think there is enough mobility in the system yet. I hope it's [not] going to take a long time. Implementing it is a problem.

Many interviewees place the blame on institutions that 'do not apply the principle' (Public Higher Education Institution, Annexure 1, p. 37). Again, it seems that the ability to move between different sectors is still at a conceptual level: '...[L]et's say

from governments side that's the plan, but I'm not sure that institutions really implement this at the moment or know how to implement this at the moment' (Private Further Education and Training Institution, Annexure 1, p. 21).

The feeling seems to be that despite the fact that all qualifications have been registered on the framework, that is that the scope of the framework covers all sectors and levels of education and training, there is confusion about the status of qualifications (SAQA Board Member, Annexure 1, p. 15) and that 'it is still a problem of public versus private sector....[T]he public sector is reluctant to allow us into the system even though those programs are registered and accredited, there is still a problem' (Private, HET, Annexure 1, p. 32). Further, there seems to be lack of parity even between public institutions, for example (Public HET institution, Annexure 1, p. 33): 'We are stuck because institutions have not demonstrated willingness to recognize this. The issue of equivalence of institutions and the power play between the institutions is a disadvantage to learners'.

It therefore seems that the lack of parity is inhibiting the extent to which credits can be transferred between institutions. While the principle is well accepted, practice does not yet seem to produce evidence of improved portability. However, it is evident that the lack of portability is not only due to the unequal status of institutions, but that it is also a result of practices that still reflect the previous system (Public HET, Annexure 1, p. 31):

We do try but the system does not allow portability, they only allow traditional portability. If people enquire about qualifications from other institutions I firstly ensure that they are on the web [the SAQA web-based database] and try and find equivalence with what we are doing and what they are doing. We have extra-curricular courses [to assist students to access our courses] and we would like that to be [the] curriculum. When the new [CHE/HEQC] policy [came] out, [we] sent [our courses] in for accreditation as certificates...and it came back, not accredited. They told us to keep it as an extra-curricular course. But there is no safety in that for the students. That will not be a portable qualification, and we must manoeuvre our way into other institutions, that is unacceptable.

A recent report, entitled *Credit Accumulation and Transfer in the context of the South African National Qualifications Framework* (SAQA, 2006, p. 49), confirms the

‘continuing limitations of portability of qualifications between universities’, for example:

- The 50% residency clause [a regulation from the previous system dealing with credit transfer between public higher education institutions] that inhibited transfer of credits between institutions for more than 50% of credits already attained at the first institution.
- Modular versus semester systems
- Differences in syllabus content or length of study

The limitations above start to hint at the many possible reason for the difficulties in building articulation routes, one of which seems to be located within the design of qualifications.

6.2.2 *The Design of Qualifications*

In keeping with the intrinsic logic of an integrated framework, the design features of qualifications are meant to enhance articulation between different learning contexts in that they are intended to have sufficient commonalities across qualifications that will make it possible for students to move horizontally, vertically and diagonally amongst different learning contexts of the system. To enable such mobility, the architecture of the qualifications should describe and define common aspects that will aid articulation across different learning contexts. This is expressed in the degree of prescriptiveness and ‘the stringency of the criteria which qualifications have to satisfy in order to be included’ on the framework (Raffe, 2003, in Tuck et al., 2004, p. 5). In South Africa, two broad types of qualifications are registered on the framework: unit-standard based qualifications and non-unit standard based qualifications⁴. The former are usually associated with sector occupationally directed qualifications, while the latter include qualifications offered at (mostly) public institutions, including vocational further education and training and higher education institutions. These two types of qualification have been the subject of much debate but, according to *An Interdependent National Qualifications Framework System: Consultative Document* (DoE & DoL, 2003, p. 21),

...the debate over unit standards-based qualifications and whole [non-unit standard based] qualifications should now be laid to rest. Attention should

⁴ Unit standards-based qualifications are made up of a specific grouping of unit standards according to specific rules of combination. Each unit standard specifies outcomes and assessment criteria, while non-unit standards-based (or whole) qualifications specify only exit level outcomes and are not made up of distinct unit standards, but rather of subjects or modules.

focus on the complex process of establishing a functional credit accumulation and transfer (CAT) scheme, without which the NQF objective of facilitating “access to, and mobility and progression within education, training and career paths” will be indefinitely delayed.

In an analysis of a sample of qualifications currently registered on the framework, it became evident that, while some sets of qualifications simply ‘made some token effort at addressing portability and transferability (often by including or paraphrasing the relevant sections from the SAQA Act) or misinterpreted the meaning...’ (Annexure 3, p. 1), other qualifications have been deliberately designed to enhance portability and articulation:

Qualifications that have seriously attempted to provide details of portability by specifying precise articulation possibilities and career path options [include] National Certificate: Supervision of Water Reticulation Operations, Waste Water Operations; General Education and Training Certificate: Conservation; National Certificate: Hygiene and Cleaning; and the National Certificate: Motor Sales and Support Services.

However, as noted earlier, it is evident that portability and articulation often seem to be within a particular ‘family’ of qualifications, with progression routes possible across ‘similar trades’ (Annexure 3, p. 1):

The [National Certificate: Supervision of Water Reticulation Operations] allows for both vertical and horizontal portability. Vertical portability is illustrated with the introduction of National Certificate in Water Reticulation on NQF level 4; the learner may pass from a National Certificate in Water Reticulation on NQF level 2 and progress to supervising water reticulation projects operating under a foreman or engineer. The qualification also allows access to a foreman level qualification on NQF level 5. It allows for mobility across similar trades – learners may study towards management certificates or diplomas in the sector or other sector on NQF level 5 or 6. The qualification provides clear guidelines of learner portability.

In addition, these qualifications and the progression routes described by them, for example, are all ‘unit-standard based’ qualifications and it is doubtful that such qualifications could articulate directly with ‘non-unit standard based qualifications’. The systemic arrangements to achieve such routes are seen to be neglected by the authorities responsible for systemic coherence. One interviewee noted, for example, that (Annexure 1, p. 34)

...there are problems. We are talking about fundamental aspects of qualifications. Fundamentals [i.e. language and communication,

mathematics and mathematical literacy and computer literacy] are supposed to be the most portable. Fundamentals and outcomes-based education were the mechanisms for the integration, portability, transferability and progression of staff. SAQA, DoE and DoL are not engaging sufficiently on what to do about this.

In this regard, the *Consultative Document* (DoE & DoL, 2003, p. 21) points out that

[i]t is true that all learning is not portable, that unit standards and qualifications are not automatically transferable...and that moving between one learning context and another requires the adaptation of skills and the integration of new knowledge. It is also the case that qualifications designers and learning institutions will be challenged to avoid monolithic courses that create barriers to portability.

Ironically, in the *Consultative Document* (DoE & DoL, 2003) a ‘separationist’ approach is what is seen to be proposed for the new shape of the SANQF: ‘The proposed structure would create another three silos. The objective of achieving portability is being undermined by the silo mentality (SACP, Annexure 4, p. 20). The Financial and Accounting Services Sector Education and Training Authority (FASSET) (Annexure 4, p. 21) agrees and maintains ‘This [the three tracks] does not represent the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) principles of mobility and articulation’. The Insurance Sector Education and Training Authority (INSETA) (Annexure 4, p. 21) suggests that the three proposed pathways, therefore, ‘reinforce the problems with articulation that there were in the past’.

Thus, it seems to be important that ‘we have to build the bridges in a very explicit way to achieve integration’ (SAQA Board member, Annexure 1, p. 28) because ‘reducing unnecessary differences between whole qualifications and those based on unit standards will also aid articulation and thus benefit learners’ (DoE & DoL, 2003, p. 20). The CHE/HEQC (Annexure 4, p. 21) agrees and notes that ‘it depends on design issues and how far the unit-standard model is retained for the different types of qualification’.

One of the ways in which to build such bridges, according to the Committee of Technikon Principals (CTP) (now part of Higher Education South Africa), is to build in ‘foundation programmes’ (Annexure 4, p. 21):

The establishment of foundation programmes would enable learners to pick up the theoretical, discipline knowledge for entry into [Higher

Education] learning. In this way public institutions create entry to learning pathways that lead to progression and qualifications.

However, it is evident that this will have to be a deliberate attempt and that the intrinsic logic of the integrated framework will have to be taken to a level of detail that is not yet possible through the statement that the principle of articulation enables ‘learners, on successful completion of accredited prerequisites, to move between components of the delivery system’ (SAQA, 2001, p. 10).

Where such deliberate work has been undertaken within the engineering sector, it seems that it is possible to achieve meaningful articulation between different types and sites of learning, for example (Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA), Annexure 4, p. 21),

...a preliminary study shows that it may be possible to produce a unit-standards based EXIT LEVEL standard for a qualification that is substantially, but not exactly, equivalent to the whole qualification version. We advocate an approach to promoting articulation and progression in the professions in which clear standards (either exit level or unit standard) are defined at a limited number of stages. For example, we are working toward whole qualifications and substantially equivalent unit standards at Stage 1, namely the exit levels of the National Diploma and BTech in Engineering disciplines and the BEng. Similarly, we are in the process of developing unit standards at the level of competence required for registration in the categories of Engineer, Engineering Technologist and Engineering Technician. We would also wish to be able to reference suitable unit standards in Mathematics, Physical Science and Languages at Level 4 that would give the benchmark of preparedness for higher education studies in engineering. *With these three sets of standards, providers would be in a better position to develop pathways for progression of learners* (emphasis added).

This is confirmed by other sectors in that ‘qualification matrices’ for their sectors are planned to aid articulation and progression, for example (Public Higher Education Institution, Annexure 1, p. 29): ‘[T]his is what the qualifications matrix is beginning to address...because in our context we have an exciting market niche...’.

The quantitative data confirm that learning and career paths are seen to be improved where deliberate work is undertaken to clarify articulation and progression routes. However, it should be noted that the survey questionnaire did not seek to investigate the extent to which articulation across different contexts takes place, only the general

principle, and in this regard, more than two thirds of the respondents (67%) agreed that learning and career paths have improved as a result of the integrated approach to education and training (Figure 6.6).

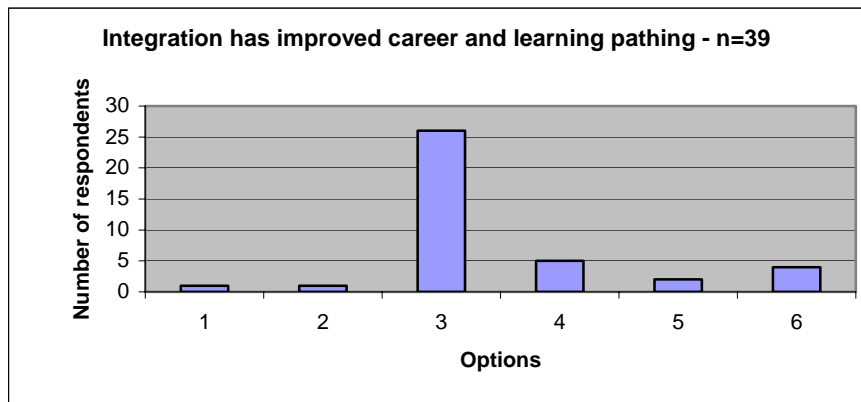


Fig. 6.6. Integration has Improved Career and Learning Pathing

Key: Option 1: Strongly disagree Option 4: Strongly agree
 Option 2: Disagree Option 5: Don't know
 Option 3: Agree Option 6: Too soon to say

For that reason, FASSET and other commentators are opposed to the concept that education and training tracks should be separated into three (Annexure 4, p. 21): 'In the interests of the learner, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to navigate his way through a learning pathway vertically and horizontally across the three grids'. FASSET further acknowledges that, while there is a 'difference between education, with a subject philosophy, and training, that is driven by a job delivery philosophy', it considers it important that in the professions, clear articulation pathways should be established, as 'professional qualifications will straddle across two/three grids'. In their view, the *Consultative Document* proposals (DoE & DoL, 2003) do not appear to have satisfactorily addressed articulation and transferability issues.

A private further and higher education institution agrees and notes that 'the ability to progress within a different path is important for the development of the individual and to promote the concept of life long learning' (Annexure 4, p. 22).

It is evident that, while most respondents to the survey questionnaire, people interviewed and commentators agree that 'flexible pathways and the establishment of equivalences between different qualifications' (Tuck, *et al*, 2004, p.8) could be an

important benefit of an integrated framework, they have not yet occurred in a systemic way, except in particular sub-sectors. Thus, while the intrinsic logic of an integrated framework suggests that seamless progression between different contexts will be enabled, the evidence shows that this is taking place only to a limited extent. More than the design of qualifications seems to be needed for this principle to become a practical solution to the lack of articulation and progression routes through the system.

6.2.3 *Conclusions – The Intrinsic Logic of an Integrated Framework*

A comprehensive and unified framework, representing the scope of an integrated framework, can undoubtedly enhance articulation, progression and mobility of learners across different contexts of the education and training system. In making the whole system available to learners from different learning contexts, and in finding ways in which qualifications from within such contexts relate to one another, in theory, it is possible to enable seamless progression. However, it is evident that while there is much support for these principles, from both the quantitative, as well as qualitative data, such articulation and progression routes seem to be limited to ‘sub-frameworks’, or ‘frameworks within frameworks’. The ability to transfer credits from the opposite ends of education and training still seems to be constrained. In part, the perceived lack of parity between institutions seems to be to blame. It is clear that public institutions amongst themselves are not viewed as equally good, nor are private institutions seen to be on par with public institutions. Also, the status of qualifications offered in different contexts, for example in public discipline-based institutions and in private, occupationally based institutions, is not seen to be equal, despite the fact that such qualifications are all placed, at the same level, on an integrated framework. Further, the different types of qualifications, namely unit-standard based and non-unit standard based qualifications, seem to add to the difficulty to determine equivalence or, at least, comparability between such qualifications. In addition, the fact that old structures are still in place, such as regulations dealing with credit transfer between public higher education institutions (the 50% residency clause) that were a feature of the pre-NQF system, further inhibits credit transfer, even if there had been willingness to facilitate transfer. Likewise, the ‘level of prescription’ in relation to qualifications design has not yet, to any great degree, facilitated articulation, except where deliberate attempts were made to conceptualise the progression routes holistically and

within a particular sub-framework. The architecture of qualifications, as a particular perspective on integration, is thus not enabling mobility of learners much outside of the specific sector within they find themselves. This seems to suggest that unless the intrinsic logic, and the design features of an integrated framework, including common levels, qualifications design and standards setting structures, are supported by other measures, integration will not be achieved. The CHE/HEQC (Annexure 4, p. 23) captures this as follows:

The creation of a qualifications framework cannot on its own bring about fundamental change in education and training provision and practices. Ultimately, it is the concerted effort and deliberate building of the capabilities and capacities of providers through the support of government and other agencies and through institutional initiatives in the areas of curriculum, learning, teaching and personnel expertise that are the crucial levers of fundamental transformation.

6.3 Institutional Logic

The discussion of the intrinsic logic of an integrated framework in the previous section suggests that the design of a framework is not sufficient to ensure the kind of change envisaged for the education and training system. The CHE/HEQC, (Annexure 4, p. 23) notes that ‘the NQF is a *major* vehicle for the transformation of education and training. However, the NQF is not the sole mechanism for transforming education and training and for realising various social purposes and goals’. The SACP agrees and says that ‘so many factors influence the human resource development that is taking place. The NQF is not the only factor. Specific programmes and projects bring about real progress. More emphasis is needed on implementation’ (Annexure 4, p. 23). Raffe, (2003, p. 243) therefore maintains that ‘a qualifications framework may be ineffective if it is not complemented by measures to reform the surrounding institutional logic’. Institutional logic, according to him, deals with

...the opportunities, incentives and constraints arising from such factors as the policies of educational institutions (in their roles as providers and selectors), funding and regulatory requirements, timetabling and resource constraints, the relative status of different fields of study and the influence of the labour market and the social structure.

However, in South Africa, institutional logic includes more than the arrangements at the level of the provider as ‘complementary measures’ to reform the system. The SANQF is, quite explicitly, seen as one of the elements in an overall national strategy

to enhance human resources and to support skills development. In the conceptual framework for this study (Chapter 3), the interdependence between the different elements of education and training, human resource development and skills development, are presented in Figure 6.7.

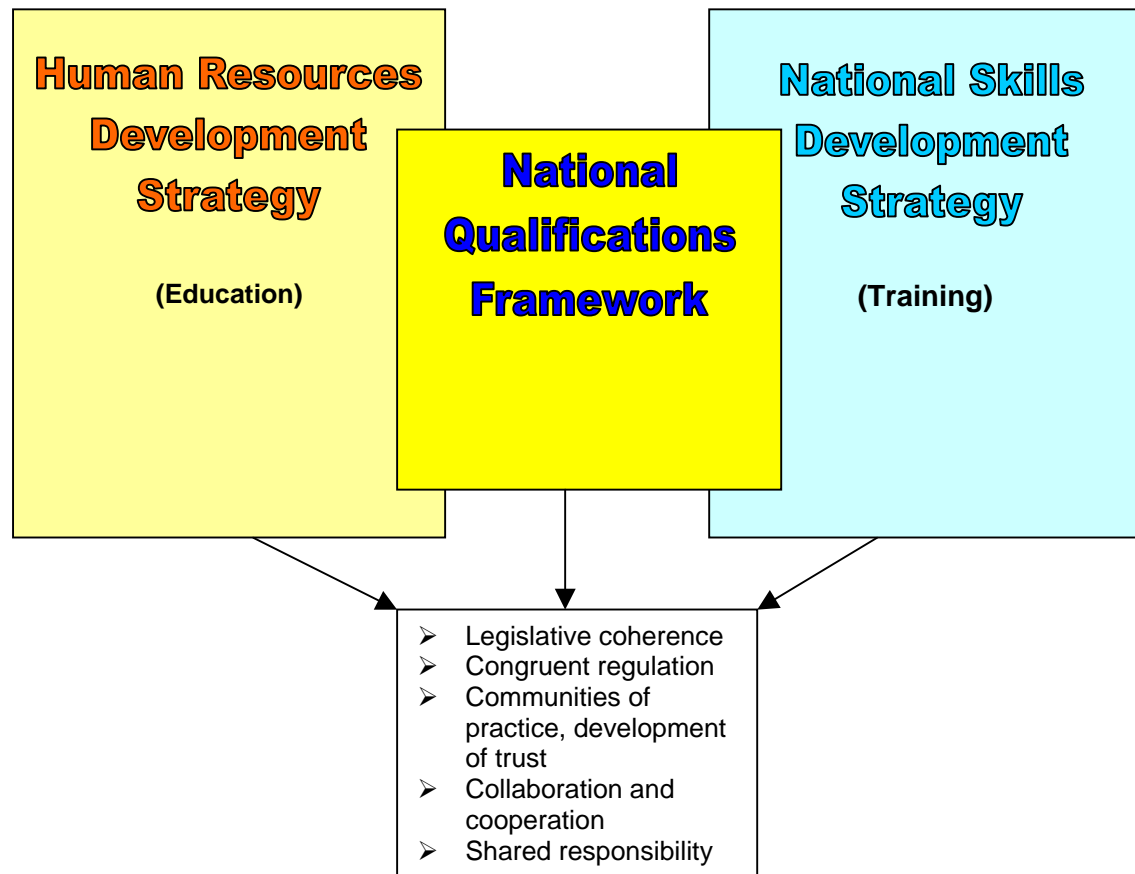


Figure 6.7: Integration as Policy Breadth

The departments, for example, in talking about ‘education’ on the one hand, representing the Human Resource Development (HRD) strategy and ‘training’, representing the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS), on the other, maintain that (DoE & DoL, 2003, p. 7)

[t]hey are in fact not opposites but equally essential facets of the same national learning system. The National Qualifications Framework is a vital mechanism for holding the tension between them and bringing out the complementarity and mutually reinforcing attributes of institutional and workplace learning.

Thus, in theory, the legislation, policy and regulation that govern the relationship between these different aspects of the human resource and skills development strategies for the country should be coherent and congruent, while policies should stretch across possible divides, that is they suggest the need for ‘policy breadth’. However, many respondents and commentators seem to feel that this is not the case, partly because the political heads of the system are not seen to be taking on their responsibility to ensure coherence and congruence.

6.3.1 Political Leadership and Policy Alignment to achieve ‘Policy Breadth’

Political leadership, seen to be necessary to enhance the ‘complementarity’ of the three legs of the strategy, is perceived to be lacking. A private further and higher education institution, in their response to the proposals contained in the *Consultative Document* (DoE & DoL, 2003), notes that ‘this integrated approach by the Department of Education and Department of Labour has many merits. Joint responsibility for this function is admirable, [but] is it realistic and “doable”?’ (Annexure 4, p. 23). The CHE/HEQC, in *their* response maintain that ‘despite many references to the importance of collaboration [between the departments] this “divided ownership” [of the SANQF] creates a number of problems’ (Annexure 4, p. 23). The result seems to be a sense of policy misalignment: ‘[W]e found the lack of alignment of national policy regarding education and training an obstacle’ (CTP, Annexure 4, p. 23). Further, the proposed changes to the SANQF mooted in the *Consultative Document* (DoE & DoL, 2003) do not seem to take current legislation, in the skills development leg of the system, into account: ‘[I]t is not clear how the following structural changes will impact on the skills development legislation’ (FASSET, Annexure 4, p. 23). SAQA, in its response to another set of proposals emanating from the national Department of Education, captures the sense of ‘policy uncertainty’ as follows:

Within the context of the commitment to the objectives of the NQF and the legislative framework provided by the SAQA Act of 1995, SAQA finds itself precariously positioned – on the one hand SAQA is obliged to comment on the draft HEQF policy, and while most willing to do so to ensure improved NQF development and implementation, it is on the other hand severely compromised in that the draft HEQF policy appears to ignore much of the current legislative framework, most notably the SAQA Act (Act 58 of 1995) and the Skills Development Act (Act 97 of 1998). This is most evident in the re-assignment of roles and responsibilities of SAQA and existing Education and Training Quality Assurance bodies (ETQAs) other than the

Council on Higher Education and its Higher Education Quality Committee. The draft HEQF policy presupposes extensive amendments to the current legislation as mooted in the *Consultative Document* (DoE and DoL, 2003), even though the outcome of that process is still undetermined (2004, p. 8).

The CHE/HEQC agrees that the lack of alignment of key policies that are meant to govern the human resource strategy in South Africa ‘requires policy continuity’, but that the higher education sector has to constantly ‘cope with policy unpredictability’, which is leading to ‘considerable stress, strain and anxiety within national quality assurance agencies and providers’ (Annexure 4, p. 24).

Further, SADTU notes that the ‘legislations with different mandates undermines integration’, (Annexure 4, p. 24) and thus inhibit coordination across jurisdictions. SAUVCA agrees and maintains that ‘policy alignment is a necessary condition for successful implementation within each sector or system’ (Annexure 4, p. 24):

This policy is necessary for the effective implementation of the NQF in terms of the development of a qualifications map, qualification design features, standards setting, quality assurance, and indeed, the design and implementation of flexible access routes.

Thus, implementing bodies are finding it difficult to conceptualise what needs to be done to achieve an integrated framework because, at a political level, there seems to be limited congruence between the departments’ legislation and regulation. The policy breadth, which intended to enhance integration across different sectors of the education and training system, is not seen to be achieved.

Nevertheless, the quantitative responses to the survey questionnaire statement, ‘the objectives of the NQF are aligned with the objectives of the National *Human Resource Development* (HRD) strategy’, are almost overwhelmingly positive (Figure 6.8).

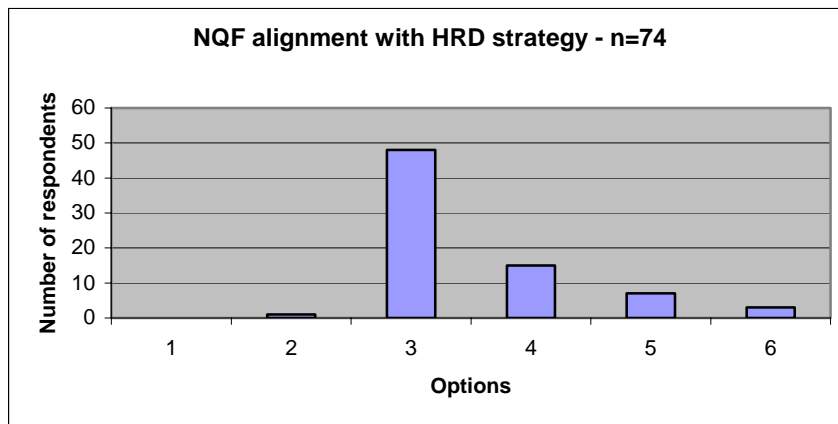


Fig. 6.8. The Objectives of the NQF are Aligned with the Objectives of the HRD Strategy

Key: Option 1: Strongly disagree Option 4: Strongly agree
 Option 2: Disagree Option 5: Don't know
 Option 3: Agree Option 6: Too soon to say

Again, this seems to be more of an expression of the hopes and aspirations for the system, rather than actual practice. The political impasse is seen to inhibit the coordination, cooperation and partnerships between the different sectors of the system: 'It became clear that there were serious disagreements between the two custodians of the NQF, the Department of Labour and the Department of Education' (SACP, Annexure 4, p. 24), not least in the incongruence of legislation and regulation, to the extent that this may 'require amending the legislation' (National Skills Authority (NSA), Annexure 4, p. 24) to better reflect the mandate of different bodies in the system. The CHE/HEQC (Annexure 4, p. 24) suggests that the lack of clarity 'increases the possibility of bureaucratic "turf-wars" and jurisdictional ambiguities that will undermine the implementation of the objectives of the NQF and the HRD strategies' and that 'this further undermines the collaboration required between workplace-based and institution-based models of learning' (COSATU, Annexure 4, p. 25). Importantly, it seems to undermine the formation of communities of practice within which the necessary work can be undertaken.

6.3.2 *Communities of Practice*

The notion of 'communities of practice' has become influential within debates in education over the last fifteen years (Parker, 2006), and is defined as '...a set of relations among persons, activity and world, over time and in relation with other

tangential and overlapping communities of practice' (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 98). In the South African context communities of practice have also been interpreted as 'communities of trust' where 'it is highly desirable to create communities of trust both within learning sectors and across the two worlds of workplace learning and institutional learning' (DoE & DoL, 2003, p. 27). However, as French (2005, p. 55) points out, 'the NQF was created in a context in which there was no trust between the proponents of the new order and the providers of the old order'. He maintains that

[t]he main reason for the decision for an integrated framework was the belief that the segregated institutions and processes of education provision in South Africa were for the most part centres of privilege or exclusion, were backward and corrupt, and were scarcely worthy of notice.

The new system thus has to enable the development of *new* communities of practice or trust. The involvement of 'stakeholders' at every level, and in every aspect of the education and training system, seems to have been an intrinsic logic applied to the development of such communities: in a common standards setting process; common qualifications design and in quality assurance. The SACP argues that 'the NQF and its structures were founded on stakeholder participation and involvement – in standards and qualifications development and registration, in workplace implementation, in [Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs)] and in monitoring and evaluation' (Annexure 4, p. 25). The logic seems to be that stakeholders, in representing the intended beneficiaries of the system, would become the new communities of practice, and the mechanism to develop such communities is an agreed quality assured framework that uses commonly agreed standards.

The quantitative data, in response to the survey questionnaire statement, 'NQF quality assurance practices ensure that qualifications are based on nationally agreed standards', shows a high degree of agreement in this regard (Figure 6.9).

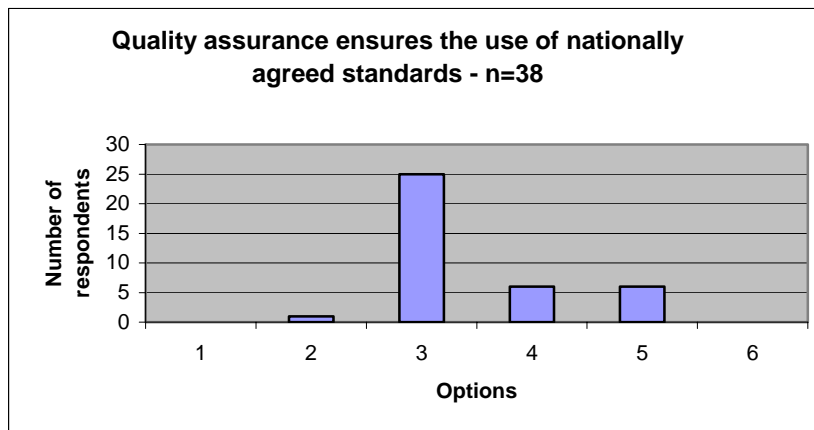


Fig. 6.9. Quality Assurance and Nationally Agreed Standards

Key: Option 1: Strongly disagree Option 4: Strongly agree
 Option 2: Disagree Option 5: Don't know
 Option 3: Agree Option 6: Too soon to say

Over two thirds of the respondents felt that quality assurance measures enhance the use of agreed standards. Theoretically, in terms of the intrinsic logic of an integrated framework, quality assurance will ensure that learning is considered equivalent, regardless of where such learning is acquired, if commonly agreed standards are used for qualifications. The interviewees largely agree. A SAQA board member, for example, indicates that the design of qualifications and the level descriptors were meant to enhance parity of esteem, and that 'it's only when these things talk to one another and when they are compared and quality assured and delivered with that in mind that you have integration' (Annexure 1, p. 30). A public higher education institution captures the perceived advantages of a common standards setting system as follows (Annexure 1, p. 34):

[The] principles of [outcomes-based education are that] if you have unit standards in management, [they] should apply wherever management is needed, [for example] you need a generic introduction to management, in terms of production management, environmental management, etc.

It is, therefore, evident that common standards are seen to assist with mobility: '...[I]n terms of outcomes, both specific outcomes, or exit level outcomes or qualifications, I think there is portability and mobility where students can move fairly freely between institutions' (Public higher education institution, Annexure 1, p. 35). An Education and Training Quality Assurance body also agrees and notes that the 'NQF is based on the same unit standards. So, there is no reason why I could say [my qualification] is

more portable than yours if [they are] based on the same unit standards' (Annexure 1, p. 35). Such standards are being developed by 'stakeholders', representing constituencies who will benefit from standards and qualifications. In a sense, the standards generation bodies are new communities of practice, and the stakeholder principle seems to be strongly supported: '...[T]he importance of stakeholder participation in the conceptual stage of standard generation cannot be over-emphasised...[and]...we recommend that all stakeholders be accorded the same status and role, in order to avoid the dominance of one stakeholder at the expense of others' (COSATU, Annexure 4, p. 25). Also, it is by no means only organised labour organisations that support a stakeholder approach. The CTP says '...we support the importance of interdependent stakeholders participating in the process of generating standards' (Annexure 4, p. 26). Likewise, institutions support commonly agreed standards, for example (Private further and higher education institution, Annexure 4, p. 26): 'Much awareness has been built around the generation and development of commonly agreed upon, internationally benchmarked standards'. However, the higher education community notes that 'national prescription, standardisation and regulation should happen only at the most generic levels' (Annexure 4, p. 26) as a possible mechanism to overcome the difficulties in achieving articulation between the two main types of qualifications, namely unit-standards based and non-unit standards based qualifications (refer to earlier discussion).

Nevertheless, 'the establishment of workable articulation mechanisms is crucial' and 'will depend on partnerships and "communities of trust" being built and strengthened between providers from different sites, contexts and learning domains' (SAUVCA, Annexure 4, p. 26). Such communities of trust hinge, to a large extent, on quality assurance processes in the different sectors of education and training. An Education and Training Quality Assurance body (ETQA), for example, noted that even if providers do not interact directly, the quality assurance process in that sector is engendering trust (Annexure 1, p. 36):

They still don't speak to one another, they still don't exchange information, they still don't assist one another, but the learner just slots into the system...because we [the ETQA] capture the individual's formative assessment...they [have assessed] that she is competent, the moderator is present, and the institution is accredited...they don't even query it with us.

Another ETQA agrees and indicates that agreed standards and quality assurance enhance portability (Annexure 1, p. 43): ‘If we have not had insight into the qualification, into the quality assurance, we will not certify, certificate or acknowledge, because we don’t know what is going on’. A private higher education institution considers quality assurance as the assurance of a minimum standard, which, in their view means that other providers are trustworthy (Annexure 1, p. 43): ‘The role of quality assurance is to see that the programmes developed meet the minimum requirements for accreditation and they are registered with SAQA and they meet the NQF requirements’. Agreed quality criteria used across education and training systems are therefore also seen to enhance the development of communities of practice: ‘...[A]ccreditation is based on criteria ensuring that all systems and processes are in place to ensure quality of training and assessment throughout the process’ and therefore ‘quality assurance is seen as a benchmark whereby trust in other institutions’ systems and processes could be developed’ (SAQA, Annexure 1, p. 42). A public Higher Education Institution (Annexure 1, p. 42) supports this view and maintains that

...it is a much needed system to have [a] registered qualification that is quality assured. It is a useful reference and for the security of the student as well. It is useful for providers to ensure that it is at the correct level and that the qualification [is] part of the SA system.

Agreed quality criteria are thus seen to be important, as ‘different sets of quality standards or criteria...[create] inconsistencies in quality’ (FASSET, Annexure 4, p. 22). However, despite agreed quality criteria, these are still not considered sufficient because ‘other bodies, which adopt a different approach to quality assurance, are perceived to be less rigorous’ (INSETA, Annexure 4, p. 26). A SAQA board member voiced the frustration that seems to become more evident throughout the system: ‘...[I]f we could find quality assurance processes where there is trust...for me the crucial thing is about mutual trust, about one another’s quality assurance processes...’(Annexure 1, p. 43).

Agreed standards and agreed quality criteria, therefore, still seem to be in the realm of the intrinsic logic of an integrated framework. Standards and quality assurance measures are applied differently in differing contexts, particularly in relation to the

two types of qualification discussed earlier, and in the quality assurance measures utilised by the different quality assurance bodies.

The NSA (Annexure 4, p. 27) says that there should be other incentives for building communities of practice, such as ‘a direct exchange of information between SETAs and relevant faculty-based clusters of training institutions’. Such partnerships ‘could inform new funding arrangements’ in order to ‘develop networks of employers for workplace experience, internships, etc.’. This hints at the notion of ‘policy breadth’: not only should legislation and regulation be congruent but at a practical level, funding mechanisms could encourage the development of partnerships and collaboration within and across institutions and workplaces and vice versa.

However, such collaboration and coordination does not seem to be enabled through quality assurance alone: ‘Issues of [quality assurance] have really not [resulted], in my view, a joint coordinated approach that is linked to the development of the system. The system is more fragmented than integrated’ (National Department of Education, Annexure 1, p. 41). This seems to be the case despite the application of the ‘same rules’ (ETQA, Annexure 1, p. 41):

If they don’t open the door for us to talk to them...there is no way of building a relationship ...and we would think that the same rules, hopefully, apply to everybody, so, if they have gone through an audit for SAQA and everything is in place, their process ought to be trustworthy and if we have built a relationship, and we have tested that on occasion, then there should be no reason not to trust what they do.

Further, collaboration is seen to be complicated because of competition between providers and of being ‘on each other’s turf’ (Public Further Education and Training Institution, Annexure 1, p. 32). Other public institutions agree (Public Higher Education Institution, Annexure 1, p. 32): ‘I think there is still some tension between public providers and private providers because private providers are taking away our business. They are taking our students...[I]f they are in the vicinity, we regard them as competition’. Some institutions feel that it is because of financial gain that there is no trust (Public Further Education and Training Institution, Annexure 1, p. 39): ‘Let’s put it this way, they don’t trust each other. There might be some more sinister [reasons] – it’s about money’, while others feel that the challenge is to create formal linkages ‘between providers and the SETAs as there is a lot of competition in the

marketplace. It is important that all providers are considered by the same criteria and managed objectively' (Private Further and Higher Education Institution, Annexure 4, p. 26).

Nevertheless, communities of practice and trust are seen to be emerging, both within particular sectors (CTP, Annexure 4, p. 27), for example, where '...[technikons] have established communities of trust with industry through cooperative education programmes and advisory boards', and across sectors with different jurisdictions (Health Professions Council of SA (HPCSA), Annexure 4, p. 27), such as

...the HPCSA ...[which] has already structured a co-operative arrangement with the Health and Welfare SETA, the effect of which is that the HWSETA will focus, for standard setting and quality assurance processes, on levels below 5 while the HPCSA will focus on levels 5 upwards...both parties have committed to a collaborative arrangement in which it is recognized that any qualifications below level 5, which leads to registration with the HPCSA, must actually be handled jointly with the HPCSA.

In addition, in the past, communities of practice have emerged as a result of the particular needs of a sub-sector (CHE/HEQC, Annexure 4, p. 27): 'An example is the tendency for professional bodies and employers to form links with [Higher Education] Band institutions'. Furthermore, such communities of practice could enrich 'a wider sectoral approach which can only breed a collaborative process...as opposed to a fragmented and individualistic process of standards setting and quality assurance' (HPCSA, Annexure 4, p. 27).

The quantitative data seem to support the emergence of such communities of practice. In response to the statement 'The NQF promotes/leads to greater *co-operation* between formal education system and the world of work and training', almost half of the respondents agreed that there is greater cooperation between different organisations (Figure 6.10).

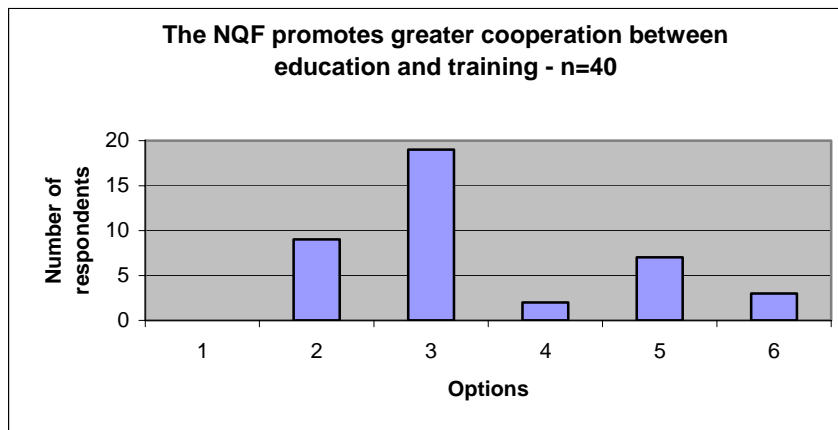


Fig. 6.10. Improved Cooperation between Different Organisations

Key: Option 1: Strongly disagree Option 4: Strongly agree
Option 2: Disagree Option 5: Don't know
Option 3: Agree Option 6: Too soon to say

However, 23% of the respondents disagree, while another 25% indicated that they did not know whether this is the case, or that it is still too soon to say. Further, in an analysis of the 'provider' responses to the same statement, it is evident that while 50% of respondents agree that co-operation has improved, 42% feel that this is not the case (Figure 6.11).

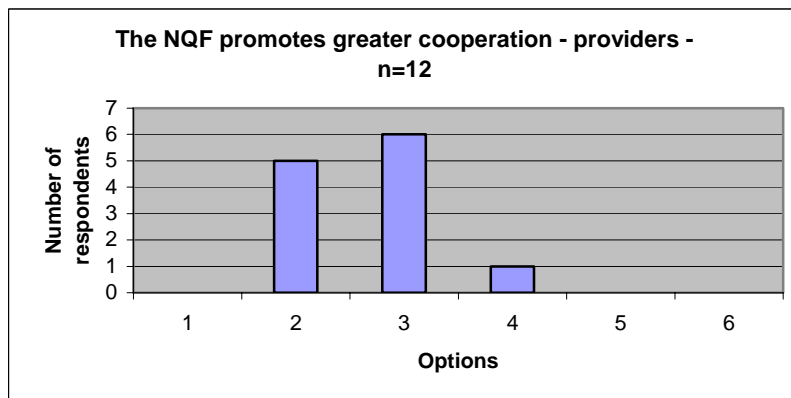


Fig. 6.11. Improved Cooperation between Institutions

Key: Option 1: Strongly disagree Option 4: Strongly agree
Option 2: Disagree Option 5: Don't know
Option 3: Agree Option 6: Too soon to say

Nevertheless, it is clear that communities of practice are emerging and that such communities place a high premium on trust amongst partners. However, as the NSA

notes, the development of such communities has ‘to be governed by government regulations’ because ‘[v]oluntary alliances have proven inefficient and insufficient to ensure broad based implementation of the envisaged partnerships’ (Annexure 4, p. 28). SAUVCA agrees and maintains (Annexure 4, p. 26)

[practices, partnerships and “communities of trust”] between providers, users and bureaucratic systems are the essential elements which ensure that adequate and appropriate learning opportunities are provided and recognised. These crucial on-the-ground networks of shared understandings, agreements and cooperation that strengthen the possibility of delivery are not sufficiently addressed...This is the “realm” in which the effort of building communities of trust will be felt and which will impact most strongly on the ability of the system to meet the goals of the NQF.

SAUVCA, and other interviewees and respondents are referring to the ‘institutional logic’ that should support the ‘intrinsic logic’ of an integrated framework. They seem to suggest that the framework cannot rely on intrinsic logic alone, nor can it depend only on institutional logic to achieve integration, but that both are needed.

6.3.3 *Conclusions – Policy Breadth as the Institutional Logic of the Framework*

It is evident that policy breadth, which could enhance the achievement of an integrated framework, has not yet been achieved, except in theory. While it is acknowledged that the SANQF is one of the elements of the human resources development strategy of the country, the political leadership needed for the structural and operational measures to enable alignment between the different sectors of education and training is seen to be lacking, not least in practical arrangements such as joint planning and funding. The lack of coordination, owing to the divided ownership of the SANQF, is seen to constrain the system, to the extent that education and training providers are finding it difficult to develop approaches that will enable the development of meaningful partnerships that could enhance joint qualification design, quality assurance and articulation routes through the system.

Nevertheless, the development of common standards and quality assurance measures, which are seen to facilitate the development of new communities of practice in the context of an education and training system where there was little trust between sectors, and which in turn, could enable integration to take place, is strongly supported by all respondents and interviewees. Quality assurance measures, against

agreed quality criteria in particular, are seen to engender trust in partners' systems and processes. However, common standards, agreed quality criteria and quality assurance measures still seem to be in the realm of the intrinsic logic of the framework, and the development of communities of practice seems to be limited to the standards generation bodies and to particular sub-sectors of the system. Nevertheless, these new communities of practice are not insignificant. It is such communities where the promise of the institutional logic of the framework, is located. It seems important that efforts of policy makers 'should be concentrated at the interface of practices and partnerships in order to build "communities of trust" and system mechanisms that will remove blockages and obstacles in the provision of increased access to quality learning opportunities' (SAUVCA, Annexure 4, p. 36).

6.4 Conclusions – The Scope, Architecture and Policy Breadth of an Integrated Framework

Chapter 6 focused on discussions of the scope, architecture and policy breadth of the SANQF. The SANQF is considered a comprehensive, unified qualifications framework. These aspects of the typology of qualifications framework are more in keeping with the espoused international purposes of education and training systems, namely that the qualifications systems are made clearer and that progression and articulation routes are described that will enable learners to move seamlessly within the system. As such, it is believed that the structure of the framework will enhance these objectives. In that regard, the SANQF has attempted to move beyond policy symbolism and ideology to the development of practical solutions that will facilitate the unification of education and training. Thus, in response to the Research Question, *Can the relationships between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful through an integrated framework?*, the scope of the framework, which deals with the *reach* of the framework, and the architecture, which deals with the *design features* of the framework and of qualifications were investigated.

The data confirm the fact that the more encompassing the scope of the framework aims to be, the more difficult it is to establish relationships between levels, sectors and types of qualification and, consequently, the more difficult it is to prevent dead ends for the learners attempting to make their way through the system. An all-

encompassing framework is therefore a necessary, but not a sufficient feature of a framework to enhance integration. The SANQF seems to have been conceptualised to address the reach, as well as the design of the elements within the framework. The design features deal particularly with the architecture of qualifications, and the degree of prescription associated with the acceptance of such qualifications for inclusion on the framework. Such prescription intends to enable comparability of qualifications at a particular level of the framework, and to enhance the portability of credits and articulation routes between different learning sites based on comparable elements of qualifications. However, the design of qualifications is not yet seen to be facilitating portability and articulation to any great degree, except in sub-sectors of the framework. This seems to stem from the perceived status of qualifications, the status of institutions offering such qualifications (public/public and public/private), the continuation of practices that characterised the previous education and training system, and the different regimes adopted for the delivery of learning programmes (e.g. modular versus semester courses). Further, the new proposals emanating from the *Consultative Document* (DoE & DoL, 2003) seem to entrench a ‘silo mentality’, which is directly opposed to the principle of integration.

The data suggest that integration can only be achieved through the deliberate and concerted efforts of partners to define and describe articulation routes. Such articulation routes could be defined through qualification matrices and qualification maps and could be enhanced through foundation and access programmes.

However, it is evident that education and training providers felt that there are other constraints to the development of such relationships. The research question, *Can the development of communities of practice enhance trust amongst partners in education and training?*, investigated the institutional logic, that is the policy breadth needed to enhance integration. These measures include congruence between education and labour legislation, policy and regulation. Respondents and interviewees felt that the lack of agreement between the Departments of Education and Labour was constraining the development of communities of practice and trust. Nevertheless, the stakeholder principle, where stakeholders, as the representatives of the beneficiaries of the system, are involved with standards setting and quality assurance, was strongly supported, in contrast with the call, from the Departments in their proposals in the

Consultative Document (DoE & DoL, 2003), to reduce stakeholder participation. Standards setting structures and quality assurance measures are seen to be the *new* communities of practice and trust. However, these new communities of practice and trust seem to only emerge where there is a sectoral need to develop such a community. Hence, the call for more regulation, in the form of funding regimes and other governmental incentives, to encourage the development of networks that will go beyond competition between education and training institutions and financial gain. The on-the-ground networks emanating from meaningful collaboration are not yet evident. The intrinsic logic of a framework, on its own, cannot achieve an integration framework.

Chapter 7 will introduce the final two perspectives on integration, namely a continuum of learning and curricular integrability. These two perspectives seem to hold the greatest promise for the development of an integrated framework.

CHAPTER 7

THE COMPLEMENTARITY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING: A CONTINUUM OF LEARNING

The idea simply, that for the sake of looking ideologically elegant, education must simultaneously be training and training must simultaneously be education – listen, a human being has got only so much that he or she can do...¹

Chapter 6 investigated the extent to which the intrinsic and institutional logics of a qualifications framework could enhance the development and implementation of an integrated framework. While the intrinsic logic, that is the structure of the framework and the design of qualifications, could facilitate integration, it became evident that much of these aspects are still at a conceptual level. The constraints in achieving integration highlighted the difficulties associated with theoretical constructs, which do not seem to take sufficient account of on-the-ground contexts. Thus, it seems that integration, from the perspective of scope, architecture and policy breadth, is a top-down attempt to effect changes in the education and training system. As with policy symbolism and ideology (Chapter 5), such attempts do not seem to be enough to effect the changes envisaged for the system. This chapter investigates the ‘persuasive logic locked up in daily practice’ and ‘the richness of ways in which institutions seek to attain the goals of the framework’². The final research question, namely Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning? therefore seeks to investigate the persuasive logic emerging from a pragmatic need of sectors and institutions to embody the principles of the SANQF. This question deals firstly with the seemingly opposing epistemologies characteristic of education and of training, which ‘have co-existed uneasily within the common qualifications framework’³. The continuum of education and training is discussed in 7.2. Secondly, the research question deals with the emergence of curricula, which increasingly combine theory and practice, to better reflect the needs of learners and workplaces in relation to developing solid theoretical groundings, complemented by practical experience. This part of the question is discussed in 7.3. The chapter is concluded, in 7.4, with commentary on the extent to which the

¹ Saleem Badat, Chief Executive Officer, Council on Higher Education

² Jansen, 2004, p. 90

³ DoE & DoL, 2003, p. 6.

complementarity of education and training is enhanced through an integrated framework.

7.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses an integrated framework from the perspective of a ‘continuum of learning’ and ‘curricular integrability’ (refer to Chapter 3). It investigates the two main epistemologies associated with education and with training as the opposite poles of an education and training system. Increasingly, it seems that there is recognition that these epistemologies are not easily separated and that a rigid view of such epistemologies is a false duality, as in practice these are not mutually exclusive. The convergence of education and training epistemologies becomes particularly evident with the emergence of the combination of theory and practice (and workplace-based learning) in curricula and learning programmes as a reflection of changes in a system that attempts to be more relevant to the world of work. The lens of ‘integration as curricular integrability’ is used to explore such changes in approaches to learning, teaching and assessment. Table 7.1 draws the relationship between Research Question 4 and the conceptual framework for the study.

Table 7.1

The Relationship between Research Question 4 and the Conceptual Framework

Main research question	
To what extent does the South African education and training system reflect in principle, perception and practice, the ideal of an integrated national qualifications framework?	
Supporting question	Conceptual framework
Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning?	Integration as continua of learning. Integration as curricular integrability.

The complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning and the structural arrangements that will enhance such complementarity are thus the focus of Chapter 7.

The data drawn upon for these findings emerge from the following sources:

- Unstructured interviews
- Interviews conducted for Cycle 1 of the NQF Impact Study
- ‘Learner’ and ‘Union’ focus groups

- Survey questionnaire data and supporting interviews for Cycle 2 of the NQF Impact Study
- Focus Groups for Cycle 2 of the NQF Impact Study
- Responses to '*An Interdependent National Qualifications Framework System*'

The integration of theory and practice as a perspective on the development of an integrated framework was well supported in the unstructured interviews with six board members of the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) (Annexure 1). Likewise, in the 'Provider' interviews, for Cycle 1 of the NQF Impact Study, the question 4.1) *Has the implementation of the NQF contributed to a national acceptance of an integrated approach to education and training?* supported by prompts: *To what extent is there integration between education and training?; What are the inter-organisational agreements, e.g. between institutions and workplaces?* and *How is practical application and experiential learning reflected in curricula and learning programmes?* found much resonance with the interviewees.

'Learner' and 'Union' focus groups could also easily respond to the question 3.3) *To what extent do your courses combine educational theory with training practice and experience?* The survey questionnaire statement relevant to this chapter is 2.5.5) *Both theory and practice are included in NQF qualifications.* As with the previous data-sets, respondents and interviewees related easily to the statement (Annexure 1). The 'Practitioner' focus group question *Do NQF qualifications promote the integration of theory and practice?* for Cycle 2 of the NQF Impact Study, also provided valuable data. As before, the responses to '*An Interdependent National Qualifications Framework System*', produced a rich variety of comments and perspectives on continua of learning and curricular integrability (Annexure 4).

7.1.1 Emerging Themes

This Research Question evidenced three main themes. The first theme concerns the perceived incommensurability of education and training epistemologies, related to the hierarchies of learning associated with these two poles of the education and training system. The second theme has to do with the increasing convergence of qualifications to 'the middle', that is qualifications, curricula and learning programmes that reflect the need to build solid theoretical groundings through discipline-based study, but

which are also, through the incorporation of authentic practice into programmes, attempting to improve relevance to workplaces and, consequently, improve employability of the holders of qualifications. The third theme deals with curricula, which are increasingly reflecting a combination of theory and practice, and the necessary collaborative approaches through partnerships to enhance the complementarity of these aspects of the learning programme.

7.2 A Continuum of Learning

The concept of the ‘continuum of learning’ was first introduced into the NQF discourse in South Africa by the Study Team tasked with the review of the SANQF (DoE & DoL, 2002, p. 68):

The concept [a continuum of learning] preserves the valuable notion of a single inter-connected learning system, which has been of fundamental importance to the transformation process...But at the risk of going over old ground, we affirm that an integrated approach should not mean erasing all differences between education and training or making all qualifications fit a single set of criteria (except for the minimum necessary requirements). The perceived threat of such an idea has given rise to fears, expressed in many submissions to the Study Team, that the essential, distinct purposes of education and training may be undermined.

This quotation encapsulates the three sub-themes emerging from the data in this section: the principle of difference and the principle of equivalence (Young, 2003); the distinct purposes of education and training (Tuck, Hart and Keevy, 2004); and the changes in the relationships between different types of learning (Raffe, 2005).

7.2.1 The Principle of Difference and the Principle of Equivalence

Young, (2005, p. 17) maintains that not until the introduction of the first national qualifications framework was there an attempt ‘to bring together academic and vocational qualifications, schools and university qualifications or the different types of professional and vocational qualifications within a single framework, [which] inevitably...created problems of progression, transferability and portability’. Nevertheless, rightly or wrongly, it seems to be precisely for this reason that the South African system opted to achieve equivalence by placing qualifications from education and training sectors at the same level on the framework. The socio-political imperatives emanating from a past unfair system of discrimination, perceived privilege and lack of opportunity, were associated with restrictive pathways and thus,

different pathways were conceptualised that were meant to lead to the same result, that is qualifications of equal status. The Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) (Annexure 4, p. 31), for example, argues that the distinct tracks for education, training and occupationally based (workplace-based) qualifications proposed in the *Consultative Document* (DoE & DoL, 2003) have ‘a major impact on access to equal opportunities by learners...[E]ven in the current NQF system it is still difficult for learners who could not pursue academic training to have an opportunity to prove himself/herself’. However, the socio-political imperatives seemed to have masked real and important epistemological issues (Raffe, 2005). The Council on Higher Education (CHE) (Annexure 4, p. 31) therefore says that ‘differences between modes of learning should not be trivialised or seen as easily “overcome”’:

Discipline-based learning (mainly in institutions) and occupational context-based learning (mainly in the workplace) can be represented as two “poles of a continuum” but this should not obscure the hierarchical differences between the two types of learning.

Other commentators agree. The Committee of Technikon Principals (CTP), for example, (Annexure 4, p. 31) notes that ‘different modes of learning are associated with differing levels of abstraction, with the greatest level of abstraction on the discipline-learning side’. Thus:

These different ways of knowing have implications for the equivalence of qualifications. Discipline-learning at a particular level cannot be equated to work-based learning at the same level. Although there may be *parity of esteem of learners on the same level*, it does not mean that the qualifications are comparable and equal (emphases in the original).

The CHE supports this view and maintains that the differences between qualification types should be recognised, but that socially acceptable comparabilities should be established, ‘as opposed to assuming epistemological equivalence’ between them (Annexure 4, p. 34).

Likewise, Umalusi, the Council for Quality Assurance of General and Further Education and Training, maintains that (Annexure 4, p. 33)

[i]nstitutional and disciplinary knowledge and education on the one hand and workplace-based knowledge and education on the other hand are not just different, they exist in a hierarchical relationship to each other. It is worth pointing out that a national framework of qualifications, because qualifications are a statement or proxy for learning that has taken

place, is of necessity arranged hierarchically in terms of breadth and depth of learning. The conditions for learning with breadth and depth are, of necessity found in formal education institutions, because workplaces are unlikely to have the time or the trained and experienced staff to enable such learning to happen.

Thus it seems that there has been a conceptual conflation of education and training. The Chief Executive Officer of the CHE argues that ‘there is a conceptual distinction to be made between education and training – I think we have tried to either conflate them or we tried to pretend that there are no problems or tensions’ (Annexure 1, p.45). This is a long-standing debate. In a 1996 discussion document, the *Ministerial Committee for Development Work on the NQF*, summarised the debate as follows (p. 18):

Essentially, the debate divided itself into two schools of thought, namely one which wanted no distinction drawn between education and training and one which wanted them to exist in parallel tracks, joined by some kind of umbrella body, a far more tentative approach towards the integration of education and training...The education sector was concerned that education would lose its “soul”, that it would become narrow in focus, concentrating only on teaching that which was required by the world of work – training, in other words. At the centre of their concern was the fear that education standards would decrease rapidly if training was to prescribe to education...The training sector, on the other hand, was afraid that the integration of education and training would lead to unreasonable demands for “high” academic standards in the training world; an imposition, it was claimed, that would make it difficult, if not impossible, for those who trained workers to adjust rapidly to employment demands when required.

Thus, Young (2003, p. 9) maintains that the principle of equivalence is fundamentally misleading and that this principle is ‘more about aspirations to equality than reality’. In reality, it seems that discipline-based and workplace-based qualifications cannot be seen as equivalent, and that ‘[i]t is not useful, therefore, to create a perception of a framework in which all qualifications can be obtained in...three pathways, [including a workplace-based pathway] when in fact it does not seem realistic that higher levels of learning can be reached in the workplace’ (Umalusi, Annexure 4, p. 6).

Therefore, Raffe (2005, p. 22) argues that

[i]n more recent policy debates integration has been associated, not with uniformity, but with diversity. An integrated qualifications framework is one that recognises and celebrates a wide range of purposes,

epistemologies, modes and contexts of learning, but which also recognises the need to build these into a coherent and coordinated system.

The interviewees agree. For example, a SAQA Board member says that ‘I do not see an integrated framework as making all things equal...[T]his is the misperception in the integrated system...that we are trying to make everyone into recognised as having degrees’ (Annexure 1, p. 26). Another SAQA Board member points out that the distinct purposes of education and training should be maintained (Annexure 1, p. 15):

...[A] lot of us can’t see the wood for the trees. If you look at the trees, there is the vocational education tree and there is the academic tree...and we don’t see the wood...the wood is the NQF. You don’t want to say [for example] that Bobby Godsell is equivalent to a professor in management at the university – there is no equivalence, but they must get equivalent status.

Thus, while the debate about opposing epistemologies may, in a sense, stand ‘proxy for other deeply rooted ideas about the very nature and purpose of learning’ (Heyns & Needham, 2004, p. 35), against the background of the socio-political imperatives of the SANQF, the debate seems to have been complicated with objections that are too easily ‘dismissed as recalcitrant, elitist, or simply racist (Ensor, 2003, p. 326). Rather, ‘to facilitate access, progression, and equity, the trick is not to assert that everything is the same, but to recognise differences and put in place the mechanisms necessary to negotiate them’ (Ensor, 2003, p. 345). One such mechanism seems to be to focus on the distinct purposes of qualifications and the value that such qualifications may add to a particular context.

7.2.2 *The Distinct Purposes of Qualifications*

Umalusi (Annexure 4, p. 33) suggests that quality assurance and curriculum issues take on different meanings according to the purposes of qualifications. It further maintains that qualifications under its ambit have *foundation* and *access* to further learning and further training purposes, suggesting that these qualifications are to be found at the one end of the continuum of education and training and, perhaps, that its qualifications are incommensurable with qualifications at the other end of the continuum, which has an occupational orientation. In the conceptual framework for this study (Chapter 3), the continuum of education and training is represented in Figure 7.1.

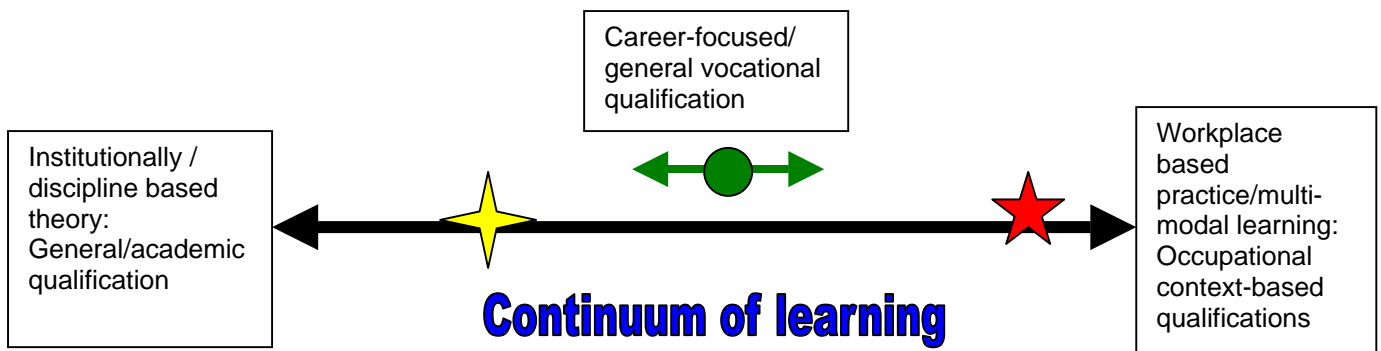


Figure 7.1: Integration as a Continuum of Learning

Umalusi thus places its qualifications on the left-hand side of the continuum, with tentative links towards the middle of the continuum, but seems to suggest that such links cannot extend to the right-hand side of the continuum.

A senior official of the National Department of Education supports the view that education and training are incommensurable and notes (Annexure 1, p. 44):

Advocates of integration in education and training really ignore the fundamental difference between the epistemological basis of education [and training]. They can't integrate the two in the sense that people talk about it. The features of training are fairly easily measurable. You can judge behaviour by looking at people, but it is not the same with education. Some of the things one does in terms of education cannot be controlled because it is a mental thing. With education we infer, we do not know, that you can think logically.

However, most of the other respondents and commentators consider such a view as a *caricature* of education and training. Raffe (2005, p. 26) notes that the polarisation of education and training is not helpful:

...[M]any of the epistemological barriers...may have more to do with the particular design of the qualifications framework than with integration per se. The Scottish experience shows that a unitised and (loosely) outcomes-based model can accommodate academic learning. Conversely, when the UK introduced a very tight model for National Vocational Qualifications there was fierce opposition from within vocational education and training. The problem was the model, not integration. *The argument is further confused by being polarised in terms of education and training – or rather, in terms of caricatures of education and training* (emphasis added).

The CHE agrees and says that such a caricature 'leads to a stunted conception of workplace learning' (Annexure 4, p. 35), and thus

[w]orkers will be trained only in those skills they require as workers, not as citizens or members of the community who deserve an education that respects and nurtures their dignity and worth as creative human beings.

As a result, this may give primacy only to the (CHE, Annexure 4, p. 35)

...extrinsic or instrumental goals of education and training such as social and economic development (narrowly conceived) and excludes important intrinsic goals such as intellectual development and personal autonomy that are central to values such as human dignity and self-expression.

The CTP agrees with this position and says (Annexure 4, p. 36)

[o]ur position is further supported by widespread acknowledgement of a trend of learning (and thus qualifications) which focuses on both economically useful knowledge as well as the development of ways of knowledge that will promote innovation, creativity, adaptability and flexibility in individuals. Learning should therefore support preparation for economic participation *now* and in the *future*, as well as prepare learners for good citizenship (emphases in the original).

A SAQA Board Member describes the complementarity of discipline-based and vocationally-oriented qualifications as follows (Annexure 1, p. 47):

Universities are science-based, technikons [universities of technology are] technology based – the technology cannot live without the science of universities...The science, and the thinking and the new knowledge, should be formed by universities...a dissertation at the technikon should be applying [science].

The Chief Executive Officer of the CHE agrees and maintains that engineers, for example, from the opposite poles of the continuum of learning, have different, but complementary roles: ‘...certain engineers actually deal with conceptual design issues and ...others deal with other issues and they really constitute a team’ (Annexure 1, p. 50).

Another SAQA Board Member points out that qualifications should thus make it possible for learners to change tack should they so wish. The proposed National Certificate: Vocational⁴, in his opinion is problematic because (Annexure 1, p. 51)

...they want this to look just like the National Senior Certificate [the new school-leaving qualification], but with more technical words in it. They aren’t linking it explicitly enough to the world of work, they haven’t engaged potential employers actively enough...[who are pushing] for

⁴ To be offered by the newly constituted Further Education and Training Institutions.

probably a less academic, more skills-based training, but having enough academic [learning] in there so that if someone buzzes, then they can get back into the academic route.

Other SAQA Board Members agree, particularly because ‘our entire schooling system is set up to prepare people for university – even the [Further Education and Training colleges] are now trying to do that’ and, in line with the purposes of qualifications on the continuum of learning, it is ‘absolutely ridiculous if you think about it’ (Annexure 1, p. 52):

...[O]nly 2.5% of people that start schooling ever go into higher education and then only 1% make it, I mean, of those who start school. The other 99% have to be prepared for work. But why is this idea that going to university so absolutely vital in our society? ...[I]t is a social thing...but that is why we don’t have skills in this country, that’s why we can’t run the country and start [to] grow the economy because we all think that the ideal thing for your child is to go to university – because they don’t get recognition [elsewhere].

Therefore, it seems that if learning is conceptualised as a continuum, or several continua, according to Raffe (2005, p. 23), then the distinct purposes of qualifications should be recognised and valued. However, it then seems to become more important to ensure articulation routes along the continuum of education and training. Thus, articulation routes should enable mobility along the continuum by recognising that some parts of the learning in occupationally based or workplace-based contexts could facilitate mobility from the occupationally based pole of the continuum to the academic pole. This is supported by the views of many of the commentators. For example, the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) maintains that ‘articulation inevitably requires making up for deficiencies in the fundamental underpinnings requiring a move to the “left”...before moving “right” again’ (Annexure 4, p. 36), as depicted in Figure 7.2 (Blom, 2006c, p. 12).

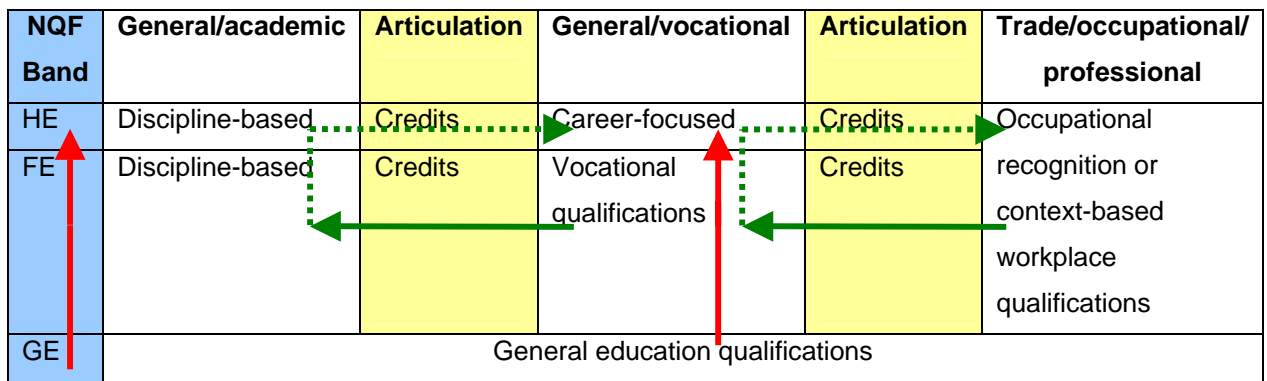


Figure 7.2: Articulation and Credit Transfer Routes from Occupationally Based Qualifications to General/Academic Qualifications

Key: Red arrow – traditional progression routes
 Green arrow – progression routes from occupationally based qualifications, to disciplinary based qualifications, back into occupationally based progression routes

The CHE agrees, and maintains that ‘progression may often start in a pathway “unique to the workplace”, but will inevitably not end in that pathway’ (Annexure 4, p. 36).

This seems to be what the Departments (DoE & DoL, 2003, p. 14) mean when they state: ‘Learning pathways cannot be sealed off from one another, as though a learner is fated to stay on one route once a choice has been made’ and thus, articulation should enable progression to those ‘who are seeking to enter or progress in or change a career pathway, or equip themselves for admission to higher education, or both’.

Many respondents agree with this position. The Executive Officer of SAQA, for example, says that ‘there are multiple dimensions to integration’ (Annexure 1, p. 28):

For example, there is a kind of a career path that goes from school to university. Then there is another kind of career path for school “drop-outs” – the old technical college, [the] new [Further Education and Training] college, and then moving back somewhere, back into maybe universities of technology and maybe something else later on...Now, part of what integration must do, is that although people are using different pathways, the pathways [should not] restrict...

The distinct purposes of qualifications then become a mechanism to strengthen the system when the question is asked: ‘What is the basket of knowledge, competencies, skills and attributes required for any particular occupation in this country?’ (Chief Executive Officer, CHE, Annexure 1, p. 37):

...[S]ome of them will veer much more to the educational and theoretical and so on, and others will veer more to the practical – and that is how you approach it – and that's how I think you don't necessarily dissolve [the tension between education and training], but you approach it in a different way altogether (Annexure 1, p. 44).

This seems to be in keeping with the increasing convergence of 'education' and 'training'. An Education and Training Quality Assurance body, for example, notes that (Annexure 4, p. 34)

...some knowledge-based industries are probably closer to the academic path than [a] simplistic description of workplace learning...Academic learning should feed into the real world needs of South Africa in the 21st century in order to address the skills shortage and ensure that educated people are also employable. Discipline-based learning alone may render learners unemployable as is currently the case with many school leavers and graduates.

The CTP agrees, and maintains that 'experiential learning is more than skill alone...it is more useful to identify what theory or experiential learning is outstanding when considering progression on a career path via identified qualifications' (Annexure 4, p. 34). Further, according to the CTP, each point along the continuum has a particular role to play in achieving the end result. 'We agree that public providers cannot provide for specific job skills and generally have a more broad career focus. This does not preclude articulation between specific work-based learning and public education institutions.'

The very notion of incommensurable epistemologies is thus challenged by many examples of where the opposite poles of the continuum already support each other. An Education and Training Quality Assurance body notes that (Annexure 4, p. 34)

...it can easily be concluded that there are a substantial number of qualifications which are offered at institutions which ought to give considerable attention to skills development within the related occupation or profession, if they are to be considered worthwhile.

SAUVCA supports this view and argues that it is difficult to draw clear boundaries between the different poles on the continuum (Annexure 4, p. 35):

Furthermore, we note the trend in higher education qualifications – in South Africa and internationally – to converge towards the middle of the continuum of learning modes; i.e. for discipline-based learning to become more skills-based and employability conscious and for workplace learning increasingly to include some form of generic skills development.

7.2.3 *Conclusions – The Continuum of Learning*

In an attempt to improve progression, transferability and portability, national qualifications frameworks seem to have stressed the principle of equivalence, as opposed to the principle of difference, characteristic of education and training systems of the past. South Africa has been no exception in this regard; the socio-political background of the system under apartheid has led to the call for alternative routes to the same end, namely qualifications of equal esteem. However, it is evident that a workplace-based route to the achievement of qualifications does not have a one-on-one hierarchical relationship to qualifications achieved in institutionally based contexts. The respondents and commentators make it clear that they do not believe that the same level of abstraction can be taught in workplace-based environments, partly because it is not the 'core business' of workplaces to do so and thus, workplaces do not have the expertise to offer this kind of learning. Nevertheless, respondents and commentators argue that there should be other socially accepted comparabilities to achieve equivalent status, but not equivalent epistemologies. It should also be noted that neither the academic, nor the vocational/occupational critics of an integrated framework felt that the distinct purposes, aims and objectives of education and training should be lost. Thus, the social status seems to be what underlies the call for 'equivalence', that is that qualifications acquired through workplace-based routes are not considered inferior to qualifications achieved elsewhere in the system. The principle of difference, understood as qualifications with distinct purposes, in a coherent system, is strongly supported. A continuum of learning, therefore, reflects the place, purpose and role of a particular qualification within the education and training system. Many respondents and commentators warned against a seemingly outdated view of education and training, namely a caricature of education and training, leading in particular, to a stunted view of workplace-based learning. In their opinion, there is an increasing convergence of both elements of the system, where a complementary relationship between these elements is more useful in a modern education and training system. However, in a coherent system, this seems to mean that, in order to award equal esteem to these elements, there is a need to enable articulation along the continuum. To improve the coherence of the system it seems not only necessary to describe articulation and progression pathways, but also to build the education *and* training elements into qualifications, curricula and learning programmes, that is to 'combine different types

of learning (e.g. applied and theoretical) to develop integrated forms of learning and knowledge, to promote transferable and generic skills, or to promote parity of esteem' (Raffe, 2005, p. 24).

7.3 Curricular Integrability

Raffe (2005, p. 22) points out that '[a]n integrated framework is one that not only includes different types of learning, but also changes the relationships between them'. From the previous section it is becoming evident that, while education and training represent 'distinct knowledge structures, distinct modes of learning and distinct social relations' (Raffe, 2005, p. 22), the notion of the incommensurability of these poles of the continuum of learning seems to be a 'false dualism' (Pring, 2004). Education and training, as practices, are not mutually exclusive and, therefore, 'the differences are of a degree and they can shade into one another' (Raffe, 2005, p. 22). Mehl (2004, p. 40) agrees and maintains:

It has become apparent that the notion of workplaces as focused users of narrow skills with very limited portability to other economic sectors is completely outdated. Within what is now called the "knowledge economy", workplaces are recognised as multi-faceted, inter-disciplinary knowledge environments not at all limited to a narrow technical skills-based [environment]. The emphasis in today's workplaces on values, life skills, communication, management as well as a diversity of sector-specific knowledge-areas, redefines it as a developer of specific, general and highly portable competencies.

It is therefore evident that 'work' and 'learning' are becoming far less polarised. In the past, 'learning' was about 'education'. '[I]t occurred in life before work' (Boud and Garrick, 1999), while 'work' was associated with 'training' and, consequently, learning at work was never considered as valuable (or valid) as learning that had taken place in educational institutions. However, increasingly there is the recognition that workplaces are important 'sites of learning' (Boud and Garrick, 1999) and that the two sites – institutions and workplaces – could be complementary to each other and not in opposition. Boud and Garrick (1999, p. 1) note the following:

Learning at work has become one of the most exciting areas of development in the dual fields of management and education. It has moved to become a central concern of corporations and universities; it is no longer the preoccupation of a small band of vocational training specialists. A new focus on learning is changing the way businesses see themselves. At the same time, educational institutions are realising that

they need to engage with the world of work in a more sophisticated manner than ever before.

Many of the interviewees and commentators agree. This is evident from the many comments about ‘a stunted view of workplace learning’ and of the ‘dumbing-down of workplace learning’ if it is isolated from discipline-based learning (CHE, Annexure 4, p. 35). Further, in a draft discussion document published by the CHE, the pressure on educational institutions to approach the mix of theory and practice, with a particular emphasis on employability, is an emerging aspect (CHE, 2001, p. 11):

Higher education institutions are expected to be far more responsive to societal needs at a concrete and instrumental level. Whereas previously, higher education was allowed to impose its own definitions of knowledge on society, society is now demanding that higher education provides more instrumental definitions of knowledge and more operational knowledge products. Globally, higher education is now expected to focus on the employability of its graduates and to contribute, at least in part, to national economic development.

This has implications for the way in which qualifications are designed, and the ways in which curricula and learning programmes are conceptualised and enacted. This section will deal with two sub-themes: the epistemological mix (or curricular integration) required to achieve the purpose of a qualification in a particular context, which will meet the needs of that specific context, including the employability of its graduates; and the partnerships that are needed to enact curricula and learning programmes.

7.3.1 The Mix of Theory and Practice

In response to the survey questionnaire statement, ‘Both theory and practice are included in NQF qualifications’, an overwhelming majority (89%) of respondents agreed, or strongly agreed (Figure 7.3).

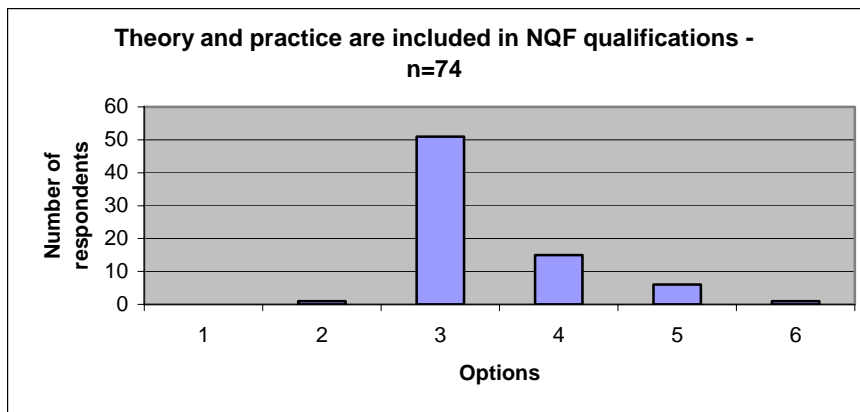


Figure 7.3 Both Theory and Practice are Included in NQF Qualifications

Key: Option 1: Strongly disagree Option 4: Strongly agree
 Option 2: Disagree Option 5: Don't know
 Option 3: Agree Option 6: Too soon to say

The quantitative responses to the survey questionnaire are supported by many comments from interviewees. A public Further Education and Training college, for example, maintains that 'even the more backward providers know that theory and practice is what is going to get the learner into a workplace' and thus 'you cannot take theory and practice apart, they [are] actually two sides of the same coin' (Annexure 1, p. 49). Therefore, the question asked is, 'How do you respond to those needs and how do you integrate the practical need to the other side of things, which is theory?' (Private Further Education and Training college, Annexure 1, p. 48).

However, many interviewees argue that the balance between theory and practice, particularly practice that will enhance employability, has not yet been achieved in academic education in public schools and universities. This is seen as problematic as 'companies will look for someone with hands-on [training]' and therefore 'companies would go for the Technikon guy' (Employer, Annexure 1, p. 48). Another employer agrees (Annexure 1, p. 48):

I would say that in universities...they do a little bit too much theory...but you know in university you have to cover that...to know the work in depth, and it's important to do all that theory. I will say that to do a little bit more practical as well...I always say there is too much theory, there is not enough practical.

In addition, a participant from an organised labour focus group noted that, ‘I came from the academic school...I had to learn much harder to get my training than the normal guy’ (Annexure 1, p. 48). Other interviewees agree (Annexure 1, p. 52):

To me it appears that the matric [school-leaving] certificate by itself is not a very useful thing...because to what extent does it prepare you for anything other than maybe university or further studies. It doesn’t necessarily prepare you for a job in the labour market...[I]f you are in a country where people do not necessarily have money for further studies...you have this pool of people with matric certificates who should be going to the labour market. The [learners] can’t, because they don’t necessarily have the skills.

A public Higher Education institution supports this view and asks, ‘So many people are going to universities, but how many of them are getting employed? They are using employment opportunities as the indicator of the value of education and training’ (Annexure 1, p. 53) and, consequently, institutions are seeking to become more ‘market-oriented’ (Annexure 1, p. 53):

...[D]egrees are not found to be applicable directly to the market and so what [institutions] have done was to say “okay, you get your degree, you spend about six to nine months in a special programme...in which you apply the theory you have learnt to a variety of industrial applications...with participants from [industry], so that you then become market-oriented”.

This supports an argument that education is becoming too focused on employability, and that a better balance is needed (National Department of Education, Annexure 1, p. 47):

...[O]ver the past five years we have perhaps concentrated too much on the economic development rather than the social development and that is reflected in the quantity of programmes we have developed. The fact that those programmes have all been about skilling for employment rather than social responsibility shows that we have not been balanced.

Allais (2003, p. 312) argues that the emergence of ‘education for employment’ arises from the introduction of a ‘neo-liberal economic policy; the dominant market-oriented orthodoxy [which] has given rise to new perspectives on the purposes of education’, which in turn is linked to ‘employment, economic improvement, and international competitiveness’. COSATU, (Annexure 4, p. 37) agrees, and warns that there seems to be an over-emphasis of ‘economic needs at the expense of social and political

development needs [which] does not facilitate the attainment of transformation in the education and training architecture as entrenched by the apartheid government’.

The notion of ‘education for employment’ is perhaps not surprising in the South African context where vast disparities still exist between rich and poor, and between privileged and under-privileged. However, the attempt to address such social problems through an education and training system is not unique to South Africa (Allais, 2003), and the challenge seems to be to achieve the right balance between educational goals and the danger of increasing the vocationalism of education. Such a balance seems to include the appropriate mix of education and training so that ‘there [is] a link, without that practical link, that qualification means nothing’ (Employer, Annexure 1, p. 48). A good balance seems to be the recognition of what is needed in workplaces in order for curricula to be responsive to such needs. SADTU supports this position and says, ‘What people learn in universities is different to what is done at workplace[s] and there is no link between the two’ (Annexure 1, p. 36).

Nevertheless, there is much evidence of changing practice: ‘...[W]hat is happening in the course will take you to the workplace...practical assessment shows that theory is being carried into the workplace’ (Employer, Annexure 1, p. 49). A public Higher Education institution agrees, and notes, ‘I’m beginning to see an improvement in our [curriculum] whereby the assessment is strongly linked to workplace learning’ (Annexure 1, p. 53).

The South African Council for Educators (SACE) takes this further, to changes in practice at the qualification design level (Annexure 1, p. 36):

You see we have put together a qualifications framework with the balance of education and training. That is why a lot of our [Higher Education institutions] can’t offer those qualities because they only have the one part of the qualification that they have expertise in. So, they find fault in the qualifications and honestly [do not recognise] that they need to shed their own way of looking at the qualifications because they only have the academic and not the training and development [of teachers in mind].

Further, a Department of Labour interviewee supports the balance of education and training and argues that (Annexure 1, p. 54)

...at least there's a recognition now, if we talk about learning, that we're not talking about sitting at a desk and studying and working. We're now also talking about the workplace, behind a sewing machine, you're also busy with working and training.

Thus, 'what we are talking about is what kind of combination do we want to have in a graduate or anyone that is simultaneously education and training' (Chief Executive Officer, CHE, Annexure 1, p. 50). A public Higher Education institution, therefore, maintains that the curriculum and learning programmes should reflect such a combination (Annexure 1, p. 51):

We have grappled with the structural reconfiguration...[t]he actual modifications that need to happen, the deepening of curriculum design...[W]e have realised that the real problem-based learning approach must have theory introduced, so we are looking at an approach that has both foundational and theoretical knowledge and application in the workplace and a reflection back to theory in terms of Kolb.

The Engineering Council of South Africa agrees and talks about the 'appropriate mix of institutional and workplace learning' (Annexure 4, p. 37). Two Education and Training Quality Assurance bodies (FASSET and the South African Institute for Chartered Accountants (SAICA)) support this notion and argue that, in their sectors, qualifications straddle institutionally based learning and workplace-based practice (Annexure 4, p. 37) and therefore there should be a balance of workplace learning and institutionally based learning. Furthermore, in their sectors, the balance of theory and practice in the curriculum is inextricably linked to their learners' right to practise. SAUVCA supports the notion that theory and practice, in appropriate quantities, should be an integral part of the curriculum (Annexure 4, p. 37):

SAUVCA supports workplace learning that is part of a well-structured curriculum, designed especially to afford opportunities to learners to apply theory to practice and to learning workplace skills. Such learning has many forms such as clinicals, practicals, experiential learning components, cooperative learning and service learning.

From the 'appropriate mix', namely through the combinations of theory and practice, emerges the perspective of curricular integrability. Along the continuum of education and training, and in keeping with the purposes of the qualification, the 'measure of integration of theoretical and practical components as contained in the...curriculum' (Keevy, 2006, p. 9) becomes evident. In the conceptual framework for this study (Chapter 3), the ratio of theory and practice, in relation to where the qualification is

placed on the continuum of learning, is presented. Model 1 (see Figure 7.4) depicts a disciplinary-based qualification as the foundation for workplace practice in the form of internships, which, at its conclusion, could lead to professional recognition and the right of the holder of the qualification to practise in the profession. In addition, disciplinary-based qualifications are increasingly linked to ‘industry-based learning’, which is part and parcel of the curriculum and requires the successful conclusion, through industry based assessment, of this part of the qualification before the qualification is awarded. These qualifications would be placed at the left of the continuum of education and training (Figure 7.1). In Figure 7.4, Model 2 depicts a curriculum that requires cyclical periods of disciplinary based learning and experiential learning, which places this type of qualification in the middle of the continuum, while Model 3 represents a curriculum where learners are placed within workplaces for ‘structured work experience’, supported by ‘structured institutionally based learning’, for example, a learnership (Bellis, 2000, p. 219). This type of qualification is placed on the right of the continuum.

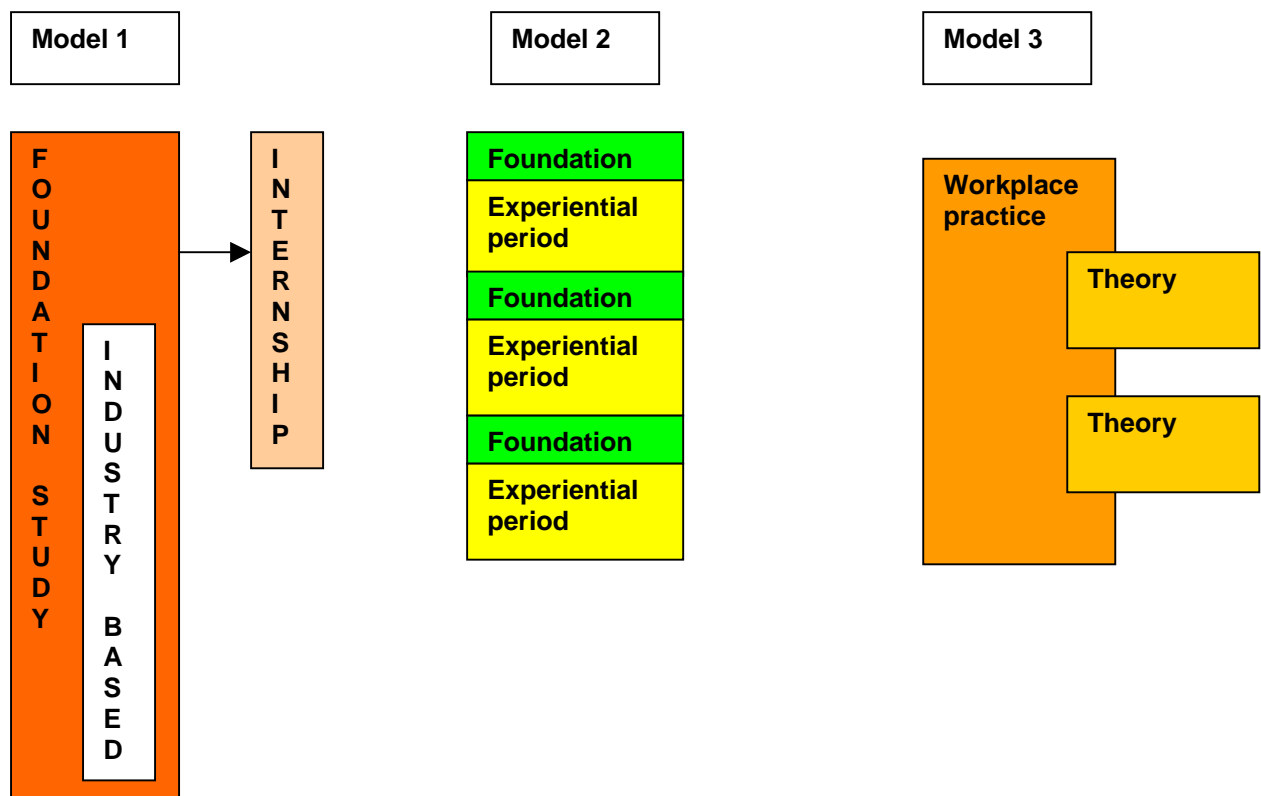


Figure 7.4: Integration as Curricular Integrability

There is much support for the appropriate mix of theory and practice. The National Skills Authority (NSA) (Annexure 4, p. 37) argues for ‘linked qualifications...that incorporate theory and practice, and thus achieve integration between education and training’. The NSA maintains that

[t]he design of trade, occupational, and professional qualifications should be based on models that have worked well in the past. The best element and practices in these models should be used as a model for “linked qualifications”.

Artisans and professionals both undergo “education” and “training” that culminates in a qualification, which gives them elite status in the labour market. The theory and practice *complement* one another and lead to “expertise”, which is recognised internationally and affords those who are qualified mobility and portability across the globe (emphasis in original).

The CHE argues that much of the existing provision of higher education can also be viewed as complementary (Annexure 4, p. 38):

Firstly, there is much research and teaching within higher education that is focused **on** the workplace. Secondly, restricting workplace learning to learning **in** the workplace ignores the key role played by research in higher education and training qualifications (emphases in the original).

The CTP agrees (Annexure 4, p. 38):

The traditional view of the delivery of education and training in HE is that discipline learning takes place in universities and skills development in the workplace. The integration of these two modes of learning is currently largely represented by the delivery in technikons. In this latter form of delivery, interdependence certainly is a major factor in the delivery. Technikon programmes, by their very nature as career-oriented programmes, integrate education and training.

Therefore, the integration of theory and practice, in appropriate combinations, seem to encourage institutions to seek ways in which ‘we weight...[and] we value different kinds of learning’. It results in asking questions such as, ‘...Do you do separated curriculum...and bring it all together at a later stage, or do you start to integrate right from the start?’ (Executive Officer, SAQA, Annexure 1, p. 21 and 48).

However, curricular integration seems to require institutions and workplaces to develop a much more structured relationship. ‘[C]ollaboration between HE and industry should...be improved, so that the practice components of professional and career-oriented qualifications can be performed in authentic contexts’ (CTP,

Annexure 4, p. 38). It seems evident that curricular integration could be enhanced if it is supported by partnerships and collaboration, which will facilitate the enactment of the curriculum.

7.3.2 *Partnerships and Collaboration as Integration*

”Integration” in the sense of partnerships between education and training and the value that these two opposite poles of the learning spectrum could add to the other, in terms of opportunities to apply knowledge and inform knowledge production...seems to be accepted and understood (Heyns and Needham, 2004, p. 43).

SAUVCA (Annexure 4, p. 38) argues that a future higher education system should seek to equip participants in higher education with a ‘fundamental orientation to life, based on the capacity for critical thought and action, which goes far beyond the specific knowledge and skills-sets that are required to achieve the specific vocational goals of the job market’. In order to achieve this, the higher education sector should engage in ‘constructive partnerships with professional bodies and other stakeholders in professional programmes that are offered in higher education institutions’.

Many interviewees and commentators view integration as ‘partnerships’. For example, a public Further Education and Training college indicated that ‘the college offers various programmes in partnership with employers and other local and international partners’ (Annexure 1, p. 55). A public Higher Education institution supports this view in an in-service-training model (Annexure 1, p. 54):

...[A] model of in-service training...[a] business type partnership type approach...works very well and [in] the advisory bodies, you have people selected...senior people in the industry [who] regularly network [with] staff and review programmes...[W]e have practical work where they go out into industry and do practical work there and are also assessed on a practical level.

However, partnerships manifest in many forms. The CHE, for example, argues that (Annexure 4, p. 38), ‘[c]ollaboration between [Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs)], employers and higher education institutions’ may be a more appropriate approach to the development of progression routes, than routes based purely on the structure of qualifications. A dichotomy between workplace-based and institution-based learning could thus undermine ‘the collaboration required between

workplace-based and institution-based modes of learning’ (COSATU, Annexure 4, p. 39). Therefore, in order to ensure that ‘practice components of professional and career-oriented qualifications can be performed in authentic contexts’, it seems important to ‘support investment by industry [to provide] placement opportunities for candidate graduates’. Partnerships, particularly in relation to experiential learning, which ‘forms part of HE programmes [should be] appropriately funded by Government’ (CTP, Annexure 4, p. 38). The NSA supports the notion of cross-sectoral funding and argues that ‘more structured mechanisms (including funding) to enable SETA ETQAs to partner with clusters of providers’ could incentivise the development of partnerships to take responsibility jointly for standards setting, quality assurance and learning programme delivery (Annexure 4, p. 38). Such partnership arrangements could, according to the NSA, ‘inform new funding arrangements’. In their view, the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs), ‘would be well-placed to develop networks of employers for workplace experience, internships, etc.’ (Annexure 4, p. 38).

Other partnerships and agreements are identified by the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA), including agreements that will enhance cross-sectoral quality assurance, standards setting and qualifications design (Annexure 4, p. 39). These will involve partnerships with the Higher Education Quality Committee of the CHE, Sector Education and Training Authorities, for qualifications offered in workplaces, and with the Council for Quality Assurance of General and Further Education and Training, for qualifications offered in Further Education and Training colleges. Partnerships in quality assurance seem particularly important as workplace learning components of qualifications bring workplaces into the education and training ‘quality assurance spiral in a unique way’ (Education and Training Quality Assurance body, Annexure 4, p. 39).

The HPCSA sees collaborative approaches as a challenge to ‘the traditional notions of education, training and development in a way that seeks to break down the artificial barriers caused by inflexible and narrow focus’. In the health professions sector, it is thus necessary to develop the ‘linkages between a number of these structures to ensure a collaborative approach rather than an individualistic approach...required for an integrated development strategy’ (Annexure 4, p. 32). Vertical and horizontal

relationships should thus be dealt with jointly with the Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority, to the extent that all qualifications that are registered with the HPCSA would encompass standards setting and quality assurance of qualifications in these overlapping sectors (Annexure 4, p. 4). This is seen to be a mechanism whereby articulation and access between the sectors are facilitated. Another Education and Training Quality Assurance body agrees, and notes that ‘internationally there have been moves to create co-operative projects that link schools, vocational education and universities and advanced study in the workplace’ (Annexure 4, p. 38). SAUVCA talks about ‘principled partnerships between different providers from different sites, contexts and learning domains’ to establish workable articulation mechanisms between partners (Annexure 4, p. 39). Such a partnership ‘holds as strongly for vertical progression from [Further Education and Training] to [Higher Education and Training] levels (i.e. from Level 4 to 5) as it does for horizontal or diagonal progression’ (Annexure 4, p. 39). ‘...[S]uch opportunities will have to be created on the basis of significant alignment between sectors, and partnerships between higher education, further education and the world of work’ (Annexure 4, p. 39). Therefore, ‘in order to expand access to HE study it further remains imperative that system blockages are removed...[T]he HE sector as providers needs to be able to access funding via [Sector Education and Training Authorities] and state subsidies’ (Annexure 4, p. 39). Thus,

[w]hile the [Higher Education] sector has the infrastructure and expertise to [enable articulation and access] through flexible delivery modes, the biggest challenge remains access to funding and the brokering of effective partnerships which will indeed make HE, FET and the world of work “inter-dependent”...[W]ithout this element, even a well-conceptualised NQF with an appropriate qualifications map [and] a well-organised bureaucratic system will not achieve the goals it was designed to effect.

7.3.3 *Conclusions – Integration as Curricular Integrability*

The data seem to suggest that it is at the level of curricular integration and the principled partnerships to enact the new relationships between education and training, (or learning and work components), that the greatest promise for integration emerges. It seems that these two components are seen increasingly to be complementary, particularly if they are conceptualised holistically as part of the curriculum. Both the quantitative and qualitative data evidenced strong support for the notion of curricular integration of theory and practice, even where changes in practice are still at the stage

of aspirations for the system. It seems that at all levels of the education and training system, from Education and Training Quality Assurance bodies through to classroom practitioners, the potential benefits of an appropriate mix of theory and practice are seen. In addition, partnerships and collaboration are seen to be important mechanisms to enact an integrated curriculum. These partnerships may take on many forms, such as in joint design of qualifications, curricula and learning programmes, in quality assurance and in the delivery of learning programmes.

However, a note of warning must be registered. The balance between the need to enhance employability and thus become more responsive to the needs of graduates, with the purposes of education, seems to be influenced by neo-liberal economic policies. These may tip the scale to focus narrowly on the market orientation of education and training, rather than on enhancing critical thinking, social development and citizenship.

Nevertheless, much support is evident for practices that worked well in the past, that is where relationships were built between institutions of learning and the professions. There seems to be the need to extend such relationships to qualifications, which did not traditionally offer a workplace practicum, as a prerequisite for the right to practise within a profession, and increasingly to include industry-based learning, or other forms of practical application of theory in authentic workplace situations.

Such practices seem to need structural relationships between partners in order to establish vertical and horizontal articulation routes and alignment between sectors, which could be incentivised by cross-sectoral funding arrangements. The absence of such structural relationships and funding arrangements are seen to be the major systemic blockage preventing integration, at this level, from taking place.

7.4 Conclusions – The Complementarity of Education and Training

The fourth Research Question, namely *Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning?*, was investigated as this part of the inquiry. Unlike many of the previous lenses or perspectives on integration, this lens seems to hold the greatest promise for the realisation of the ideal of an integrated framework. This seems to stem from the

recognition that an integrated framework celebrates difference and diversity in accordance with the purposes and the role of qualifications on a continuum of a learning system. While some commentators insist that the epistemological characteristics of education and of training are incommensurable, this view was disconfirmed by many other comments in relation to the value that discipline-based learning and workplace practice could bring to each of the poles on the continuum of the learning system. Strong views were expressed that workplace-based qualifications cannot stand alone, as the delivery of such qualifications would lack thorough theoretical grounding, as well as the development of cognitive abilities and the broader social goals engendered by learning in discipline-based environments.

However, equally strong views were expressed that discipline-based qualifications need components as part of a holistic curriculum that will enhance employability and workplace skills. 'Pure' academic qualifications offered in public schools and universities were seen to be non-responsive to the needs of graduates in terms of their employability. However, warnings were sounded about an overt vocationalisation of education, in the sense that education becomes narrowly instrumental, ignoring the broader development of graduates.

Nevertheless, while education policies in South Africa may have been influenced by neo-liberal economic policies, the call for improved employability of graduates is most likely rooted in the realities of South African society. Part of these realities includes the notion that the entire system is geared towards entry to universities, possibly because the university sector holds the greatest esteem in the system. However, the other realities seem to include the view that many school-leavers (those who are able to meet the minimum requirements for entry to public higher education institutions), and graduates from universities are not employable. A balance between these opposing socio-political imperatives is seen to be attainable through the appropriate mix of theory and practice.

The general view seems to be that the best of both worlds, in appropriate ratios of disciplinary education and workplace practice, could enhance and support integration. Curricular integration is thus strongly supported. However, while much curricular integration in the past has evolved naturally through relationships between institutions

and professions, (and these relationships are held up as good examples of linked qualifications), there seems to be the need to facilitate many more of these relationships through structural arrangements, including cross-sectoral funding. Such relationships and collaboration are seen to have the potential in enhancing qualification and curriculum design, quality assurance, delivery of programmes, articulation and progression routes, and access.

It seems to be possible, therefore, to infer that an integrated framework could have a substantial influence on the change in the relationship between education and training. An integrated framework could, if structural arrangements are facilitated, thus enhance the complementarity between education and training by recognising that the distinct purposes of the two opposite poles of the system are not in opposition, but could, in fact, strengthen the system.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE FUTURE OF INTEGRATION: THEORY, POLICY AND RESEARCH

...many societies don't get things right the first time. So, they try something, and they mess it up, and they mess it up in the implementation, and then they try something else, and then they come back, and so, you see very often this policy churn¹

The final chapter reflects on the South African National Qualifications Framework (SANQF) as an integrated framework, particularly in relation to the main research question To what extent does the South African education and training system reflect in principle, perception and practice, the ideal of an integrated national qualifications framework? In doing so, it evaluates the research questions, the methodology and the conceptual framework for the study. It also presents the key findings of the inquiry. The Research Questions and the results for each question, in relation to the particular perspective of an integrated framework, are summarised in 8.2. Section 8.3 discusses methodological issues, including the research instruments and the limitations to the study. The key findings are presented in 8.4. The question asked in 8.5, namely 'Is integration an unattainable ideal?', represents the central point of departure of the inquiry. The conceptual framework for the study and consequently the particular perspective of the study is discussed in 8.6. Further research, to investigate additional puzzles in the development and implementation of an integrated framework, is discussed in 8.7. The chapter concludes (8.8) with some reflections on my journey through the study.

¹ Executive Officer of the South African Qualifications Authority

8.1 Introduction

South Africa is one of many countries that have decided to implement a national qualifications framework as a key instrument of reform of education and training systems. As such, the South African National Qualifications Framework (SANQF) is considered one of the 'first generation' NQFs. Many countries that are implementing so-called second and third generation frameworks visit and invite the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) to visit them in order to learn from the South African example, particularly countries in the Southern African Development Community (SADC). However, the South African example is perhaps the only one that links the reform of its education and training system to social justice, redress and the transformation of its larger society.

The national qualifications framework movement is a young one – the oldest NQF, the Scottish example, is barely twenty years old. Internationally, twenty years is not considered a long period in relation to the time that it takes from the implementation of radical reforms to the point where major changes in practice become evident. South Africa's NQF is barely nine years old and, if one considers that at least the first two to three years were spent on developing regulations and setting up new bureaucratic structures to take responsibility for standards and qualifications development and quality assurance, then the implementation of the SANQF has a very short history indeed. Nevertheless, within this short period, the SANQF has been subject to a formal review (2001/2002), formal proposals for changes in the system (2003), as well as a number of informal proposals that have not yet been made available to the public. In addition, a host of other discussion documents, for example the draft Higher Education Qualifications Framework (Ministry of Education, 2004), seem to take the original integrated design of the SANQF in other directions.

This period has thus been marked by policy instability, policy uncertainty, policy unpredictability, and the misalignment of policies that were meant to cover the Human Resource Development strategy and the National Skills Development Strategies. In effect, this period has been characterised by policy churn, with some critics suggesting that the SANQF was an expensive experiment that should be abandoned, and others vehemently supporting the original intentions and rationale of the framework. Yet critics and supporters alike seem to support an integrated system

in some form or another, even if the principle of integration is only espoused, and still considered very much to be at a conceptual level. This inquiry started off with the premise that there is much conceptual confusion of the principle of integration. The puzzle was that if there seems to be so much support from both critics and supporters for this first objective of the SANQF, why is there so little evidence of its implementation? The different perspectives or lenses of an integrated framework emerged from this question, which in turn led to the development of the conceptual framework for the study.

8.2 Summary of the Research Questions and Results

While the different perspectives of an integrated framework greatly assisted in sorting out the conceptual muddle surrounding integration, it became evident that these perspectives overlap. The Research Questions assisted in grouping the perspectives coherently, but it was clear that respondents, interviewees and commentators often grouped two or more perspectives together. Nevertheless, the Research Questions, linked with the seven perspectives identified in the Conceptual Framework, increasingly aided in pinpointing the different understandings, uses of and implications of an integrated framework.

The main research question, namely *To what extent does the South African education and training system reflect in principle, perception and practice, the ideal of an integrated national qualifications framework?* was supported by four additional research questions that attempted to understand an integrated framework from the different perspectives developed in the Conceptual Framework:

- i) Is the objective of an integrated South African National Qualifications Framework an example of policy symbolism?
- ii) Can the relationships between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the South African National Qualifications Framework be made meaningful through an integrated framework?
- iii) Can the development of communities of practice as a key element of an integrated framework, enhance trust amongst partners in education and training?
- iv) Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning?

The relationship between each of the questions, and the perspectives of an integrated framework was shown in each of the findings' chapters.

8.2.1 Is the Objective of an Integrated South African National Qualifications

Framework an Example of Policy Symbolism?

The first supporting research question viewed integration from a macro and conceptual perspective (refer to Chapter 5). Firstly, the macro perspective deals with the political intent, influenced by a particular historical and political moment and the ideology that underlies the formulation of policy of a new government.

The data strongly reflected the political and ideological rationale for the implementation of an education and training policy that was meant to address social justice issues. Resistance to an unjust regime, which classified a large part of the population as 'second-class citizens', social inclusion and subsequently the involvement of the intended beneficiaries of a system through the notion of the SANQF as a social construct, emerge as major themes in the discussion of integration as policy symbolism.

As a result, social justice issues particular to the South African context seem to have been conflated with historical prejudices against vocationally and occupationally oriented learning, although this is a characteristic of most education and training systems, and not only of the South African system.

Secondly, this research question dealt with the education and training system in the abstract, at a theoretical level, against the background of social justice and the underlying ideology that drove the new government. An integrated framework was meant to accord equal esteem, in contrast with the elitism and social strata silos that characterised the previous system under apartheid. Integration therefore seems to reflect a value of a new democratic society, as opposed to an authoritarian society, and was possibly strongly influenced by a socialist, egalitarian rationale. The notion of 'equal esteem' is a theme that recurs throughout the study and seems to be, in part, an attempt to recognise those individuals who have contributed to the struggle for freedom, and to enhance the life opportunities of such individuals..

The recognition that ‘ordinary people’, as opposed to the elite, have value, is reflected to some extent in the concept of the SANQF as a social construct. This seems to mean that civil society is empowered to participate, as a partner, in the formulation and construction of an education and training system; something that in the past, was structured to entrench social strata and the concomitant privilege and prestige associated with the upper levels of those strata. The idea of an integrated SANQF is thus far more than a mere ‘classification system’ of qualifications and learning programmes – it is vested with the responsibility to effect broader social transformation.

The ideology resulting from a particularly disparate political system, therefore, became the guiding philosophy for the construction of the new education and training system. In the objectives and underpinning principles, integration emerges as a meta-theme for the framework, particularly in the ways in which the new system is meant to enhance portability, progression and articulation between different components of the system. These ‘technical’ aspects of an integrated framework are thus strongly linked to the social purposes of the SANQF, namely to transform a system built on deliberate neglect, and thereby to value all learning, to achieve parity of esteem, and to enhance the freedom to move between components of the system. Whereas most national qualifications frameworks attempt to achieve greater coherence, in addition the SANQF was meant to reduce social inequalities; to award social esteem to all learning, particularly learning associated with workplace training; and, through establishing national standards for national qualifications, was also meant to reduce the differences between institutions of learning and between the advantaged and disadvantaged.

The current political impasse and the seemingly different agendas of the Departments of Education and of Labour is, therefore, seen to be a major stumbling block in the achievement of the social, transformative purposes of an integrated framework.

However, the risks of infusing an education and training system, and particularly an integrated system, with the aspirations for a transformed society are great. On the one hand, the almost blind commitment to the ideology underpinning an integrated framework may mask the real structural and epistemological difficulties that have

very little to do with ideology. On the other hand, such commitment to an ideology seems to insulate the framework, as a pragmatic construct, against criticism, to the extent that critics are branded as ‘stone-age resisters’ with ‘racial or ideological motives’ (Jansen, 2004, p. 90). Finally, the lack of progress in the achievement of these aspirations may lead to disillusionment on the part of the intended beneficiaries of the system and, consequently, disengagement from the process.

In conclusion, the answer to the question, ‘Is the objective of an integrated South African National Qualifications Framework an example of policy symbolism?’, is therefore, ‘Undoubtedly so’. Further, this symbol of the break from a past disparate and unjust system has made it inconceivable to implement the framework incrementally, as so many other frameworks have been, because the system under apartheid was completely discredited. In addition, the symbolism vested in an equitable education and training system has profoundly influenced the guiding philosophy underpinning the construction of the framework.

8.2.2 Can the Relationship between Levels, Sectors and Types of Qualifications on the South African National Qualifications Framework be made Meaningful through an Integrated Framework?

The second and third research questions viewed integration at a meso level, that is where increasingly there is a move away from the symbolic and conceptual level, to a level where an integrated framework is operationalised and ‘made practical’ (refer to Chapter 6). The second question dealt with the intrinsic logic of an integrated framework, namely with the structure of the framework and the design of qualifications that intend to describe and define the structural relationships between different levels, sectors and types of qualifications in order to establish learning pathways throughout the system. The design of the framework aims to establish progression and articulation routes and the portability of credits attained in different contexts of the framework. For this reason, the SANQF was conceptualised as a comprehensive framework, with the intention to broaden the reach of the framework and, consequently, make the whole system available to learners. This is unlike most other national qualifications frameworks, where these may cover only one particular sector, for example, the vocational sector, or the university sector. Even the Scottish system, which is considered a ‘unified’ system, consists of sub-frameworks or

‘frameworks within frameworks’. An important implication of the comprehensiveness of the South African framework is that it is much more difficult to establish meaningful links between the sectors included on the framework. These difficulties became evident from the data. The structure of the framework and the design of qualifications, that is the intrinsic logic of the framework, is not a sufficient measure to establish structural relationships. Whereas common levels, standards and common criteria for the inclusion of qualifications on the framework were considered to be mechanisms to enhance equivalence between such qualifications, it is evident that there are important constraints.

The first includes the lack of parity of esteem between institutions of learning. While the quantitative data indicated that respondents believed that qualifications are of equal value and that it is possible to transfer credits between different institutions and contexts, this was largely disconfirmed by the interviews. Neither the qualifications offered at different public institutions, nor the qualifications offered at public and private institutions were considered equally valuable. The quantitative data, therefore, seemed to reflect the aspirations for the system, rather than actual practice.

Further, the degree of prescriptiveness for the inclusion of qualifications on the SANQF, that is the architecture of qualifications, did not result in sufficient commonalities for such qualifications to be considered equivalent, particularly between the two main types of qualifications – unit-standards based and non-unit-standards based qualifications. It also became evident that to achieve any kind of meaningful relationship between different types of qualification and different contexts, a much more deliberate approach is needed, where stakeholders representing the different sectors engage in joint planning, qualifications design and quality assurance, which seems to take the intrinsic logic of the framework into the realm of institutional logic. Where such deliberate efforts were undertaken in sub-sectors of the framework, it became evident that learning and career paths were improved. Such a holistic view of the qualifications of the sub-sector was made possible by the development of credit matrices or qualification maps for the sub-sector. It therefore seems likely that learners within a particular sub-sector would increasingly be able to transfer credits, and embark on learning and career paths within that sector. However, this is not necessarily true for cross-sectoral pathways.

Therefore, in answer to the question, ‘Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the South African National Qualifications Framework be made meaningful through an integrated framework?’, the data indicates that this has not happened to any great degree, except in structural relationships within particular sub-sectors. This may mean that the South African system is seeing the emergence of a number of sub-frameworks that are linked, rather than integrated with other sub-sectors. The scope of the framework and the comprehensiveness of the South African framework, in particular, are not currently seen to enhance the establishment of an integrated framework. It seems that the greater the scope, the more difficult it is to establish structural relationships across all sectors of the education and training system. Structural relationships seem to require changes in the institutional logic of an integrated framework, which was addressed in the third research question.

8.2.3 Can the Development of Communities of Practice Enhance Trust amongst Partners in Education and Training?

The third research question (Chapter 6) is closely associated with the second question, and thus also dealt with the meso level perspective of an integrated framework. This question investigated the institutional logic of an integrated framework, that is the policy breadth of the system. Policy breadth refers, in the first place, to the congruence of legislation, regulation and sector and institutional policies of institutions that find themselves under the ambit of the Human Resource Development strategy (largely the responsibility of the Department of Education) and the National Skills Development Strategy (the responsibility of the Department of Labour) and, in the second place, to agreed overall plans for the system supported and endorsed by these two departments. However, this ‘divided ownership’ of the overall human resource and skills development strategies was seen as an important constraint for the development of communities of practice and trust, particularly because the perception seems to be that the two heads of these ministries have had inter-personal problems and, consequently, that their differences are about ‘fighting for turf’, rather than being based on principled differences.

Further, the development of communities of practice and trust should be seen against the background of widespread ‘mistrust’ in the previous system, where even good practice in the previous system was discredited. Again, it is evident that the main

proponents of an integrated framework felt that they could not consider an incremental approach, where the system could build on existing practice rather than start from scratch. Thus, in the design of the framework, there was an attempt to build new communities of practice, through the development of qualifications through standards generation bodies representative of the main stakeholder groups. Such bodies do not necessarily include expert qualification and curriculum designers. Also, communities of practice and trust were seen to be vested in the new quality assurance bodies, which are meant to give the assurance that, through their quality assurance processes, the emerging results can be trusted. While there is evidence that in some sub-sectors the quality assurance system is engendering trust amongst institutions within that sector, it also became evident that this kind of trust is not yet emerging cross-sectorally. One of the reasons seems to be that quality assurance bodies have different foci in their quality assurance processes and, consequently, other quality assurance bodies do not consider such processes valid and, therefore, not trustworthy. Further, it seems that quality assurance per se cannot prevent the competition for students and for financial gain amongst institutions.

Where communities of practice and trust are emerging, these appear out of the need of a sub-sector, for example, between institutions of higher learning and professional bodies. It is also important to note that most of these communities of practice are communities that existed before the implementation of the SANQF. This is acknowledged, and is held up as an example of how new communities of practice could be developed. Proposals for more enabling regulation, which would enable partners to form on-the-ground networks, based on shared understandings and the need to cooperate, are made, particularly in relation to cross-departmental planning and funding.

Nevertheless, it became evident, firstly, that the notion of communities of practice is still in the realm of the intrinsic logic of the framework. In other words, communities of practice and trust currently still hinge on the design of the framework. Secondly, the major constraint to develop other communities of practice and trust is the lack of congruence in aims, legislation, regulation and policies between the two political heads of the education and training system. Finally, it seems that the intrinsic logic of

the framework has little to do with the development of on-the-ground networks, which could possibly evolve into new communities of practice and trust.

The research question, ‘Can the development of communities of practice enhance trust amongst partners in education and training?’ evidenced that trust is developing within sub-sectors of the education and training system. However, the lack of congruence between the legislation, regulation and policies of the political heads of the system seems to be constraining the development of new communities of practice within and across sectors. In fact, it seems that rather than facilitate the development of new communities of practice, new barriers are emerging. This seems to stem from, for example, the different foci and approaches of quality assurance bodies in relation to the qualifications within their ambits of responsibility. Also, the necessary institutional logic, which may influence the way in which new communities of practice and trust are formed, is not currently enabled. Such new partners need to undertake deliberate work to build shared understandings and agreements progressively, which may lead to meaningful progression and articulation routes within and across sectors, but the incentives to undertake the work, such as joint planning and cross-departmental funding, are not yet possible.

8.2.4 Can an Integrated Framework Enhance the Complementarity of Discipline-based and Workplace-based Learning?

The fourth and final supporting research question viewed integration from a micro perspective, that is at the level of implementation in the development of curricula and learning programmes. This question investigated integration as the continuum of learning, and the curricular integration that emanates from an understanding of such a continuum (refer to Chapter 7).

As in all of the previous sections, in this part of the inquiry it also became evident that the socio-political background to the development and implementation of an integrated framework tends to mask the real practical difficulties in attaining the integration of education and training. This is reflected in the discussion on the equivalence of qualifications on the framework as opposed to the recognition and valuing of difference and diversity. The socio-political imperatives underlying the reform of the system seem to have led to an epistemological conflation of education

and training, possibly rooted in the restrictive practices of the system under apartheid. The result is that where commentators argue for recognised epistemological differences, such commentators are considered ‘recalcitrant’, ‘stone-age resisters’. However, a number of commentators call for the ‘equal status’ of qualifications through socially acceptable comparabilities, which could result in parity of esteem between education and training. However, they argue against attempting to attain epistemological equivalence. In part, the argument of the hierarchical relationships between abstract learning and everyday knowledge is real and valid, but the practical difficulties of offering abstract, conceptual learning in workplaces also play an important role.

Nevertheless, increasingly there is recognition and celebration of difference and diversity. This seems to be reflected in the acknowledgment that education and training are both part of a continuum of learning, and that the continuum represents the place, purpose and role of qualifications within the system. The purpose of the qualification is thus the basis for parity of esteem. However, epistemologically, qualifications along the continuum are not seen to be equivalent.

The value of qualifications in relation to their purpose in the system is evident in the recognition that education and training could increasingly become complementary, particularly if education and training are not caricatured as ‘mental’ and ‘manual’. In addition, many respondents and commentators noted that there is an increasing trend, internationally, of combining economically useful learning appropriate to a workplace with abstract, theoretical learning and the achievement of broader social goals such as citizenship.

However, the recognition of diversity and difference seems to require a description of the most appropriate combinations of theory and practice as part of a holistic curriculum, which will straddle discipline-based learning in institutions and authentic practice in the workplace. This seems to suggest that there is an acknowledgement that the principle of integration is changing the relationship between education and training, and which may result in a ‘new’ epistemology where different types of learning, for example, applied and theoretical, are viewed as complementary and not opposing components of the system. In this regard, both the quantitative responses

and the qualitative interviews evidenced strong support for appropriate combinations of theory and practice. In addition, there is recognition that a balance should be struck between the seemingly increasing vocationalisation and marketisation of education and broader social transformation goals.

Further, the recognition of diversity and difference seems to require a much more deliberate approach to planning for progression and articulation routes. This is seen to be facilitated by structural relationships, partnerships and collaboration on qualification design, quality assurance and programme delivery, as well as a much greater alignment between sectors to achieve their common goals. An important systemic blockage that seems to be preventing such principled partnerships is the inability of institutions of learning under the ambit of the Department of Education to access funding from the Department of Labour, which has an interest in linking qualifications in order to achieve the skills development objectives.

In conclusion, in answer to the question, ‘Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning?’, the data seems to suggest that this is indeed the case. Integration viewed as a continuum of learning, supported by the development of appropriate holistic curricula, which includes theory and practice in appropriate combinations along the continuum, learning programmes and delivery methodologies, seems to hold the greatest promise for the achievement of an integrated framework. One of the main reasons seems to be that those who deal with the enactment of curricula, at the coalface of education and training delivery, see the benefits for enhanced quality of education and training in keeping with the needs of a modern system.

8.3 Methodological Reflections

This inquiry was based on data collected for three different purposes. The first was for the National Qualifications Framework Impact Study, Cycle 1 (pilot study) and Cycle 2 (baseline study), which included qualitative and quantitative data. The second dataset emanated from public responses to *An Interdependent National Qualifications Framework System: Consultative Document*, jointly published by the Department of Education and the Department of Labour (2003) as a response to the review of the SANQF undertaken in 2001 and published as the *Report of Study Team*

on the Implementation of the National Qualifications Framework (2002). The third dataset consisted of six unstructured interviews with members of the South African Qualifications Authority undertaken in May and July 2006.

Except for the last dataset, data collection for the first two datasets did not purpose to investigate an integrated framework per se. The NQF Impact Study has a much broader purpose, and included, in the first two cycles, data collection across four organising sets, which include 17 Impact Indicators (refer to Chapter 4):

- The extent to which qualifications address the education and training needs of learners and South African society
- The extent to which the delivery of learning programmes address the education and training needs of learners and the South African society
- The extent to which quality assurance arrangements enhance the effectiveness of education and training
- The extent to which the NQF has had a wider social, economic and political impact in building a lifelong learning culture.

Further, the NQF Impact Study did not attempt to investigate the fine grain of practice, but to determine *indications* of impact. While a number of Impact Indicators thus addressed ‘integration’ and its associated principles such as ‘portability’, ‘progression’, ‘articulation’, and so forth, the responses were of necessity quite brief. Nevertheless, the fact that both Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 contained questions about integration in general made it possible to extract a substantial dataset. However, owing to the sampling approach for Cycle 2, namely purposive quota sampling, it was not always possible to ensure that the most knowledgeable person in the organisation sampled (university, college, workplace, employer) would complete the questionnaire, undergo the supporting interviews, or participate in the focus groups. The learner focus groups in particular produced very little usable data. In terms of the quantitative data, it was a matter of concern for the Research Team responsible for the NQF Impact Study that so many responses tended towards the median ‘Agree’. This is a methodological concern that will have to be considered for the future cycles of the NQF Impact Study. However, it may also suggest that there is overwhelming support for the principle of an integrated framework. Nevertheless, while some sets of

responses indicated some difference across categories of respondents, in general the overall responses and the category-specific responses were almost identical and not always congruent with the qualitative responses in the interviews.

The second dataset, based on public responses to *An Interdependent National Qualifications Framework System: Consultative Document*, was therefore particularly useful. The selection of responses utilised for this inquiry included responses from Education and Training Quality Assurance bodies across different sectors, including Higher Education and General and Further Education, as well as Sector Education and Training Authorities, organised labour organisations, professional bodies, umbrella bodies such as the CTP and the SAUVCA (now merged into Higher Education South Africa) private higher education institutions, the National Skills Authority, and a political party. This dataset produced particularly rich and detailed commentaries on an integrated framework. The strength of this dataset stems from the fact that highly knowledgeable persons, representing their particular sector responses, compiled the public comment. In addition, these comments were largely unsolicited and unguided by interview schedules or questionnaire statements. The use of this dataset also afforded the opportunity to engage with the debates raging about the SANQF, something that the Research Team for the Impact Study deliberately avoided and, thus, this dataset added a particularly rich dimension to the data utilised for this inquiry.

The final dataset, the unstructured interviews with six members of the South African Qualifications Authority, was undertaken for two reasons, namely to confirm the currency of the views expressed by the respondents and interviewees for Cycle 1 (2003/2004) and 2 (2004/2005) of the NQF Impact Study, and to gauge the perceptions of the members of the Authority, since these are likely to influence the direction of the education and training system substantially, in particular in relation to an integrated framework. The responses of these members were largely congruent with the data collected for the two cycles of the NQF Impact Study, which suggests strongly, as noted in both reports of the NQF Impact Study, that integration is still largely at a conceptual level.

8.3.1 *Research Instruments*

Except for the last dataset, the research instruments used for Cycle 1 and 2 were not, as noted earlier, primarily focused on an integrated framework (Annexure 6). Nevertheless, the qualitative research instruments for Cycle 1 were largely appropriate and useful. However, the quantitative instrument for Cycle 2 raised concerns owing to the large number of median responses. The six-point scale, ‘Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree, Don’t know, Too soon to say’, may need to be revisited for a finer differentiation in responses². In addition, of necessity, the supporting interviews focused on responses where respondents strongly disagreed or strongly agreed, and thus did not produce detailed qualitative responses, which may have explained the differences between the quantitative data and the qualitative responses.

The unstructured interview with six members of the South African Qualifications Authority was based on a single question, namely ‘What do you understand by integration’ or ‘What does an integrated framework mean to you?’ Deeper probes, namely, ‘What are the implications if we do not achieve an integrated framework?’, were used for two of the respondents, but for the remaining four this seemed unnecessary. This instrument was thus useful and appropriate for the target respondents.

8.3.2 *Limitations*

The most important limitation to this study is closely associated with one of the key findings of the study, namely that an integrated framework is still largely an aspiration for the system, rather than practice. The SANQF has had a very short history. In the nine years of its existence much has been achieved, but an integrated framework has not yet been operationalised in a substantial way. Successful approaches are limited, and even in those pockets where integration seems to have been implemented, the success or failure of such approaches will only become evident once a cohort of learners has been able to navigate their way through the system.

² A recommendation that will be made to the Research Team for Cycle 3 of the NQF Impact Study, which will be initiated by the end of 2006.

The second limitation stems from the fact that, except for the final dataset, the other datasets were intermingled with other issues dealing with the system on a much broader level. A single set of research instruments would have facilitated comparability across sectors and respondents.

The third limitation is also closely related to one of the key findings. It was extraordinarily difficult to separate ideology from pragmatic decisions about the SANQF. Much deliberation was thus needed in order to isolate and separate the socio-political ideals from possible emerging practice.

8.4 Key Findings

8.4.1 Key Finding 1: Socio-Political Aspirations

The socio-political aspirations, reflected in the notion that an integrated framework is a powerful symbol of the break from a past disparate system, have profoundly influenced the underpinning ideology for the system. While it is acknowledged that symbolism is important, particularly in South Africa, the blind commitment to an integrated framework seems to mask real and important difficulties in achieving an integrated framework. Likewise, the ideology, as the guiding philosophy of the system, seems to insulate an integrated framework against criticism, with critics branded as resisters. The risks of infusing an education and training system with the aspirations of a transforming society are great. Where such aspirations are not seen to be realised, key intended beneficiaries may become disillusioned and feel betrayed, resulting in disengagement with the collaboration required to achieve their ideals for the system.

8.4.2 Key Finding 2: Integration in the Abstract

Related to the previous finding, it is evident that integration is still largely at a conceptual level. No substantial attempts have been made by the political heads of the system to analyse and operationalise the meanings of integration at a systemic level. In this regard, the conceptual framework for this study has greatly assisted in sorting through the muddle of the meanings and uses of integration. If it is understood that an integrated framework, as a meta-theme for the system, purposes to enhance meaningful progression, articulation and credit transfer, then the operationalisation of these concepts may become more tangible.

8.4.3 Key Finding 3: The Esteem of Vocational Education

The ideology underpinning a new and equitable system seems to be ignoring the fact that vocational education, internationally, is struggling to achieve parity of esteem with the traditional, prestigious, academic stream of education. This is reflected in the drive for parity of esteem of qualifications attained in the different sectors of education, by placing them at the same level of the SANQF. This is perhaps not surprising in the South African context, given the disparate system of the past, with academic education associated with white privilege and vocational and occupationally-based education associated with black suppression, but the equivalence of qualifications should not be confused with equal esteem for qualifications, regardless of where they were achieved. Equal esteem for learning may be a reasonable assumption, but equivalence between qualifications may be an unattainable ideal.

8.4.4 Key Finding 4: Social Inclusion

The stakeholder principle espoused by the SANQF is strongly supported by respondents, interviewees and commentators alike. However, this principle is also strongly criticised, possibly because it is seen to alienate experts, who traditionally were responsible for qualification and standards design and curriculum development. Nevertheless, this approach to qualifications and standards design, and quality assurance has gone a long way in reassuring civil society that its voice is heard in an environment where, in the past, decisions were made on behalf of the greater part of the population. This is an important achievement for the SANQF, and the buy-in that was attained as a result of this approach should, if possible, be maintained, albeit in a different form. While this finding does not address an integrated framework directly, it seems important to retain the support and endorsement of civil society for its involvement and ownership of the system.

8.4.5 Key Finding 5: The Intrinsic Logic of the Framework

The design features of an integrated framework are important and helpful in outlining the progression and articulation routes for learners who are attempting to develop a learning and career path. However, the comprehensiveness of a framework can inhibit, rather than aid integration. An all-encompassing framework seems to require much more detailed descriptions of progression and articulation routes across the

system. Given that a comprehensive framework includes all levels and types of qualifications, the intrinsic logic of the framework seems unlikely to achieve the relationships needed to enhance progression and articulation routes on its own. The design of the framework could enhance progression and articulation through other measures such as credit matrices and qualification map, but, even so, will still need the institutional logic to support the broad design.

8.4.6 Key Finding 6: The Institutional Logic of the Framework

The institutional logic of an integrated framework hinges on the extent to which the institutions are enabled to develop relationships with other sectors in the education and training system. However, this kind of policy breadth currently does not seem to exist. There seems to be limited congruence in the legislation, regulation and policies of the two Departments responsible for the implementation of the SANQF. The divided ownership of the SANQF is considered a serious constraint for the development of principled partnerships that may straddle education and training.

8.4.7 Key Finding 7: Articulation between Qualifications

The difference between the two main types of qualifications on the framework cannot be reduced by stating that the debate over unit-standards based and non-unit-standards based qualifications should be put to rest (DoE & DoL, 2003). It became evident that articulation between these two types of qualification is difficult. An alternative approach to articulation should be investigated, possibly by making use of a unitised, modular approach, which could, in the case of unit-standard based qualifications, include a number of unit standards in a composite unit of learning, while non-unit-standards based qualifications could arrange the learning in modules. The Scottish system has been successful in utilising units of learning and modules, which seem to enable credit transfer across different types of qualifications (Hart, 2005).

8.4.8 Key Finding 8: The Emergence of Sub-frameworks

The strongest evidence of the implementation of an integrated framework occurred in sub-frameworks of the system, for example, in the engineering sector and health professions sector as examples of the development of 'new' communities of practice. This is an important and significant finding. Integration evolved naturally as a result of the need of the sub-sector. Within the sector it is, therefore, possible to develop

qualification maps and matrices that are useful and meaningful to the sector. This suggests that an integrated framework may increasingly move towards a linked system. It also seems to suggest that to achieve the ideal of an integrated framework, it may not be useful to create the impression that integration can be achieved by political fiat. Integration will occur where it is necessary and useful.

8.4.9 Key Finding 9: Communities of Practice

It became evident that the distrust between the education and training sectors is still quite widespread. This is partly due to the distrust of the previous system, but it also became evident that new unintended barriers are emerging, particularly in relation to the differences in the approach to quality assurance, which seem to cast doubt on the trustworthiness of the quality of qualifications subject to different quality assurance regimes. As in the case of the previous finding, communities of practice and, consequently, the trust formed between partners within such communities, evolve out of the need of a particular community. Again, as in the previous finding, trust cannot be regulated. However, enabling regulation, particularly in relation to agreed quality assurance approaches, could enhance the development of communities of practice. Problems with the differences in quality assurance regimes are well documented (SAQA, 2005).

8.4.10 Key Finding 10: A Continuum of Learning and Curricular Integration

The continuum of learning and curricular integration, that is the integration of theory and practice in qualifications, curricula and learning programmes, produced the strongest evidence of integration. A continuum of learning, whereby the purposes, place and objectives of a particular qualification are valued, is well accepted and supported. Increasingly, education and training institutions seem to be recognising that difference and diversity in terms of qualifications do not necessarily equate to 'better or worse'. Rather, there is an acknowledgement that, in a modern education and training system, most qualifications tend to converge towards the middle of the continuum of learning and that it is valuable to include, in holistic curricula, economically useful learning, authentic workplace practice, as well as solid theoretical groundings to such practice. The complementarity of discipline-based learning and workplace-based practice, in this context is thus strongly supported.

8.4.11 Key Finding 11: Principled Partnerships

The positive finding under Key Finding 10 is tempered by the constraints experienced by education and training institutions in developing principled partnerships. As in the case of many of the previous findings, the development of principled partnerships, which may facilitate cross-sectoral planning of progression and articulation routes, qualification mapping and curriculum design in order to achieve curricular integration, is still at the level of aspiration for the system. The systemic blockage is perceived to be the inability of institutions, which fall under the ambit of the Department of Education (for example, public universities, universities of technology and further education and training colleges), to access funding from the National Skills Fund administered by the Department of Labour. As before, the divided ownership of the system is seen to be problematic.

8.5 An Integrated Framework: An Unattainable Ideal?

If the goals of an integrated, high quality education and training system that will facilitate access, mobility and progression for the individuals in the system in order to achieve their full personal development, no longer hold, then we should develop new objectives. If however, these are still true, then we have to find ways in which to make this possible (Blom, 2006c, p. 16).

The main research question asks, ‘To what extent does the South African education and training system reflect in principle, perception and practice, the ideal of an integrated framework?’ The data suggest that the principle of an integrated framework is strongly espoused in its symbolic importance to the system. Likewise, in the defence of an integrated framework against the proposed changes to the framework, it is clear from the data that many respondents cherish the notion of integration but that, in practice, the ideal of an integrated framework is far from being realised. It is evident from the data that many people blame the lack of integration on political indecision, the different agendas and the lack of strategic direction of the two departments politically responsible for the implementation of an integrated framework. While lack of political will certainly seems to impact on the system at a macro level, the data also suggest that there are many structural difficulties associated with a comprehensive and unified framework. A comprehensive framework requires much more deliberate work to align the sub-sectors of the system. The structure of the framework and the design of qualifications, common standards and agreed quality assurance systems do not necessarily facilitate integration on its own. Further,

opposing epistemologies that are characteristic of discipline-based and workplace-based learning still remain a major constraint. Nevertheless, the data suggest that the greatest promise for the achievement of the ideal of an integrated framework seems to be located in the integration of theoretical and applied learning and in the principled partnerships needed to enact integrated curricula. However, even at this micro level, integration is seriously constrained by difficulties experienced at the meso and macro levels of the system. This may mean that an integrated framework can only be built from the ‘bottom up’, that is, where it is meaningful within a particular context – often within a particular sub-sector of the system. This may also mean that rather than more regulation, less regulation is needed that will remove unintended barriers created by the many structures of the system responsible for standards and qualification development and quality assurance, each with their own legislative mandates and reporting requirements. This may enable the development of relationships where there is a need, including cross-sectoral relationships which may require cross-sectoral funding. The data strongly suggest that this is where integration is already occurring naturally.

In conclusion, firstly, the importance of the symbolism of an integrated framework should not be underestimated. On the one hand, the deeply felt passion for a transformed education and training system and by implication, a transformed society, seems to have remained a strong motivator for continued support of an integrated system. On the other hand, it is evident that a strongly espoused ideology may mask real practical problems in achieving an integrated framework and seems to insulate the principle against critique.

Secondly, the SANQF cannot be seen, to any great extent, as an integrated framework. It is evident that stating that the framework is ‘integrated’ does not make it so. Integration cannot be achieved by political fiat. The intrinsic logic of an integrated framework only seems to be meaningful if the institutional logic of an integrated framework, and a credible theory of action to enable integration, is taken very seriously. Integration, seems at a systemic level, can only be realised where account is taken of the resources required, where the constraints and impediments are considered and where realistic, incremental milestones are determined.

In the third place, it is evident that an integrated framework, despite its intentions, does not improve parity of esteem. There is no parity between education and training qualifications, between institutions (public/public and public/private) and consequently, there is also no parity between the holders of qualifications attained in different contexts and at different sites of learning. Parity may ultimately only be achieved when the quality of learning programmes and programme delivery are improved. Related to the previous point, portability of learning seems only possible where articulation routes are deliberately planned for and clearly described. The vision of seamless mobility of learners who are attempting to make their way through the system may only be realised through deliberate articulation bridges within and between sub-sectors of the education and training system. Again, this may only be enabled through improved quality of learning within those sub-sectors.

In the fourth place, trust, and consequently, the communities of practice necessary for building articulation routes, cannot be enforced by regulation. This is evident from the lack of trust in the quality of qualifications and a questioning of the rigour of quality assurance regimes utilised in different sectors of the education and training system despite the claim that all education and training providers are subject to the same quality criteria. Trust seems to be engendered through joint planning, meaningful partnerships and joint responsibility for the quality of the system.

Finally, the greatest promise for real change in the education and training system, and therefore in achieving an integrated system, seems to be in the acknowledgement that education and training epistemologies are not incommensurable, but could increasingly become complementary. From a policy point of view, it may ultimately be more meaningful to focus on how the global trend of education and training convergence could be enabled. Thus, policy development in relation to an integrated framework needs to find the right balance between the regulatory purposes, namely the ‘tight’ features of a qualifications framework, and the ‘looser’ communication purposes that will enable the development of appropriate fit for purpose approaches within particular contexts. Crucially, policy directions should enable the development of communities of practice, and this seems only possible through an enabling, rather than regulatory structure.

8.6 The Conceptual Framework for the Study

The concept of an integrated framework has, in South Africa, become infused with socio-political aspirations for a transformed society. This is unlike other countries where unified frameworks are being implemented and where these are seen as a technical requirement to make the system easier to understand. The different perspectives on integration developed in the conceptual framework for this study thus assisted in clarifying the integrative intentions of qualifications frameworks in general and the SANQF specifically. The seven lenses on integration were useful in facilitating an improved understanding of integration in the South African context and assisted in separating ideology from structure while retaining the guiding philosophy of the framework. Through the data it became evident that it is difficult to develop a comprehensive, integrated framework, not because of resistance to the ideology underpinning the framework, as the ideology is one of the most enduring features of the new system, but because of a poor understanding of the technical mechanisms needed to implement such a system. While the first two lenses, symbolism and a guiding philosophy, therefore provided a perspective on the social justice issues that sit behind the rationale for an integrated framework, the remaining lenses provided the socio-technical prerequisites for successful implementation. The data strongly support this view. In the investigation into the scope, architecture and the policy breadth of the SANQF, the most prominent problems experienced were related to structure, design and lack of congruence of planning and regulation. Also, it became evident that structure and design can assist, but do not ensure implementation. Implementation is enhanced through joint strategic alignment of the system in the recognition of the kinds of interventions that will have to be undertaken in order for the composite parts of the system to articulate. Currently, it is clear that education and training are still completely separate, and that the two systems have had different development trajectories. Further, these different trajectories, with their concomitant structures, foci and regimes, seem to be constraining the development of communities of practice that could embody the two final lenses of the conceptual framework, namely a continuum of learning and the integrated curricula that give meaning to such a continuum. The conceptual framework for the study greatly assisted in clarifying the greatest promise for the ideal of an integrated framework, as these last two lenses evidenced the most positive attempts to implement an integrated framework.

8.7 Further Research

Further research should therefore focus on the diversity of practice, in particular in terms of the development of meaningful communities of practice, as recognition of the emergence of strong sub-frameworks, and the bridges that need to be developed between such frameworks. In investigating how such communities naturally develop, conceptualise the work at hand, and enact the purposes of the community, good practice could be extrapolated to an ever widening circle of implementation.

In keeping with the stated and well-supported principle of parity of esteem, inquiries into how the stepsisters of the system, vocational and occupationally based learning could be improved, seems crucial. The placement of academic and vocational/occupational qualifications at the same level does not ensure parity. It seems evident that parity will only be achieved if the quality of vocational/occupationally based learning is seen to be improving.

Finally, research into the emergence of a ‘new epistemology’, with the appropriate mix of theory and practice in keeping with the purposes of qualifications, ‘brokered by new relationships between institutions and workplaces and more diverse delivery modes’ (Blom, Coetzee & Shapiro, 2005, p. 5) and through the development of holistic curricula, learning programmes and assessment regimes which take cognisance of the increasing convergence of education and training, seems important.

8.8 Reflections

This inquiry was a lesson in humility: humility in what policy makers can achieve in their vision for a transformed system. A vision, an ideology and deeply felt passions are not enough to effect large-scale changes in our education and training system.

When I started out on the investigation of the SANQF as an integrated framework, as many of the respondents of the study, I felt equally frustrated by what seemed to be a lack of political will by the two departments responsible for the implementation of the framework, and felt equally betrayed by their indecision, particularly as I work for the organisation that is taking the brunt of the criticism emerging from all levels of the system. However, while the political impasse is constraining the development of innovative approaches to a new system, it became evident to me that other difficulties,

unrelated to the political leadership, have not sufficiently been taken into account. Thus, I found myself vacillating between hope and despair. An integrated framework is such a strong expression of the hope and aspirations of our emerging society and, as a member of that society, I wanted to retain the idealism embodied in a new, equitable society. My despair stemmed from the realisation that idealism needs to be backed up by much hard work, hard thinking and consistent efforts in the face of unexpected barriers, deeply entrenched views and practices and vested interests. Yet, I find myself feeling hopeful again. Firstly, in recognising that perhaps we need to take one step forward, and should be willing to take a few steps back, before moving forward again. Secondly, in experiencing the genuine sincerity with which most people, at all levels and contexts of our education and training system, are trying to grapple with and embody the principles of the SANQF. I therefore remain committed to an education and training system that has as its guiding philosophy the recognition of the value of human beings for whom such a system is set up, wherever they find themselves within the system, and whichever form the system may take in the future.

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ANNEXURE 1

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS

pp. 220 – 275 (Annexure page no's start at 1 for referencing in the text)

1.1 Data Sources

NQF Impact Study data for Cycle 1 (SAQA, 2004), including

- Annexure 3: Analysis of contextualisation interviews
- Annexure 5: Analysis of employer interviews
- Annexure 6: Analysis of focus group interviews
- Annexure 7: Analysis of departmental interviews
- Annexure 8: Analysis of union interviews
- Annexure 9: Analysis of provider interviews

NQF Impact Study data for Cycle 2 (SAQA, 2005), including

- Annexure 2: Analysis of Education and Training Quality Assurance bodies interviews
- Annexure 3: Analysis of departmental interviews
- Annexure 4: Analysis of providers
- Annexure 5: Analysis of labour interviews
- Annexure 6: Analysis of employer interviews

Interviews with the South African Qualifications Authority Board members and senior management staff

1.2 Themes, codes and sub-codes

1.2.1 Policy symbolism

- Break from the past
- Intentions of the framework
 - Integration
 - Education and training

- Congruent legislation and regulation
 - Architecture
 - Theory and practice
 - Progression
 - Linkages
- Policy borrowing
- Political contestation

1.2.2 Guiding philosophy

- Conceptual framework for the education and training system
 - Mobility
 - Articulation
 - Portability
 - Integration
 - Academic and vocational
 - Education and training
- Parity of esteem
 - Value all learning
 - Institutions
 - Qualifications
 - Vocational
 - Academic

1.2.3 Scope

- Coherence
 - Coordination
 - Political contestation
 - Different systems
- Linkages

- Progression
 - Qualification sub-frameworks
 - Old and new
 - Learning pathways
- Joint responsibility
- Portability
 - Institutions
 - Articulation
 - Coordination
 - Structural problems and differences
 - Quality assurance
- Public/private and public/public
 - Collaboration
 - Parity of esteem

1.2.4 Architecture

- Articulation
 - Relationships
 - Public/private
 - University/technikon
 - Credit transfer
 - Joint planning
 - Agreed standards
- Portability
 - Structure of the qualification
 - Agreements
 - Collaboration
 - Quality assurance

1.2.5 Policy breadth

- Communities of practice
 - Quality assurance
- Establishment of trust
 - Stakeholder involvement
 - Collaboration of sub-structures
 - Joint design
 - Partnerships
 - Alignment of strategies
 - Employment grading
 - Relationships
- Credit accumulation
- Coherence

1.2.6 Continuum of learning

- Epistemologies
 - Divide between education and training
 - Discipline-based and workplace-based
 - Divide between institutions and workplaces
 - Parity of esteem

1.2.7 Curricular integrability

- Theory and practice
 - Workplace based qualifications
 - Workplace preparation
 - Employability
 - Curricula
 - Collaboration
 - Relationships

- Partnerships
- Joint planning
- Relevance to the world of work

1.3 References

- For the NQF Impact Study Cycle 1 Annexures the following referencing method is used: **(1:5:17)**, which means that the data has been extracted from the **Cycle 1** Annexures; it is **Annexure 5**; in Annexure 5, the reference is on **page 17**.
- For the NQF Impact Study Cycle 2 Annexures the following referencing method is used: **(2:9:21)**, which means that the data has been extracted from the **Cycle 2** Annexures; it is **Annexure 9**; in Annexure 9, the reference is on **page 21**.
- For the interviews with SAQA Board members and senior management:

Name	Representative of:	Reference
Ms Marietta van Rooyen	The Association of Private Providers of Education and Training (APPETD)	MvR
Mr Ken Hall	Business South Africa (BUSA)	KH
Prof Saleem Badat	Council on Higher Education (CHE)	SB
Ms Sue Muller	National Professional Teachers Organisation of South Africa (NAPTOSA)	SM
Dr Adi Paterson	Dept of Science and Technology	AP
Mr Samuel Isaacs	Executive Officer of the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)	SI

1.4 Abbreviations

Abbreviations are used to indicate the stakeholder group represented by the respondent. The table below provides a full list of abbreviations:

Abbreviations: Cycle 1	Description	Abbreviations: Cycle 2	Description
DoE	National Dept of Education	DoE NAT	National Dept of Education
DoL	National Dept of Labour	DoL GAU/KZN/LIM/NW/WC	Gauteng, Kwa-Zulu Natal, Limpopo, North-west, Western Cape Dept.s of Labour
ECEducation	Eastern Cape Dept of Education	EMP Large MPU	Large employer Mpumalanga
ECLabour	Eastern Cape Dept of Labour	EMP SMME NW	Small employer North-West
ETQA manager	Education and Training Quality Assurance manager	EMP SMME GAU	Small employer Gauteng
FET Private GAU	Further Education and Training institution, Private, Gauteng	ETQA	Education and Training Quality Assurance body
FET Private WC	Further Education and Training institution, Private, Western Cape	FET Private GAU/WC/NAT/NW	Private further Education and Training College Gauteng/Western Cape/National/North West
GD Education	Gauteng Dept of Education	FET Public GAU/MPU	Public Further Education and Training College Gauteng/Mpumalanga
GD Labour	Gauteng Dept of Labour		
HET Public GAU	Higher Education Institution, Public, Gauteng	FET PR-PUB NAT	Private/public partnership FET National
IMWG member	Inter-Ministerial Working Group member	GET/ABET Private GAU	General Education and Adult Basic Education and Training Gauteng/Kwazulu
Nat DoE	National Dept of Education	GET/ABET Private KZN	
Nat DoL	National Dept of Labour	HET Public GAU	Public Higher Education and Training Institution Gauteng/Kwazulu Natal/Limpopo
NUMSA	National Union for Mine Workers	HET Public KZN	
SACE	South African Council for Educators	HET Public LIM	Public Higher Education and Training Limpopo Focus Group
SAQA Manager	South African Qualifications Authority manager	HET Public LIM FG	
SAQA Staff	South African Qualifications Authority staff member	LAB ED FS	Organised labour (Education) Free State
Snr DoE official	Senior Dept of Education official		
Snr DoL official	Senior Dept of Labour official		
University Principal	Vice Chancellor of a public university		
WCEducation	Western Cape Dept of Education		
WCLabour	Western Cape Dept of Labour		

RESEARCH QUESTION 1: Is the objective of an integrated SANQF an example of policy symbolism?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Break from the past 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prior to the advent of the NQF there was no sign of education and training system, there was darkness in a sense. Now people believe there is education. It is an important achievement to have such a symbolic coming together of the minds. We might disagree about the mechanisms that are put in place but in terms [of] symbolism there is change. 	Snr DoE official (1:3:13)
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Break from the past 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think, the whole education and training thing is also embedded in a particular context and because we... And that is why I say, our policy intervention should be simultaneously driven by ideology and values and so on and also the context within which we have to operate. 	SB 18/05/06
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intentions of the framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More importantly is the issues of access, redress, equity and quality has been compromised. When the NQF was designed the major arguments that were raised was that we want to get the majority of our people that were marginalized by the system, and are outside of the formal education system, out of no fault of their own, who have accumulated skills and experience in the workplaces and in the communities. We will provide them with access back into education system and provide them with opportunities for them to progress from a sweeper to an engineer. That is where we have done tremendous injustice to the NQF. I think we have not been able to build a facilitative framework that allows people access and give them a picture of how they are going to travel the journey and progress. We have not moved on that side, we have set a multitude of possibilities but they are not translated and cannot be translated into a picture that will assist our people to access education and training 	Nat DoE (1:7:7)
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intentions of the framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think the legislation works well...whether the companies apply it properly, that's another matter...but I think the framework we have set up, and those who make use of it...does gain from it. I think we...we had a long history of not providing quality education for everybody. 	FET Private GAU (2:4:84)

RESEARCH QUESTION 1: Is the objective of an integrated SANQF an example of policy symbolism?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intentions of the framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think in some way the NQF is about bringing things together 	Nat DoL (1:7:10)
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intentions of the framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...so I think sometimes we get stuck in the ideological and I think a lot of the policies and so on in this country have been driven by ideological positions that adheres to particular theoretical frameworks and so on. Now, that's, I immediately want to say that that there is nothing wrong with that – and I still want to argue 20 years later that this is the correct starting point. I don't accept affordability, for example, as the correct starting point. I believe that your goals, your principles and values and all that, including the context in which you have to pursue these things are what should shape. Now, I think sometimes, where we are not honest enough – is, as much as ideology and visions and principles should drive policies and so on, at some point we have to also step back to say, but what does the empirical evidence say and if the empirical evidence is pointing in a different direction then you have to have the an interplay between the empirical evidence and ideological dispositions because otherwise we are being dishonest – the empirical must speak, and this is the point to say that there is nothing wrong with ideology driving the policy but the two must come together at some point. What does the empirical say to you now? 	SB 18/05/06
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intentions of the framework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Integration ○ Education and training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...when you talk about NQF you talk about putting together education and training as, as a basic concept, and, and it put these two together without a thin, thin line of separation I think, it does emphasize, so to say, that education without training and vice versa can't work, and it doesn't, really, come up to bear any results. They go hand in glove. 	ECLabour (1:7:11)
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intentions of the framework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Integration ○ Education and training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The major vision of NQF was to link education and the training, and these two are inseparable because you can't have theorists that cannot apply their knowledge and vice versa. Even their skills need to have some knowledge and I think we just need to balance the two. Balancing is critical. 	EC Education (1:7:11)

RESEARCH QUESTION 1: Is the objective of an integrated SANQF an example of policy symbolism?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intentions of the framework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Integration ○ Education and training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So, when I get back to the notion of an integrated learning system – an integrated learning system should establish peers, but not equals. • People who can have equal esteem for each other, equal respect... • I can sit with my technical college friends, you know who are certificated engineers...I have an equal respect for them, but I will never pretend to be equal in status to them in their practical knowledge 	KH 19/05/06
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intentions of the framework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Integration ○ Education and training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The idea simply that for the sake of looking ideologically elegant, education must simultaneously be training and training must be simultaneously be education – listen a human being has got only so much that he or she can do, in a three or four year programme • If it is not the case, why do you think that education and training can overcome...that are fundamentally social and economic structural problems of the society. I think a lot more honesty is required. • So, I think we are caught in these kind of – I am not, I am not being cynical about it, I am just very honest about the fact that – because I still believe that there is something worthwhile to hang on to – the ideological goals and so on. 	SB 18/05/06
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intentions of the framework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Integration ○ Education and training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...perhaps, when in the heady days of people's education and people's power and so on we kind of dissolved complex binaries too easily. The people's education and people power part of it and the education and training part of it. And I think that was at a point where we were kind of highly optimistic and we thought that we will kind of really show the world because we also assumed we are pretty unique, therefore we would do it differently, wouldn't make the kind of mistakes that others have made and so, so, I think there was this kind of context also. 	SB 18/05/06

RESEARCH QUESTION 1: Is the objective of an integrated SANQF an example of policy symbolism?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intentions of the framework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Progression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What we have been able to do is push standards and learnerships and extended public works programmes. All these provide quick fixes to meagre salaries. There is no sustainability, no progression, no growth. In that regard we have failed big time, we have betrayed the masses of the people, We have had 5 years to implement it, but all we are getting is an increase in the number of the young being unemployed and destitute...it means that there is something we are not doing right. 	Nat DoE (1:7:10)
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intentions of the framework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Linkages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been an attempt to link education and training through the NQF. 	GDEducation (1:7:11)
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...perhaps when in the heady days of people's education and people's power and so on we kind of dissolved complex binaries too easily. The people's education and people power part of it and the education and training part of it. And I think that was at a point where we were kind of highly optimistic and we thought that we will kind of really show the world because we also assumed we are pretty unique, therefore we would do it differently, wouldn't make the kind of mistakes that others have made and so, so, I think there was this kind of context also • ...we were assuming that a particular Cosatu model can dissolve paradoxes and contradictions... 	SB 18/05/06
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I still want to argue 20 years later that this is the correct starting point. I don't accept affordability, for example, as the correct starting point. I believe that your goals, your principles and values and all that, including the context in which you have to pursue these things are what should shape. 	SB 18/05/06
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have a kind of conception of equality, which is 'sameness', right, whereas the equity conception, which is about fair and just treatment, it is about recognising the worth of each human being and individual and his or her contribution to the economy and society 	SB 18/05/06

RESEARCH QUESTION 1: Is the objective of an integrated SANQF an example of policy symbolism?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...there was a whole lot of people that were left out and that is no longer acceptable in society 	SI 12/7/06
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We know, that our economy is held up by people who don't have these fancy qualifications but they are able to run our factories, run our banks, they are able to do a whole lot of things that are valuable to our society and somehow we are not recognising that. 	SI 12/7/06
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...we were saying that in South Africa we are trying to...I think it went something like, in South Africa, we are trying very hard to deal with...the issue of the integration of people, you know, the bigger project, where you are saying that the reason why you are bringing people together like this in this kind of education and training, is also about systemic transformation, where you are trying to break down other barriers, where most of your semi-skilled workers were black, so, you are trying to deal with that. 	SI 12/7/06
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Life opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...so you don't get the situation that if you did not go into a particular stream that your life chances then are drastically affected forever. 	SI 12/7/06
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Life opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think, the whole thing is - an integrated framework is important, but not for creating equalness, but for giving people routes to the top 	KH 19/05/06
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Life opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is about the ability of any person of any starting point to progress right through the system – that's what we mean by integration 	AP 01/06/06
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Life opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Right, so that is what I mean by integration: it means that the goal that every person, every citizen in the society can move to the highest level, should they so wish, can do that with the minimum of impediments – that's integration. 	AP 01/06/06

RESEARCH QUESTION 1: Is the objective of an integrated SANQF an example of policy symbolism?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social construct <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Societal roles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...you almost had the kind of builders and the bridge builders and all of that, but they have always had this different kind of value in society, so, you do get these kinds of comparisons, and the comparisons also make it important that we in fact start to value different kinds of learning...I wouldn't say equally, but we have to value different kinds of learning appropriately, so that it is not seen as <i>de facto</i> inferior – it is just different kinds of learning and we've just got to accept that. 	SI 12/7/06
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social construct <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Societal roles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You're a degreed person, I am a technikon-based person. Your academic thinking you learnt in your degree, is totally different from technikon based learning, and it has to be, because we have different roles: when I go into a problem, I'm thinking solutions, when you into a problem, you're thinking of concepts. 	KH 19/05/06
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intentions of the framework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parity of esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you remember the slogan that was always ...in the early 90s – 'from sweeper to engineer' and we need to have an ability for a person to start as a sweeper and have the status of the engineer eventually without necessarily being the engineer. Be the head of the cleaning should give equal status. The more we veer away from that original and...the unions, you know - they insisted on this equal status - that's where it comes from – it is almost uncanny how – I mean I am a total capitalist, but I am actually appreciative of what they said. 	MvR 18/05/06
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intentions of the framework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parity of esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...the only thing that was an objective of in the NQF is to give equal status and recognition to vocational studies on the same level as academic studies. 	MvR 18/05/06
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intentions of the framework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parity of esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People who can have equal esteem for each other, equal respect... ...an integrated learning system should establish peers, but not equals. 	KH 19/05/06

RESEARCH QUESTION 1: Is the objective of an integrated SANQF an example of policy symbolism?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy borrowing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...not the ideal model for SA – foreign (Indonesian) concept. Not working in SA. It is like we are using policy books from other countries. 	GDLabour (1:7:13)
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political contestation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I don't think there is any interaction between education and training, and it starts with the two ministers that don't talk to one another. 	FET Private WC (2:4:20)
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political contestation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...the minister, the departments, you know all of those things, they seem to have different agendas...the education department say education is for education but the Department of Labour is saying education is for skills development and those two need to match. The vocational and the general must be married and they must produce offspring that will make our country more full in terms of our skills and I just wish they would get into bed together. It's not happening. 	FET PR-PUB NAT (2:4:83,84)
Policy symbolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education and training Congruent policy and regulation Architecture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You cannot say it is not integrated, because the framework is there in terms of the NQF itself of generating that working together between training and education. Again there is nothing tangible. Maybe at this stage we are lacking too much of policy formulation and regulation at the level of putting things on the ground. I said earlier to some extent but again because you do not see anything tangible on the ground that relates to integration. Integration exists in so far as the standards generated provide for the general component of the legislation in education and fundamentals. We cannot say we have achieved integration. 	Nat DoE (1:7:11)
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parity of esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Value all learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> So, in trying to solve the problems of a social and economic nature through education ... in a context of where you are fighting apartheid and you are critiquing, but you were critiquing on the basis that you thought that we are going to build a different economic and social system in the country. 	SB 18/5/06

RESEARCH QUESTION 1: <i>Is the objective of an integrated SANQF an example of policy symbolism?</i>			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parity of esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Value all learning ○ Qualifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I guess, I have to start right at the beginning to say that I believe that the establishment of the NQF was a fundamental mechanism, I mean, to ensure that the learning of people was recognised on an equal footing, if you like, and that qualifications that one achieves in every corner of the country, there is a mechanism for them to be recognised and to be registered via a tool where equality is given to their qualifications, if you like...So, I think, essentially, I mean the establishment of this tool and of this mechanism brought about the lot of hope and excitement for people. 	WCLabour (1:7:12)
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parity of esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Value all learning ○ Qualifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have a kind of conception of equality, which is 'sameness', right, whereas the equity conception, which is about fair and just treatment, it is about recognising the worth of each human being and individual and his or her contribution to the economy and society, even though there may be differentials related to the qualifications and expertise and so on. 	SB 18/05/06
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parity of esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Value all learning ○ Qualifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The other thing about the integration story is that people do make a kind of distinction that this kind of education and training is better than <i>that</i> kind of education and training... 	SI 12/7/06
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parity of esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Value all learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We must give people the recognition of learning with value that add up especially for those who do not have full qualifications. 	SACE (1:8:6)

RESEARCH QUESTION 1: Is the objective of an integrated SANQF an example of policy symbolism?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parity of esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Value all learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What I think – we are being too, – a lot of us often can't see the woods for the trees. If you look at the trees, there is the vocational education tree and there is the academic tree, you know, and we don't see the wood, now, the wood is the NQF, and the only thing that was an objective of in the NQF is to give equal status and recognition to vocational studies on the same level as academic studies. We didn't want to, what is that word is used in the Umalusi report - equivalence. 	MvR 18/05/06
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parity of esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Value of vocational learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...vocational qualifications are gaining momentum in the country. I think it is a good thing. 	HET Public GAU (2:4:18)
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parity of esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Value of vocational learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I don't know in the white communities but in the black communities the trend is changing now, in the past no black person wanted their children to go for technical training. It was regarded as inferior training, when you say you want to become a builder, people thought of someone, you know, there was the wheelbarrow syndrome. People thought of someone shoving a wheelbarrow, they never thought of someone designing a building structure, that was not part of building to them...that tells you that we are changing...[to] being people who are respected by the communities for being a contractor. ...you see people did not think that guys who are in technical were actually trained, for instance, you need mathematics to become a technical person and people who don't have mathematics, science and everything else, they just thought that [it] is a stupid trade... 	GET/ABET Private GAU (2:4:19)

RESEARCH QUESTION 1: Is the objective of an integrated SANQF an example of policy symbolism?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parity of esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Value of vocational learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The level of responsibility of a person and, and you know Ronel, we must go back to the really excellent stuff that was done in SA – where you could have a government ticket certificate person coming through the technical college or through the technikon or through the university – but what his got is his government ticket is equivalent in all respects to that engineer in terms of the authority he carries – the government ticket examination is one of the most respected exam in this country – it is a written exam but extremely applied The status being a recognition of ability, of authority, of responsibility and so on. That's why I really feel with the unions on this – they want their people in factories – a person who looks after a multi-million rand power station, to be recognised as somebody worthwhile. Then we will also draw people into the industry – the is the point for ASGISA and JIPSA...the status of vocational and occupational, and that is why I got so cross with 'Oranges and Apples', because they denigrate [vocational qualifications] You see why it is so important to have the level descriptors, written in such a way [that it accommodates the equal status], but we failed and I am a lonely voice in this regard. 	MvR 18/05/06
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parity of esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...everything that comes from the NQF, we all know the same thing no matter which universities or colleges we come from. The standardisation of qualifications has helped...so for the employer it is the same value. 	FET Public MPU (2:4:17)
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parity of esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think there is still that perception depending on different people, and what they see as the benefits of the learning programmes. It depends on the historical background. X institution may always be seen as better than Y institution. 	LAB ED FS (2:5:9)
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parity of esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...I think it is still biased. It's issues of perception. We haven't made the shift. I mean people would still prefer Wits. 	FET PR-PUB NAT (2:4:17)

RESEARCH QUESTION 1: Is the objective of an integrated SANQF an example of policy symbolism?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parity of esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think the university...and other institutions, of course, you would agree with me that it's one of those...institutions that were established during the apartheid regime and most of its anticipated ideas was to put black far away from urban areas, second rated education, Bantu education. 	HET Public LIM (2:4:19)
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parity of esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education and vocational qualifications Institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...but in some quarters vocational qualifications are not seen as equally important as educational qualifications. That kind of integration has not yet happened. Those who have gone through vocational training, their qualifications are seen as low. It also depends on where people see you coming from, from which particular institution you got your qualification 	LAB ED FS (2:5:11)
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parity of esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think the institutions will [go] out of business...to them it's more of a threat than a good thing. 	EMP Large LP MPU (2:6:9)
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parity of esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Previously disadvantaged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prior to 1994 we had different levels of education. The NQF attempts to bring both the advantaged and previously disadvantaged to the same level. 	Learner focus groups (1:6:6)
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parity of esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a perception that learners with NQF qualifications are not trained as well as pre-NQF qualifications, which are preferred for appointments. 	GNLabour (1:7:13)
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parity of esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The quality of education and training is very important, particularly with regard to the equality of institutions providing training. 	Learner focus groups (1:6:6)
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parity of esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...technical college qualifications must be quality qualifications. 	Learner focus groups (1:6:6)
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parity of esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have a problem with doing N3 courses, because when we approach a university, they tell us that the N3 is not a proper Matric and we cannot be admitted. 	Learner focus groups (1:6:7)

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Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parity of esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualifications Institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With our experience we've seen people who have this certificate from an institution that was considered [for credit transfer], depending on where they were coming from and what they were able to produce. In certain cases there have been serious problems, where people had even forms of qualifications that were not recognised. 	LAB ED FS (2:5:9)
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parity of esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...but the trend appears to be happening when you talk to people that, who are in the graduates from UCT or RAU, to keep them, and therefore are given more preference than the person who comes from a bush university, so to speak 	EMP SMME LP NW (2:6:9)
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parity of esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutions Qualifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a saying by one sociologist that "schools are classifiers of children". ...educational qualifications are still viewed as more important. 	HET Public GAU (2:4:19)
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conceptual framework for the education and training system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is important however is to note that the NQF is an abstract social construct that has been developed 'by the people, for the people'. It is merely a concept. It just says there are the levels of education and training and these are the format[s]. NQF is a conceptual framework against which things can be done. 	Commentary: (1:3:10) ¹ IMWG member (1:3:10)
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conceptual framework for the education and training system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meta-theme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...is not so much integration as a value, but for me integration is a meta-theme that includes issues of access, transparency, portability and so on. So, when we say integration, I think you have to, by definition, unpack it. Because what we've got is we've got conceptual integration, we want this to be a single integrated NQF. I would call it 'operationalising integration' 	AP 1/6/06

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Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conceptual framework for the education and training system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a conceptual framework the NQF is being used to improve the understanding of education and training, show possibilities of mobility... In response to the question: What are the strengths of the NQF? It is completely central to what is understood to be the purpose of education and training in the country. 	Commentary: (1:3:12) SAQA Manager (1:3:12)
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conceptual framework for the education and training system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Now we have a system where you know that whatever qualification you have, it will be recognised in terms of mobility. 	SAQA Manager (1:3:12)
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conceptual framework for the education and training system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobility is not that high. ...mobility is a problem. 	Snr. DoE Official (1:3:11) SAQA Manager (1:3:11)
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conceptual framework for the education and training system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobility Articulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You find that in some areas we are told that we cannot access through this door, that articulation sometimes is limited by rules of combination within providers. 	LAB ED FS (2:5:9)
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conceptual framework for the education and training system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portability Progression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> My understanding of this is around portability of qualifications. I think we are still meeting a lot of challenges with regard to mobility and progression. The principles are well stated but in terms of practice there are problems. 	GDE (1:7:6)
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conceptual framework for the education and training system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobility Articulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...for the first time, we saw a system that was going to allow learners to move from bands and across, vertically and horizontally. That articulation was very important. 	ECLabour (1:7:6)

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Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frustrations with lack of integration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...integration is also used as a device to prevent certain from happening so for example people say integration is too difficult... 	SI Executive officer, SAQA
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frustrations with lack of integration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political will 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There isn't a political will, which says that this is the way it is going to be, now make it work. And if there isn't that and the personalities are clashing, then we have a problem. 	SM 19/05/06
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frustrations with lack of integration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political will Political suicide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...they realise that they can't be openly critical of something that is obviously in the interest of the country as a whole and so you get always, this preamble with this huge buy in to the objectives and then everything from the body of the article or the paper goes on to split it up 	SM 19/05/06
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is an awareness in the system of the need for an integrated framework. 	ETQA Manager (1:3:11)
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated approach 	<p>In response to the question: What are the weaknesses of the NQF?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Its failure to convince people that it is an integrated approach...the integration is expensive, it needs getting people who have had practical experience in the field and can in fact do that. 	IMWG Member (1:3:11)
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic and vocational 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are cracks as [the] NQF tries to integrate vocational and academic training. 	SAQA Staff member (1:3:13)
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education and training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...although in the beginning it was a big task, there is overwhelming acceptance for the need for that integrated framework and not separate streams. The integratedness of education, training and development is the key. 	SACE (1:8:12)
Guiding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NQF Review and the Interdependent Task Team's reports created much unclarity when it said that the two must be separated. 	LAB ED FS (2:5:11)

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coherence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It has also helped to bring to the fore the weaknesses of the system as it was at the time, filled with dead ends, and idiosyncratic ways of establishing relationships, almost at the whim of an authority. 	University Principal (1:3:13)
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coherence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unitary system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> So, so you know, the Cosatu model allows you to pursue both equity and economic growth and development simultaneously. Well perhaps, but that is a very big claim to make, are you sure, you may be able to manage that better, but dissolve the tension 	SB 18/05/06
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coherence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unitary system Status of qualifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are trying to...and this is the misperception in the integrated system, is that we are trying to make everyone into recognised as having degrees Total integration would say technikon diploma equals degree equals certified engineer. 	KH 19/05/06
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coherence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unitary system Status of qualifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absolutely, and if you start to map these things, then you don't get to the situation that if someone who has a degree – they actually think they are better than someone who hasn't got a degree. If for example people have different kinds of learning then you what you want to ideally do in a thing like a National Qualifications Framework, is say, how can we weight, how can we value different kinds of learning. ...it is the social use – if you can legitimate that distinction...if you can say to someone, but your qualification is lower than that. The fact that there are so many people that have the qualification, is the quality in it. 	SI 12/06/06
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coherence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National strategy Institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...there is now a doing away of certain gates...gateways and hurdles that need to be overcome have been passed, have now been taken away because there is a national qualifications strategy...in theory it is supposed to take away the problems...but it's the institutions that aren't making it work 	Public FET GAU (2:4:7)
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coherence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National strategy Institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...let's say from governments side that's the plan, but I'm not sure that institutions really implement this at the moment or know how to implement this at the moment 	Private FET GAU (2:4:11)

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Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coherence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unitary system Status of qualifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...and the only thing that was an objective of in the NQF is to give equal status and recognition to vocational studies on the same level as academic studies. ...our entire our schooling system is set up to prepare people for university - even the FET now is trying to do that – setting up people to go to higher education. Which is so absolutely ridiculous if you think about it – only 2,5 % of people that start schooling, ever go to higher education and then only 1 % make it, I mean, of those who start school. Do you remember the slogan that was always ...in the early 90s – ‘from sweeper to engineer’ and we need to have an ability for a person to start as a sweeper and have the status of the engineer eventually without necessarily being the engineer. Be the head of the cleaning should give equal status. 	MvR 18/05/06
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coherence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rhetoric Integration in action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They are beginning to [realise] that it is integrated education and training, across that divide, across schools and colleges, across universities and technikons and across labour and education, but it is only rhetoric. I worry that what’s happening has as much to do with personalities as it has to do with rhetoric Its not everybody in the population that even knows about integration, and I think if there hadn’t been this resistance, this divide between education and labour, more of the population would have seen the NQF in action, and at the moment it is still very much, in some sectors, perhaps most sectors, it’s still very much in the background. 	SM 19/05/06

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Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coherence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contestation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The reluctance to engage with the NQF, the considerable opposition and the attempts to force a power shift are all examples of the incoherence between the NQF and higher education. They are busy fighting among themselves. They have a Policy agenda going. There is internal fighting. People don't talk about the NQF at University level. 	<p>Commentary (1:3:13)</p> <p>IMWG member (1:3:13)</p>
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coherence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The problem is we got a range of clients for one reason or the other does not get access to those examinations [ABET]. Their community based for whatever reason do not want to register with the Department of Education. The Independent Examinations Board only really offers exams in the fundamentals. To offer exams for example in the Natural Sciences, they want more than a hundred learners, which is understandable. So we got quite a few industries in specifics who are now completing learning programmes in other learning areas. They are based on SAQA unit registered standards but they can't get credit for that, so that's a huge problem for us at this stage. 	<p>Private ABET/GET (small) (1:9:6)</p>
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coherence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think there is a link [between the three national strategies], which is unfortunately, I could say is just a miracle, because it is not coordinated...we do not have that coordinated approach, that is actually visible, that is actually tangible. 	<p>DoL NW (2:3:46)</p>
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coherence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our assessment tools are not in OBE format and this bedevils the process. On the one hand, we have unit standards and modules whereas on the other we have subjects and marks assessment. Our particular assessment in the workplace uses and outcomes-based approach whereas the Technikon uses classroom-based assessment approaches. 	<p>Public HET (large) (1:9:23)</p>

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coherence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Examinations are compulsory and contribute to a conventional approach to assessment at the college, although some effort is being made to do continuous assessment. Exam-based [assessment is used] for NATED courses. [There is] more scope outside the NATED courses... 	Public, FET (Medium) (1:9:23)
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coherence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have the opposite problem, not that they are not practical enough but that there is a divide between the full qualification, university type of standard and ours which, quite frankly, is now only starting to be developed by the universities and the technikons... 	ETQA (2:2:12)
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coherence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What we have found with most of our private providers, they stand on the sort of two legs, one in occupation-directed qualification and then one sort of holding very much onto the academic strain... 	ETQA (2:2:13)
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coherence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> But, what has become increasingly clear is that [the] DoE have no understanding of anything that happens outside the formal academic environment and are not willing to learn and not willing to concede that what the Academy of Financial Markets is doing, it's making contributions. 	ETQA (2:2:28)
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coherence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...the courses that have been done in another institution is not necessarily linking with the content of a new qualification and it ends up causing problems for us because the one year study will actually fall [by] the wayside because it [has not been] taken into account by [the] other 	Private, HET (1:9:24)
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coherence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> But where I do agree with Jonathan is when you approach curriculum 2005 and so on, from a purely ideological way and don't understand the context within which you are implementing, what you are heading for, is disaster. 	SB 18/05/06

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coherence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...increasingly we are living in a world that needs to be joined up and so, by its very nature if you think about things in a systemic manner then you have to accept that there are...you can't draw neat boundaries The issue of no dead-ends, you know that, that persons can pick up learning later in life...because you had a bad start somewhere, it doesn't mean that for the rest of your life you are going to be locked into a system that you can't move. So, I think those are the reasons that in fact, drive us to consider an integrated programme. 	SI 12/06/06
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coherence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...what I am saying is that you are getting a...probably a kind of organic integration and that maybe that is integration across the world where people are saying, 'this set of qualifications can work in these areas' 	SI 12/06/06
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comparability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think you can become an electrician, and learn a hang of a lot of physics and maths and chemistry, all of that, so you can do all of that, but what...and then you compare it to what? Then someone says 'compare it to the school curriculum'. Now, there are many people who have a school curriculum, who can't do what that electrician can do, but the electrician can certainly do a whole lot, and more of what the school learner can do. For me, if you are able to say, 'what are the learning outcomes of the school learner' and you can say 'what are the learning outcomes of someone undergoing an education and training programme to become an electrician?'...then you can start to see what are some of the commonalities and what is not there. 	SI 12/06/06
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Linkages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...if there had been no NQF we could have continued, but there would have been no quality assurance and so on. They have to ensure that they work closely, but if the NQF is not there, then it is a waste of time and it is business as usual. If we want to ensure redress, there has to be a NQF and there have to be ETQAs. 	DoL WC (2:3:47)

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Linkages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mapping pathways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first thing I was talking about on how to assist a learner to map their own pathway and their journey through the NQF Framework over say 5 – 10 years, we have not been able to do that. So, in a sense, we have not mapped the Framework. 	Nat DoE (1:7:11)
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Linkages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mapping pathways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ed French put it wonderfully one day and I have never forgotten the notion, because I could relate to it being a chemist. He used the jungle gym – kids climbing on a jungle gym – I could see it as an atomic framework or the DNA...where I see the NQF as making sense of all the internal pathways of the DNA. So I have had this absolute passion for an integrated framework, but I contradict myself totally by saying that I do not see an integrated framework as making all things equal. A lot of people say that its – what would you call it – it actually militates against people crossing pathways – I think the NQF should allow for that, but pathway crossing should be the exception, rather than the rule. 	KH 19/05/06
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Linkages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mapping pathways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is people who make the arguments in such a way that they favour one kind of experience and so, I mean, that is why the move to a kind of standardised curriculum is so destructive in a way, because if you have a standardised curriculum, it means that someone who is not part of a standardised curriculum is automatically excluded – now, there is nothing wrong with a standardised curriculum, but it can't be the only curriculum, because there are always people that come from a different curriculum and then if you look across the world, you will never get a standardised curriculum. 	SI 12/06/06

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linkages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mapping pathways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So what a qualifications framework does when you look at level descriptors and so on, it is about a way, and that is not different for example from someone who has a BA and a BSC - their kinds of expertise is different, but when they go and teach, then someone makes a decision that these two qualifications, for the same job, you get the same pay, based on these qualifications, so there you have a case where people have performed a mapping, saying these two qualifications are at the same level and they have some outcomes are similar and others that are completely dissimilar and it is how those things, you know play themselves out. 	SI 12/06/06
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linkages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mapping pathways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think that if people start to make their pathways too rigid, you will get a point where there are too many people outside the system and there is a economist called...the closest equivalent to an individual in terms of intellectual property rights are their qualifications because that is what you barter with...if there are more people outside the official system than inside, then the official system is illegitimate, so, I think that what you are going to get if you are living in a world where there are more people learning in this kind of way than in that kind of way, then you are making this kind of thing, to some extent, irrelevant, because ...even if this thing that you are trying to keep separate, if you are trying to keep separate, you are producing poor quality 	SI 12/06/06

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linkages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mapping pathways ○ Career paths 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think there are multiple dimensions to integration. For example, there is a kind of career path that goes from school to university. Then there is another kind of career path for school drop-outs, old technical college, new FET college, and then moving back somewhere, back into maybe universities of technology and maybe something else later on. So, one gets all of that. Now, part of what integration must do, is that although people are using different pathways, the pathways don't restrict. So the integration there is an integration, that is an integration of pathways, where you actually say, that you can go by different pathways, so that if you move through the system, you don't have to go back to zero every time – which is the case very often. 	SI 12/06/06
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint responsibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...we will take responsibility, all of us who are responsible for the implementation of the NQF. 	DoE NAT (2:3:48)
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linkages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mapping pathways ○ Career paths 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is about the ability of any person of any starting point to progress right through the system – that's what we mean by integration. But, it does not mean that differentiation of the academic stream, the professional stream and the vocational stream is a bad thing. It just means that we have to build the bridges in a very explicit way to achieve integration. • Let's accept differentiation, but let's build the bridges • ...so, in very practical terms... 	AP 01/06/06

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Linkages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mapping pathways Career paths 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> So, what we have to do is that you have to design the goal, and the goal is the goal that the citizen has the whole system available to him – at least the publicly funded part of it. And that therefore what do we mean by articulation – it means that if someone has one qualification in a certain area and has a logical linkage to another, that that those linkages can be made – then you can articulate. And that is why these words, at a very high level, have to be operationalised, otherwise we are having a different conversation altogether And I think the danger that SAQA faces is that because it's a knowledge-worker intense organisation, is that people run a thought experiment about how to do integration but that is not the same as making it practical 	AP 01/06/06
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Linkages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualification sub-frameworks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are hoping that by the end of maybe February again we will have a qualifications framework for further education and training that is linked to the NQF again...well the NQF is the National Qualifications Framework and you cannot be designing anything else outside it, that's my view. At the same time there are certain specifics that cannot be accommodated within a macro system because it is a generic system, that is actually a framework, and when you go into it you still need to get into great detail in terms of specifics...actually what we need is a career path qualifications framework. I mean the Transport SETA, the Mining Qualifications Framework, they are all doing certain maps of qualifications that are specific to their sectors. 	DoE NAT (2:3:49)
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Linkages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...this is what the qualifications matrix is beginning to address...because in our context we have an exciting market niche... 	Public HET GAU
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Linkages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Old and new 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...you need to gradually phase [out] that [old] system and gradually phase in the new system. There must be linkage between the two. People need to be prepared, because if you are not prepared...they will resist the new system. 	DoE NAT (2:3:49)

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Linkages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have not populated the Framework with qualifications that show progression and linkages in education. 	Nat DoE (1:7:11)
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The little contact that we've had with students who wanted to move between institutions showed that it wasn't easy for them to do so. 	DoL WC (2:2:10)
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What has actually happened is that our guys that do their diplomas with the Technikons, they go as far as the BTech but from there, the university ones will go and do masters, we've got a couple of cases where the people from BTech move directly to masters. 	EMP Large LP MPU (2:6:9)
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intrinsic logic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design Portability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SAQA wants to look at: is it portable, is it accessible for people coming in from other disciplines, you know, is it defined according to unit standards, or is it a more classic type of qualification 	AP 01/06/06
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intrinsic logic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will have SETAs, and CHE and Umalusi separated, so, the whole notion of parity of esteem can't come from the design of the qualifications itself and the level descriptors. It's only when these things talk to one another and when they are compared and quality assured and delivered with that in mind that you have integration 	SM 19/06/06
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intrinsic logic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Common currency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> So, part of integration is to say - all qualifications are on one framework and these are the ways in which they work together. So, integration is by taking...and trying to find what is the common currency in learning and saying these are the important things...you can get there through various ways. 	SI 12/06/06
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intrinsic logic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> So, a doctor in South Africa, can they move in the United States and practice immediately? The answer is, 'no they can't practice immediately, there are some barriers that they must go through', etc. In Australia there are barriers – people can't move from one state to another state. Now, I think people are all of a sudden saying that this doesn't work to our interests, so how do we break those down. So, what people are constantly looking for, is how do we develop system that in fact is going to enable their mobility. 	SI 12/06/06

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articulation Mapping pathways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our SGB, for instance, has set up a framework of qualifications that flow one into the other, certificate to two year diploma...we are busy with the occupation-directed...the NQF has done a lot by delineating clearly [the] NQF levels [and] standards and then as a professional board we have adjusted our professional registration and designed it to integrate...so our professional registration has been aligned to the NQF and the SGB has also done so... 	ETQA (2:2:20)
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We do try but the system does not allow portability, they only allow traditional portability. If people enquire about qualifications from other institutions I firstly ensure that they are on the web [SAQA website] and try and find equivalence with what we are doing and what they are doing...When the new [CHE/HEQC] academic policy [came] out, [we] sent [our extra-curricular courses] in for accreditation as certificates. We did that and it came back, not accredited. We tried another route, and developed a 4 year course and with the foundation as a first year. It cannot be accredited. They told us we must keep it as an extra-curricular course. But there is no safety in that for the students. That will not be a portable qualification, and we must manoeuvre our way into other institutions, that is unacceptable. 	Public, HET (large) (1:9:6)
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structural problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We felt [that it is too early to say if people are able to move between vocational, professional and academic qualifications], but it might not be a NQF problem, it might be a structural problem. 	DoL WC (2:3:9)
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structural problems Quality assurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think it's not a fault of the ETQAs, it's how the system was structured that is not enabling them to do the work that they are supposed to be doing. 	DoE NAT (2:3:41)

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structural differences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...with the new landscape of our higher education institutions, some universities went the modular route in terms of offering their courses [and] some are going the semester course route, so anybody who decides to move around a lot will get lost. 	DoE NAT (2:3:9)
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Old and new 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We would want, in terms of the NQF, that all what you can present, what you have completed [to be] recognised, that you get credits for it. I'm saying it is not happening in practice, because at the moment they recognise 50% and you would still have to complete 70% even if there [are] overlaps. 	DoL WC (2:3:9)
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public/private <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...no, I am afraid we are actually more in competition [with] each other...because we [are] on each other's turf. 	FET Public GAU (2:4:32)
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public/private <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think there is still some tension between public providers and private providers because private providers are taking away our business. They are taking our students...if they are in our vicinity we regard them as our competition. 	HET Public GAU (2:4:32)
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private/private <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...we see the other providers as opposition...and in the past it was always [our approach] to downgrade the other person's qualifications...you advertise your own, you know, that type of thing, I know that's wrong but that's what happening. 	FET Private (2:4:33)
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public/private <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parity of esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is still a problem of public versus private sector...the public sector is reluctant to allow us into the system even though those programmes are registered and accredited, there is still a problem. 	Private, HET (small – medium) (1:9:6)

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public/public <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parity of esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are stuck because institutions have not demonstrated willingness to recognise this [the equivalence between institutions]. We need to have a credit matrix that is formalised and managed outside of the institutions' autonomy...the issue of equivalence of institutions and the power play between the institutions is a disadvantage to the learners. 	Public HET (large) (1:9:6)
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public/public <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parity of esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...some of the institutions are sort of looked down at as low in quality. 	DoL KZN (2:3:9)
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public/public <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parity of esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...in Natal people prefer to go to the University of Natal rather than to the University of Durban Westville...our kids here in this province, when they apply for bursaries [it is to go to] University of Pretoria or Wits or something, not worried about Venda or the University of the North and maybe because it is a rural versus the urban or whatever the reason is but I think that that stigma is still there. 	DoL LIM (2:3:10)
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parity of esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strongly disagree. If you talk with the guys from the university, they have little knowledge about their qualifications, and they will not accept the technikon qualification, so I don't think there is enough mobility in the system yet. I hope it's [not] going to take a long time. Implementing it is a problem. 	Public HET GAU (2:4:11)
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One of the possible concerns or problems is that each SETA wants to develop its own standards and qualifications. The way it is going, I am afraid that we can end up with up to 10 electrician qualifications and it becomes a problem with portability. We need strong generic standards that can be used for various qualifications. 	Employer (1:5:5)
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the labour area, by labour I mean the narrow sense of the word, credits are going to function more effectively and it will be easier to realise. For example the construction industry credit towards learnerships are easier to realise and to see but in the academic world it tends to be a bit slower because of some resistance, part of qualifications have to be part of the system. 	NAPTOSA (1:8:6)

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structure of the qualification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are problems. We are talking about fundamental aspects of qualifications. Fundamentals are supposed to be the most portable. We are registered with UMALUSI but it is not interested [to quality assure] freestanding fundamentals. Fundamentals and outcomes-based education were the mechanisms for the integration, portability, transferability and progression of staff. SAQA, DoE and DoL are not engaging sufficiently on what to do about this. 	Private ABET/GET (medium) (1:9:6)
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structure of the qualification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In terms of FET and HE, it is doubtful how portable qualifications are, as the qualifications are still institutionally based. 	Public, FET (large) (1:9:6)
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structure of the qualification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It [an outcomes-based approach] seeks to eliminate duplication. Each qualification has critical cross-field outcomes. [The] principles of OBE [is that] if you have unit standards in management, it should apply wherever management is needed, [for example] you need a generic introduction to management, in terms of production management, environmental management, etc. 	Public, HET (large) (1:9:20)
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structure of the qualification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have internal...approval mechanism for new programmes and for the redesign of programmes, which is based on the criteria of program design features, NQF structural arrangements, how to adhere to them in a meaningful way that exemplifies good teaching and learning. 	Public, HET (Large) (1:9:27)
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structure of the qualification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...what do the employers feel about it and really pushing for probably, a less academic, more skills-based training, but having enough academic in there so that if someone buzzes, then they can get back into the academic route 	AP 01/06/06

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structure of the qualification Integration Mobility Guiding philosophy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maybe [the] NQF is losing its original vision. Fundamentals and OB were the mechanisms for the integration, portability, transferability of staff. We have moved far away from that vision. Maybe the conceptualisation of the NQF was idealistic. SAQA, DoE and DoL are not engaging sufficiently on what to do about this. There is a major difference between vocational and academic training. 	Private, ABET/GET (Medium) (1:9:33)
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structure of the qualification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...in terms of outcomes, both specific outcomes, or exit level outcomes or qualifications, I think there is portability and mobility where students can move fairly freely between institutions... 	Public, HET (large) (1:9:7)
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structure of the qualification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think that you know the thing is that NQF qualifications is based on the same unit standards. So, there is no reason why I could say mine is more portable than yours if [they are] based on the same unit standards. 	ETQA (2:2:10)
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intrinsic logic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level descriptors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is equivalence on the NQF – [on a level] and that is where I think the academics have now won the battle. When you look at the new level descriptors – they have won the battle – we didn't have enough people from industry in that group. You see why it is so important to have the level descriptors, written in such a way [that it accommodates the equal status], but we failed and I am a lonely voice in this regard. 	MvR 18/06/06
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> So, if a learner comes with [anything] like a cosmetology certificate...a City and Guilds something, a technical college qualification, the institution still allows them in. 	ETQA (2:2:10)
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreements Public/private parity of esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The technikons don't even accept learners that have exited from a health and skincare therapy qualification at one of our private institutions for a third year in cosmetology. They don't accept them. They've done exactly the same curriculum. 	ETQA (2:2:10)

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality assurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They still don't speak to one another, they still don't exchange information, they still don't assist one another, but the learner just slots into the system, no problem...because we [the ETQA] capture the individual's formative assessment...they [have assessed] that she is competent, the moderator is present, and the institution is accredited...they don't even query it with us. 	ETQA (2:2:11)
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think in some of them there is portability...especially where you have the SETAs that relates, I think to each other... 	Public, HET (medium) (1:9:7)
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes, to the extent that we, our providers contact us and say there is a problem with the outcomes in this unit standard. We then, in writing, advise our SGB there is a problem. 	ETQA (2:2:12)
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unless you involve people who are business-minded, who are on the ground in business, unless you get that sort of expertise involved, nothing will happen, it will remain talk shops, pie in the sky stuff. 	ETQA (2:2:13)
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...we are actually trying to integrate, to come up with an integrated qualification matrix across the [sector]. We might have to look at a cluster of departments to say that in this particular cluster these are the skills lacking as compared to other clusters and to develop something around that. 	HET Public GAU (2:4:26)
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public/private 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The only way we can foster articulation is on a personal one-on-one basis...the problem is that students from the private sector do not articulate easily...because of the lack of understanding on the [public] sector side. [Portability between] professional and academic are easier than vocational and professional. 	Private, HET (medium) (1:9:7)

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ University/technikon mobility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...they will not accept the technikon qualification, so I don't think there is enough mobility in the system yet. • It does not enable students to move...mainly because the institutions do not apply the principle 	HET Public GAU (2:4:13)
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Credit transfer ○ Relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If they come from any of the registered public institutions, universities, technikons. We have not had a case where a student have left Mangosuthu and went to another institution and the credit accumulated here was not recognised by that other institution. 	HET Public KZN (2:4:15)
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Credit transfer ○ Joint planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...there should be some...kind of interaction between SAQA, the market and us [the institution] and industry and say 'okay, this is the basket [of skills and knowledge] we need for the next three years to fill up the market. 	HET Public GAU (2:4:16)
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Credit transfer ○ Agreed standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That is true, [in the past the learner who goes to the one university] and the other one [who] goes to WITS university, when you go out for employment, they say the better [candidate] is that one that comes from WITS. [Now], everything that comes from the NQF, we all know the same thing, no matter which universities or colleges are we coming from. The standardisation of qualifications has helped. 	FET Public MPU (2:4:77)
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Credit transfer ○ Agreed standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ja, if we can standardise the education...if a person in Cape Town [is] being taught the same as what they are doing [here, we could] standardise the service and the training solution. 	FET Private NW (2:4:77)

RESEARCH QUESTION 3: Can the development of communities of practice enhance trust amongst partners in education and training?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Policy breadth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities of practice Establishment of trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We've come a long way in our understanding of stakeholders and the different level of commitment and participation in what that means. There are recommendations that could be thinned down and there could be a stakeholder representation that is also to some extent an expert representation to accelerate processes. That is a tension that needs to be maintained. Simple representation in terms of a stakeholder as being a body at a meeting but who doesn't participate or add any value to processes is not very helpful to the system. It also gives more weighting to those who do have the expertise and who then drive the system, because they can then also say that it is a stakeholder driven process. It is quite complicated. 	SAQA Manager (1:3:8)
Policy breadth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities of practice Establishment of trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NQF is not created by SAQA. SAQA is the agency for the development and the oversight of the implementation of the NQF. The NQF is owned by the people of the country and the range of participants that committed themselves to this. 	SAQA Manager (1:3:8)
Policy breadth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities of practice Establishment of trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder involvement Joint design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sometimes we are actually designing [the qualifications] and we are participating in the National Work Groups. Therefore we can influence the design. 	Employer (1:5:6)
Policy breadth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities of practice Establishment of trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The [Standards Generation Bodies] are manned by industry, which contributes to the relevance of the qualifications. 	Employer (1:5:6)

RESEARCH QUESTION 3: Can the development of communities of practice enhance trust amongst partners in education and training?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Policy breadth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities of practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...we have a convener system within the Technikon system, where after the submissions, the interim submissions to SAQA, the convener Technikons have been engaged in reworking or redesigning the actual qualification...[in] electrical engineering there has been an improvement in the way the qualification has been structured. 	Public, HET (large) (1:9:23)
Policy breadth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities of practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...the first drive came out of that [relevance] that had to change...but now we are starting to identify the gaps, and specifically, there has been a needs driven approach towards community service...we used the expertise of the college lecturers in SGBs with industry. This has been very exciting and totally new approach to stakeholders. 	Public, FET (large) (1:9:24)
Policy breadth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...people who are not well acquainted with what the qualifications are registered [on the NQF] by specific universities [look like]. I mean they registered their own ones, they [are] not well acquainted with what's the content of [other qualifications] and they don't trust each other. Let's put it this way, they don't trust each other. There might be some more sinister [reasons] – it's about money...you are paying your first two years at University of Pretoria but now you are going to Potchefstroom University. [This university] has lost out on you first [two] years so I must...collect some money from you... 	FET Public GAU (2:4:36)
Policy breadth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities of practice Establishment of trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration of sub-structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SAQA cannot do all these things on its own. The sub-structures such as the public sector, the DoL must take up their responsibilities and start doing their job. 	SAQA staff member (1:3:8)
Policy breadth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities of practice Establishment of trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> [The company] designed the curriculum with different role players. 	Employer (1:5:9)

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Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Policy breadth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities of practice Establishment of trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...we appreciate the opportunity to get invited to the curriculum forums and that and in putting [the] curriculum together, yes, we believe we need to be part of that 	GET/ABET Private KZN
Policy breadth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities of practice Establishment of trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In our case what we have done is we have ventured [into] a partnership which I think the Minister has given us permission to register it as a private university from 5 January. It used to be called the Warwick Institute and it is affiliated with the Warwick University in UK. We work in partnerships. Say like to register people on learning pathways without what is traditionally known as the pre-requisite for Masters and Doctorate degrees. We went to different universities in South Africa and they would not actually do that, they would say that 'no, you need to have a BA' or something degree and we would say that this person is 40 years old and had done all of these other courses, unit standards, and we can ask 'isn't he ready to do a Master's degree?' 	Employer (1:5:8)
Policy breadth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities of practice Establishment of trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alignment of strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We can [achieve the five objectives of the NQF] if we have a nationally aligned plan where everyone in the education system is dedicated towards the achievement of the NQF. 	SAQA Manager (1:3:8)
Policy breadth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities of practice Establishment of trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alignment of strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This cannot be achieved [by the] NQF alone. Whatever I rate would be in the broader context of what other initiatives have been doing...the DoE, DoL and Skills Development had something to do with it. 	ETQA Manager (1:3:8)
Policy breadth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment grading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...the current grade in the industry does not talk to the NQF. Which is the issue...let's come up with appropriate grading results of the industry that link to the NQF. 	NUMSA

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Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Policy breadth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...it would remain our responsibility to first build a relationship up, especially, I think, specifically with the ETQA manager on the ETQA manager level to build a relationship, to get familiar with each other. If they don't open the door for us to talk to them or whatever, there is no way of building a relationship and we are willing and we would think that the same rules, hopefully, apply to everybody, so if they have gone through and audit for SAQA and everything is in place, their process ought to be trustworthy and if we have build a relationship and we have tested that on occasion then there should be no reason not to trust what they do. ...when you have to build a relationship of trust, trust is not something that, although you would want to be inclined to trust, you would have to ensure through a relationship that there is...the basics are in place... 	ETQA Manager (2:2:25) (2:2:26)
Policy breadth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities of practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality assurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issues of [quality assurance] have really not improved in my view in a joint coordinated approach that is linked to the development of the system. The system is more fragmented than integrated 	Nat DoE (1:7:9)
Policy breadth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities of practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality assurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At this stage it has put on the national agenda the issue of quality assurance and linking that into a common framework. 	GDLabour (1:7:10)

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Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Policy breadth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities of practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality assurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I believe one identify quality in terms of two ways, quality as an individual measurement or standard, or quality as a collective standard. Meaning that some define quality as only the top 20. Meaning that if next year the top 20 is shifting up, even those who improve at the bottom, improve but are not part of the [top] 20. That kind of quality interpretation is what I call a competition of quality. You can only be regarded as better when some others are doing worse. I certainly endorse the notion of quality in a collective sense, meaning the benefit goes to the majority and not individuals. If you define quality as a collective quality instead of individual quality, the constituency that is going to be involved with standards setting and standards generation are going to be different. A collective approach to quality cannot be achieved through qualifications but needs to be supported by the framework. 	SACE (1:8:13)
Policy breadth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities of practice Trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality assurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...quality assurance is seen as a benchmark whereby trust in other institutions' systems and processes could be developed [to enhance parity of esteem between institutions] 	Commentary SAQA (1:9:26)
Policy breadth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities of practice Trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality assurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...it is a much needed system to have [a] registered qualification that is quality assured. It is useful for reference and for the security of the student as well. It is useful for providers to ensure that it is at the correct level and that the qualification [is] part of the SA system. 	Public, HET (Large) (1:9:26)
Policy breadth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality assurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In SA there is a synchronisation of accreditation framework(s) so that there is portability. 	Public, HET (Large) (1:9:27)

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Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Policy breadth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality assurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If we have not had insight into the qualification, into the quality assurance, we will not certify, certificate or acknowledge, because we don't know what's going on. 	ETQA (2:2:27)
Policy breadth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality assurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What I have suggested to DQAD, is that if we could find quality assurance processes where there is trust, for me the crucial thing is about mutual trust, about one another's quality assurance processes, and if we can then find two or three that are close together where one can close that little gap, then we will have CAT and it is working and this is how it is working. And the other route is to see where it is not working, but if you put all your energies at that end, it is going to take a long time before you see the benefits 	SM 19/06/06
Policy breadth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality assurance Architecture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The role of QA is to see that the programmes developed meet the minimum requirements for accreditation and they are registered with SAQA and they meet the NQF requirements and they are at the same level as the level descriptors. 	Private, HET (Medium) (1:9:27)
Policy breadth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Credit accumulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well one of the things we have done in terms of our curricula, we have taken it and we allocated credit to the different areas. And we were able to combine areas of learning for modules. They [students] all start together and those that can't stay within six month drop out...they have an exit point. When they come back next time, they will come back with proof to get to the second semester. 	Private, HET (Medium) (1:9:24)
Policy breadth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coherence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It has definitely made a difference. It is in concert with other policies around access, equity and redress principles. The NQF is a particular catalyst supported by other policies and legislation. 	Public, HET (Large) (1:9:33)

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Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Policy breadth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coherence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political contestation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unfortunately, the interdependent NQF is not going to be a useful strategy to change that. We really need to the NQF becoming a coherent integrated strategy and not this revamped New Academic Policy, a binary model now we have a primary model. The Minister of Labour and Education must give clear directives and must be more critical of themselves and of where the country is going. 	Public, HET (Large) (1:9:36)
Continuum of learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Epistemologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discipline-based Workplace-based 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocates of integration in education and training really ignore the fundamental difference between epistemological basis of education. They can't integrate the two in the sense that people talk about it. The sooner we start recognising it the better. The features of training are fairly easily measurable. You can judge behaviour by looking at people, but it is not the same with education. Some of the things one does in terms of education cannot be controlled because it is a mental thing. With education we infer (we do not know) that you can think logically. To recognise the difference and we need to provide an integrated approach not an integration of education. 	Snr. DoE Official (1:3:12)
Continuum of learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Epistemologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discipline-based Workplace-based 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> So, my own view then is that given that we have a differentiated economy, which requires a differentiated labour force – then we have to ask the question, that, for that differentiated economy and labour force and occupational structure, what is the basket of knowledge, competencies, skills and attributes required for any particular occupation in this country and that's in a sense – some of them will veer much more to the educational and theoretical and so on, and others will veer much more to the practical – and that is how you approach it – and that's how I think you don't necessarily dissolve it, but you approach it in a different way altogether. 	SB 18/05/06
Continuum of learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Epistemologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Divide between education and training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A prominent barrier to NQF implementation is mentioned as a lack of 'fully understanding the Higher Education sector'. NQF proponents are criticized as being too vocationally orientated, disregarding the fundamental differences between vocational training and academic education. 	Commentary (1:3:16)

RESEARCH QUESTION 4: Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Continuum of learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Epistemologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Divide between education and training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think, there is a conceptual difference between education and training and I think you try and ignore that difference at your peril and that is why we have to two distinct terms for them – and these terms are not just terms that are conflated – they are concepts also and if you don't want conceptual conflation then you must be able to clarify very clearly what education is and what is training. ...there is a conceptual distinction to be made between education and training – I think we have tried to either conflate them or we tried to pretend that there are no problems or tensions... 	SB 18/05/06
Continuum of learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Epistemologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Divide between education and training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You're a degreed person, I am a technikon-based person. Your academic thinking you learnt in your degree, is totally different from technikon based learning, and it has to be, because we have different roles: when I go into a problem, I'm thinking solutions, when you into a problem, you're thinking of concepts. The science, and the thinking and the new knowledge, should be formed by universities – your doctorate should be forming new knowledge, or new directions, or new thinking. A dissertation at the technikon should be applying that and I don't think there should be any doctorates at technikons. I don't say that technikon students should never become able to produce a doctorate – I don't think that, and that's where the integratedness comes in – it is that this person is at such a level that that person can create new thinking and you create a new... we have spoken grease monkeys, we haven't spoken craft, craft masters and that is the esteem that the NQF has to establish, and it doesn't. 	KH 19/05/06
Continuum of learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Epistemologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Divide between institutions and workplace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are teething problems [with] the divide between formal institutions and workplaces. 	Employer (1:5:6)

RESEARCH QUESTION 4: Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Continuum of learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Epistemologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Divide between institutions and workplace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is some work to be done to integrate the Department of Education and Department of Labour efforts. A divide still exists. The Council [on] Higher Education and individual higher education institutions have not fully integrated their programmes and efforts with workplace learning opportunities. 	Employer (1:5:16)
Continuum of learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Epistemologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Divide between institutions and workplace Parity of esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think there is still resistance from many of the traditionally tertiary institutions as well as the continuing perception in the public that a qualification from a traditional tertiary institution will always be better. 	Employer (1:5:16)
Continuum of learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Epistemologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Divide between institutions and workplace Parity of esteem Symbolism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our biggest problem is with tertiary institutions. It is not integrated as a wider philosophy. The institutions do not demonstrate it. They will say that they want someone that has graduated through at least one of the old better known Universities, why, because that is the academic side. I say the fact that a person has been working for 10 years in that area and they say it has nothing to do with it. The concept is nice, it is all there, but it is not integrated. 	Employer (1:5:16)
Continuum of learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workplace based preparation Policy breadth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People are beginning to make linkages between education and training and job creation. I do think that the NQF has contributed to this. 	Public, HET (Large) (1:9:30)
Continuum of learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workplace based preparation Policy breadth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our academic plan makes an explicit statement about contributing to the HRD of the country in terms of the priority and the professional development of our graduates and also the workforce development of adult learners. 	Public, HET (Large) (1:9:30)

RESEARCH QUESTION 4: Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Continuum of learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workplace based preparation Policy breadth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learnerships are running at 5 out of 6 colleges, which link with the Department of Labour and the National Skills Development Strategy. In terms of the HRDS we are starting to see linkages between Education and Labour at provincial and at college level...in terms of the needs of industry, we are at least talking to each other. 	Public, FET (Large) (1:9:30)
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workplace based preparation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You know that after you graduate you should be able to prepare and analyse financial statements if you studied accounting, be able to diagnose patients and prescribe treatments if you did medicine. 	Learner focus groups (1:6:8)
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workplace based preparation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students today need skills in something, whether its vocational or getting employed, or otherwise they will permanently live in slavery. 	Public, HET (Medium) (1:9:33)
Continuum of learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workplace based qualifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am not sure in the sense that, over the past 5 years we have perhaps concentrated too much on the economic development rather than the social development and that is reflected in the quantity of the programs we have developed. The fact that those programmes have all been about skilling for employment rather than social responsibility shows that we have not been balanced. 	Nat DoE (1:7:12)
Continuum of learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocational qualifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No, [workplace experience is not credit-bearing], but it could and in fact, I would like to see it accredited. But that should take you to a vocational kind of degree. 	HET Public GAU (2:4:34)
Continuum of learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocational qualifications Complementarity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are trying to...and this is the misperception in the integrated system, is that we are trying to make everyone into recognised as having degrees. Universities are science-based, technikons [universities of technology are] technology based – the technology cannot live without the science of universities...The science, and the thinking and the new knowledge, should be formed by universities...a dissertation at the technikon should be applying [science]. 	KH 18/05/06

RESEARCH QUESTION 4: Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There has always been a fight, with some guys from the Technikons and from Universities, remember companies would go for the Technikon guy...companies will look for someone with hands-on [training] 	EMP Large LP MPU (2:6:14)
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I would say that in the universities, you know, they do a little bit too much theory most of the time, but you know, in university you have to cover that...to know the work in depth and it's important to do all that theory. I will say that to do a little bit more practical, as well, like the technikons go out, and they have to do a certain time practical. You know, I think most of that guys, some of them don't have the educational qualifications, sometimes, and I always say there is too much theory, there is not enough practical. 	EMP SMME LP GAU (2:6:14,15)
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...I have sat in many courses and just people throwing theory at you means nothing, you need to apply it in any assignment or something and demonstrate what you are doing. 	EMP Large LP MPU (2:6:19)
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theory and practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...look, how do you make sure that those needs that you are identifying are [we] responding to, how do you respond to those needs and how do you integrate the practical need to the other side of things, which is theory. Because un most of our most recent learning materials we've had to satisfy the requirement of the unit standard [and] do a lot more theory. 	FET PR-PUB NAT (2:4:35)
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theory and practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you do separated curriculum...and bring it all together at a later stage, or do you start to integrate right from the start? 	SI 12/07/06
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workplace practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...with technical training [you] give them practical hands-on training, give a person contact, to give them practical training on-site in industry and they can apply for positions. I think there should be a link, without that practical link that qualification means nothing. 	EMP Large LP MPU (2:6:14)
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workplace practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I came from the academic school...I had to learn much harder to get my training that the normal guy from the standard factory 	Worker focus groups (1:6:9)

RESEARCH QUESTION 4: Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workplace practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am currently doing NQF aligned training with ... its actually for trainers, education and training and development practitioners...those unit standards turns back to [the] workplace and can be used...your portfolio of evidence is you practical, what is happening in the course will take you to the workplace...practical assessment shows that theory is being carried into the workplace. 	EMP Large LP MPU (2:6:10)
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workplace practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...even the more backward providers know that theory and practice is what is going to get that learner into a workplace 	FET Public GAU (2:4:11)
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workplace practice Collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...[Anglo Platinum] need this stuff but we don't have the connection, so there is a decision to start having more open days and to...start informing industry and government. 	HET Public LIM FG (2:4:33)
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workplace practice Break from the past 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What has happened is a drastic shift from the old system. You will enrol with RAU, and there will be time where you'll be given time to implement the theory in your study, or you are a principal, again the question of how you plan and whatever, you do your management at school level, you do it practically. 	SADTU (1:8:12)
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curricula Intentions of the framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is more demand for a combination of practical experience and educational theory. ...what people learn in universities is different to what is done at workplace[s] and there is no link between the two. 	SADTU (1:8:6)

RESEARCH QUESTION 4: Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curricula Intentions of the framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You see, the academics only know the educational side and they will only bring out whatever. You see we have put together a qualifications framework with the balance of education and training. That is why a lot of our HE can't offer those qualities because they only have the one part of the qualification that they have expertise in. So they find faults in the qualifications and not honestly recognising that they need to re-shed their own way of looking at the qualifications because they only have the academic and not the training and development. 	SACE (1:8:5)
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curricula 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I mean you cannot offer any program if you are going to assume that people have to have [experience]. I mean, the theory is universal...you have to have those concepts. You cannot take theory and practice apart, they [are] actually two sides of the same coin. 	FET Public GAU (2:4:34)
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curricula 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...and I think this has been proven and it's a point that needs to be stressed, [namely] that the matriculants coming out here [need theory and practice]...what they teach in school I don't know...we find that the schools are not relevant in that type of think and something needs to filter back into the school [with regards to] the practical stuff. 	GET/ABET Private KZN (2:4:34)
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curricula Complementarity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> And really I think what we are talking about is what kind of combination do we want to have in a graduate or anyone that is simultaneously education and training ...certain engineers actually deal with conceptual design issues and ...others deal with other issues and they really constitute a team 	SB 18/05/06
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curricula Parity of esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> So, certain engineers actually deal with conceptual design issues and so on and others deal with other issues and they really constitute a team. Now, does that make one person better – now that's where our issue comes in. Therefore, because we are living in a society – again it comes back to the economic and social system. If you could actually pay an engineer 10 grand a month, who comes from UCT and you can also pay a person who comes from TUT 10 grand a month, actually our problems are solved. 	SB 18/05/06

RESEARCH QUESTION 4: Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum Improved vocational/ occupational programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have grappled with the structural reconfiguration and it has been quite helpful at that level. The actual modifications that need to happen, the deepening of curriculum design...we have realised that the real problem-based learning approach must have theory introduced, so we are looking at an approach that has both foundational and theoretical knowledge and application in the workplace and a reflection back to theory (in terms of Kolb). 	Public, HET (large) (1:9:23)
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum Improved vocational/ occupational programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We had to revise our curriculum and specially qualifications on level 5, [where] we ensure that there is a language component there. We did select fundamentals. 	Public, HET (Large) (1:9:24)
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum Improved vocational/ occupational programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...what we had to do is to develop a couple of extra ones which we didn't offer...organisations such as ours, the NGOs, tended to focus on the practical component of the job, so what we have to do is beef up theory... 	Private, ABET/GET (Small) (1:9:24)
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum Improved vocational/ occupational programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes, it's actually structured in this way that it dictates to you [the] percent[age] of the learning [that] has got be classroom based and so much has got to be work based, so that integrates [theory] and practice...and also your technical courses like guys who do structures, concreting and so forth – there is a fair amount of theoretical training and technical training 	GET/ABET Private GAU (2:4:35)
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum Improved vocational/ occupational programmes 	<p>...they want this to look just like the National Senior Certificate [the new school-leaving qualification], but with more technical words in it. They aren't linking it explicitly enough to the world of work, they haven't engaged potential employers actively enough...[who are pushing] for probably a less academic, more skills-based training, but having enough academic [learning] in there so that if someone buzzes, then they can get back into the academic route.</p>	AP 01/06/06

RESEARCH QUESTION 4: Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum Improved vocational/occupational programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...can I just say that I think it is very closely related to the fact that our entire our schooling system is set up to prepare people for university - even the FET now is trying to do that – setting up people to go to higher education. Which is so absolutely ridiculous if you think about it – only 2,5 % of people that start schooling, ever go to higher education and then only 1 % make it, I mean, of those who start school. The other 99% have to be prepared for work, but why is this idea that going to university is so absolutely vital in our society, because after the second World War –the Afrikaners absolutely set themselves for this and after apartheid, blacks absolutely set themselves for this, which is fine and I understand, it is a social thing, where one understands it, but that is why we don't have skills in this country, that's why we can't run the country and start grow the economy because we all think that the ideal thing for your child is to go to university - because they don't get recognition [elsewhere] 	MvR 18/05/06
Curicular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workplace practice Employability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To me it appears that the matric certificate by itself is not a very useful thing unless it's like you say an FET qualification at that level, because to what extent does it prepare you for anything other than maybe university or further studies. It doesn't necessarily prepare you for a job in the labour market...if you are in a country where people do not necessarily have money for further studies...you have this pool of people with matric certificate who should be going to the labour market. The [learners] can't, because they don't necessarily have the skills. 	FET PR-PUB NAT (2:4:11)

RESEARCH QUESTION 4: Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Workplace practice ○ Employability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm not quite sure because so many people are going to universities but how many of them are getting employed? So, they are using employment opportunities as the indicator of the value of education and training 	HET Public GAU (2:4:12)
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Employability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...each time we employ [someone] we still have to spend a lot of time...training them to be able to become functional in the organisation. 	GET/ABET Private KZN (2:4:21)
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Employability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...degrees are not found to be applicable directly to the market and so what [other institutions] have done was to say "okay, you get your degree, you spend about 6 to 9 months in a special programme that, in which you apply the theory you have learnt to a variety of industrial applications and it is with the participants from [industry] so, that you then become market orientated." 	HET Public LIM (2:4:22)
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Employability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...when you have to learn both theory and practical you will be able to enter into the labour market much more easily than a person who only learns theory. 	DoL NW (2:3:21)
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Workplace assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm beginning to see an improvement in our content whereby the assessment is strongly linked to workplace learning, performance management...and they are trying to narrow [the mismatch] because even within the workbook there would be, for instance, a worksheet which binds the supervisor of that learner to say "how are you going to help your learner implement the skills that he/she acquired from training". So, it's sort of continuous sort of assessment where it goes right into the workplace. 	HET Public GAU (2:4:24)

RESEARCH QUESTION 4: Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Value all learning Collaboration, coordination Relationship Parity of esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least there's a recognition now, if we talk about learning, that we're not talking about sitting at a desk and studying and working. We're also now talking about in the workplace, behind a sewing machine, you're also busy with working and training. I think that in a sense the DoE has managed to some extent to bring the two together, but also there is a close working relationship between what the DoE and DoL offers. We talk to each other, because ultimately there is an overlap in terms of the target groups. You know, we're coming from a history where it was regarded as inferior if you had a qualifications from a FET College. Now, all of a sudden, it is recognised by the DoE and it has recognition throughout the world of work, it is no longer seen as inferior. At one stage people were not keen to go to the Technical Colleges because of the whole stigma of having a college qualification. 	DoL WC (2:3:19)
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration Joint planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think they have a very valuable component there with sort of an [experiential] model of in-service training...sort of in this business type partnership type approach. It works very well and [in] the advisory bodies, you have people selected, you know, senior people in the industry [who] regularly network [with] staff and review programmes...we have practical work where they go out into industry and do practical work there and are also assessed on a practical level. 	HET Public LIM FG (2:4:35)
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I come from a university background, but I have also been involved with technikons and that vocational side of it whereas you get the practical plus the theoretical and that seems to work well. I think universities can learn a lot from that and become a bit more practical themselves. 	DoL GAU (2:3:20)

RESEARCH QUESTION 4: Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevance to the world of work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was general consensus that NQF qualifications could be relevant in the future, but that it is still too early to make such a conclusion. The college offers various programmes in partnership with employers and other local and international partners. It is specifically these courses that are found to be relevant to learners. 	Public, FET (medium) (1:9:8)
Curricular integrability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevance to the world of work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So the programmes are structured in such a way that we do not only use theoretical stuff only, we make them employable. 	Private, HET (Medium) (1:9:29)

**QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF A SELECTION OF CYCLE 2 SURVEY
QUESTIONNAIRE DATA**

pp. 276 – 287 (Annexure page no's start at 1 for referencing in the text)

(Survey questionnaire is attached as Annexure 6)

**The extent to which qualifications facilitate the mobility of learners
(horizontally, vertically and diagonally) within the South African education and
training system**

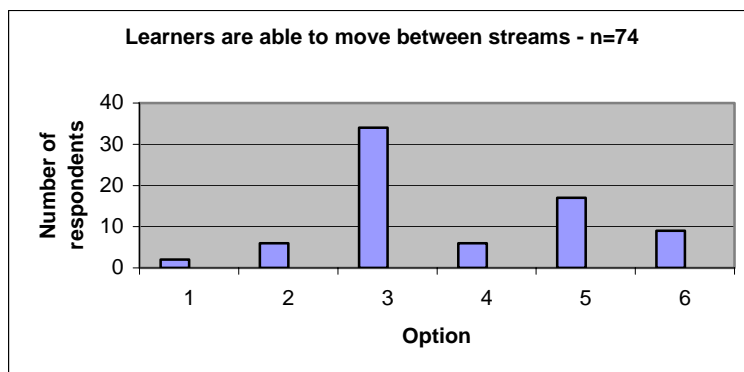
Key:

- 1 = strongly disagree
- 2 = disagree
- 3 = agree
- 4 = strongly agree
- 5 = don't know
- 6 = too soon to say

All data from respondents combined:

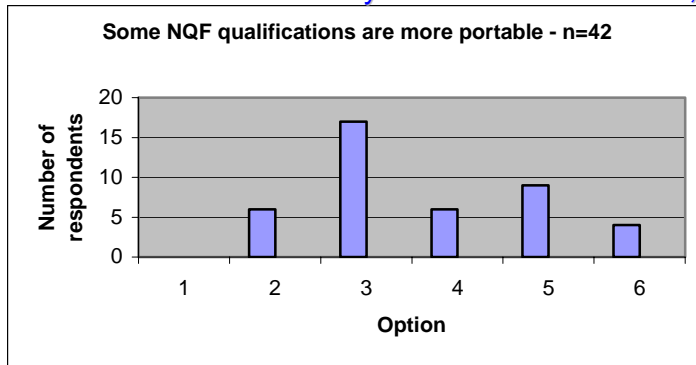
Question 2.2.2

Learners with NQF qualifications are able to *move* between vocational, professional and academic streams of the education and training system



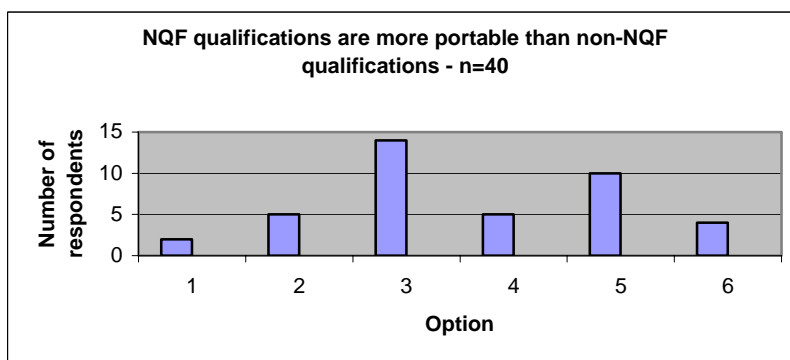
Question 2.2.3

NQF qualifications offered by *some institutions* are seen as more portable than NQF qualifications offered by other institutions



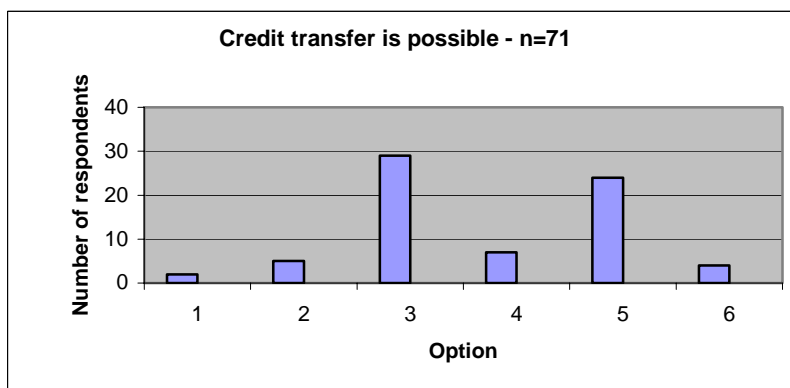
Question 2.2.4

NQF qualifications are seen as *more portable* than non NQF-qualifications



Question 2.2.5

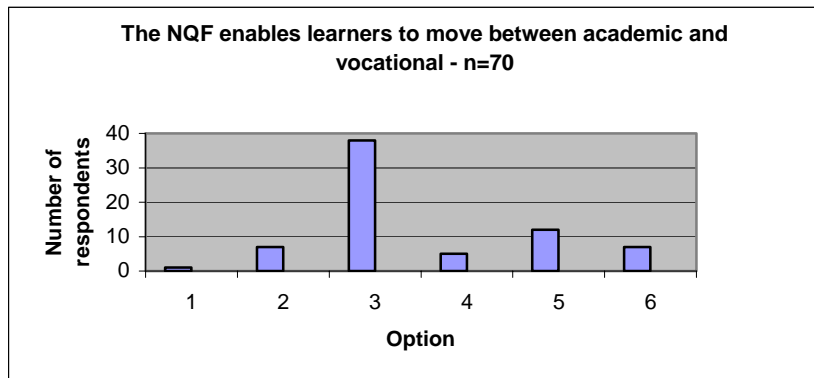
Recognition (credit transfer) is given for incomplete NQF qualifications when learners move from one institution to another



The extent to which NQF qualifications promote an integrative approach to education and training and the nature of such qualifications

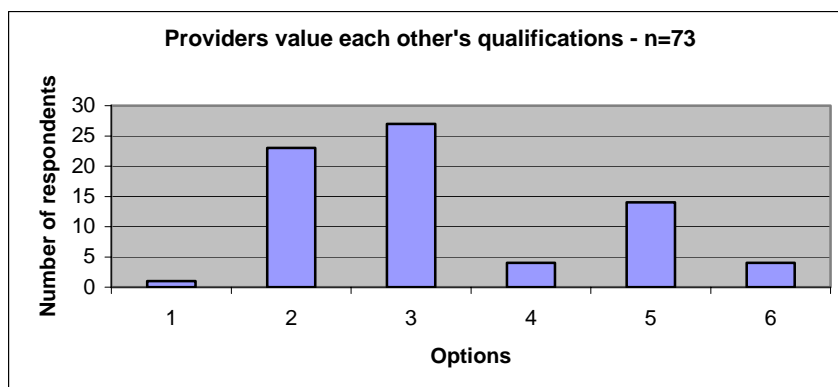
Question 2.5.1

The NQF enables learners to *move* between academic qualifications and vocational qualifications



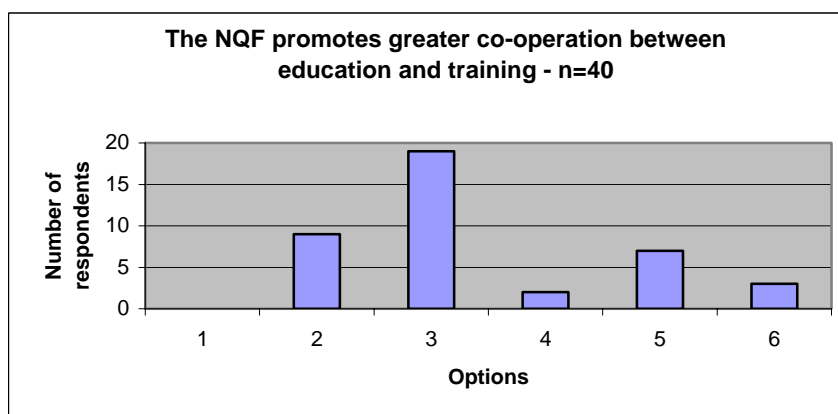
Question 2.5.2

Providers of education and training *value* each other's qualifications



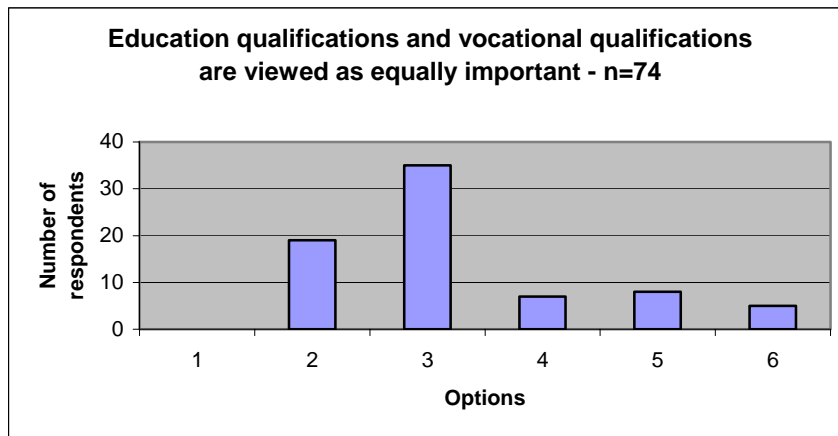
Question 2.5.3

The NQF promotes/leads to greater *co-operation* between formal education system and the world of work and training



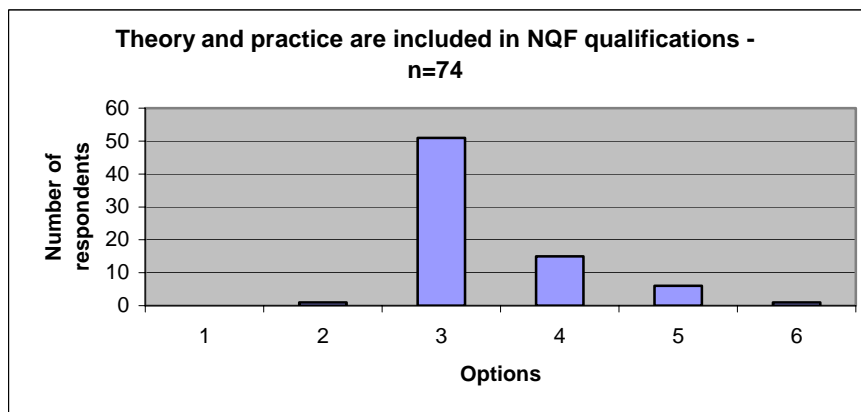
Question 2.5.4

Education qualifications and vocational qualifications are viewed as *equally important*



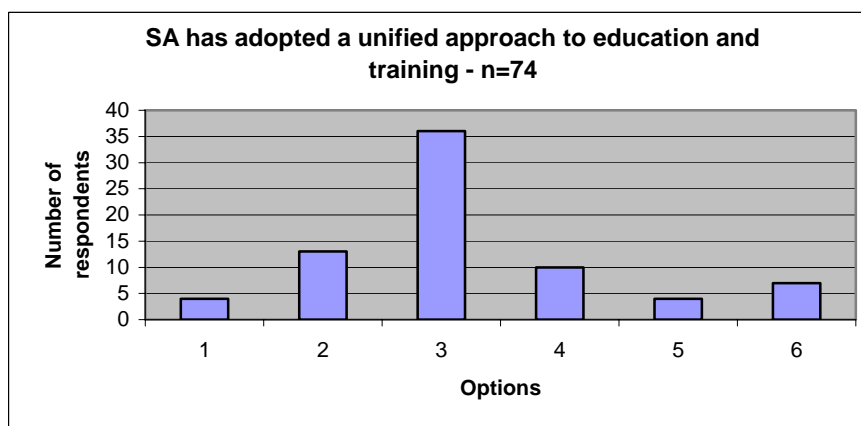
Question 2.5.5

Both *theory and practice* are included in NQF qualifications



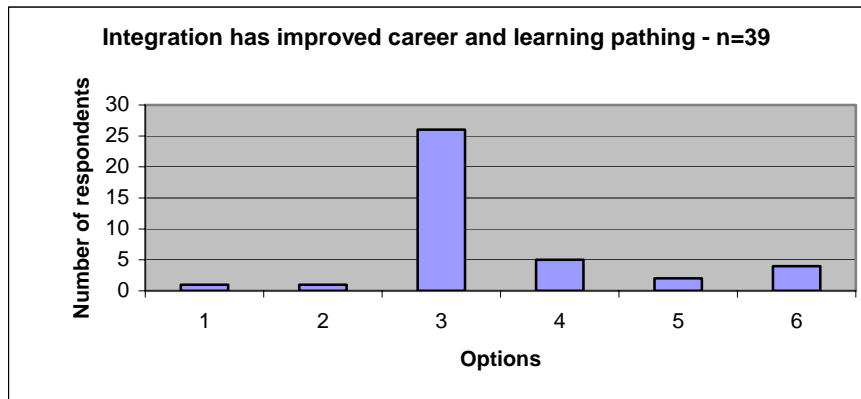
Question 2.5.6

South African has adopted a *unified approach* to education and training



Question 2.5.7

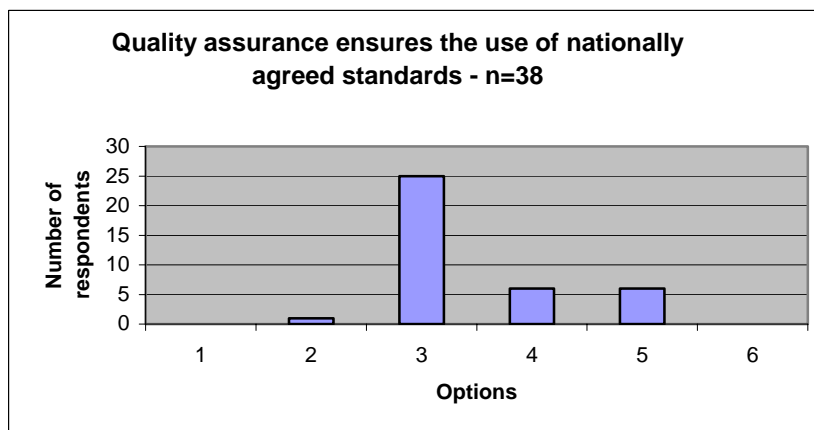
The integration of education and training has improved *career and learning pathing*



The extent to which quality assurance practices enhance the quality of learning, teaching and assessment

Question 4.1.4

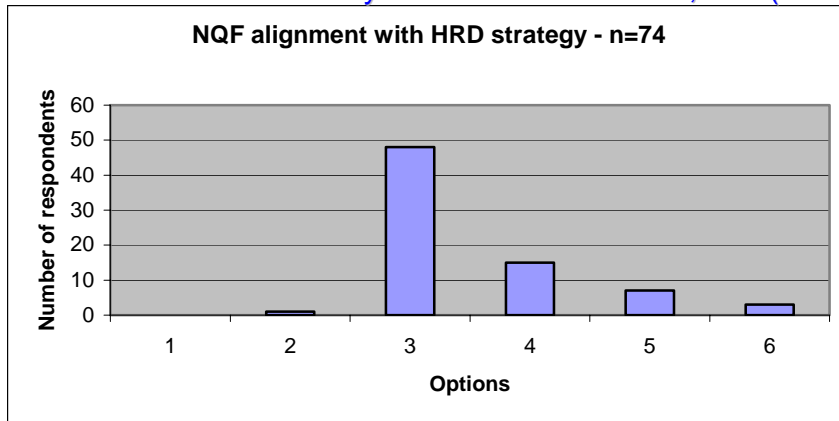
NQF quality assurance ensure that qualifications are based on *nationally agreed standards*



The extent to which the implementation of the NQF supports and contributes to the achievement of national strategies such as the Human Resource Development, National Skills Development Strategy and Tirisano

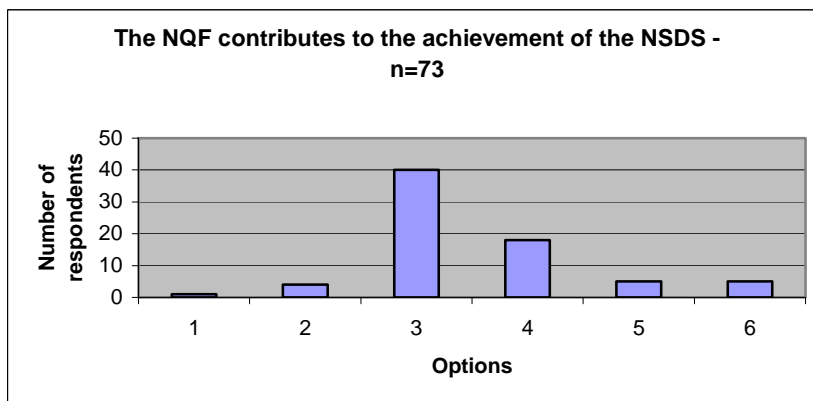
Question 5.2.1

The objectives of the NQF are aligned with the objectives of the National *Human Resource Development* (HRD) strategy



Question 5.2.10

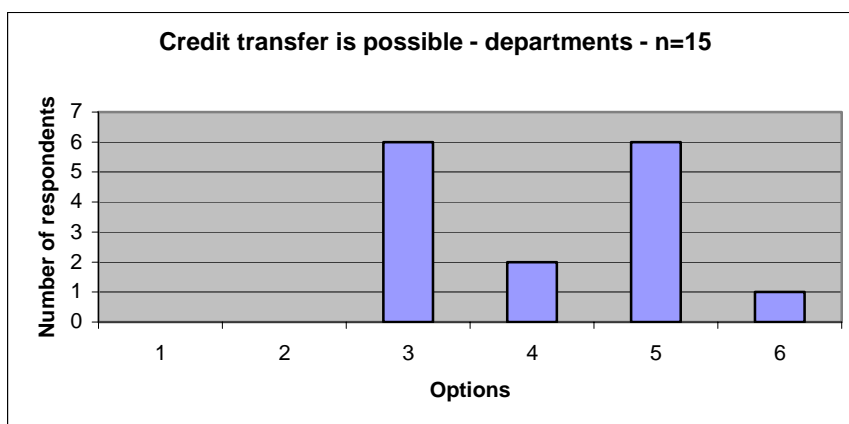
NQF qualifications contribute to the achievement of the *National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS)* targets



Department-specific data

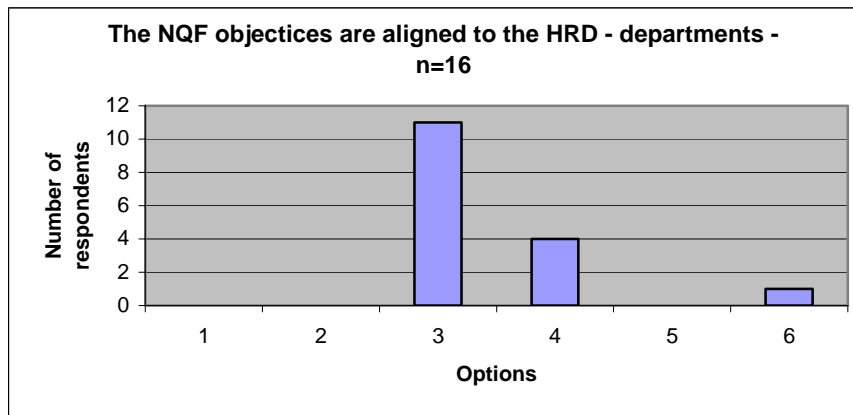
Question 2.2.5 (Department-specific)

Recognition (credit transfer) is given for incomplete NQF qualifications when learners move from one institution to another



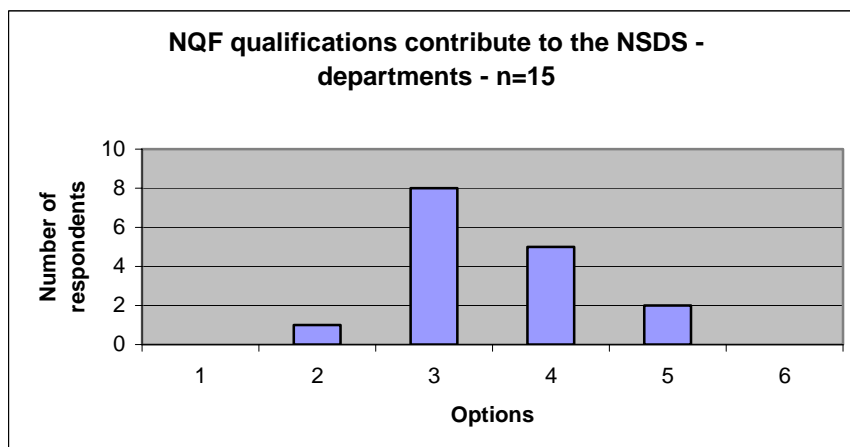
Question 5.2.1 (Department specific)

The objectives of the NQF are aligned with the objectives of the National *Human Resource Development* (HRD) strategy



Question 5.2.10 (Department specific)

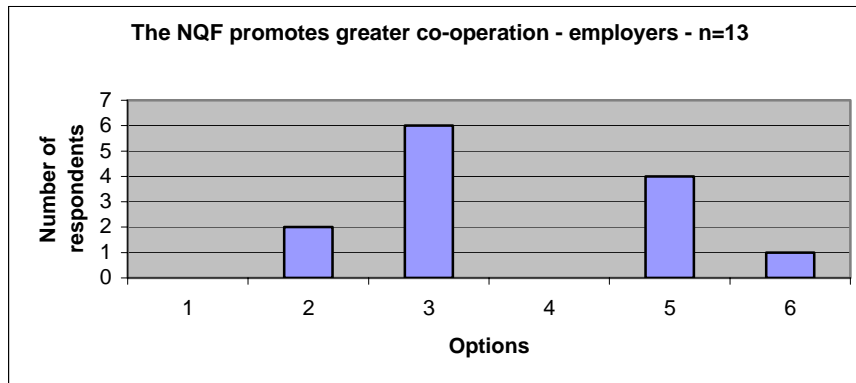
NQF qualifications contribute to the achievement of the *National Skills Development Strategy* (NSDS) targets



Employer specific data

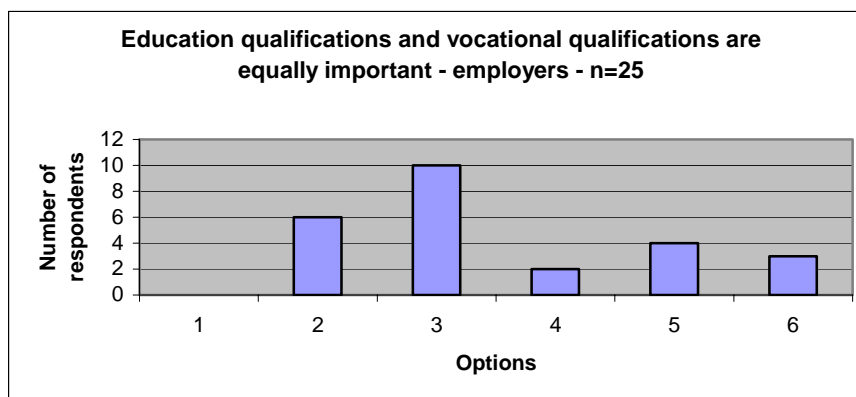
Question 2.5.3 (Employer specific)

The NQF promotes/leads to greater *co-operation* between formal education system and the world of work and training



Question 2.5.4 (Employer specific)

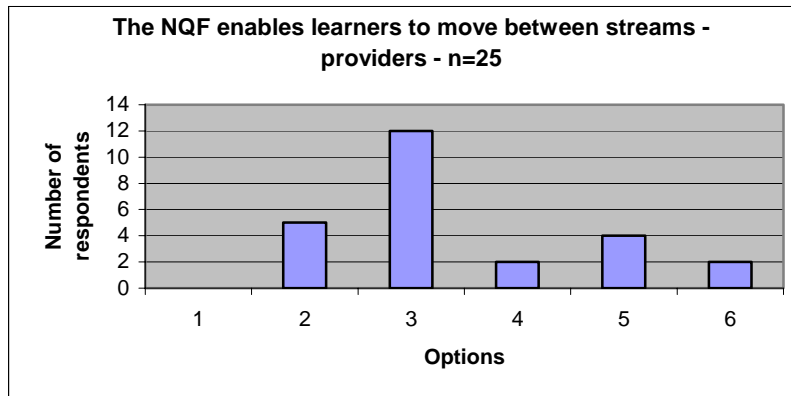
Education qualifications and vocational qualifications are viewed as *equally important*



Provider specific data

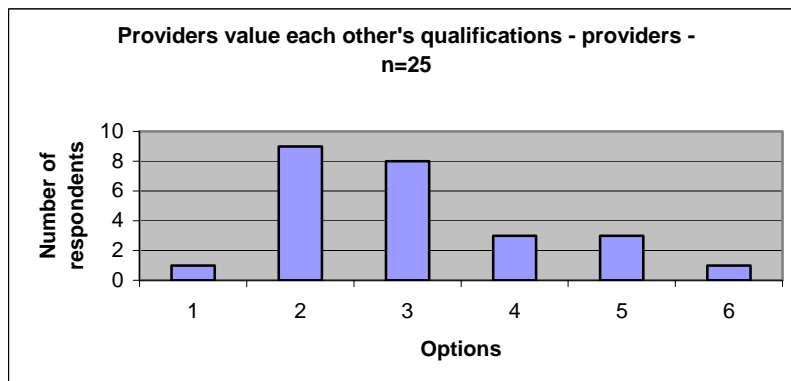
Question 2.5.1 (Provider specific)

The NQF enables learners to *move* between academic qualifications and vocational qualifications



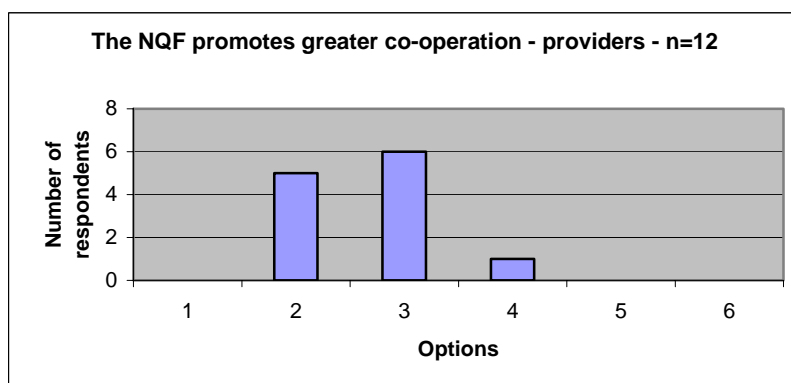
Question 2.5.2 (Provider specific)

Providers of education and training *value* each other's qualifications



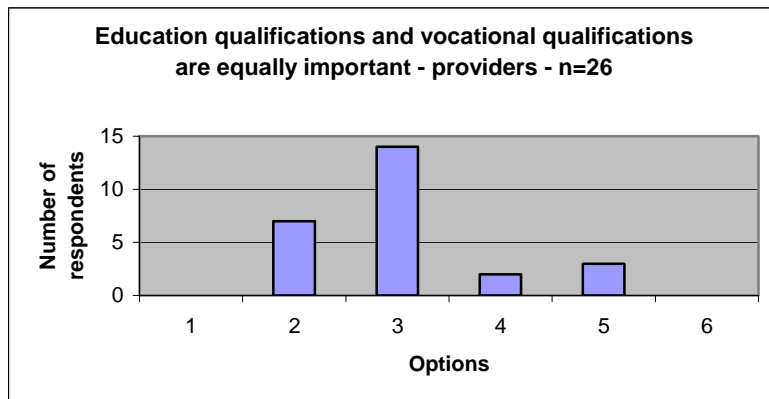
Question 2.5.3 (Provider specific)

The NQF promotes/leads to greater *co-operation* between formal education system and the world of work and training



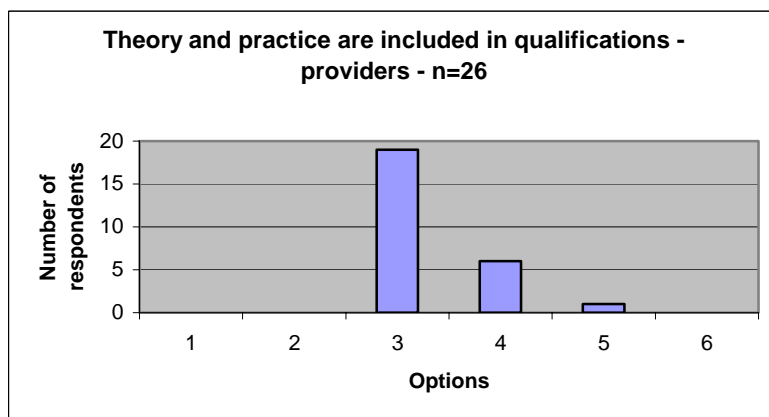
Question 2.5.4 (Provider specific)

Education qualifications and vocational qualifications are viewed as *equally important*



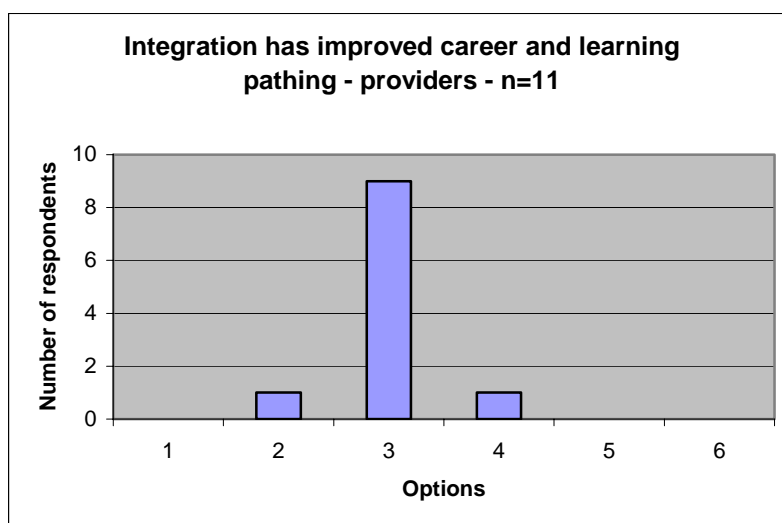
Question 2.5.5 (Provider specific)

Both *theory and practice* are included in NQF qualifications



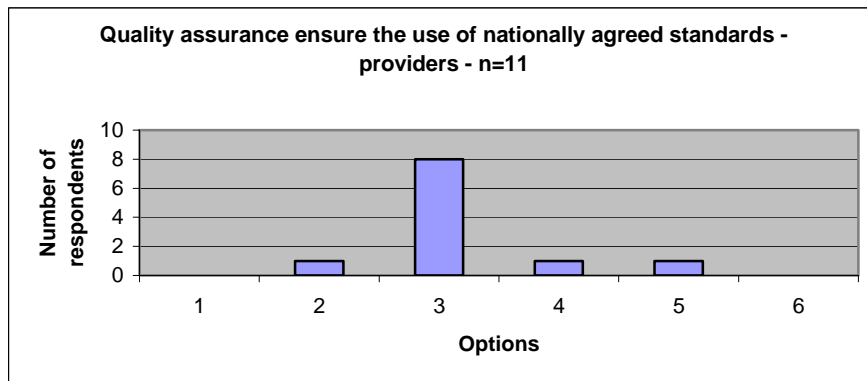
Question 2.5.7 (Provider specific)

The integration of education and training has improved *career and learning pathing*



Question 4.1.4 (Provider specific)

NQF quality assurance ensure that qualifications are based on *nationally agreed standards*



ANNEXURE 3

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS – A SAMPLE OF REGULAR QUALIFICATIONS REGISTERED ON THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

pp. 288 - 297 (Annexure page no's start at 1 for referencing in the text)

References:

- For the NQF Impact Study Cycle 1 Annexures the following referencing method is used: **(1:5:17)**, which means that the data has been extracted from the **Cycle 1** Annexures; it is **Annexure 5**; in Annexure 5, the reference is on **page 17**.
- For the NQF Impact Study Cycle 2 Annexures the following referencing method is used: **(2:9:21)**, which means that the data has been extracted from the **Cycle 2** Annexures; it is **Annexure 9**; in Annexure 9, the reference is on **page 21**.

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Source
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Transferability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very few of the qualifications analysed (4 of the 15 high-scoring qualifications, i.e. those which were most likely to contain statements on portability and transferability) provided any specific detail...in the main qualifications either did not address the issue at all, made some token effort at addressing portability and transferability (often by including or paraphrasing the relevant sections from the SAQA Act) or misinterpreted the meaning... 	(1:4:5)
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Transferability ○ Adaptability ○ Credit transfer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ability to adapt acquired skills to a range of new working environments goes to the heart of the issue of portability within a qualification 	(1:4:6)
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Credit transfer ○ Career paths 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualifications that have seriously attempted to provide details of portability by specifying precise articulation possibilities and career path options [such as the] National Certificate: Supervision of Water Reticulation Operations, Waste Water Operations; General Education and Training Certificate: Conservation; National Certificate: Hygiene and Cleaning; and the National Certificate: Motor Sales and Support Services 	(1:4:6)

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Source
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Structure of the qualification ○ Credit transfer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Certificate: Hygiene and Cleaning...the essential core of the qualification is that it is a building block for entry into related industries at NQF Level 2. The qualification asserts that providing a basis of education in hygiene and cleaning sector is a prerequisite for portability into other related sectors 	(1:4:6)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This qualification has developed a system that allows for credit gained at one level to be transferred throughout the system, thereby allowing students to build up credits towards additional qualifications in related fields such as hospitality, health care or related branches of cleaning. The qualification allows for both horizontal and vertical portability – a choice is provided for the learner at NQF level 1 to enter into a related branch of cleaning such as industrial or textile cleaning • One of the overall aims of the qualification is to allow employees within the industry to identify a career paths within the Hygiene and Cleaning industry. In terms of vertical portability the qualification may be used as a basis to progress into industries at NQF level 2, such as: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Health Care 2. Waste Management 3. Hospitality 4. Food Production 5. Retail and Merchandising 	(1:4:7)
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Structure of the qualification ○ Progression ○ Career paths 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The technical qualifications such as the National Certificate: Supervision of Water Reticulation Operations, Waste Water Operations; General Education and Training Certificate: Conservation provide clear indications of vertical and horizontal portability and progression across NQF Levels in this regard. These qualifications identify clearly the potential for particular career paths. 	(1:4:6)

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Source
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Structure of the qualification ○ Agreed standards ○ Progression ○ Career paths ○ Mobility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Certificate: Supervision of Water Reticulation Operations <p>The qualification has been developed to assist with standardisation across the water reticulation industry. This process of standardisation will lay a foundation for learners for future career advancement across similar trades and within the sector. The competence gained through the course [will] give the learner the requisite skills to build individual capacity; these skills are portable and will enhance the career development of the individual.</p> <p>This qualification allows for both vertical and horizontal portability. Vertical portability is illustrated with the introduction of National Certificate in Water Reticulation on NQF level 4; the learner may pass from a National Certificate in Water Reticulation on NQF level 2 and progress to supervising water reticulation projects operating under a foreman or engineer. The qualification also allows access to a foreman level qualification on NQF level 5. It allows for mobility across similar trades – learners may study towards management certificates or diplomas in the sector or other sector on NQF level 5 or 6. The qualification provides clear guidelines of learner portability.</p> 	(1:4:7)

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Source
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Structure of the qualification ○ Career paths ○ Agreed standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Education and Training Certificate: Conservation <p>The qualification allows learners to gain a set of portable skills for further learning. Learners will be given a broad overview of conservation, some of the technical skills relating to conservation, and the importance of conservation principles. The qualification has an elective component so that learners will be able to select a possible career pathway of sector where they will be able to apply the conservation skills and strategies taught. The qualification essentially creates an environment from which portability into other conservation sectors may be achieved, by providing a general education at GET level and then goes on to provide information specific education in nature and cultural conservation. The qualification shares the same fundamental learning areas as that of the GETC in Tourism and GETC in Sport, Recreation and Fitness, which are composed of a large portion of standards relating to knowledge and skills that provides the foundation for further learning. The qualification rationale makes reference to the alignment of this qualification with that of adult basic education and training, which aims at the strategic development of under-educated individuals and therefore this qualification, is constrained in terms of only being able to provide a foundation of broad skills relating to basic education. The introduction of general conservation concepts can only provide the foundational skills necessary for choosing a career path.</p> 	(1:4:7,8)
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Credit transfer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate: Education <p>The qualification serves as both an entry and exit point from both the Professional Diploma in Education (PDE) and the Bachelor of Education (Bed). There is no mention of horizontal portability within this qualification, that is the qualification identifies a series of general competencies required and does not stipulate how these competencies may help to improve the level of portability amongst learners. Apart from the mention of the qualification serving as an exit and entry point from the BEd programme and the PDE, there is no clear linkage between how the acquired competencies relate to vertical or horizontal portability.</p> 	(1:4:9)

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Source
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Structure of the qualification ○ Mobility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Certificate in Construction Plastering The qualification will allow persons to register as a construction plasterer and allow future career advancement across similar trades and to supervisory and management qualifications within the sector. These standards have also been developed for mobility across similar trades within the industry and are intended to allow for further learning towards supervisory and management qualifications within this and other sectors. This qualification also builds on other certificates from a range of sub-sectors and will provide articulation in both technical and management areas. 	(2:8:32)
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Structure of the qualification ○ Mobility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Certificate in Surveying A learner having gained this qualification would be able to register with the South African Council for professional and technical surveyors and through their numerous reciprocal agreements to gain international recognition. All three aspects of mobility, that is, horizontal, diagonal and vertical are built into the qualification. 	(2:8:33)
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Learning paths 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The underlying principle in the design of an FETC then must be that the qualifying learner has the learning assumed to be in place to embark upon the study of qualifications at a higher level or at the same level but with a different focus, and that through the acquisition of the FETC, a viable learning pathway is created. This underpins the concept that qualification design must favour the principle of ‘dove-tailing’, i.e. exiting from one qualification must lead directly to entry to one or more qualifications at the same or higher level 	(SAQA, 2001: 3) ¹ .

¹ SAQA, (2001). FETC policy document

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Source
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structure of the qualification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> According to the SAQA FETC policy document ‘each FETC will constitute a minimum of 120 credits with a minimum of 72 credits being obtained at or above level 4 and in the case of certificates of 120 credits, a maximum of 48 credits being obtained at level 3, of which at least 20 credits shall be from the field of Communication Studies and Language, and in addition at least 16 credits shall be from the sub-field of Mathematics’ 	(SAQA, 2001:3)
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structure of the qualification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SAQA FETC policy document (2001: 22) asks what is ‘the degree of coherence that should be prescribed or the amount of learning that must be common for all learners in the FET band to ensure that the progress to further learning is possible within the variety of contexts’? The decision was made that all FETCs should have a minimum number of credits allocated to the Fundamental components of the qualification, and that such credits will be spread across Communication and Language Studies and Mathematical Literacy. 	RB ² (2005)

² Blom, R. (2005) NQF registered Occupational Further Education and Training Certificates (FETCs). An analysis: (Draft)

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Source
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Learning paths 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three of the principles underpinning the NQF are associated with learning pathways: Articulation: To provide for learners, on successful completion of accredited prerequisites, to move between components of the delivery system; Progression: To ensure that the framework of qualifications permits individuals to move through the levels of national qualifications via different appropriate combinations of the components of the delivery system; Portability: To enable learners to transfer credits of qualifications from one learning institution and/or employer to another. 	(SAQA, 2001: 10) ³
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Learning paths • Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Structure of the qualification ○ Career paths 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is more likely that learners would repeat a unit standard that has many elements that are common, in order to obtain credits, that would translate into a second or third qualification. Hopping onto learning pathways is a common occurrence in the field. The hopping is a result of promotion in the workplace that changes the job-function and content 	(2:8:34)
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Career paths 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose statements of the occupational FETCs range from specific technical and industry specific competencies, to providing access or a foundation to formal qualifications registered on the NQF at an entry level. The target markets include currently employed, unemployed adults and youth, people who wish to formalize knowledge and skills gained in the specific industry or sector and people who may have been denied advancement in the past. In addition, many purpose statements include possibilities for the building (or extending) of career pathways starting from the FETC as a foundation, as well as provide for lifelong learning, the ability to become self-employed and for the development of entrepreneurial skills. 	RB (2005)

³ SAQA, (2001). Criteria and Guidelines for Assessment of NQF registered Unit standards and Qualifications

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Source
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Credit transfer ○ Joint planning ○ Agreed standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The currently registered occupational FETCs seem to address the needs of a diverse community of learners across many sectors of education and training. • The analysis indicates that all the qualifications in the sample meet the minimum criteria for an FETC, with most of the 70 occupational FETCs exceeding the minimum credit rating. • However, it should be noted that the quality of delivery cannot be assumed from the quality of the structure of the qualification. An investigation into the curricula, learning programmes and assessment practices will enable an informed judgement and will go a long way in ensuring parity of esteem with the other two emerging FETCs, namely the vocational FETC and the general FETC (schools). 	RB (2005)
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Theory and practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Certificate in Supervision of Civil Engineering Construction The qualification consists of generic supervisory competencies, generic technical competencies as well as ‘managerial technical expertise’ required in a specific context. Management supervisory competencies are combined with technical competencies resulting in large qualifications of 240 credits (on average). This compares favourably with similar qualifications in New Zealand that are integrated with practical experience and theoretical study. 	(2:8:38)
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Workplace practice ○ Curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Certificate Diesel Mechanic, Fitting and Turning, Plater/Boilermaker To attain this qualification, candidates must achieve exit level outcomes in the core unit standards as well as those required in one of the specialization areas. The specified outcomes for exit level outcomes are performance-based (applied competence as opposed to required knowledge only). This entails that the experience from the workplace may be recognized when awarding credits towards this qualification. 	(2:8:54)
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mobility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Certificate: Introduction to the Mining and Minerals Sector is a NQF level 1 qualification and is designed to meet the needs of learners in this sector. The purpose of the qualification is to lay the foundation for mobility and portability within the sector. 	(2:8:43)

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Source
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mobility ○ Career paths 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Certificates Electrical, Diesel Mechanic, Fitting and Turning, Plater/Boilermaker The specialization areas of this qualification allow for a variety of potential employment opportunities within the sector. Furthermore, specialized unit standards create a magnitude of career opportunities within other sector, namely: auto, mechanical and electrical sectors. In addition, this qualification will also provide opportunities for self-employment and entrepreneurship within and across the sector. Conclusion: vertical mobility with the sector, horizontal mobility across sectors and diagonal mobility within diverse career paths. 	(2:8:48)

ANNEXURE 4

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF A SELECTION OF PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE REVIEWS OF THE SANQF

pp. 298 - 337 (Annexure page no's start at 1 for referencing in the text)

- Report of the Study Team on the Implementation of the National Qualifications Framework (Department of Education and Department of Labour, 2002)
- An Interdependent National Qualifications Framework System. Consultative Document (Department of Education and Department of Labour, 2003)

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ASDFSFA	Association of Skills Development Facilitators of South Africa
CHE/HEQC	Council on Higher Education/Higher Education Quality Committee
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CTP	Committee of Technikon Principals (now part of Higher Education South Africa – HESA)
ECSA	Engineering Council of South Africa
FASSET	Financial and Accounting Sector Education Training Authority
HPCSA	Health Professions Council of South Africa
INSETA	Insurance Sector Education and Training Authority
SACP	South African Communist Party
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers' Union
SAUVCA	South African Vice Chancellors' Association (now part of Higher Education South Africa – HESA)
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
UMALUSI	Council for Quality Assurance of General and Further Education and Training

RESEARCH QUESTION 1: Is the objective of an integrated SANQF an example of policy symbolism?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Policy symbolism	Intentions of the framework	Any policy document is open to multiple interpretations and unintended consequences and it is a major failing of the CD that there are significant areas of ambiguity and lack of detail that open the door to conflicting interpretations.	CHE/HEQC
Policy symbolism	Intentions of the framework	Politically, the unhinging of education and training will result in the ‘dumbing-down’ of workplace learning and prevent access, mobility and progression for workers wishing to achieve worthwhile higher education and training qualifications.	CHE/HEQC
Policy symbolism	Intentions of the framework	The transformation and development of South Africa’s education and training system, including the NQF, should maintain an adherence to principles, values, vision and goals and within these adopt flexible and incremental approaches that utilize and build on progress already achieved post-1994 by existing systems, institutions and organisations.	CHE/HEQC
Policy symbolism	Resistance to apartheid	We need to remind the role players in the task team that the National Qualifications Authority is the product of hard, serious and difficult negotiations amongst the strong positioned nationalists and democrats. It further emanated from the alliance’s strong engagements with the opposition of change at the time and as such must be respected.	COSATU
Policy symbolism	Resistance to apartheid	A National Qualifications Framework was a central objective of our national liberation. It was a critical element of the Reconstruction and Development Programme. It was to a great extent conceptualise and driven by organized labour, as it was understood that real democratic change was impossible without a complete restructuring of the education and training system.	SACP

RESEARCH QUESTION 1: Is the objective of an integrated SANQF an example of policy symbolism?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Policy symbolism	Resistance to apartheid	The CHE and HEQC are and remain committed to an integrated approach to education and training as an important inheritance of the national democratic struggle of the pre-1994 period and as the most appropriate means to achieve the goals of the NQF: namely an education and training <i>system</i> characterised by equity of access, opportunity and outcomes; high quality provision, learning and teaching; learner mobility and progression; and, articulation between programmes, qualifications and institutions.	CHE/HEQC
Policy symbolism	Social inclusion	The social construct nature of the NQF should be upheld, since it creates space for the generation of new knowledge that is socio-technical in character through social dialogue forums. This socio-technical character of the NQF is embodied in all the principles embracing the different needs and expectations of constituencies.	COSATU
Policy symbolism	Social inclusion	The inclusion of social partners was an attempt to further the interests of the broader civil society and negate the elitism and non-inclusive approach that characterized the education and training systems under apartheid.	SADTU
Policy symbolism	Social inclusion	It is our view that stakeholder engagement is the way to go as this process is political. Political in that it is a transformation process of the apartheid geared education and training system characterised by social strata silos.	COSATU
Policy symbolism	Social inclusion	The proposals of the CD do not address issues of access, progression and mobility within higher education and training. On the contrary, they raise further impermeable barriers to such access, mobility and progression.	CHE/HEQC

RESEARCH QUESTION 1: Is the objective of an integrated SANQF an example of policy symbolism?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Policy symbolism	Social inclusion	It is beyond any question that the institution of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) has ushered in a viable and sustainable educational, training and development dispensation. This dispensation has indeed begun challenging the traditional notions of education, training and development in a way that seeks to breakdown the artificial barriers caused by inflexible and narrow focus on professional qualifications. Instead, the approach seems to be widening the scope to structure and recognize on-the-job training, skills and vocational development programs and intermediary qualifications with clear career paths towards fully fledged professionals.	HPCSA
Guiding philosophy	Conceptual framework for education and training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration 	DOE and DOL should act according to the spirit intended with the implementation of the NQF, which was to bring about ONE integrated framework for Education and Training	Insurance sector
Guiding philosophy	Conceptual framework for education and training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration 	Firstly, the conception of the interface between learning and work. The ' <i>integrated approach</i> ' to education and training that has been a key objective of South Africa's NQF and has strongly shaped its implementation over the last seven years is replaced by an ' <i>interdependent approach</i> ' that rests on conceptual and organisational distinctions between three 'learning pathways'.	CHE/HEQC
Guiding philosophy	Conceptual framework for education and training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration 	The CHE and HEQC are and remain committed to an integrated approach to education and training as an important inheritance of the national democratic struggle of the pre-1994 period and as the most appropriate means to achieve the goals of the NQF: namely an education and training <i>system</i> characterised by equity of access, opportunity and outcomes; high quality provision, learning and teaching; learner mobility and progression; and, articulation between programmes, qualifications and institutions.	CHE/HEQC

RESEARCH QUESTION 1: Is the objective of an integrated SANQF an example of policy symbolism?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Guiding philosophy	Conceptual framework for education and training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration 	While the CHE and HEQC welcome the release of the Consultative Document and support a number of its recommendations (see sections 2 and 7), we fundamentally disagree, with its reconceptualisation of the integration of education and training based on conceptual and organisational distinctions between three 'learning pathways'. We believe that the concept of 'interdependence' marks a dangerous retreat from the principle of the 'integration' of education and training. This will undermine access with quality to higher education and training especially for learners in the workplace.	CHE/HEQC
Guiding philosophy	Conceptual framework for education and training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration 	No one disagrees that the integrated approach is more difficult to achieve. Its benefits however, for our society are greater than any that our past system has provided.	INSETA
Guiding philosophy	Conceptual framework for education and training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobility 	The addition of yet another learning path may cause confusion and create barriers to entry that can impair learning or career pathway mobility.	ASDFSFA
Guiding philosophy	Parity of esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocational Academic 	There also appears to be little or no attempt to ensure that learners who engage in academic qualifications be required to participate in appropriate worksite experiential learning. The establishment of the TOP Quality Council could create another artificial barrier between learners who emerge with academic qualifications (who have not had the opportunity of participating in practical integrated and experiential workplace learning) and those who have obtained certification of vocational competence. Perpetuation of the elitist "ivory tower" academic mentality has a direct influence on the efforts of SDFs to recruit people into learnerships and skills programmes.	ASDFSFA
Guiding philosophy	Parity of esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocational Academic 	[The dis-integration of the system] ...will undermine access with quality to higher education and training especially for learners in the workplace.	CHE/HEQC
Guiding philosophy	Parity of esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocational Academic 	The difference is not just based on social perception or that workplace-based education and training has not been valued or that elites have used their disciplines to maintain the status quo. The difference is actually a fundamental fact of what education is – about knowledge that is discontinuous, not continuous with every day experience. It takes people beyond the knowledge available to them through every day life.	Umalusi

RESEARCH QUESTION 1: Is the objective of an integrated SANQF an example of policy symbolism?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Guiding philosophy	Parity of esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocational • Academic • Practical considerations 	The conditions for learning with breadth and depth are, of necessity, found in formal education institutions, because workplaces are unlikely to have the time or the trained and experienced staff to enable such learning to happen. It is not useful, therefore, to create a perception of a framework in which all qualifications can be obtained in all three pathways, when in fact it does not seem realistic that higher levels of learning can be reached in the workplace.	Umalusi
Guiding philosophy	Parity of esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life opportunities • Equal weighting 	The initial purpose of the NQF was to integrate education and training giving both, Labour and Education, equal weighting. However, the proposed new NQF is certainly skewed in favour of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education. Many argue that the new proposed system takes us back to the apartheid years where learning on the shop floor was considered inferior and out of the realm of Higher Education. In addition, those progressing through the Higher Education pathways are usually advantaged, with better resources and guaranteed better life opportunities – the NQF was intended to break this elitist status quo that was perpetuated by the apartheid regime in order to create a cheap and poorly skilled black labour force.	SADTU
Guiding philosophy	Parity of esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equal opportunities 	The real test for separated systems is whether learners have equal opportunities in reaching their full potential in such systems. For the main part such systems are resourced in such a way that the academic stream is always the better endowed and learners who are able to progress in this stream have better life opportunities. The parity of resourcing for the various streams is crucial for this model to work.	INSETA
Guiding philosophy	Parity of esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equal status 	Our history teaches us that work-place based learning had always been given an inferior status and one of the assumptions behind the integration project was to give workplace based and institution based learning an equal status. This could be interpreted that those with qualifications from SETA's could be labeled inferior compared to those with qualifications from HEQC. This is taking us back to the Verwoerd era whereby those with technikon qualifications were considered inferior as opposed to those with university qualifications. We are worried about issues such as access and articulation at this level.	SADTU

RESEARCH QUESTION 1: Is the objective of an integrated SANQF an example of policy symbolism?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Guiding philosophy	Parity of esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equal status • Qualifications 	Further, it is our contention that the inter-dependent three-track system proposed in the Consultative Document is at odds with trends in the development of knowledge domains in a 21 st century world, and higher education's necessary and on-going re-alignment in this regard. An NQF that is a continuum of different qualifications at each level (see the SAUVCA submission on the Study Team Report, Aug 2002), varying from "pure" general/formative qualifications at one pole, to "fully" vocational/career-focused qualifications at the other, will see most or all higher education qualifications tending to the middle over time, something which is entirely appropriate for higher education in a world which has seen the very concept of a single, life-long "career" disappear. The further development of this trend will be curtailed if the three-track model of the Consultative Document is put into practice in the belief that different sets of educational philosophies and practices are involved in three domains of learning and development (and, indeed, reminds us of the 'separate spheres' theology of the previous dispensation).	SAUVCA
Guiding philosophy	Social construct	The social construct nature of the NQF should be upheld, since it creates space for the generation of new knowledge that is socio-technical in character through social dialogue forums. This socio-technical character of the NQF is embodied in all the principles embracing the different needs and expectations of constituencies.	SADTU
Guiding philosophy	Social construct	The NQF was purported to be a social construct that embodied the aspirations of all the people of South Africa, especially those disadvantaged and deprived by our legacy of apartheid. ...the response by the two Ministries on the Interdependent Consultative Document clearly indicates a radical shift from this integration project. In fact, what has occurred is the creation of a new NQF system that has detracted from our transformation agenda by making proposals that fundamentally change the NQF?	SADTU

RESEARCH QUESTION 1: Is the objective of an integrated SANQF an example of policy symbolism?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Guiding philosophy	Lack of progress	...this 'divided ownership' approach creates a number of problems. Another consequence of the emphasis in the CD on achieving a compromise acceptable to the two Departments is that other critical issues associated with the framework are not given the attention they deserve	CHE/HEQC
Guiding philosophy	Political will	It is clear that the decision on the NQF requires strong political commitment that is based on the aspirations of the people of this country and that it would be ironic if the NQF is dismantled as a response to the personalities of two ministers. Surely the future of this country's potential to heal itself, empower itself and become a key player in the global arena must transcend the tensions and turf contestation of two individuals. ...if we now begin to establish a new NQF [i.e. not integrated] we are detracting from the mandate of the people of this country and revisiting a past we best leave behind...	SADTU
Guiding philosophy	Meta-theme	The fundamental and overriding principle that animates the CHE and HEQC response is that The CHE and HEQC are and remain committed to an integrated approach to education and training as an important inheritance of the national democratic struggle of the pre-1994 period and as the most appropriate means to achieve the goals of the NQF: namely an education and training <i>system</i> characterised by equity of access, opportunity and outcomes; high quality provision, learning and teaching; learner mobility and progression; and, articulation between programmes, qualifications and institutions.	CHE/HEQC

RESEARCH QUESTION 1: Is the objective of an integrated SANQF an example of policy symbolism?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Guiding philosophy	Social and economic development	While the CD acknowledges that the HRD strategy is committed to an inclusive interpretation of work that encompasses values such as human dignity, self-expression and full citizenship, the CD itself concentrates on those skills necessary for social and economic development. Without doubt, the development of the person power of South Africa – in terms of knowledge, skills, competencies and attitudes – is crucial for social and economic development, and the institutions of education and training must make a pivotal contribution in this regard. There is also no doubt that educational institutions must become more responsive to the development of person power for social and economic development. However, the CHE and HEQC must express their grave concern that the CD's interpretation of the HRD strategy gives primacy only to the extrinsic or instrumental goals of education and training such as social and economic development (narrowly conceived) and excludes important intrinsic goals such as intellectual development and personal autonomy that are central to values such as human dignity and self-expression.	CHE/HEQC
Guiding philosophy	Fundamental learning	If Fundamental Learning remains as part of regulations rather than as guidance to institutions it can all too easily lead to little more than forms of ritual compliance and 'box ticking'. Other means such as quality assurance mechanisms are likely to be more effective in ensuring that institutions are taking fundamental learning seriously in ways appropriate to the level and content of the programme.	CHE/HEQC

RESEARCH QUESTION 1: Is the objective of an integrated SANQF an example of policy symbolism?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Guiding philosophy	Equivalences	<p>The CD supports the NAP model of ‘nested qualifications’ and argues that there are close similarities with the ‘contextual qualifications’ model developed by some of the SETAs. The CD believes these similarities will guarantee valid equivalences or ‘comparabilities’ between qualifications achieved in the work-place and within institutions</p> <p>(CD pages 17 – 20). The CD, however, does not explain how knowledge is to be taught, learnt, and evaluated (assessed and assured) within the different pathways or across institutional and workplace-based sites of learning. Without these details, the CD’s argument is unconvincing. Furthermore, the CD undermines its own argument with its strong recognition of the differences between institution based and workplace based learning. The CD correctly points out that as a result of not recognising these differences, SAQA guidelines attempted to describe all types of learning in terms of a single definition. Instead of trying to develop an NQF that linked the different types of learning, the SAQA approach blurred the differences with its concept of ‘organisational fields’ and failed to take account of the differences in definitions of a qualification. As the CD recognises, the differences neglected by SAQA have emerged anyway and despite the inflexibility of the SAQA guidelines, key groups involved (for example the CHE and the SETAs) have conceptualised or developed qualifications in very different ways. Against this background, the suggestion that there are strong similarities between institution based and workplace based qualifications appears contradictory.</p>	CHE/HEQC

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Scope	Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination • Parity of esteem • Partnerships 	The fact that 3 separate bands will reinforce the superiority of the Academia band No automatic portability of qualifications achieved, impacting the TOP Quality Band. This could result in the need for additional bridging learning, that could be required if learners move from the Top band to the Academic band. Learning then becomes more costly Different Level Descriptors applying to the 3 bands Different rules that could potentially apply to providers across the bands hampers partnerships across the bands.	Insurance industry
Scope	Divided ownership	The CD recognises the responsibilities of the two Departments for “education and training on the one hand and skills development on the other” (CD p. 5). The emphasis on these different roles and how they might be combined defines the nature of the compromise proposed by the CD. This accepts the need for each Department to be responsible for, and have authority over, both the qualifications appropriate to its remit and the body or bodies established to manage them. As we shall suggest later in this response, despite many references to the importance of collaboration, this ‘divided ownership’ approach creates a number of problems.	CHE/HEQC
Scope	Divided ownership	These relationships, however, could be further complicated by the portfolio division of responsibility with two of the QCs linked to the DoE (HI-ED and GENFET) and the other QC (TOP) linked to the DoL. The lack of clarity in the CD increases the possibility of bureaucratic ‘turf-wars’ and jurisdictional ambiguities that will undermine implementation of the objectives of the NQF and HRD strategies.	CHE/HEQC

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Scope	Systemic coherence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incoherence 	This is to be contrasted with initiatives that seek to introduce new conceptual frameworks and attendant implementation trajectories that are not adequately argued for, which may indeed be severely flawed and, in effect, introduce a host of new problems for national quality assurance agencies and providers of education and training. This does not mean that the CHE/HEQC do not recognize the many acute problems and gaps in the current implementation arrangements for the NQF. The major challenge is to resolve these problems without producing even more obstacles and incoherence in the education and training system.	CHE/HEQC
Scope	Systemic coherence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incoherence Policy predictability and continuity 	Related to the above, national quality assurance agencies, other related bodies and providers of education and training continue to be in flux and to face major challenges. The system, institutions and actors are at the limits of their capacities to cope with policy unpredictability and to continuously absorb policy changes, often in the face of inadequate resourcing. There is considerable stress, strain and anxiety within national quality assurance agencies and providers. It is imperative that we avoid further debilitation of institutions and ensure policy predictability and institutional stability.	CHE/HEQC
Scope	Systemic coherence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design features Progression 	...it is unclear how far a common definition of a qualifications will apply to all three pathways or whether they will be able to conceptualise their qualifications in their own terms and negotiate issues of credit transfer and progression	CHE/HEQC
Scope	Systemic coherence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equivalence 	...equivalence between [education and training] will not be achieved by political fiat...	SAUVCA

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Scope	Systemic coherence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design features • Structural and operational problems 	<p>We agree that the SAQA architecture is not holding and ascribe the problems to both structural and operational factors</p> <p>...we must state that we are of the firm opinion that, in some cases, the whole qualification method has most utility while, in other cases, unit standards would be the optimum basis. We illustrate this assertion by recounting experience in the Engineering Standards Generating body (ESGB). A whole qualification approach to standards writing has been successfully used for the BEng degree. At the level of professional competence, unit standards-based qualifications are being developed.</p> <p>We do not dispute that it may be possible to specify the outcomes of a qualification in either unit standards or whole qualifications form. In fact, a preliminary study shows that it may be possible to produce a unit-standards-based EXIT LEVEL standard for a qualification that is substantially, but not exactly, equivalent to the whole qualification version.</p>	ECSA
Scope	Systemic coherence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design features • Funding 	...better integration between standards setting, curriculum design and quality assurance of both education and training, and funding of education and training	NSA
Scope	Systemic coherence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships 	Since we do not have any form of structural integration like that of a single ministry of education and training, the relationship between the Departments of Education and Labour and between them and SAQA are crucial in ensuring that SAQA, which is accountable to both the Ministers of Education and Labour, is able to discharge its mandate properly.	INSETA

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Scope	Systemic coherence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulation 	If we accept the differences between learning modes and contexts, then the establishment of workable articulation mechanisms is crucial for attaining the desired inter-dependence on the NQF, an inter-dependence which will depend on partnerships and 'communities of trust' being built and strengthened between providers from different sites, context and learning domains.	SAUVCA
Scope	Qualifications map	<u>A qualifications map</u> or classification system or taxonomy to make possible the accurate placing or positioning of qualifications in terms of explicit criteria (e.g. level descriptors, qualification types and qualifications descriptors), all of which fit into a classification hierarchy. It is in this mapping of our qualifications system that current debates are located about NQF levels and pathways, as well as the distinctiveness of different modes/contexts of learning.	SAUVCA
Scope	Qualifications map <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality assurance 	It is urgent that clarification on qualification mapping is established as soon as possible as it hinders any processes of quality assurance. Formal debate on learning pathways needs to be initiated.	Umalusi
Scope	Learning pathways	We fully acknowledge the positive role the NQF has played in raising awareness and stimulating creative thinking about ways to enable higher education to be more accessible to previously disadvantaged learners; to clarify learning pathways and qualifications and to stimulate development of mechanisms for recognising all forms of learning other than formal learning.	CTP

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Scope	Architecture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design features • Learning pathways 	<p>We advocate an approach to promoting articulation and progression in the professions in which clear standards (either exit level or unit standards) are defined at a limited number of stages. For example, we are working toward whole qualifications and substantially equivalent unit standards at Stage 1, namely the exit levels of the National Diploma and BTech in Engineering disciplines and the BEng. Similarly, we are in the process of developing unit standards at the level of competence required for registration in the categories of Engineer, Engineering Technologist and Engineering Technician. We would also wish to be able to reference suitable unit standards in Mathematics, Physical Science and Languages at Level 4 that would give the benchmark of preparedness for higher education studies in engineering. With these three sets of standards, providers would be in a better position to develop pathways for progression of learners.</p> <p>Is mapping of standards and qualifications by TOP potentially useful? Our comment above about a large initial effort followed by light ongoing maintenance applies to qualification mapping. We feel that the various registries maintained by SAQA should contain the map. In fact, we believe that SAQA's current conflation of provider's qualifications (actually programmes in most cases) with standards is both confusing and counterproductive.</p>	ECSA

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Scope	Learning pathways <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blockages 	<p>The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) was envisaged as the vehicle for a new, non-discriminatory human resource development strategy. The underlying rationale being to open up learning pathways for all South Africans, whatever their previous education, training or work experience</p> <p>The proposed three-grid National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is an extreme shift away from this philosophy. The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) will be disintegrated and more complex. Each pathway will be described by a separate set of level descriptors and ‘managed’ by three independent Quality Councils thus constructing walls between the three grids. In the interests of the learner, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to navigate his way through a learning pathway vertically and horizontally across the three grids.</p>	FASSET
Scope	Learning pathways	The interlinking of learning pathways is absolutely necessary, it is not often that a person works in the direct field of study undertaken at Technikon’s, College’s or Universities in their youth. In many cases the learner moves from a chosen career path a few years into their careers, recognition for the learning obtained informally is important in the workplace for credibility and promotion or advancement within a career path. Formalisation of the skills learnt, and the ability to progress within an different path is important for the development of an individual and to promote the concept of life long learning.	LYCEUM
Scope	Learning pathways <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not serious about it 	In short, with the establishment of three pathways of learning based on three qualification-types, supported by three sets of level descriptors, with responsibility for both standards setting and quality assurance within the three areas of learning allocated to three QCs, and finally no clear leadership authority indicated or attention given to the management of articulation and integration, it is difficult at this stage to be convinced that the proposal is in fact serious about the continued existence of one, single framework!	INSETA
Scope	Learning pathways <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fragmentation 	The concept of three learning pathways in particular was felt to be fragmentary and a return to the past	NSA

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Scope	Portability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coherence • Progression 	<p>The 3X3 framework sends a message that progression is as achievable via the right hand column as via the left hand column. This is not to argue against the importance of promoting progression but that it should not drive the design of the framework in the way suggested in the diagram. Qualifications are limited in what they can achieve. They have a role in promoting progression and eliminating unnecessary barriers. However, relative to the work of teachers and the support of employers, they are marginal. The three types of learning or qualification pathways in the diagram are not equivalent. Progression is bound to be skewed towards the left of the diagram because, in an important sense, learning in institutions and through disciplines is far more powerful than learning that takes place at work. If this were not the case, then we would not have schools, colleges and universities. Those countries in South East Asia and Northern Europe that have been most successful in limiting this 'skew', have done it by expanding the quality and quantity of institution based education that is available to those that are in employment and following a work-based route.</p>	CHE/HEQC
Scope	Systemic efficiency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linkages 	<p>SETAs, where they have proven capacity, should also have the same rights of accreditation over faculties/schools at education and training institutions as, for example, the Health Professions Council and the Engineering Council of South Africa have with faculties of medicine and engineering respectively. In order to ensure this, the relationships between ETQAs must be regularised to ensure systemic efficiency. In the same way, consideration must be given to the SETAs quality assuring relevant faculties in FET colleges, as this is highly desirable to ensure an effective and efficient delivery system for the linked qualifications. Closer linkages between SETAs and FET colleges should be encouraged</p>	NSA

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Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Scope	Routes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning pathways 	There is nothing wrong with the concept of progression from a 'sweeper to an engineer' as proclaimed in a popular slogan of the 1990s. Problems occur, however, if it is assumed that the sweeper can become an engineer through work based learning alone. This flies in the face of what engineering is as a body of largely mathematically-based knowledge which cannot be acquired only in the workplace. The only route for the sweeper, whether part time or full time, is what it always was, via college and university study. The challenge for South Africa is making this route more accessible to people like sweepers, not trying to avoid the problem via an unrealistic view of the potential of workplace based learning to support progression right to the top of the qualifications ladder.	CHE/HEQC
Architecture	Commonalities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inter-connectedness 	Underlying the architecture for the new NQF structures proposed by the Consultative Document is a separationist ideology characterised by the metaphor that education and training is a continuum with education and training on either extreme, that education institutions are central to knowledge production, and that the differences between education and training must be clearly recognised in the system. This ideology tends to separate out education and training into the three streams academic, general vocational, and occupational as opposed to an integrationist ideology that would tend to build on the commonalities and establish the inter-connectedness.	INSETA

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Architecture	Articulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning pathways 	<p>Learning pathways cannot be sealed off from one another, as though a learner is fated to stay on one route once a choice has been made. The principle of flexibility must ensure that the links are available for learners to move from one pathway to another, to be credited appropriately with learning achievements that are relevant to the new pathway and be afforded the opportunity to acquire additional learning that would enable the learner to make an efficient transition”.</p> <p>However there is no attention given in the document as to who will be responsible for the development and maintenance of these articulation qualifications and credits. Unless this is specifically spelt out there is a very real danger that they will fall between the cracks and the concept of flexible learning pathways will have been lost.</p> <p>In short, with the establishment of three pathways of learning based on three qualification-types, supported by three sets of level descriptors, with responsibility for both standards setting and quality assurance within the three areas of learning allocated to three QCs, and finally no clear leadership authority indicated or attention given to the management of articulation and integration, it is difficult at this stage to be convinced that the proposal is in fact serious about the continued existence of one, single framework!</p>	INSETA
Architecture	Articulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobility 	<p>There are more learners in the FET band outside the formal education system than in it, and there should be a way to move between the two systems. This was one of the strengths in the original NQF system. Internationally there have been moves to create co-operative projects that link schools, vocational education and universities and advanced study in the workplace. Having three rigid pathways will not facilitate this option.</p>	INSETA

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Architecture	Linkages	While the CHE and HEQC welcome the release of the Consultative Document and support a number of its recommendations (see sections 2 and 7), we fundamentally disagree, with its reconceptualisation of the integration of education and training based on conceptual and organisational distinctions between three 'learning pathways'. We believe that the concept of 'interdependence' marks a dangerous retreat from the principle of the 'integration' of education and training. This will undermine access with quality to higher education and training especially for learners in the workplace. Politically, the unhinging of education and training will result in the 'dumbing-down' of workplace learning and prevent access, mobility and progression for workers wishing to achieve worthwhile higher education and training qualifications.	CHE/HEQC
Architecture	Linkages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Career paths 	The interlinking of learning pathways is absolutely necessary, it is not often that a person works in the direct field of study undertaken at Technikon's, College's or Universities in their youth. In many cases the learner moves from a chosen career path a few years into their careers, recognition for the learning obtained informally is important in the workplace for credibility and promotion or advancement within a career path. Formalisation of the skills learnt, and the ability to progress within an different path is important for the development of an individual and to promote the concept of life long learning.	LYCEUM
Architecture	Credit transfer	It should be possible for learners to gain qualifications (and even degrees) by completing parts (accumulated in the form of credit) over different lengths of time and combining them in different ways rather than necessarily being tied to specific sequential programmes over a particular time.	CHE/HEQC
Architecture	Portability	The proposed structure would create another three silos. The objective of achieving portability is being undermined by the silo mentality It is essential that the country maintain one framework of qualifications, and that the commitment to equity and redress be affirmed	SACP

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Architecture	Mobility and articulation	This [the three tracks] does not represent the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) principles of mobility and articulation	FASSET
Architecture	Articulation	[The three tracks] reinforce the problems with articulation that there were in the past	INSETA
Architecture	Articulation	[Articulation] it depends on design issues and how far the unit-standard model is retained for the different types of qualification	CHE/HEQC
Architecture	Articulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning pathways 	The establishment of foundation programmes would enable learners to pick up the theoretical, discipline knowledge for entry into [Higher Education] learning. In this way public institutions create entry to learning pathways that lead to progression and qualifications	CTP
Architecture	Articulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning pathways 	...a preliminary study shows that it may be possible to produce a unit-standards based EXIT LEVEL standard for a qualification that is substantially, but not exactly, equivalent to the whole qualification version. We advocate an approach to promoting articulation and progression in the professions in which clear standards (either exit level or unit standard) are defined at a limited number of stages. For example, we are working toward whole qualifications and substantially equivalent unit standards at Stage 1, namely the exit levels of the National Diploma and BTech in Engineering disciplines and the BEng. Similarly, we are in the process of developing unit standards at the level of competence required for registration in the categories of Engineer, Engineering Technologist and Engineering Technician. We would also wish to be able to reference suitable unit standards in Mathematics, Physical Science and Languages at Level 4 that would give the benchmark of preparedness for higher education studies in engineering. With these three sets of standards, providers would be in a better position to develop pathways for progression of learners.	ECSA
Architecture	Articulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning pathways 	In the interests of the learner, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to navigate his way through a learning pathway vertically and horizontally across the three grids'	FASSET

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Can the relationship between levels, sectors and types of qualifications on the SANQF be made meaningful though an integrated framework?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Architecture	Articulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning pathways 	...the ability to progress within a different path is important for the development of the individual and to promote the concept of life long learning	LYCEUM
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality criteria 	...different sets of quality standards or criteria...[create] inconsistencies in quality...	FASSET

RESEARCH QUESTION 3: Can the development of communities of practice enhance trust amongst partners in education and training?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Policy breadth	NQF as one element of the HRD strategy	The creation of a qualifications framework cannot on its own bring about fundamental change in education and training provision and practices. Ultimately, it is the concerted effort and deliberate building of the capabilities and capacities of providers through the support of government and other agencies and through institutional initiatives in the areas of curriculum, learning, teaching and personnel expertise that are the crucial levers of fundamental transformation. ...the NQF is a <i>major</i> vehicle for the transformation of education and training. However, the NQF is not the sole mechanism for transforming education and training and for realizing various social purposes and goals	CHE/HEQC
Policy breadth	NQF as one element of the HRD strategy	...so many factors influence the human resource development that is taking place. The NQF is not the only factor. Specific programmes and projects bring about real progress. More emphasis is needed on implementation	SACP
Policy breadth	NQF as one element of the HRD strategy	...this integrated approach by the Department of Education and Department of Labour has many merits. Joint responsibility for this function is admirable, [but] is it realistic and “doable”?	LYCEUM
Policy breadth	Divided ownership • Collaboration	...despite many references to the importance of collaboration [between the departments] this “divided ownership” [of the SANQF] creates a number of problems	CHE/HEQC
Policy breadth	Divided ownership • Policy alignment	...we found the lack of alignment of national policy regarding education and training an obstacle	CTP
Policy breadth	Divided ownership • Legislative coherence	...it is not clear how the following structural changes will impact on the skills development legislation’	FASSET

RESEARCH QUESTION 3: Can the development of communities of practice enhance trust amongst partners in education and training?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Policy breadth	Divided ownership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislative coherence 	Within the context of the commitment to the objectives of the NQF and the legislative framework provided by the SAQA Act of 1995, SAQA finds itself precariously positioned – on the one hand SAQA is obliged to comment on the draft HEQF policy, and while most willing to do so to ensure improved NQF development and implementation, it is on the other hand severely compromised in that the draft HEQF policy appears to ignore much of the current legislative framework, most notably the SAQA Act (Act 58 of 1995) and the Skills Development Act (Act 97 of 1998). This is most evident in the re-assignment of roles and responsibilities of SAQA and existing Education and Training Quality Assurance bodies (ETQAs) other than the Council on Higher Education and its Higher Education Quality Committee. The draft HEQF policy presupposes extensive amendments to the current legislation as mooted in the <i>Consultative Document</i> (DoE and DoL, 2003), even though the outcome of that process is still undetermined.	SAQA
Policy breadth	Divided ownership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislative coherence Policy alignment 	...requires policy continuity', but that the higher education sector has to constantly 'cope with policy unpredictability', which is leading to 'considerable stress, strain and anxiety within national quality assurance agencies and providers'	CHE/HEQC
Policy breadth	Divided ownership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislative coherence Policy alignment 	...policy alignment is a necessary condition for successful implementation within each sector or system This policy is necessary for the effective implementation of the NQF in terms of the development of a qualifications map, qualification design features, standards setting, quality assurance, and indeed, the design and implementation of flexible access routes.	SAUVCA
Policy breadth	Divided ownership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislative coherence Policy alignment 	...legislations with different mandates undermines integration	SADTU
Policy breadth	Divided ownership	It became clear that there were serious disagreements between the two custodians of the NQF, the Department of Labour and the Department of Education	SACP
Policy breadth	Divided ownership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislative coherence 	...require amending the legislation	NSA
Policy breadth	Divided ownership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jurisdictional ambiguities 	...increases the possibility of bureaucratic "turf-wars" and jurisdictional ambiguities that will undermine the implementation of the objectives of the NQF and the HRD strategies	CHE/HEQC

RESEARCH QUESTION 3: Can the development of communities of practice enhance trust amongst partners in education and training?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Policy breadth	Divided ownership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration 	...this further undermines the collaboration required between workplace-based and institution-based models of learning	COSATU
Policy breadth	Establishment of trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Alignment of strategies 	Specific legislation has been promulgated within the Insurance Industry that advocates the implementation of formal learning; viz <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAIS (Financial Advisory Intermediary Services Act) • Financial Services Charter Our industry is in the process of gearing up to meet the needs of these legislative requirements. Over the past 3 years the Insurance Industry have focused on getting buy-in and commitment to the NQF and setting up structures to prepare for implementation. Current changes in legislation pertinent to our industry are too far reaching and are too soon and will seriously hamper our NQF / SDF implementation initiatives. This set-back will impact on the very nature of our business, (FAIS), as without formal learning being implemented for our Financial Advisors we will not have competent staff to sell our products. This will have a serious impact on the economy of the country.	Insurance industry
Policy breadth	Establishment of trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration of sub-structures 	The National Qualification Framework should capture, reflect and enable Skills Development required Nationally, Sectorally and according to company specific requirements.	Insurance industry
Policy breadth	Establishment of trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration of sub-structures 	The inability of <i>all</i> key players to enact memoranda of understanding and create a free flow of information and funding between Setas has seriously hampered the establishment and implementation of cross-sectoral learnerships. An additional learning path and uncertain new roles for quality assurance bodies might create new conflicts to thwart the achievement of learnership targets.	ASDFS
Policy breadth	Communities of practice	...the NQF and its structures were founded on stakeholder participation and involvement – in standards and qualifications development and registration, in workplace implementation, in [Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs)] and in monitoring and evaluation	SACP
Policy breadth	Communities of practice	...the importance of stakeholder participation in the conceptual stage of standard generation cannot be over-emphasised...[and]...we recommend that all stakeholders be accorded the same status and role, in order to avoid the dominance of one stakeholder at the expense of others	COSATU

RESEARCH QUESTION 3: Can the development of communities of practice enhance trust amongst partners in education and training?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Policy breadth	Communities of practice	...we support the importance of interdependent stakeholders participating in the process of generating standards'	CTP
Policy breadth	Communities of practice	Much awareness has been built around the generation and development of commonly agreed upon, internationally benchmarked standards.	LYCEUM
Policy breadth	Communities of practice	...national prescription, standardisation and regulation should happen only at the most generic levels...	SAUVCA
Policy breadth	Communities of practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality assurance 	It is clear that the NQF must simultaneously be flexible enough to meet the needs of business and sufficiently structured, in terms of quality assurance, to ensure the sustainability of the NSDS.	ASDFS
Policy breadth	Communities of practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality assurance 	...other bodies, which adopt a different approach to quality assurance, are perceived to be less rigorous	INSETA
Policy breadth	Communities of practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality assurance • Quality criteria 	...[linkages] between providers and the SETAs as there is a lot of competition in the marketplace. It is important that all providers are considered by the same criteria and managed objectively	LYCEUM
Policy breadth	Communities of trust	...the establishment of workable articulation mechanisms is crucial' and 'will depend on partnerships and "communities of trust" being built and strengthened between providers from different sites, contexts and learning domains Practices, partnerships and "communities of trust" between providers, users and bureaucratic systems are the essential elements which ensure that adequate and appropriate learning opportunities are provided and recognised. These crucial on-the-ground networks of shared understandings, agreements and cooperation that strengthen the possibility of delivery are not sufficiently addressed...This is the "realm" in which the effort of building communities of trust will be felt and which will impact most strongly on the ability of the system to meet the goals of the NQF.	SAUVCA

RESEARCH QUESTION 3: Can the development of communities of practice enhance trust amongst partners in education and training?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Policy breadth	Communities of trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incentives 	...a direct exchange of information between SETAs and relevant faculty-based clusters of training institutions. [Such partnerships] could inform new funding arrangements [in order to] develop networks of employers for workplace experience, internships, etc. ... have to be governed by government regulations [because] [v]oluntary alliances have proven inefficient and insufficient to ensure broad based implementation of the envisaged partnerships	NSA
Policy breadth	Communities of trust and practice	...[Technikons] have established communities of trust with industry through cooperative education programmes and advisory boards	CTP
Policy breadth	Communities of trust and practice	...the HPCSA ...has already structured a co-operative arrangement with the Health and Welfare SETA, the effect of which is that the HWSETA will focus, for standard setting and quality assurance processes, on levels below 5 while the HPCSA will focus on levels 5 upwards...both parties have committed to a collaborative arrangement in which it is recognized that any qualifications below level 5, which leads to registration with the HPCSA, must actually be handled jointly with the HPCSA. ...a wider sectoral approach which can only breed a collaborative process...as opposed to a fragmented and individualistic process of standards setting and quality assurance [could offer] enrichment that you would otherwise find in a collaborative arrangement	HPCSA
Policy breadth	Communities of trust and practice	An example is the tendency for professional bodies and employers to form links with [Higher Education] Band institutions	CHE/HEQC
Policy breadth	Establishment of trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coherence Collaboration of sub-structures Institutional development 	The creation of a qualifications framework cannot on its own bring about fundamental change in education and training provision and practices. Ultimately, it is the concerted and deliberate building of the capabilities and capacities of institutional providers through the support of government and other agencies and through institutional initiatives in the areas of curriculum, learning, teaching and personnel expertise that are the crucial levers of fundamental transformation.	CHE/HEQC

RESEARCH QUESTION 3: Can the development of communities of practice enhance trust amongst partners in education and training?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Policy breadth	Establishment of trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coherence 	The governance and regulatory architecture of the NQF should be simple, clear, efficient and effective. Clear jurisdictions for, and responsibilities of, the different agencies must be defined and legislated in unambiguous terms thereby avoiding contestations over 'territory', delays due to overly bureaucratic structures and processes, and uncertainty amongst the QCs and institutional providers.	CHE/HEQC
Policy breadth	Establishment of trust	The CD implies that public providers of higher education should focus on general formative education and should not compete with private or corporate providers specialising in occupationally oriented training (CD pages 13 & 14). The CHE and HEQC strongly object to this caricature of higher education and training. The implication is that universities and technikons should provide only undergraduate general formative qualifications and post-graduate discipline-based qualifications, leaving career focused and professional qualifications to private providers. This would decimate enrolments in public higher education institutions and severely undermine the quality of education and training in fields such as health, law, engineering, business, accountancy, teaching and public administration amongst others. It assumes, also, that there are private providers capable of taking on these responsibilities whereas there is no evidence to support this.	CHE/HEQC
Policy breadth	Establishment of trust	...voluntary alliances have proven inefficient and insufficient to ensure broad based implementation of the envisaged partnerships...	NSA
Policy breadth	Coherence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding 	The portfolio division of responsibilities should not lead to situations where the funding of provision is located in one government department and the quality assurance of programmes and qualifications is located in an agency that reports to another government department. This will severely undermine the capacity of the Department of Education to steer and transform higher education through planning, funding and quality assurance.	CHE/HEQC

RESEARCH QUESTION 3: Can the development of communities of practice enhance trust amongst partners in education and training?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Policy breadth	Coherence	<p>The CD argues that the unit standards/whole qualification distinction masks more fundamental differences between disciplinary and work-based learning and the purposes of the different types of qualifications that they lead to. This is true. However, in rejecting the distinction, it is unclear whether it is assumed that <i>all</i> qualifications will consist of unit standards (albeit not necessarily as separate standards) or whether a unit standards definition of a qualification will only apply to work based qualifications. In other words, it is unclear how far a common definition of a qualification will apply to all three pathways or whether they will be able to conceptualise their qualifications in their own terms and negotiate issues of credit transfer and progression.</p> <p>The CD argues that the unit standards/whole qualification distinction is redundant as qualifications are always made up of parts (units) and that there is a requirement that each part has to be coherent in itself as well as in how it contributes to a whole qualification. However the CD does not elaborate on when the parts can be treated separately from the whole, or where and by whom decisions are made about the sequencing or accumulation of parts. The idea that qualifications should be ‘credit based’ and available in units or ‘bite sized chunks’ is fashionable, albeit controversial. On the one hand there is the question as to whether all qualifications should be obtainable on the basis of ‘accumulated credit’ (e.g. through modules) or whether institutions, employers or professional bodies should reserve the right to reject some combinations. There is considerable debate around the rationale for credit-based or unitised qualifications. They are assumed to be attractive to</p> <p>(a) Employers who may not want to pay for a whole qualification; and</p> <p>(b) Disadvantaged learners who might be put off whole qualifications.</p>	CHE/HEQC

RESEARCH QUESTION 3: Can the development of communities of practice enhance trust amongst partners in education and training?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Policy breadth	Articulation	<p>On the other hand, a possible outcome of their availability is narrowly based skills training for some employees and ‘Mickey-mouse’ qualifications for disadvantaged learners which do not give access to progression. The coherence of whole qualifications can be exclusionary; however it can also be a guarantee of the rigour and validity of the knowledge and/or skills that are being acquired.</p> <p>It should be possible for learners to gain qualifications (and even degrees) by completing the parts (accumulated in the form of credit) over different lengths of time and combining them in different ways rather than necessarily being tied to specific sequential programmes over a particular time. At the same time universities, technikons and professional bodies should be allowed to decide the criteria for adequate and coherent sequences and combinations.</p> <p>The implications of the position taken in the CD are unclear as it depends on design issues and how far the unit-standard model is retained for the different types of qualification. It is for example, highly debatable, whether a unit standards model is appropriate for discipline-based qualifications.</p>	CHE/HEQC
Policy breadth	Articulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pathways 	<p>The CTP continues to support the concept of an NQF, its objectives and principles. Whether the NQF is the vehicle for addressing redress and national economic, social and cultural development, is debatable. We fully acknowledge the positive role the NQF has played in raising awareness and stimulating creative thinking about ways to enable higher education to be more accessible to previously disadvantaged learners; to clarify learning pathways and qualifications and to stimulate development of mechanisms for recognising all forms of learning other than formal learning</p>	CTP
Continuum of learning	Epistemologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discipline-based and workplace-based 	<p>Epistemologically and pedagogically, the CD tries to combine two incompatible principles: a principle of equivalence whereby qualifications and the learning they represent are similar across different sites and modes of learning; and, a principle of difference whereby important differences between modes and sites of learning are recognised. The CD assumes, but does not explain how, these tensions will be resolved.</p>	CHE/HEQC

RESEARCH QUESTION 4: Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Continuum of learning	Epistemologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discipline-based and workplace-based learning 	Differences between modes of learning should not be trivialised or seen as easily 'overcome'. Discipline-based learning (mainly in institutions) and occupational context-based learning (mainly in the workplace) can be represented as two 'poles of a continuum' but this should not obscure the hierarchical differences between the two types of learning. Further it may be possible to 'erase' the distinction between unit standards and whole qualifications, but, this will be a slow and complex process. The reconceptualisation of the distinction requires considerable curriculum research and development to establish a clear relationship between the 'parts' and the 'whole' of a qualification.	CHE/HEQC
Continuum of learning	Epistemologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic; academic-vocational; occupational 	Furthermore, the three columns have some grounding in practical experience and the structure at least points to an organisational basis for limiting the proliferation of bodies involved in both qualification design and quality assurance	CHE/HEQC
Continuum of learning	Epistemologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic; academic-vocational; occupational 	...a major impact on access to equal opportunities by learners...even in the current NQF system it is still difficult for learners who could not pursue academic training to have an opportunity to prove himself/herself.	COSATU
Continuum of learning	Epistemologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic; academic-vocational; occupational 	...different modes of learning are associated with differing levels of abstraction, with the greatest level of abstraction on the discipline-learning side... These different ways of knowing have implications for the equivalence of qualifications. Discipline-learning at a particular level cannot be equated to work-based learning at the same level. Although there may be parity of esteem of learners on the same level, it does not mean that the qualifications are comparable and equal	CTP

RESEARCH QUESTION 4: Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Continuum of learning	Epistemologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equivalence • Parity of esteem 	<p>The CD argues for recognition of three distinct but inter-related learning modes or pathways constituting a continuum of learning (CD pages10-12). The two poles of the continuum are marked by discipline-based learning (mainly in institutions) and occupational context-based learning (mainly in the workplace). In the middle of the continuum is career-focused or general-vocational learning (mainly in institutions). The CD proposes that these three learning pathways form the basis for three distinct but equivalent qualification pathways.</p> <p>The CHE and HEQC believe that the CD fails to recognise that these different types of learning represent not just differences but also a hierarchy of types of learning. Qualifications have to remain rooted in epistemological reality and in people's experience if they are to be a vehicle for expanding education and training. The three proposed qualification pathways are not equivalent; parity of esteem is not a reality in any country, partly as a result of continuing social inequalities and the unequal distribution of wealth and partly because there are real differences between types of learning. The CD begins by recognising this reality in its discussion of types of learning but completely loses its implications in its proposals. In effect, workplace learning will be separated from other forms of learning by impermeable barriers, creating a destructive silo effect. The CHE and HEQC believe that far from improving access, mobility and progression, the recommendations of the Interdepartmental Task Team will lead to the perpetuation of inequalities, and impermeable boundaries between what will be perceived to be superior 'educational' institution based qualifications, and what will be perceived to be inferior 'training' workplace based qualifications.</p>	CHE/HEQC
Continuum of learning	Epistemologies	[a challenge to] the traditional notions of education, training and development in a way that seeks to break down the artificial barriers caused by inflexible and narrow focus.	HPCSA

RESEARCH QUESTION 4: Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Continuum of learning	Epistemologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equivalence 	<p>...institutional and disciplinary knowledge and education on the one hand and workplace-based knowledge and education on the other hand are not just different, they exist in a hierarchical relationship to each other.</p> <p>It is worth pointing out that a national framework of qualifications, because qualifications are a statement or proxy for learning that has taken place, is of necessity arranged hierarchically in terms of breadth and depth of learning. The conditions for learning with breadth and depth are, of necessity found in formal education institutions, because workplaces are unlikely to have the time or the trained and experienced staff to enable such learning to happen</p> <p>...the general and further education and training bands are driven by different purposes. If one accepts that general education is about <i>foundation</i> and <i>basic</i> education, the quality assurance and curriculum issues take on a different meaning to that of the further education and training band.</p>	UMALUSI
Continuum of learning	Epistemologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equivalence • Parity of esteem 	We want to concentrate here on the issue of equivalence in relation to bands and levels and to suggest that ‘the principle of equivalence’ which, for example, treats institutional or disciplinary learning as equivalent to learning that ‘is unique to the workplace’ is an assumption that needs to be questioned and that it may be more about aspirations to equality than reality. The CD distinguishes between different types of learning but fails to recognise that, in an important sense, these different types represent not just differences but a hierarchy of types of learning. There is much historic prejudice against practical skills and craft knowledge and much elitism surrounding subjects and disciplines. Both forms of prejudice have origins in the class structure of capitalist societies and both need to be criticised.	CHE/HEQC
Continuum of learning	Epistemologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equivalence 	<p>Underlying these prejudices are real epistemological differences between the knowledge that can be acquired in the left hand column (institutionally and through disciplines) and that which can be acquired in the right hand column (in the workplace). The ‘principle of equivalence’ is fundamentally misleading in obscuring these real differences.</p> <p>The power of different types of learning is a reality that any NQF has to start from. If it does not, it will be a barrier to progression - not a way of overcoming barriers.</p>	CHE/HEQC

RESEARCH QUESTION 4: Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Curricular integrability	Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevance to the world of work 	The National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) is aimed at addressing the structural problems of the labour market inherited from the past, and transforming the South African labour market from one with low skills to one characterized by rising skills and a commitment to life long learning.	Insurance industry
Curricular integrability	Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevance to the world of work 	Our position is further supported by widespread acknowledgement of a trend of learning (and thus qualifications) which focuses on both economically useful knowledge as well as the development of ways of knowledge that will promote innovation, creativity, adaptability and flexibility in individuals. Learning should therefore support preparation for economic participation now and in the future, as well as prepare learners for good citizenship.	CTP
Curricular integrability	Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complementarity 	...some knowledge-based industries are probably closer to the academic path than [a] simplistic description of workplace learning...Academic learning should feed into the real world needs of South Africa in the 21 st century in order to address the skills shortage and ensure that educated people are also employable. Discipline-based learning alone may render learners unemployable as is currently the case with many school leavers and graduates.	ETQA
Curricular integrability	Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progression Articulation 	...experiential learning is more than skill alone...it is more useful to identify what theory or experiential learning is outstanding when considering progression on a career path via identified qualifications... We agree that public providers cannot provide for specific job skills and generally have a more broad career focus. This does not preclude articulation between specific work-based learning and public education institutions	CTP
Curricular integrability	Epistemologies	...it can easily be concluded that there are a substantial number of qualifications which are offered at institutions which ought to give considerable attention to skills development within the related occupation of profession, if they are to be considered worthwhile.	ETQA
Curricular integrability	Epistemologies	...[comparabilities should be established], 'as opposed to assuming epistemological equivalence'	CHE

RESEARCH QUESTION 4: Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Curricular integrability	Epistemologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convergence 	Furthermore, we note the trend in higher education qualifications – in South Africa and internationally – to converge towards the middle of the continuum of learning modes; i.e. for discipline-based learning to become more skills-based and employability conscious and for workplace learning increasingly to include some form of generic skills development.	SAUVCA
Curricular integrability	Epistemologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convergence 	...leads to a stunted conception of workplace learning. Workers will be trained only in those skills they require as workers, not as citizens or members of the community who deserve an education that respects and nurtures their dignity and worth as creative human beings. ...the unhinging of education and training will result in the ‘dumbing-down’ of workplace learning and prevent access, mobility and progression... [gives primacy to]...extrinsic or instrumental goals of education and training such as social and economic development (narrowly conceived) and excludes important intrinsic goals such as intellectual development and personal autonomy that are central to values such as human dignity and self-expression.	CHE/HEQC
Curricular integrability	Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workplace based qualifications 	Learnerships will provide opportunities for the development of entrepreneurs and venture-creation, which means the number of small, medium and micro-enterprises (SMMEs), could increase phenomenally in the coming years. This would have a significant effect on unemployment and wealth-creation in communities that have historically borne the brunt of socio-economic deprivation.	ASDFS
Curricular integrability	Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workplace based qualifications 	SAUVCA supports workplace learning that is part of a well-structured curriculum, designed especially to afford opportunities to learners to apply theory to practice and to learning workplace skills. Such learning has many forms such as clinicals, practicals, experiential learning components, cooperative learning and service learning.	SAUVCA
Curricular integrability	Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Linked qualifications 	The design of trade, occupational, and professional qualifications should be based on models that have worked well in the past. The best element and practices in these models should be used as a model for “linked qualifications”. Artisans and professionals both undergo “education” and “training” that culminates in a qualification, which gives them elite status in the labour market. The theory and practice complement one another and lead to “expertise”, which is recognised internationally and affords those who are qualified mobility and portability across the globe (emphasis in original).	NSA

RESEARCH QUESTION 4: Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Curricular integrability	Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linked qualifications • Articulation 	...articulation inevitably requires making up for deficiencies in the fundamental underpinnings requiring a move to the “left”...before moving “right” again	ECSA
Curricular integrability	Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workplace based qualifications • Linked qualifications 	Firstly, there is much research and teaching within higher education that is focused on the workplace. Secondly, restricting workplace learning to learning in the workplace ignores the key role played by research in higher education and training qualifications.	CHE/HEQC
Curricular integrability	Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workplace based qualifications • Linked qualifications 	The traditional view of the delivery of education and training in HE is that discipline learning takes place in universities and skills development in the workplace. The integration of these two modes of learning is currently largely represented by the delivery in technikons. In this latter form of delivery, interdependence certainly is a major factor in the delivery. Technikon programmes, by their very nature as career-oriented programmes, integrate education and training. Our position is further supported by widespread acknowledgement of a trend of learning (and thus qualifications) which focuses on both economically useful knowledge as well as the development of ways of knowledge that will promote innovation, creativity, adaptability and flexibility in individuals. Learning should therefore support preparation for economic participation now and in the future, as well as prepare learners for good citizenship.	CTP
Curricular integrability	Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linked qualifications 	...progression may often start in a pathway “unique to the workplace”, but will inevitably not end in that pathway...	CHE/HEQC
Curricular integrability	Theory and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linked qualifications 	What people learn in universities is different to what is done at workplace[s] and there is no link between the two...	SADTU

RESEARCH QUESTION 4: Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Curricular integrability	Theory and practice • Linked qualifications	...linked qualifications...that incorporate theory and practice, and thus achieve integration between education and training... The design of trade, occupational, and professional qualifications should be based on models that have worked well in the past. The best element and practices in these models should be used as a model for “linked qualifications”. Artisans and professionals both undergo “education” and “training” that culminates in a qualification, which gives them elite status in the labour market. The theory and practice complement one another and lead to “expertise”, which is recognised internationally and affords those who are qualified mobility and portability across the globe	NSA
Curricular integrability	Theory and practice • Linked qualifications	You see we have put together a qualifications framework with the balance of education and training. That is why a lot of our [Higher Education institutions] can’t offer those qualities because they only have the one part of the qualification that they have expertise in. So, they find fault in the qualifications and honestly [do not recognise] that they need to shed their own way of looking at the qualifications because they only have the academic and not the training and development [of teachers in mind].	SACE
Curricular integrability	Theory and Practice • Danger of market-orientation	[over-emphasis on] economic needs at the expense of social and political development needs [which] does not facilitate the attainment of transformation in the education and training architecture as entrenched by the apartheid government.	COSATU
Curricular integrability	Theory and Practice • Appropriate mix	...appropriate mix of institutional and workplace learning...	ECSA
Curricular integrability	Theory and Practice • Appropriate mix	This is of particular relevance to the professional qualifications as these qualifications will straddle across the two/three grids ...a career-focused learning pathway, which acknowledges the long-held view of professional bodies that the rigid distinction between discipline-based and occupational context-based does not recognise the way in which many professional designations are achieved	FASSET SAICA
Curricular integrability	Theory and Practice • Appropriate mix	SAUVCA supports workplace learning that is part of a well-structured curriculum, designed especially to afford opportunities to learners to apply theory to practice and to learning workplace skills. Such learning has many forms such as clinicals, practicals, experiential learning components, cooperative learning and service learning.	SAUVCA

RESEARCH QUESTION 4: Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Curricular integrability	Theory and Practice • Appropriate mix	Firstly, there is much research and teaching within higher education that is focused on the workplace. Secondly, restricting workplace learning to learning in the workplace ignores the key role played by research in higher education and training qualifications.	CHE/HEQC
Curricular integrability	Theory and Practice • Appropriate mix	The traditional view of the delivery of education and training in HE is that discipline learning takes place in universities and skills development in the workplace. The integration of these two modes of learning is currently largely represented by the delivery in technikons. In this latter form of delivery, interdependence certainly is a major factor in the delivery. Technikon programmes, by their very nature as career-oriented programmes, integrate education and training.	CTP
Curricular integrability	Partnerships	...collaboration between [Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs)], employers and higher education institutions...	CHE/HEQC
Curricular integrability	Partnerships	...the collaboration required between workplace-based and institution-based modes of learning...	COSATU
Curricular integrability	Partnerships	...practice components of professional and career-oriented qualifications can be performed in authentic contexts...support investment by industry [to provide] placement opportunities for candidate graduates...forms part of HE programmes [should be] appropriately funded by Government	CTP
Curricular integrability	Partnerships • Funding	...more structured mechanisms (including funding) to enable SETA ETQAs to partner with clusters of providers... ...[the Sector Education and Training Authorities] would be well-placed to develop networks of employers for workplace experience, internships, etc.	NSA
Curricular integrability	Partnerships • Collaboration	...a fundamental orientation to life, based on the capacity for critical thought and action, which goes far beyond the specific knowledge and skills-sets that are required to achieve the specific vocational goals of the job market ...constructive partnerships with professional bodies and other stakeholders in professional programmes that are offered in higher education institutions	SAUVCA
Curricular integrability	Partnerships	...internationally there have been moves to create co-operative projects that link schools, vocational education and universities and advanced study in the workplace...	ETQA
Curricular integrability	Partnerships	Collaboration between SETAs, employers and higher education institutions [for progression routes]	CHE/HEQC

RESEARCH QUESTION 4: Can an integrated framework enhance the complementarity of discipline-based and workplace-based learning?			
Theme	Codes and sub-codes	Evidence/relationship with research question	Respondent
Curricular integrability	Partnerships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment • Funding 	<p>...principled partnerships between different providers from different sites, contexts and learning domains [to establish workable articulation mechanisms between partners and these partnerships] holds as strongly for vertical progression from [Further Education and Training] to [Higher Education and Training]...such opportunities will have to be created on the basis of significant alignment between sectors, and partnerships between higher education, further education and the world of work</p> <p>...in order to expand access to HE study it further remains imperative that system blockages are removed...the HE sector as providers needs to be able to access funding via [Sector Education and Training Authorities] and state subsidies</p> <p>While the [Higher Education] sector has the infrastructure and expertise to [enable articulation and access] through flexible delivery modes, the biggest challenge remains access to funding and the brokering of effective partnerships which will indeed make HE, FET and the world of work “inter-dependent”...without this element, even a well-conceptualised NQF with an appropriate qualifications map [and] a well-organised bureaucratic system will not achieve the goals it was designed to effect.</p>	SAUVCA
Curricular integrability	Partnerships	[A dichotomy between workplace-based and institution-based learning could thus undermine] the collaboration required between workplace-based and institution-based modes of learning	COSATU
Curricular integrability	Partnerships	Viewed from the perspective of a statutory profession, what agreements would be required in order for the profession to perform its essential functions? [Partnerships between] the profession and HEQC...; the profession and SETAs...the profession and GENFET-QC	ECSA
Curricular integrability	Partnerships	[Partnerships in quality assurance in relation to workplace learning in order to bring this into the] quality assurance spiral in a unique way	ETQA

ANNEXURE 5

CODES – NQF IMPACT STUDY – CYCLE 2

The extent to which qualifications address the education and training needs of learners and the South African society (Q)		
1. Number of qualifications (N)	Q: N: number	The interviews may offer limited info on this indicator but it has been included nonetheless
2. Effectiveness of qualifications design (ED)	Q: ED: access	Race, gender and disability
	Q: ED: mobility	Between providers and levels
	Q: ED: progression	Particularly recognition of qualifications in the workplace
	Q: ED: fit-for-purpose	Addresses contextual needs
3. Portability of qualifications (P)	Q: ED: increased-employability	Employees with NQF quals are more employable
	Q: P: horizontal	Portability of qualifications across vocational, professional and academic streams
	Q: P: diagonal	Portability of qualifications across streams including change in level
	Q: P: vertical	Portability of qualifications across levels within one stream
	Q: P: awareness	Awareness of portability options
	Q: P: parity-of-esteem	Qualifications offered by different institutions
	Q: P: comparability	NQF qualifications and non-NQF qualifications (e.g. non-aligned training)
	Q: P: credit-transfer	Recognition is given for incomplete qualifications (non-RPL) including the ability to move between institutions
4. Relevance of qualifications (R)	Q: R: workplace	Relevance to the workplace and industry
	Q: R: society	Relevance to society in particular – much more general than workplace
	Q: R: availability	The availability of relevant qualifications
	Q: R: new	Qualifications in new and emerging field of learning
	Q: R: internationality	International comparability of NQF qualifications
	Q: R: skills-shortage	Qualifications (through learnerships and skills programmes)
5. Qualifications uptake and achievement (UA)	Q: UA: cost-quals	The cost of completing NQF qualifications
	Q: UA: provider-distribution	Distribution of accredited providers across SA including availability and variety
	Q: UA: employees	New and prospective employees having completed NQF qualifications
	Q: UA: learners	Extent to which learners in general complete NQF qualifications
6. Integrative approach (IA)	Q: IA: articulation	Movement of learners between vocational and academic streams
	Q: IA: co-operation	Co-operation between formal education and world of work
	Q: IA: value	The comparative value of educational and vocational qualifications
	Q: IA: theory-and-practice	The inclusion of both theory and practice in NQF qualifications
	Q: IA: unification	Extent to which SA has adopted a unified approach – i.e. integrated
	Q: IA: pathing	Influence of integration on career and learning pathing

The extent to which the delivery of learning programmes addresses the education and training needs of learners and the South African society (LP)		
7. Equity of access (EA)	LP: EA: disabilities	Access of learners (particularly those previously excluded) to NQF qualifications
	LP: EA: gender	
	LP: EA: age	
	LP: EA: race	
	LP: EA: non-traditional-learners	
8. Redress practices (RP)	LP: EA: admission-requirements	Influence of institutional admission requirements on learner entry
	LP: EA: RPL-availability	Availability of RPL systems and procedures to learners
	LP: RP: credits-through-RPL	Learners obtain credits towards NQF qualifications through RPL
	LP: RP: access-without-requirements	Learners are granted access to FET and HE institutions whether or not they have a matriculation certificate
9. Nature of learning programmes (N)	LP: RP: promotion-without-requirements	Employees are promoted whether or not they have a matriculation certificate
	LP: RP: redress-measures	Education and training institutions implement measures to facilitate the redress of past unfair practices
	LP: N: demand	Demand for learning programmes based on NQF qualifications
	LP: N: redesign	The implementation of the NQF has led to the redesign of courses (to adopt an outcomes-based format)
	LP: N: quality-through-OBA	The quality of learning programmes is improved by using an outcomes-based approach (OBA)
10. Quality of learning and teaching (QLT)	LP: N: curriculum-development	NQF qualifications enable effective curriculum development
	LP: QLT: learner-needs	NQF has led to improved learning and teaching practices that address the needs of learners
	LP: QLT: learner-support	New and improved learner support systems have been introduced
	LP: QLT: employer-support	Employers have introduced measures to support employees studying towards NQF qualifications
	LP: QLT: quality-through-OBA	The quality of learning and teaching is improved by using an outcomes-based approach (OBA)
	LP: QLT: responsiveness	Learning and teaching practices are responsive to the needs of the learners
	LP: QLT: professional-development	The professional development of education and training practitioners has received increased attention
	LP: AP: fairness	The assessment of learning towards NQF qualifications is fair (unbiased)
11. Assessment practices (AP)	LP: AP: validity	The assessment of learning towards NQF qualifications is valid (measures what it is supposed to measure)
	LP: AP: reliability	The assessment of learning towards NQF qualifications is reliable (dependable and consistent)
	LP: AP: implementability	The assessment of learning towards NQF qualifications can be implemented with/without undue difficulty
	LP: AP: changes	Significant (positive/negative) changes to assessment practices over the past few years
	LP: AP: quality	The quality of assessment practices over time
	LP: AP: workload	Workload associated with the assessment of NQF qualifications
	LP: AP: feedback-and-appeal	Feedback and appeal mechanisms have become more accessible to learners and employees
12. Career and learning pathing (CLP)	LP: AP: cost-assessment	The cost of assessing learning towards NQF qualifications
	LP: CLP: learner-awareness	Learners' awareness of career opportunities associated with NQF qualifications
	LP: CLP: employers'-support	Employers encourage employees to improve their qualifications by providing learning pathways
	LP: CLP: CCFOs	Learning programmes include CCFOs

The extent to which quality assurance arrangements enhance the effectiveness of education and training (QA)		
13. Number of registered assessors and moderators (NAM)	QA: NAM: assessors	The interviews may offer limited info on this indicator
14. Number of accredited providers (NAP)	QA: NAP: providers	The interviews may offer limited info on this indicator
15. Quality assurance practices (P)	QA: P: new-learning	New forms of learning, teaching and assessment developed as a result of the introduction of QA practices
	QA: P: quality	Has the quality assurance improved?
	QA: P: problems	Admin and bureaucratic problems
	QA: P: agreed-standards	Quality assurance ensures that qualifications are offered against agreed standards
	QA: P: provider-quality	Quality assurance practices have improved quality of education and training providers
	QA: P: accreditation	Accreditation as QA measure
	QA: P: standards-setting	Standards-setting as QA measure

The extent to which the NQF has had a wider social, economic and political impact in building a lifelong learning culture (SEP)		
16. Organisational, economic and societal benefits (OS)	SEP: OS: employers-support-LLL	Employers support LLL
	SEP: OS: providers- support-LLL	Providers support LLL
	SEP: OS: institutional-policies	Changes in institutional policies and practice as a result of the NQF
	SEP: OS: RPL	Overarching comments on RPL
	SEP: OS: hope	Learning pathways offer hope for a better future
	SEP: OS: self-esteem	Achievement of qualifications contributes to self-esteem
	SEP: OS: NQF-awareness	General awareness of NQF and NQF-related issues
17. Contribution to other national strategies (ONS)	SEP: ONS: HRD	Awareness and links to the HRD (through the NQF)
	SEP: ONS: unemployment	NQF and a decrease in unemployment
	SEP: ONS: economic-growth	NQF and the development of new economic opportunities
	SEP: ONS: illiteracy	NQF and reducing illiteracy
	SEP: ONS: upskilling	NQF and upskilling of the labour force
	SEP: ONS: lifeskills	Life skills incorporated into qualifications, e.g. HIV/AIDS awareness
	SEP: ONS: regional-collaboration	SADC/African collaboration
	SEP: ONS: employability	Employability and sustainable livelihoods
	SEP: ONS: socio-economic-situations	Enables communities to take control of their socio-eco situations
	SEP: ONS: NSDS	Awareness and links to the NSDS (through the NQF)
	SEP: ONS: SMME	Self-employed/small businesses
	SEP: ONS: Tirisano	Awareness and links to the DoE's Tirisano Strategy (through the NQF)
	SEP: ONS: formal-education	NQF quals have made the formal edu system more relevant to the needs of learners

ANNEXURE 6
RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

CYCLE 1 INSTRUMENTS

ANNEXURE 6
RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

CYCLE 2 INSTRUMENTS

- Survey Questionnaire
- Focus Group – Practitioners
- Focus Group – Learners
- Focus Group - Labour

ANNEXURE 7
TRANSCRIPTS OF UNSTRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH SAQA BOARD
MEMBERS

Ms M van Rooyen	Association of Private Providers of Education, Training and Development (APPETD)	18/05/06
Dr S Badat	Chief Executive Officer of the Council on Higher Education (CHE)	18/05/06
Mr K Hall	Business South Africa (BUSA)	19/05/06
Ms S Muller	National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa (NAPTOSA)	19/05/06
Dr A Paterson	Discretionary	01/06/06
Mr S Isaacs	Executive Officer of the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)	12/07/06

**INTERVIEW WITH MS MARIETTA VAN ROOYEN
18 MAY 2006**

What does integration mean? What it is that we mean when we say it?

MvR: Let me distinguish between integration of the system of education and training, which is the overall system of integration, are you talking about that? Because integrated assessment is something else
You know Ronel, I have been giving it a lot of thought.
What I think – we are being too, – a lot of us often can't see the woods for the trees. If you look at the trees, there is the vocational education tree and there is the academic tree, you know, and we don't see the wood, now, the wood is the NQF, and the only thing that was an objective of in the NQF is to give equal status and recognition to vocational studies on the same level as academic studies. We didn't want to, what is that word is used in the Umalusi report - equivalence.

RB: Didn't want to create equivalence...its comparability.

MvR: You don't want to say that Bobby Godsell is equivalent to a professor in management at the university – there is no equivalence, I must tell you, but they must get equivalent status.

RB: So, it is not equivalence in terms of ...

MvR: It is equivalence on the NQF – [on a level] and that is where I think the academics have now won the battle. When you look at the new level descriptors – they have won the battle – we didn't have enough people from industry in that group. As a matter of fact, it only had academics - it didn't even have the private providers – even though I scream for it all the time.

RB: So, just explain that. In other words, we saying the fact that we are now going from 8 – is a reflection of ...

MvR: No, I have no problem with the fact that we are going from 8 to 10 – the level descriptors were drawn up by academics only. So, the level of responsibility in a big company like Anglo doesn't feature. The level of responsibility of a person and, and you know Ronel we must go back to the really excellent stuff that was done in SA – where you could have a government ticket certificate person coming through the technical college or through the technikon or through the university – but what his got is his government ticket is equivalent in all respects to that engineer in terms of the authority he carries – the government ticket examination is one of the most respected exam in this country – it is a written exam but extremely applied, its outcomes based, like the CA, you know. Now, we have very few of these people left – like welders, a good welder, like the one we were

told about in that strategy workshop, Prof du Toit, it must have the same status as a professor at the university -

RB: So it is about the status

MvR: The status being a recognition of ability, of authority, of responsibility and so on. That's why I really feel with the unions on this – they want their people in factories – a person who looks after a multi-million rand power station, to be recognised as somebody worthwhile. Then we will also draw people into the industry – the is the point for ASGISA and JIPSA...the status of vocational and occupational, and that is why I got so cross with 'Oranges and Apples', because they denigrate [vocational qualifications]

MvR: You see why it is so important to have the level descriptors, written in such a way [that it accommodates the equal status], but we failed and I am a lonely voice in this regard.

RB: I want to ask you something about that level descriptors. Just in terms of, not so much the content, but in terms of the idea that there should be separate level descriptors...

MvR: This is wrong that is where you don't get equal status.

RB: So in other words, if our level descriptors are right, written right, it will lead to the awarding of equal status?

MvR: Yes

MvR: I don't want people to say that 'I have been in the factory for 20 years and therefore I must get a masters degree', its ridiculous you know. But, but I have been in the factory for 20 years and I am responsible for all of this, I do all of that...

RB: I have all the experience and knowledge...

MvR: Yes, and therefore I am on a level 6

RB: What would be the effect/implication for our system if we don't manage to get integration right?

MvR: In the first place we are going to strengthen the ivory towers tremendously and it will just remain a dominating kind of ideal in our whole existence – can I just say that I think it is very closely related to the fact that our entire our schooling system is set up to prepare people for university - even the FET now is trying to do that – setting up people to go to higher education. Which is so absolutely

ridiculous if you think about it – only 2,5 % of people that start schooling, ever go to higher education and then only 1 % make it, I mean, of those who start school. The other 99% have to be prepared for work, but why is this idea that going to university is so absolutely vital in our society, because after the second World War –the Afrikaners absolutely set themselves for this and after apartheid, blacks absolutely set themselves for this, which is fine and I understand, it is a social thing, where one understands it, but that is why we don't have skills in this country, that's why we can't run the country and start grow the economy because we all think that the ideal thing for your child is to go to university - because they don't get recognition [elsewhere]

- RB: That is the point, if the status of occupational and vocational qualifications were higher – more learners would want to and more parents will help and encourage their children to go there...
- MvR: As they are doing in Australia – we should go to Australia again and see why it is that they have all of that vocational/occupational things working there – people have status, a waitress has status – your tourist guide have enormous status and they are proud of their situation and of their jobs...and self-respect... that goes with it.
- RB: As long as higher education or general/academic holds sway in relation to the status then everyone else is going to see themselves and wanting to, aspiring to be there...and being sorry that they can't.
- MvR: Do you remember the slogan that was always ...in the early 90s – 'from sweeper to engineer' and we need to have an ability for a person to start as a sweeper and have the status of the engineer eventually without necessarily being the engineer. Be the head of the cleaning should give equal status.
- MvR: Of course, Alan Wilkin was the example, he was the CEO of ESKOM started as an apprentice and ended up as the CEO, so it is possible for doing it.
- MvR: The more we veer away from that original and...the unions, you know - they insisted on this equal status - that's where it comes from – it is almost uncanny how – I mean I am a total capitalist, but I am actually appreciative of what they said.
- MvR: Transformation in the country needs that – don't you think?
- RB: We will know that we have arrived once, once we can say that people have equal status
- MvR: Which is why it is so dangerous to divide the system in terms of qualifications – to dis-integrate if you like.

**INTERVIEW WITH PROF S BADAT
18 MAY 2006**

RB: **An integrated framework – we see it in every publication that comes out – what does it mean, what does it mean to you, what does it mean to the sector?**

SB: Do you mean an integrated framework of E and T or interdependence, in what sense?

RB: Exactly that. How would you, how do you see it from your particular perspective? How do you see integration?

SB: My starting point is that, you know, given where I come from in the 80s and being the People's Education convener. So, ideologically, I come from that kind of background and is in the social movement who is committed to this. If I stuck there still, there is a serious problem 20 years down the line – I think we all matured and so on, so I think sometimes we get stuck in the ideological and I think a lot of the policies and so on in this country have been driven by ideological positions that adheres to particular theoretical frameworks and so on. Now, that's, I immediately want to say that that there is nothing wrong with that – and I still want to argue 20 years later that this is the correct starting point. I don't accept affordability, for example, as the correct starting point. I believe that your goals, your principles and values and all that, including the context in which you have to pursue these things are what should shape. Now, I think sometimes, where we are not honest enough – is, as much as ideology and visions and principles should drive policies and so on, at some point we have to also step back to say, but what does the empirical evidence say and if the empirical evidence is pointing in a different direction then you have to have the an interplay between the empirical evidence and ideological dispositions because otherwise we are being dishonest – the empirical must speak, and this is the point to say that there is nothing wrong with ideology driving the policy but the two must come together at some point. What does the empirical say to you now?

The second point I wish to make, perhaps when in the heady days of people's education and people's power and so on we kind of dissolved complex binaries too easily. The people's education and people power part of it and the education and training part of it. And I think that was at a point where we were kind of highly optimistic and we thought that we will kind of really show the world because we also assumed we are pretty unique, therefore we would do it differently, wouldn't make the kind of mistakes that others have made and so, so, I think there was this kind of context also. Unique – wouldn't make the mistakes that others have made, so I think there is the kind of contexts that Mongani calls SA exceptionism.

The third point I would make is that there is, I think, there is a conceptual difference between education and training and I think you try and ignore that

difference at your peril and that is why we have to two distinct terms for them – and these terms are not just terms that are conflated – they are concepts also and if you don't want conceptual conflation then you must be able to clarify very clearly what education is and what is training.

So, these debates are not just around education and training, the debates in the early 90s where people like myself were responding very sharply to Andre Kraak and others – we were assuming that a particular Cosatu model can dissolve paradoxes and contradictions – we are saying, don't make such grandiose claims, you may be able to manage those paradoxes, but dissolving them is a bit too far.

So, so you know, the Cosatu model allows you to pursue both equity and economic growth and development simultaneously. Well perhaps, but that is a very big claim to make, are you sure, you may be able to manage that better, but dissolve the tension is another kind of, this is taking this to another level and you are actually taking it out of the debate then - there is only one model and I think you misunderstand in your perpetuaseness in some senses, that you think that certain model can simply dissolve...and therefore I have also started to say that we must be very careful of speaking the language of solutions also, because some of these problems are so complex – I am not sure we can solve or dissolve them, I think we learn to manage them as best as we can and in a way that is constantly asking ourselves: are we sure we are remaining faithful to the ideological and social commitments we have to redress, equity, justice and so on? That's what you ask yourself all the time, but for the rest it is about finding appropriate strategies in managing these paradoxes that run through our society and run through our institutions and so on - the equity and social equity issues versus development i.e. if you are only driven by equity you may have a very nice profile of your institution but it is tending to end there because you don't have the skills base. On the other hand, if you are only concerned about whether people can do the job, your equity profile may look very bad. Now you have got to manage that, Sam's got to manage that. I have got to manage that. But, at some point, and this you can reduce to the individual dilemma: here I have a post, I cannot afford to bring in someone who cannot do the job whether he is white or she is a women or whatever. I know the consequences of bringing in someone...because it will land with me, my life will be more difficult, but I know that I have an equity profile, so you can't solve those things, you can manage those things.

Coming back to...I think there is a conceptual distinction to be made between education and training – I think that we have tried to either conflate them or we tried to pretend that there are not problems or tensions.

The example, when you...you can train someone to do certain things, but that doesn't mean that you have necessarily educated that person. In the same way you can educate someone, but it doesn't mean that because you have now taught me in engineering how thermo-dynamics and everything works, I can actually go and fix my car. I mean you can give simple examples to show that the two are

different. And really I think what we are talking about is what kind of combination do we want to have in a graduate or anyone that is simultaneously education and training. And now, because you start...so if you think you can simply dissolve that – then we only need one set of institutions, and only one kind of...an engineer must be able to do everything from building a bridge to the kinds of thing that someone from previously a technikon does, but there is a finite demand that any human being can do. So, certain engineers actually deal with conceptual design issues and so on and others deal with other issues and they really constitute a team. Now, does that make one person better – now that's where our issue comes in. Therefore, because we are living in a society – again it comes back to the economic and social system. If you could actually pay an engineer 10 grand a month, who comes from UCT and you can also pay a person who comes from TUT 10 grand a month, actually our problems are solved. That is exactly what has happened in Cuba. Why are Cuban teachers so dedicated like Martin ...is going to show again from his three country study that was just finished off – Cuba, Brazil and Chile – because they get paid the same – and therefore they go into teaching because they love teaching – they have a social calling for teaching. They know when they become an engineer or they become a medical doctor, they are not going to earn more – so, they all earn the same and people go into areas that they are really interested in. We've got a problem of the kind of differentials that arise if you are engineer that is trained at UCT, or you come out of a technikon or a college.

RB: So, your status is associated...

SB: We have a kind of conception of equality, which is 'sameness', right, whereas the equity conception, which is about fair and just treatment, it is about recognising the worth of each human being and individual and his or her contribution to the economy and society, even though there may be differentials related to the qualifications and expertise and so on.
Now, you know, if you want to introduce these things – you can introduce it – but change the economic and social system, then you may succeed, but in the context of a capitalist system that we have adopted post 1994 – you are...being dishonest and people understand that...if you think you can say that these are equivalent. Now that is where the whole equivalence issue comes in. Now, I think sometimes that we are not clear enough on what the problem is.

RB: That's true...

SB: We can solve the problem of giving equal regard by paying people the same.

RB: The same salary.

SB: Perhaps the person who is going to UCT may say that 'Actually, I am more cut out to go to the technikon and because I am going to earn the same, I'll go there'.

I think, the whole education and training thing is also embedded in a particular context and because we... And that is why I say, our policy intervention should be simultaneously driven by ideology and values and so on and also the context within which we have to operate. Certain things will work in a different social system that is not going to work here. So, my own view then is that given that we have a differentiated economy, which requires a differentiated labour force – then we have to ask the question, that, for that differentiated economy and labour force and occupational structure, what is the basket of knowledge, competencies, skills and attributes required for any particular occupation in this country and that's in a sense – some of them will veer much more to the educational and theoretical and so on, and others will veer much more to the practical – and that is how you approach it – and that's how I think you don't necessarily dissolve it, but you approach it in a different way altogether.

RB: Right

SB: The idea simply that for the sake of looking ideologically elegant, education must simultaneously be training and training must be simultaneously be education – listen a human being has got only so much that he or she can do, in a three or four year programme. So, in trying to solve the problems of a social and economic nature through education ...and we forget Sociology 101 of Education that we have been teaching and you often have to remind yourself that teaching Sociology of Education in the 80s in a context of where you are fighting apartheid and you are critiquing, but you were critiquing on the basis that you thought that we are going to build a different economic and social system in the country.

If it is not the case, why do you think that education and training can overcome...that are fundamentally social and economic structural problems of the society. I think a lot more honesty is required.

You cannot achieve socialism in a capitalist system and you cannot achieve a new...

I am perhaps more clearer, but you know when you are having to espouse particular policies in a particular context you have to do the best you can. That's why I say you need very good advisors...that you can deflect...You don't recognise what the fundamental problems are, which are social structures economically, you then look for other levels of where the problems are. Why do we have unemployment – unemployment is a feature of capitalism.

RB: That's interesting

SB: Show me a capitalist society that doesn't have unemployment – there is a very good argument that was made a 100 years ago by Marx of why unemployment and what role unemployment plays, why you need an industrial reserve... so,

don't blame CHE or SAQA or universities because there is unemployment - it is a structural feature of the capitalist society.

Of course, you can't say that as a Minister, but you know, the sociologists of education and so on have to say that to you. You know, let's get real here - unless you're Denmark or Sweden or so, which is a very small economy, wealthy, where you can manage that - if you live in those societies you have little unemployment. So, I think we are caught in these kind of - I am not, I am not being cynical about it, I am just very honest about the fact that - because I still believe that there is something worthwhile to hang on to - the ideological goals and so on. But, I also understand the context that I work in - I have to provide advice and I have to comment on things from a perspective of having chosen this economic and social system - can I provide advice to you that can still be more progressive - yes, I think I can...to tell you to tell Minister Manuals to cut out his neo-liberal policies. That's not useful.

Can we...something, still be done within that - yes, with a lot of imagination, yes, we can find ways of addressing some of our issues, ways that can create more social justice rather than exacerbate them. Otherwise, you must to lock yourself away somewhere at a university and simply do other kinds of research and so on - cut yourself off. But if you are working at SAQA, Umalusi and the CHE and these kinds positions - understand the context you are working in and the kind of advice - I wrote it in a recent paper somewhere, which I am still reworking - 'be careful of making a virtue of out of necessity'. Listen, advising the Minister in a particular way is a necessity of the context of which you are working in - but don't make a virtue of that, because there can be different ways of addressing these issues.

RB: I'd like to see that, where are you going to publish it?

SB: Because, you can change the ideological frame, and say...you can actually do this, my criticism then becomes that ...and this a debate I am having with ...and others at the HSRC...you can change the frame, rather than just provide the kind of advice and providing the kind of recommendations you are making, because the Ministry is paying for it. You can change that frame and simultaneously do research that it is very useful to Cosatu and other social movements. Because there are alternatives, but it requires more radical thinking around certain lines and so on, and so, but I know you've got to pay your bills and so on. So you have to do the work and give the customer, in this case, who is paying for the research, what they want. Now that doesn't make you an apologist - you are doing the work with a lot of integrity and so on, as long as you don't make a virtue out of necessity, because there are alternatives, always. It is question of choices...what choices we ought to make and what decisions we ought to make.

So yes, I think you could approach education and training differently but, so, where I... agree with ...there many things I disagree with Jonathan in terms of

conceptually and in terms of strategy and so on. But where I do agree with Jonathan is when you approach curriculum 2005 and so on, from a purely ideological way and don't understand the context within which you are implementing, what you are heading for, is disaster. The idea that suddenly those that have been trained in fundamental pedagogics all their life, who have never been asked to think for themselves really and so on, and suddenly be introduced to...what you call these things, the cascade model... the cascade model is only as good as the people at the top are ...

So, if you are introducing it into a context where the raw material is not there – rather than cascade, do it over a longer term, much more thorough...than weekend workshops.

I think we are in a rush, rather than saying 'lets be systematic about these things'...we are in such a rush...because you have Minister that promises that he will increase our matric outputs by fifty percent and so on. Well, things like education and training, you can't have a six months plan, you must have a 10, 15 – 20 year plan

SB: We underestimate, and that is coming back to the topic, we underestimate what was left in 1994, and I keep saying that, and Jonathan is right there, I absolutely agree there – we don't get our head around about how bad it was and not just in schooling, in the universities also.

RB: Everywhere, I agree, everywhere...

SB: But unless we become honest about that, then we can formulate a lot of interventions and so on, but we should not be surprised that we are underestimating the nature of the problem.

**INTERVIEW WITH MR KEN HALL
19 MAY 2006**

RB: What do you see, what are your feelings, what do you think about this notion of an integrated framework? What is it? What do we mean by it? What do want to achieve with it?

KH: Ed French put it wonderfully one day and I have never forgotten the notion, because I could relate to it being a chemist. He used the jungle gym – kids climbing on a jungle gym – I could see it as an atomic framework or the DNA...where I see the NQF as making sense of all the internal pathways of the DNA. So I have had this absolute passion for an integrated framework, but I contradict myself totally by saying that I do not see an integrated framework as making all things equal.

I want to illustrate this – when you do academic learning, you build a foundation of thinking – that thinking can in no ways be substituted by an RPL - because the thinking is a structured academic learning wall. All that RPL can do is to tell you who you can talk to as peers – but the walls are never the same, there will maybe be a few things in the wall of RPL that are indicators that this person can hold is own.

I want to give you a perfect example. You're a degreed person, I am a technikon-based person. Your academic thinking you learnt in your degree, is totally different from technikon based learning, and it has to be, because we have different roles: when I go into a problem, I'm thinking solutions, when you into a problem, you're thinking of concepts. Remember the first Impact Study meeting, I walked in and I said 'do we want to measure the efficiency of the bureaucracy?' And it was as if...I saw James' eyes open up, I don't know if yours did, it might have, because we have this amazing academic framework and I still think it is fabulous, but I could see the lack of an end state to say: 'are we really looking at the impact or are we actually looking at all the frameworks and the detail, getting stuck in the detail'. OK?

When you go into a doctorate degree or a master's or an honours, you build onto that, because you've got the thinking. I am totally against the notion of technikon people doing that, or even an RPL, to go straight onto a doctorate, an academic doctorate like a PhD, because I believe the thinking that would go into that doctorate would be practical based and not academic based. So, when I get back to the notion of an integrated learning system – an integrated learning system should establish peers, but not equals.

RB: Now you will have to explain what you mean by that.

KH: People who can have equal esteem for each other, equal respect...

- RB: So, it is status...but not, so it is peers, but not...?
- KH: Not equals. You are Afrikaans by background, I am English by background – we are peers in culture, but not equal cultures. A university-based culture is totally different from a technikon-based culture is totally different from a technical college-based culture. I can sit with my technical college friends, you know who are certificated engineers...I have an equal respect for them, but I will never pretend to be equal in status to them in their practical knowledge – heaven help it...when my brother comes around, with his...you know he is an engineer...I wouldn't put him near a car, I wouldn't put him near anything like that – neither would I put myself there, but my cousin who is a certified engineer, is the guy that does that stuff for us, when we go camping, we always have a stratification of people. You've got the intellectuals, you've got these guys – but I would put those guys with the cars – those guys fix the cars, I'd rather do the cooking. You see what I mean, there are different roles, different roles in society.
- RB: OK, so...Right, that's interesting. However, why is it ...
- KH: We are trying to...and this is the misperception in the integrated system, is that we are trying to make everyone into recognised as having degrees. I am very unpopular at work, because one of my biggest jobs is to consult on the equivalency of qualifications, and it relates back to service benefits, as well. Now, I am saying 'we have set the benchmark of certain benefits accrue to people with degrees', then they come along and they say 'Yes, but, I got a business studies unit MBA from the Durban Technikon, Durban Institute of Technology and I want to be recognised as a person with an MBA from Tukkies'. Then I say 'Nonsense'
- RB: But isn't the MBA...
- KH: Then they say but I am biased, then I say 'I can't be biased because I am technikon based' so, if I were biased, I would be saying 'yes, let's do that – this was in the time before the MBA study was done – it lost its status.
- RB: So, you were right.
- KH: I don't want to be seen as right all along – I want to be seen as having the right principle at heart, ok? Not I told you so, situation.
- RB: No, of course not. But, you saw it for what it is.
- KH: I am just afraid there is going to be a new wave. So, in that way I am highly supportive of Saleem, in what he says, and often he says: 'why do you want it on the NQF? Why would you want this on the NQF, or why do you want that on the NQF? And I agree with him, because I think we are very naïve about what RPL

can do. In short I believe in a form of integratedness, but I don't believe in total integration.

RB: Well, what do you mean by 'total integration'?

KH: Total integration would say technikon diploma equals degree equals certified engineer.

RB: So, it is the notion of education and training?

KH: The notion of education and training...no, it is the notion of education and education and education. Remember the old SAPSE 150 – they had a curve – a curve of qualifications, let me just think what the curve looked like. What is the difference between type C learning, A B and C learning, remember that? And they said if you have a degree, you have academic, applied, practical. If you have a diploma, you have academic, applied, practical. If you have a college-based certificate, you have a academic, applied, practical. Remember those curves? You'd never seen them? This still made sense to me and it still does, and I think we threw the baby out with the bathwater. SAPSE 150? I used to know those SAPSE documents out of my head. Type A was academic, type B was applied – oh, in fact, the technikon one looked like that – that was the curve the technikon had a hump of applied, the universities had a hump of academic and the technical college had a hump of practical and applied.

RB: In other words, it looked more like this...

KH: So, so, the university would start there and drop fast, the college...that would be the university, that would be college, that would be technikon

RB: OK so this was university...

KH: This is my pet study – I would love to do a study, I'd love to do an M.Tech, in fact, I started but I disqualified myself ...I'd written 300 pages...and I realised that my problem was that nobody understands outcomes-based education. After speaking to Bill Spady and all these guys, I realised that he's got something that he doesn't understand either.

But I've got this notion of graduatedness. What does it mean to be graduated? Dennis van Rensburg once had this incredible – what would you call it, it was at the inauguration of ...as vice-chancellors of Pretoria Technikon about 1995/1996. He gave this address and he spoke about the notion of vocational and he was saying that colleges are vocationally oriented, technikons are career-oriented and he said a technikon must never become a university – I still agree with him. I've got this notion of science, technology and art. Universities are science based, technikons were technology based – the technology cannot live without the

science of universities. I look at ecologies, and I love nature, the colleges and your colleges should be high institutions of creating art, artistry.

RB: What do you mean by art?

KH: Art, in craft, in craft-like. I hate the word practical, because all of these are practical. I hate the word technical skills and non-technical skills, because all of it are technical, but technology is applying science. The science, and the thinking and the new knowledge, should be formed by universities – your doctorate should be forming new knowledge, or new directions, or new thinking. A dissertation at the technikon should be applying that and I don't think there should be any doctorates at technikons. I don't say that technikon students should never become able to produce a doctorate – I don't think that, and that's where the integratedness comes in – it is that this person is at such a level that that person can create new thinking and you create a new – what was that new machine that you put on your cellphone to do all the electronic goodies, became the entrepreneur of the year – those people who not only apply the science and then become leaders in the field and one of the things that we have gone and done: we have spoken practical, we have spoken grease monkeys, we haven't spoken craft, craft masters and that is the esteem that the NQF has to establish, and it doesn't. I see art, science and technology in every career...when I compiled the original document that looked at the 12 fields, I had a hell of a fight with Prof Rumble. I said, field 02, and all of these were supposed to be alphabetical...till someone messed it up and put Construction down at number 12... and it was a way of ordering the filing system of learning in a logical way, but they weren't learning fields, they were organising fields...and I once wrote a paper about this once for the inter-ministerial working group in 1995/96 and we were on the same platform with it. Field 02...came out as something such as Arts and Culture or something. I said there shouldn't be a word 'culture' in it – it should be the science, technology and art of field 1,2,3,4 – there should be nothing that says 'art' in that sense, and he went and said that we should have Arts and Culture – its arts and artistry craft we had this long discussion about this about arts and culture – that implies that there is no culture in science, no culture in technology, no culture in arts. Everything is underpinned by culture, so I see there is a culture of science – if you go to university and you learn for a degree in engineering - you learn a culture of engineering – why are engineers so arrogant, why are accountants like they are – they create a common culture, a common way of thinking, a common approach. It does vary slightly from one university to another but the basic thing is you create a culture...same at a technikon...same again at the colleges, you create a culture in the journeyman.

KH: I've got a totally off the wall kind of thinking. A lot of people say that its – what would you call it – it actually militates against people crossing pathways – I think the NQF should allow for that, but pathway crossing should be the exception, rather than the rule. When you have someone crossing pathways, the biggest challenge is to find the right role models – the whole thing relates to credit for the

mentor and a person that was humble enough to climb the ladder [talking about the ex CEO of ESKOM] So, here you see the two pathways...the integratedness of an NQF cannot compensate for how you develop and that to me is the worry – we make too many assumptions – yes, it opens a door, but it doesn't open a heart – and it is that culture in the disciplines that I think is important. I think, the whole thing is - an integrated framework is important, but not for creating equalness, but for giving people routes to the top – we must never be naïve to think that it is going to create people who can handle the development.

**INTERVIEW WITH MS S MULLER
19 MAY 2006**

What is integration – an integrated framework?

SM: The notion of integration has never been challenged

RB: That's been my take as well, that it has never been challenged, however, there seems to a change in understanding of what it means

SM: Finally they are beginning to understand what it is and then you get this territoriality stepping and saying hey, 'the integrated framework sounds great, and it is what the country needs, but it is going to affect me...'

SM: They are finally starting to realise what it means, but I think, in spite of realising what it means, they realise that they can't be openly critical of something that is obviously in the interest of the country as a whole and so you get always, this preamble with this huge buy in to the objectives and then everything from the body of the article or the paper goes on to split it up

RB: In fact I've noticed exactly the same, and made the observation at one stage that politically it would be seen to be suicide, if you like, to say that we don't want integration. So what do you think they understand by it?

SM: They are beginning to that it is integrated education and training, across that divided, across schools and colleges, across universities and technikons and across labour and education, but it is only rhetoric.

RB: Do you believe in it though? How should we do it?

SM: I worry that what's happening has as much to do with personalities as it has to do with rhetoric, and the other dimension, that I think is...ja, how to put it? There isn't a political will, which says that this is the way it is going to be, now make it work. And if there isn't that and the personalities are clashing, then we have a problem. In addition to that, although they've supported it at least in principle, their actions haven't supported the notion of integration. People need to put their money where their mouths are, and now, 5, 6 years down the line, they perhaps understand it much better, feel no less stressed, but it would be a hell of a loss of face if you suddenly change your mind.

RB: Not only that, it's how it is understood in the general populace to a certain extent – politicians are very careful not to not alienate the general populace and if that's the slogan that makes them happy then you can't go and take it away

SM: Its not everybody in the population that even knows about integration, and I think if there hadn't been this resistance, this divide between education and labour,

more of the population would have seen the NQF in action, and at the moment it is still very much, in some sectors, perhaps most sectors, it's still very much in the background. So, there is SAQA and the NQF and there are new qualifications – those things are more visible, but there is not the visibility of the benefits of integration specifically.

RB: That's very true.

SM: And it has to do with the discussion that we had yesterday on credit transfer and accumulation – I have always assumed that the NQF had CAT built in, that it is part of it, and it is not – the article made it clear.

RB: It isn't built in but it was conceptualised, certainly, as being an enabling mechanism whereby one can accumulate credit and transfer.

SM: Ja, one can't really have CAT without an NQF, and I assumed that the two go hand in hand.

SM: What I have suggested to DQAD, is that if we could find quality assurance processes where there is trust, for me the crucial thing is about mutual trust, about one another's quality assurance processes, and if we can then find two or three that are close together where one can close that little gap, then we will have CAT and it is working and this is how it is working. And the other route is to see where it is not working, but if you put all your energies at that end, it is going to take a long time before you see the benefits

[Discussion about CAT]

RB: In fact, I suggested that we actually do a pilot where we take an area, for example Health and actually get that section together and ask them to work out a CAT

SM: So you would have professional councils.

[Discussion about CAT]

RB: The other question I want to ask you about integration. What would be the implications if we don't have an integrated framework?

SM: We would have education and training as before, we would DoE and DoL as before. We will have SETAs, and CHE and Umalusi separated, so, the whole notion of parity of esteem can't come from the design of the qualifications itself and the level descriptors. It's only when these things talk to one another and when they are compared and quality assured and delivered with that in mind that you have integration...So, we will just perpetuate the divide we always had.

RB: Is that such a bad thing?

SM: Yes, I think it is. Because I don't think DoL sees the education in the same light. If you look at the old artisan qualifications, the N1 – N6. They are semester courses, they teach you to spray paint and weld, but they don't teach the NQF kind of things of literacy and numeracy – and so, those elements are educational and are of benefit to the individual and to society and DoL might have thought about them, but doesn't focus on that.

RB: Don't you think it is like that in any case – if you look at what the SETAs are doing, they are quality assuring their field of expertise, they don't want to quality assure the fundamentals.

SM: No, let Umalusi quality assurance the fundamentals, then you get integration, more than 25 SETAs, each having a different view of the fundamentals.

RB: So, integration through quality assurance then? But you know, of course, that Umalusi doesn't want to quality assure the fundamentals?

SM: Ja, I know. Well, I know that the Department of Education does not want to pay for occupational qualifications in the FET band.

RB: I didn't realise this before, but that for me is quite concerning. In the past the DoE was responsible for the artisan, certainly the theory part of the artisan qualifications.

SM: We've just had a media campaign to try and bring this to the attention...we're going to the NBFET. We've had talks with David McFarlain all week saying that the department has abdicated its responsibility here – you can't bring in vocational qualifications which are aimed at higher education, phase out the N1 to N3 and not replace them with anything.

[Discussion about technical college qualifications]

SM: You see if we are importing 800 artisans, skilled artisans for SASOL and the Dept of Home Affairs has given permission for that, why do we have the skills shortage in the first place and the question is what are we doing in training our own people for sustainable development?

RB: So, why do you think do we have a skills shortage?

SM: Well, the old NATED 190 and 191, the proper artisan qualifications are so outdated that they are meaningless, and as Penny rightly said, a six weeks course in spray painting isn't education, really. And we agree and those things should be replaced with 120 credit, which are properly designed, that industry wants and are of benefit to the learner.

- RB: How did this happen, because we knew this, didn't we, 10 years ago?
- SM: If you go back to the CUMSA and before that, the De Lange Report of the 80's – it was saying almost 30 years ago we have a skills problem. After that nothing happened, the CUMSA thing said we had these three trajectories which is what we are going back to if you read the latest – but everything up to 94 was designed in terms of job reservation and race. Now, if that system is persisting 12 years into the democracy – what does this say about our commitment to democracy and access and redress and equity. Nationally identified priorities: ASGISA, JIPSA, NSDS, Public Works Programme – there is a host of them. The government is saying one thing, but the Dept of Education is saying, yes, but...we won't provide artisans because it is not our job and our question that we have put out at just about every media release, is if FET colleges in the public sector are not going to provide, then who?
- RB: Exactly, yes – who should provide it? Because, traditionally they did...
- SM: They did. This is my question: We're 12 years into the democracy. We're perpetuating the system and in fact, exacerbating the system, which was set up for a particular intent and purpose – to support job reservation and apartheid. Now, has our mindset not changed?
- RB: I am busy with the paper – on the Umalusi report called 'Apples and Oranges. Have you read it? I start my paper of by saying; it fills me with despair...
- SM: You can't compare 'Apples with Oranges'. The name of your paper should be 'Oranges and Crocodiles'. If you want to compare like with like, then they must be comparable in some way, but you cannot compare a programme or a matric exam, after 12 years in a second language, English Second Language, and with a semesterised course which might not be underpinned by 12 years of anything. So, calling it 'Apples and Oranges' is the first mistake.
- RB: Well, the second mistake for me, in any case, is that they are dealing with things that we know historically were unequal. It was designed to be that way. And I mean, what is the point of making a comparison if we know that it was designed to be different, that it was designed to be at a lower level.
- SM: The point is that something that takes a whole year academic, with a semester for a totally purpose – that you can't be compared. The fact that this exists after 12 years of democracy – that is a problem, and that you have to compare this with something that has moved a little, not much with something that has moved not at all – its crazy.

**INTERVIEW WITH DR A PATERSON
1 JUNE 2006**

RB: What about integration?

AP: What I think we should be talking about integration, is not so much integration as a value, but for me integration is a meta-theme that includes issues of access, transparency, portability and so on. So, when we say integration, I think you have to, by definition, unpack it. Because what we've got is we've got conceptual integration, we want this to be a single integrated NQF. At the design level, we have got integration, because it is now a 8 or a 9 level NQF. And that it is interesting in itself because when we first designed it – what is it now 9 or 10?

RB: It is 8 - 10

AP: We first conceptualised it as 8, designed and established it as a 8 and then we realised that there is problem. So, we went back and reconceptualised it as a 10 and we designed and we are busy establishing it as a 10. So, that is a good example of a learning system. Now, what we then mean by integration, is that, in principle, any learner, from wherever they start at level pre-1, can get to 10, whether they come through this mode, or whether they come through that mode...

RB: OK, so it is about progression.

AP: It is about the ability of any person of any starting point to progress right through the system – that's what we mean by integration. But, it does not mean that differentiation of the academic stream, the professional stream and the vocational stream is a bad thing. It just means that we have to build the bridges in a very explicit way to achieve integration.

RB: I've just done a paper that says exactly that. Yes, so, we build the bridges and I agree, it needs to be a very deliberate and consistent approach. It talks to about what you said earlier, about how SAQA would link the professions, for example, to a basic degree and so on and also looking at the vocational and how these links with others.

AP: A classic example is when somebody studies engineering, we don't have the exact SA figures, but internationally, what you have with engineering internationally, a third of the people who study engineering, never practice, a third practice and then go into management and then about a third stay engineers. Now, if the engineering courses certified by one engineering body, it is actually irrelevant to those who go into consulting, but they may later on find themselves in a bank, and do some bank-related qualifications and become some sort of qualified financial person, but they started out as an engineer. So, in my mind, what the professions are doing, they are not defining the curriculum. They are defining a curriculum that is sufficient and necessary for that profession. The society, through SAQA

has to agree with that – that's what SAQA does, but SAQA does not run the engineering profession because the profession is different to a qualifications authority, so there's kind of dual responsibility here – that profession wants to look at the minimum requirements to say that you are an engineer. SAQA wants to look at: is it portable, is it accessible for people coming in from other disciplines, you know, is it defined according to unit standards, or is it a more classic type of qualification and then I think SAQA should also be taking a view of, when these people get this qualification, the B.Eng degree or the B Tech degree – had they actually been prepared for the world of work? That is a SAQA question, not an engineering question. They think that they're doing that anyway, so if someone comes out of an institution and can't get a job in their chosen profession because they lack some core skills, then the Engineering Council is not going to fix that.

RB: The qualification has to fix that...

AP: Right, so that is what I mean by integration: it means that the goal that every person, every citizen in the society can move to the highest level, should they so wish, can do that with the minimum of impediments – that's integration.

RB: OK

AP: But, it is important, because in my mind there are number of words that we use quite frequently, like articulation, portability, integration, coherence. Each of those words by itself, in conceptual terms is content-free – you can fill it with anything you want to fill it with. So, what we have to do is that you have to design the goal, and the goal is the goal that the citizen has the whole system available to him – at least the publicly funded part of it. And that therefore what do we mean by articulation – it means that if someone has one qualification in a certain area and has a logical linkage to another, that those linkages can be made – then you can articulate. If somebody studied at HE institute A and they get to a third year of the BSc in some area, they can easily import that to another institution without having to do a very significant amount of work and so on. Otherwise what those words do, they become sticks to beat the organisation with, because people say – you haven't got integration, but if you hadn't defined what you mean by integration, how can you test it?

So, I think, one of the things I have found in the early SAQA documents is that these concepts were not operationalised, and what we need to do is that each of those concepts needs to have an operational description with it with words and adjectives, and so on. I'm always trying to – the reason we talk in sentences – you don't just walk into office and say, hi Ronel, 'integration', it is because integration is a vacuum in a sense. But if I say, hi Ronel, today we are going to talk about 'integration in SAQA' and the type of integration I am talking about is IT systems integration – ah, he is talking about IT systems and I know nothing about that, so I have come to wrong meeting and I'll send in someone else. And I

think we very often use those words – you know in management terms, people often say that there is a problem with communication. What they often mean is that ‘I don’t feel I have the information to do my job properly’. And then you have to say, ‘what information do you need to do your job properly’ and then they say ‘I need this, and this, and this’. ‘OK, what is your search strategy to get this information?’ ‘Can you get it yourself or do you need somebody else to get it for you?’ Otherwise, everybody agrees that communication is bad, but what can you do about it? So, that is how I think about these concepts.

RB: [Discussion about trip to Scotland]

AP: And that is why these words, at a very high level, have to be operationalised, otherwise we are having a different conversation altogether

RB: That part of what I am trying to find out: ‘How do we understand integration?’

AP: I would say we would probably, I mean in a technocratic sense, is to start with the Act – these are the things that are the objects of the Act. Let’s then think about integration in those terms, but on a more pragmatic sense, because you can never do everything it says in the Act, is to say, ‘what are the targeted areas where we are going to try and enhance integration’, because you are not going to be able to do in one step. And I think the danger that SAQA faces is that because it’s a knowledge-worker intense organisation, is that people run a thought experiment about how to do integration but that is not the same as making it practical – in my mind that is the step we have to take now, it’s to say: ok, let’s be the best communicator – let’s be the best networker, let’s build social capital, let’s pick some areas where we can have a demonstrable impact, because in what I call the sociology of politics in organisations, we have to make deliberate choices, and I think that, my experience of the Authority and the work of the Council, or whatever we call ourselves, is that there is one group that is continuously restating the kind of ...re-levelling the playing field and there is another bunch that saying but guys, we’ve done that already.

[Discussion about the work of SAQA]

RB: I want to just come back to the idea of a pragmatic approach to enhancing integration. I am busy with terms of reference for a study in FET – the three FETCs, to make sure that we develop a methodology to help those three FETCs articulate and to monitor the articulation. So, is that what you are talking about in terms of [articulation]?

AP: That is a key area, so in very practical terms...in each of those areas, first of all, what is working? The NSC has just gone through a massive re-engineering. What could we logically do to help that at this point? I think what we could logically do at this point, is sit and watch because we agreed that it is a good thing and

we've signed off and those guys must get on with it and we are really only going to know in a couple of years' time...

Right, if one then is saying that in that area, let's make sure that everyone who is has to study is studying it, let's make sure that maybe that the assessment thing is checked more actively than usual, but let's let Umalusi do all of that because they are...

If you then take the NC: Vocational. What is the problem with Vocational [Occupational]? Well, first of all, that there are very few vocational [occupational] access routes for a large number of people who leave at the end of standard 9, so I would in the NC domain say, 'let's look at reach – how many people who want to be trained in that area, can get in?' How much do they have to pay, how many can get into private education colleges and how many go into the public...are rural areas under-served...on the assumption that the stuff have been around for a while and that they must have sorted out some minimum standards and so on, but with the [occupational], the classic [occupational] route – the problem is reach, so most people can't get into them – so they go to shebeens...and so on, so they get trained in other things ...there are big issues of reach ... SAQA's thing there should be about 'let's check whether the issues of access and affordability is sorted out' ... because that's probably going to be more important in the short term than finding out whether you get high levels of articulation, because if you have so few people in it, you are putting to much effort into fixing the layer rather than just making sure that it's ok.

And then the FETC is the sort of mix between the two where it is more vocational in orientation, but it still has a strong academic base. What's the problem there? The problem there is probably the dominance of the Department of Education, to be very frank, because they want this to look just like a national senior certificate, but with more technical words in it. They aren't linking it explicitly enough to the world of work, they haven't engaged potential employers actively enough. Their equipment and technologies are outdated, so the kids are not really learning about the most up to date stuff, so there, probably the primary problem is entering into the world of work, so I would then as SAQA be working with the Department of Labour to say, how many of these people that come out of the FETC [Vocational] at level 2 and 3 are actually getting employed, and if they are not getting employed, why, what do the employers feel about it and really pushing for probably, a less academic, more skills-based training, but having enough academic in there so that if someone buzzes, then they can get back into the academic route. But my impression of that layer at the moment is that most of those people come out of there unemployable, because they have not been trained on the latest technologies. So, pragmatism says, find what the real problem is or at least prioritise the first three problems and pick the one at the top of the list and then pay some attention to 2 and 3. But, my view is that SAQA hasn't up to now played that role. What it has tended to do is say 'do we have the proper curriculum statements, do we have unit standards?' Which is kind of a

technocratic view of what it has to do. Rather, than saying that these qualifications are worthless, because these people are not getting jobs.

RB: Should I include this discussion in the next draft of the document?

AP: Yes, I think it is useful. I would call it 'operationalising integration'. Let's accept differentiation, but let's build the bridges...

**INTERVIEW WITH S ISAACS
12 JULY 2007**

RB: The issue I want to talk about is integration. Integration is still considered to be at the conceptual level and I want to see what it means to you, what are the issues?

SI: I still feel that it means different things to different people – but I think, increasingly we are living in a world that needs to be joined up and so, by its very nature if you think about things in a systemic manner then you have to accept that there are...you can't draw neat boundaries and I think that the way in which you in fact, have allowed qualifications from school to universities and the way in which, for example artisans receive their training, and then there was a whole lot of people that were left out and that is no longer acceptable in society – and so what one is looking for, is a way in which the social uses of qualifications is mediated a lot better, so you don't get the situation that if you did not go into a particular stream that your life chances then are drastically affected forever. So, increasingly, you know, different countries have different policies about social inclusion, becomes an important concept. The issue of no dead-ends, you know that, that persons can pick up learning later in life...because you had a bad start somewhere, it doesn't mean that for the rest of your life you are going to be locked into a system that you can't move. So, I think those are the reasons that in fact, drive us to consider an integrated programme. And I think part of the other misunderstanding is that, if you look at a good medical qualification, a medical qualification – were always integrated, so people had a good mixture of education and practice, you know.

RB: That is one of the understandings certainly...

SI: So, that is always there, but because medicine is such a high stakes thing it is seen as 'education' and not as much as kind of training, but someone who is a carpenter, for example, that is seen more as training and yet there is a whole lot of education that can also enrich a carpenter. It is people who make the arguments in such a way that they favour one kind of experience and so, I mean, that is why the move to a kind of standardised curriculum is so destructive in a way, because if you have a standardised curriculum, it means that someone who is not part of a standardised curriculum is automatically excluded – now, there is nothing wrong with a standardised curriculum, but it can't be the only curriculum, because there are always people that come from a different curriculum and then if you look across the world, you will never get a standardised curriculum. So, when you get people from one country and another country, you can't compare standardised curricula, so what you have to accept is that there are many ways to learn things and some ways are better than others but, over time, and because of social practice, people will choose curricula that are appropriate to their contexts, so I think that is important.

The other thing about the integration story is that people do make a kind of distinction that this kind of education and training is better than *that* kind of education and training...

RB: Like parity of esteem...

SI: It is more than parity of esteem, it is almost like somebody is saying – my car is better than your car – no how do you prove it, and unfortunately because our university sector is the oldest sector in one sense of the word – and have always have this high esteem placed on it, you almost had the kind of builders and the bridge builders and all of that, but they have always had this different kind of value in society, so, you do get these kinds of comparisons, and the comparisons also make it important that we in fact start to value different kinds of learning...I wouldn't say equally, but we have to value different kinds of learning appropriately, so that it is not seen as *de facto* inferior – it is just different kinds of learning and we've just got to accept that.

RB: ...and that it has got a place in society...

SI: Absolutely, and if you start to map these things, then you don't get to the situation that if someone who has a degree – they actually think they are better than someone who hasn't got a degree.

RB: What do mean by 'map'?

SI: If for example people have different kinds of learning then you what you want to ideally do in a thing like a National Qualifications Framework, is say, how can we weight, how can we value different kinds of learning. So what a qualifications framework does when you look at level descriptors and so on, it is about a way, and that is not different for example from someone who has a BA and a BSC - their kinds of expertise is different, but when they go and teach, then someone makes a decision that these two qualifications, for the same job, you get the same pay, based on these qualifications, so there you have a case where people have performed a mapping, saying these two qualifications are at the same level and they have some outcomes are similar and others that are completely dissimilar and it is how those things, you know play themselves out.

RB: Do we say that those two qualifications...certainly they are equally valuable, but the type of learning – is it the same kind of depth of learning, would you say?

SI: It depends, you see, I think you can become an electrician, and learn a hang of a lot of physics and maths and chemistry, all of that, so you can do all of that, but what...and then you compare it to what? Then someone says 'compare it to the school curriculum'. Now, there are many people who have a school curriculum, who can't do what that electrician can do, but the electrician can certainly do a whole lot, and more of what the school learner can do. For me, if you are able to

say, 'what are the learning outcomes of the school learner' and you can say 'what are the learning outcomes of someone undergoing an education and training programme to become an electrician?' ...then you can start to see what are some of the commonalities and what is not there. And I think the whole argument starts to break down, because if you look at people coming out of the schooling system, then they are coming out with a wide range of knowledge, skills and values, and it is not as if you get a standardised product coming from the school. So, you can get people coming out of a school who can barely read and write for example and somehow they passed the exams, and you have someone else who is average, who is fairly competent, and very often if you compare high flyers with people that were average, then they get to university, and somehow the average people outshine the high flyers. Now, why is that so – it is a complex thing, it is not only what happens in the learning programme, there is a whole lot of external factors, and other internal factors that drive the person's ability to learn.

RB: So, are you saying that integration is about giving people a second chance? In other words, those people who may very well be the average person and therefore may not get the wonderful bursary, and perhaps as a result of economics, go to a cheaper institution, or an institution, for example, like a college, where they feel...

SI: Well, you see, I think integration is...I think there are multiple dimensions to integration. For example, there is a kind of career path that goes from school to university. Then there is another kind of career path for school drop-outs, old technical college, new FET college, and then moving back somewhere, back into maybe universities of technology and maybe something else later on. So, one gets all of that. Now, part of what integration must do, is that although people are using different pathways, the pathways don't restrict. So the integration there is an integration, that is an integration of pathways, where you actually say, that you can go by different pathways, so that if you move through the system, you don't have to go back to zero every time – which is the case very often. If you were in the old technikon system and university system, they always said you had to go back to zero and similarly the technical college system...the technikon said you had to go back to zero. So, part of integration is to say - all qualifications are on one framework and these are the ways in which they work together. So, integration is by taking...and trying to find what is the common currency in learning and saying these are the important things...you can get there through various ways. And so that is the one integration. One integration is in fact, moving away from a standardised curriculum, is to say there are many ways...you can have a big curriculum and a smaller curriculum, so I think that is the one kind of integration. I am trying to think where we, Dr Nkomo and myself once had a conversation over integration. And the integration that we spoke about is at a number of levels...there is integration between education and training, there is integration between...we did a paper for a New Zealand conference...there is a Commonwealth Secretariat...There were four levels of integration....

- RB: Just to let you know, I have identified seven levels.
- SI: Well, tell me...let me hear the seven...
- RB: No, I don't want to pre-empt our discussion, but the one that you are talking about is what I call 'articulation' and the other is the notion of 'theory and practice'. The third one is the notion of education and training.
- SI: The one was theory and practice, the other on career paths, and the other one was the career paths...I am trying to remember the fourth one, the fourth one was quite subtle...we were saying that in South Africa we are trying to...I think it went something like, in South Africa, we are trying very hard to deal with...the issue of the integration of people, you know, the bigger project, where you are saying that the reason why you are bringing people together like this in this kind of education and training, is also about systemic transformation, where you are trying to break down other barriers, where most of your semi-skilled workers were black, so, you are trying to deal with that. But, I think the point that Dr Nkomo was making had to do with is teaching and learning, and the fact that you are also integrating those processes, because people who teach are also learning, so there is another dimension there that is quite important. You are not saying that some people teach and some people learn, that you are also integrating the process of teaching and learning...
- RB: Right, so when are you a teacher, and when are you a learner...
- SI: That's right, you may at some stage be a teacher, but you are also learning. That is another kind of integration that you...I think that is what it was.
- RB: Flowing out of this is perhaps the difficult question to ask. There are a lot of discussions around what is going to happen to the NQF...what would be the implications if we don't get it right...if we don't get integration right?
- SI: I think I want to answer the question in two ways. The first is, you know, many societies don't get things right the first time. So, they try something, and they mess it up, and they mess it up in the implementation, and then they try something else, and then they come back, and so, you see very often this policy churn. You'll get that phenomenon. So, one of the things that can happen is that we just lose our opportunity and then we go back to try something else, and then we come back 10, 20 years later and then we say: 'and now we do it all over again'. There are enough examples, of ideas like lifelong learning that comes back every few years in a new form. So, I think there is that particular scenario. But I think that all over the world, the problem is the same. You get people that in fact, have achieved something in one context, and they move into another contexts, and because they are human beings, they can't start at the bottom of the rung in that country. So there are two forces that push you. Any adult who is sensible, will always...like they manage their finances and everything else...they will look at

what their employability index is. How employable are you...is the place where you are in, can you move? Now, I think that one can look at the financial markets, because there you can actually see people can move their money by a key-stroke on a computer. And they can move their money very quickly. But, can you move your qualifications? So, a doctor in South Africa, can they move in the United States and practice immediately? The answer is, 'no they can't practice immediately, there are some barriers that they must go through', etc. In Australia there are barriers – people can't move from one state to another state. Now, I think people are all of a sudden saying that this doesn't work to our interests, so how do we break those down. So, what people are constantly looking for, is how do we develop system that in fact is going to enable their mobility. So, just like people have a portfolio that is diversified...so you might have some overseas investments, some local investments, people are also saying 'I have a qualification. What can I do in another country?' If I am an English teacher, that is fairly portable, you can go into a number of places. So, you find that a person is an English teacher, but they do something like TSOL, and English as a foreign language, ESOL, so they do these things, because it enhances their employability. So, I think already what people are constantly doing, is this international comparability. 'I've got this – where can I go to with that?' So, people will use the old networks like the Commonwealth, to see...People also look at new destinations, 'can they make it, can they do their own...' and so you will then try and get credit so that you can move. So, I think, that you will never entirely loose the...the universities to some extent, try and do that with their exchange students and they do their curricula...so, if you are in the Arts field, you can normally move, or if you are a researcher, you are a researcher in education policy, you can go anywhere in the world with that. But, that is a limited area. Medical doctors and lawyers have a problem – there is a programme that you do to convert their South African law degree, to a British law degree. I have a few friends who have gone through that. My brother is a maths teacher in London – they have accepted his South African qualifications, but to get promotion and all that, he has to do other things there. So, what happens is a kind of ...starting to accept that this is a good qualification. So, *de facto*, what I am saying is that you are getting a...probably a kind of organic integration and that maybe that is integration across the world where people are saying, 'this set of qualifications can work in these areas'.

- RB: There are enough of these Bologna conventions and Arusha conventions which are trying to enable that.
- SI: That is an increasing pressure. Increasingly the world doesn't have enough... they are not training enough doctors, for example, so if Britain needs doctors, they recruit from all over the world, and nurses and so on. So, I think that what we are getting – as countries become more kind of utilitarian – they are saying we are only going to train so many nurses, so many this, so many that – they then have to find, if they have a crunch, where do we get these other from. If countries are clever, they will say, 'we have a high level of unemployment', 'if we train 10 000

nurses' these people can find jobs. So, if you look at Malaysia and Java and so on – these people find jobs all over the world. I mean, I went to Israel and in Israel there were a lot of Malaysian. They were working as nannies, they were working in hotels and so on. So, they were doing the lower level labour the Israelis did not want to do and they are earning more in Israel than they would in Malaysia and then they go back to Malaysia. So it is issues like that that are going to work against people who don't want to do integration. And then maybe there is a third issue and it is the universities themselves are following a lot of inter-disciplinary approaches...in the field ecology for example, in the field of medicine, in the field of engineering, there are a lot of multi-disciplinary approaches. So what we are starting to see is that one can't treat/see things in isolation and so, even as medical schools are operating – problem-based curriculum. The subject today is tuberculosis, but in order to understand tuberculosis, you have to understand micro-biology, you have got to understand the anatomy of the lungs, you've got to understand the chemistry that takes place within the lungs...you have to put all of this together and already people are starting to say well, in order to understand this, you have to have an inter-disciplinary...so, all they do is to call that 'medicine' as opposed to 'biology' and 'chemistry', but the fact of the matter is that people have been integrating all along, so, and you depend on these other disciplines to help you and increasingly people are trying to teach it in that way, rather than saying I am doing Anatomy 1 and Chemistry 1, and then the integration happens at some later stage, so you do the basis first. Now, you see there is a lot of debate about which curriculum is better – do you do separated curriculum, with the disciplines, like that and bring it all together at a later stage, or do you start to integrate right from the start...I think the jury is out on the latter, because it is new. Some people say they get great results...people know more and so on, I think that we must still see what the results are, but what is clear is that you still need a point of integration and therefore, in a thing like medicine, you don't have a standardised curriculum and so therefore if people want to move from a problem-based curriculum to a more standard medical...can they do it? One answer that I get is that 'no, you can't do it'. So again, some of these things create new barriers and it is not so easy then to give people credit for transfer if someone has this kind of programme and they moving into that kind of programme but I think there are new ways of dealing with it. Wits, for example, has a new graduate qualification, so they take people with one qualification already and they shorten your medical curriculum and do it in a problem-based curriculum so it is a four year curriculum instead of a five year the essential point is that here you've had within a discipline and integrative process and I think that in all of life we are starting to see that, It is not possible to have a domestic worker who just cleans, because they are working with chemicals and this can cause all kinds of problems in your home if you don't integrate in a meaningful way and the other thing is with medication for – the pharmacists always get upset with me – when I say I am taking, and you are asking me to take this medication and I am taking these multivitamins and I am taking this medications – are there any interactions? It is important that they know – I expect that they will know and they are trained to know how different medicines interact with each other, but all

- in all the human body is a system and learning, I would argue, also is a system so constantly what we do as human beings, in integrate knowledge because that is the only way in which we can make it our own so, and that is why it is interesting to speak to people who have had different life experiences, because sometimes people with similar background, but with different experiences, sit in a meeting and they see things in a presentation, they see different interpretation.
- RB: Thank you very much, that's been useful.
- SI: The other thing I didn't mention is the fact that integration is also used as a device to prevent certain from happening so for example people say integration is too difficult, to recognise it, so what people would like to ...
- RB: For example epistemologies...the notion that education is too different from training and never the twain shall meet.
- SI: I think a lot of that is just kind of slight of hand, yes of course there are different epistemologies, but the argument that I used to have with Jeanne Gamble, her husband is an advocate and she was an industrial training. And I said, in your home, we know that advocates in a court of law, have a very particular language, but that doesn't prevent them from speaking in their home and understanding each other, so even though his education has taught him to use language in a particular context, she is able to converse with him. So, at one level he has got specialisations in the way language is used in the legal profession, but that doesn't make that inaccessible to someone else. So in the same way Engineers have a jargon, and you come in, you don't know the jargon, but it can become accessible to you. So this notion that you have to go through the same experience, is not valid because we all make the kinds of transitions. Even though I have not been trained in the legal fraternity, I can detect certain things and I can understand certain things – I am not a lawyer, but I am not a novice. So, the average person who has learnt and has developed themselves in a number of ways are able to cope and all of sudden they are saying, no, no, we can't give you any credit, you must go back to zero
- RB: The training is too different from education.
- SI: Again it is the social use – if you can legitimate that distinction...if you can say to someone, but your qualification is lower than that. The fact that there are so many people that have the qualification, is the quality in it. That doesn't come into the argument and I think that is part...in our social practice, where somebody says 'there is a wise person' and 'there is an educated fool', so in our social practice we have already distinguished. The wise person does not need any qualifications and here is a person who an educated fool and for me, that is the dilemma we are facing, and in fact, to be a wise person in society, we have to integrate a whole lot of things and I think that is part of our problem. And even teaching our kids, is how do you integrate yourself within a world – how many

people are dysfunctional and part of that dysfunction is that you were never allowed or taught how to integrate. You get the kind of thing in a co-ed school, and this has been well reported, where girls purposely under-perform, but girls do better in a girls only school...otherwise you are not going to get husbands later on, that is really stupid, but girls do better in a girls only school. When people go into the world, how do you integrate in a way that doesn't make you stand out. I think that our whole world is based on separating – there is a very strong emphasis, lets break the problem down, this notion of separating out and labelling all of that, and maybe it solves some problems on a conceptual level, but at some stage you have to put it all together again. How do you get this kind of synthesis right. In my Engineering experience – there was a shortage, electricians can only operate when they have a licence, but there was too much work and not enough licensed electricians, so the inspectors just turned a blind eye. Industry had to work so just had unlicensed electricians, people that...I think that if people start to make their pathways too rigid, you will get a point where there are too many people outside the system and there is an economist called...the closest equivalent to an individual in terms of intellectual property rights are their qualifications because that is what you barter with...if there are more people outside the official system than inside, then the official system is illegitimate, so, I think that what you are going to get if you are living in a world where there are more people learning in this kind of way than in that kind of way, then you are making this kind of thing, to some extent, irrelevant, because ...even if this thing that you are trying to keep separate, if you are trying to keep separate, you are producing poor quality. We see it in the IT industry –very often, you do get the BSc Computer Science, but a whole lot of people go straight from school others go directly into an IT, so they don't have a degree, for example Bill Gates, the cutting edge stuff were far more interesting than what they were being taught – nobody will think that Bill Gates is all the poorer because he doesn't have a degree. We know, that our economy is held up by people who don't have these fancy qualifications but they are able to run our factories, run our banks, they are able to do a whole lot of things that are valuable to our society and somehow we are not recognising that.

ANNEXURE 8

PUBLIC COMMENTS – RESPONSE TO *An Interdependent National Qualifications Framework System: Consultative Document*

Stakeholder responses are available on the compact disc attached.

LIST OF RESPONSES

- Council on Higher Education (CHE)
- Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU)
- Committee of Technikon Principals (CTP)
- Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA)
- Financial and Accounting Services Sector Education and Training Authority (FASSET)
- Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA)
- Lyceum College
- National Skills Authority (NSA)
- Insurance Sector Education and Training Authority (INSETA)
- South African Communist Party (SACP)
- South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU)
- South African Institute for Chartered Accountants (SAICA)
- South African Vice-Chancellors' Association (SAUVCA)
- Umalusi – Quality Assurance Council for General and Further Education and Training