

**ENABLERS AND BARRIERS TO  
STUDENT ACCESS: NATIONAL  
BASELINE SURVEY ON  
ARTICULATION**

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# RATIONALE

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- Articulation (within and across) the institutional and qualification landscape
- National imperative - PSET White Paper (2013) - limited implementation
- SAQA conducts research to support this work and expands its capacity through long-term research partnerships with public HEIs
- SAQA-DUT research partnership 2016 -

# RATIONALE

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- Explores the enablers and barriers to systemic articulation.
- Require understanding of the prevailing issues related to articulation in the PSET sector in South Africa.
- A national articulation baseline survey (NABS) was undertaken in Nov 2016
- All 26 public HEIs and all 50 TVET colleges.

# DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

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- Design of the baseline survey was exploratory and the methodology qualitative in nature.
- Two open ended questionnaires (required descriptive responses) for the public HEI and TVET College groups respectively.
- Survey conducted between August and December 2016. Public entities only

# DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

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- Questionnaires emailed to the HEIs with a formal invitation to participate, from SAQA's Chief Executive Officer
- For HEIs: relevant Deputy Vice Chancellors/Registrars. For the TVET Colleges: College Principals.
- To ensure that the highest academic office at each institution dealt with the survey, or delegated it to an appropriate person, recognised to be responsible for articulation arrangements
- Forty-nine (98%) of the Colleges and twenty-five (98%) of the HEIs completed the surveys.

# DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

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### Relational Agency as a Theoretical Framework

Edwards (2010, 2011, 2014)

- **Relational Agency** (capacity required by collaborators take collective action)
- **Relational Expertise** (collaboration on what matters for us in our context)
- **Common Knowledge** (beyond surface behaviour to deep sustained dialogue)
- **Resourceful Leadership** (engendering horizontal/vertical deliverables)

# RESULTS

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# 1. UNDERSTANDINGS OF ARTICULATION

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- Relatively high awareness levels of *systemic articulation* (linked up qualifications and other elements that make up learning pathways in the system)
- Relatively high awareness levels of *specific articulation* (institutional/specific arrangements to enable articulation between particular programmes/qualifications/ learning and work.
- Less understanding of need for flexibility in support of students transitioning students along their particular *individual pathways*. .

## 2. NATURE AND MANAGEMENT OF ARTICULATION ARRANGEMENTS

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- Around one third of the TVETs reported **formal** articulation arrangements;
- Half reported **informal** arrangements (usually for links to workplaces) –
- One seventh of TVETs involved in a **combination** of formal and informal arrangements.
- Almost half of the HEIs participating in **formal** articulation arrangements, a quarter involved in **informal** initiatives.
- All of the TVETs reported engagement in some articulation activities, while just over two thirds of public HEIs did so.

## 2. NATURE AND MANAGEMENT OF ARTICULATION ARRANGEMENTS continued...

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- Three relatively large-scale articulation arrangements identified
- In response to provincial needs - provincial governments and a range of learning institutions (and other entities in some cases).
- Each differed in terms of approach, scale, and purpose. Yet each gained traction, **possibly** as a consequence of turning articulation into a provincial priority.

### 3. NATURE/EXTENT OF SUCCESSES AND ENABLERS OF ARTICULATION

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- Among successful practice models described, two key contributing factors surfaced that appear to be driving the success of the models.
- First: reliance on an established articulation *office*, as opposed to an incumbent *officer*. These structures are responsible for some – if not all – of the elements of articulation
- Second: ‘resourceful leadership’ (Edwards, 2014) needed to forge collaborations across perceived divides (division along lines of expertise).

## 4. TRACKING OF LEARNER TRANSITIONING

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- Almost half of TVETs and almost a third of HEIs track learners.
- Information tracked differs across institutions.
- Systematic reporting requirements are needed to support articulation,
- Articulation Reporting Guidelines' are needed to facilitate common understandings around tracking and consistent articulation-related reporting across the system.

## 4. TRACKING OF LEARNER TRANSITIONING continued ...

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- Learners' identity numbers could enable tracer studies of learner movements
- Including pathways that involve learners stopping in and stopping out of education, training, development and work.
- Reporting needs to be integrated into current supporting systems and also reflect learner experiences of articulation.
- Roles for National Learners' Records Database (NLRD), Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS) and a future TVET Management Information System (TVETMIS).

# **FINDINGS ON TRACKING LEARNER TRANSITION**

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**TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF STUDENT TRACKING AND MONITORING BY TVET COLLEGES AND HEIS**

Institutional type	Number (%) of institutions with tracking systems	Number (%) of institutions with no tracking	Total
TVET Colleges	28 (57%)	21 (43%)	49
HEIs	8 (32%)	17 (68%)	25

**TABLE 2: TYPES OF ARTICULATION MONITORING AND TRACKING ARRANGEMENTS**

Monitoring and tracking arrangement(s) reported	# of TVET Colleges & HEIs
TVETs tracking students through the levels of their qualifications	n=19
HEIs tracking students from access, through the mainstream qualification and eventually graduation	n=1
Tracking students from TVET Colleges articulating into the UoT	n=1
Tracking transitioning students by HEI's Faculty Management	n=2
Regular HEI enrolment planning targets to DHET through HEMIS	n=2

**TABLE 2: TYPES OF ARTICULATION MONITORING AND TRACKING ARRANGEMENTS**  
**continued...**

Monitoring and tracking arrangement(s) reported	# of TVET Colleges and HEIs
Tracking of students transitioning within NATED N4-N6	n=1
Tracking of students transitioning into the workplace	n=7
Coltech TVET/MIS system, monitoring and tracking on enrolment planning targets	n=5
Tracking of students personally	n=2
Tracking of students through mentors or placement officers	n=2
Tracking of students from a TVET to HEI (unclear how)	n=1

**TABLE 3: NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO HAVE TRANSITIONED (GROUPED IN 10S, 100S AND 1000S)**

Type of institution	Student numbers			Total numbers of institutions
	10s	100s	1000s	
Numbers of TVET Colleges	2	7	4	13
Numbers of HEI	1	2	1	4

# CONCLUSION

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- Universities South Africa (USAf); South African College Principals' Organisation (SACPO)
- Association of Private Providers of Education, Training, and Development (APPETD)
- Department of Trade and Industry (DTI); Department of Labour (DoL) and SETAs
- Department of Higher Education and Training, Department of Basic Education (DBE), SAQA and the Quality Councils.

# CONCLUSION

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These coordinating bodies need to be involved in:

- **taking to scale** the successful pockets of developed articulation initiatives;
- **supporting the emerging** initiatives to become developed; and identifying
- **unblocking barriers** stalling the latent ones

These role-players need to build trusting relational agency (Edwards, 2014) to identify and remove barriers.

# CONCLUSION

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Participatory Engagement Engenders the Movement:

- From Competition to Collaboration
- From Contestation to Consultation