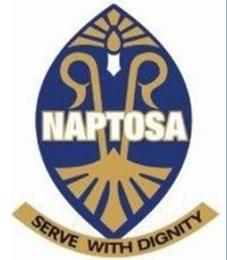




NATIONAL NEWS FLASH



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TVET/CET COLLEGES

NNF 2 of 2020

24 April 2020

DHET/LABOUR INTERACTION

ENGAGEMENT WITH EMPLOYER

On Thursday, 23 April 2020 DHET convened a meeting with labour attended by the CTU-ATU represented by Greg Masondo and Joe Mashigo and SADTU represented by Mompoti Jones Galorale and Otty Sibiya. DHET representatives were Mr SL Sethusha, Mr FL Ramonyatse, Ms N Williams, and Ms E Maluleka.

The chairperson Mr Sethusha indicated that the bilateral meeting was initially intended to be an ELRC FETC Bargaining Unit one but due to inability to secure the ELRC leadership to convene the meeting, the Department resorted to a bilateral engagement.

The employer presented the revised TVET college academic calendar for 2020, plans and interventions to save the 2020 academic year.

EMPLOYER PRESENTATION

The employer gave a detailed presentation on the phased-in/ staggered approach that will be followed to return staff and students to colleges

- To ensure compliance with the social distancing principle, classes with 20 or more students would be split into two.
- A six-day teaching cycle will be adopted where the two groups of students will attend face-to-face classes on alternating days and engage in self-study as well.
- Lecturers will provide full support to remote learning, online learning, provide study guides, previous question papers that have already been uploaded on NOLS and assignments; and
- Plans are afoot for other external teaching and learning support systems like
 - zero rating of websites,
 - radio and television broadcasts
 - uploading recorded programmes and podcasts on the TVET websites, etc.

INPUTS BY LABOUR

The employer was urged to:

- Ensure that deep cleaning and sanitisation of the colleges' infrastructure and facilities take place before students and staff return.
- Provide students and staff with relevant personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Ensure that arrival and departure times are staggered to avoid congestions

- Disable the biometric fingerprint systems and find alternative access control measures.
- Find innovative ways to cater for students that may not have access to E-Learning and other remote learning programmes.
- Share college schedules that show how and when colleges are going to sanitise (deep-clean) their facilities

Parties agreed to future meetings, particularly after the pronouncements by the President on 23 April 2020 and the joint Ministers' briefings the next day, 24 April 2020.

Parties also agreed to work together to monitor progress of the readiness of TVET colleges and to provide each other with regular feedback.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND TRAINING (CET) MATTERS

NAPTOSA takes her members seriously. A week ago, we received queries from members based at CET Colleges in Gauteng that they had not received their 37% payments in lieu of benefits. NAPTOSA immediately engaged the Department who confirmed that they aware of the anomaly. The Department assured NAPTOSA that the problem would be resolved by the week-ending 24 April 2020. On liaising with the affected members, we can now confirm that payment was received.

We want to thank our National TVET/CET Portfolio Committee Chairperson, Mr Manie Stoltz for having initiated discussions with DHET. We also want to heartily thank the Director: Human Resource Management Administration at the Department of Higher Education and Training Mr Fanie Reyneke for acting swiftly after receiving our queries.

We still have a few hiccups affecting members in other provinces that we are trying to resolve.

NAPTOSA is cognisant of the myriad challenges that CET Colleges are experiencing. Some of the challenges confronting CET managers and councils are systemic in nature:

- Inherent frustration in building a sector which lacks infrastructure identity
- Timely filling of vacancies due to exorbitant publishing costs
- Conflict between council and management arising from understanding of roles and responsibilities
- Limited staff component at managerial level
- Lack of staff to receive skills transfer relating to systems
- Limited budget
- Conditions of service of lecturers

Mitigating strategies to address these challenges include lecturer development; skills audit to gather empirical evidence of lecturer skills level and development of a Lecturer Development Policy. As for infrastructure, CET colleges utilise local primary and secondary schools within communities. However, these establishments lack institutional identity and a conducive learning environment for CET students. The lack of infrastructure limits student-lecturer time on task which results in poor education, training, and development outcomes. It also contributes to poor quality and integrity of examinations and assessment.

NAPTOSA will continue engaging the Department in different forums to ensure that the CET College lecturers' conditions of employment are improved.

BASIL MANUEL

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR