

Dear Fébé

This is a brief response to your letter about the information from Advocate Boshoff.

Generally, I am worried that an overhasty process may compromise a better long term result. It would be sad to have unthought through formulations, and plans without detail, presented in amendments which may come back to bite us later.

On point 3:

(a) I think there is a real likelihood of confusion here. The term “Further education” has been used in two senses in South Africa: firstly, literally as further education after some initial education (and therefore in some ways like the term post-school education and training), and secondly, as a particular band of education on the NQF (NQF levels 2 to 4)(more or less equivalent to the secondary education level in schooling). It is this later definition that dominates the discourse in South Africa (the first definition is more used in countries like England where it excludes both secondary school education and higher education (though the latter is also, of course, post-school)).

Now if ABET is to be placed in FET then the conception of FET cannot be the second one but can only be the first. But this then would require a thorough reconceptualisation of FET and a massive exercise in making people aware of the changed terminology. And that would need time and planning. It cannot be done by some fiat in a minor amendment to the FETC Act.

(b) This sort of makes sense but perhaps it would have to be made clear that this is purely a technical definition of the term College (which really does suggest a somewhat large and substantial institution (which many CE centres would not be). Perhaps the wording would be better as “Colleges, Institutes and Centres”.

(c) Surely they mean “continuing education” not “continuous education”. Given that the name of FET colleges has only now stuck, is it a good idea to now start all over again with a new name? This relates too to my query on (a).

(d) A good idea but I would also hold out for the idea of an Adult Education Institute too.

(e) Transforming PALCs to CETCs is a massive undertaking and I think it has to have a proper operational plan (such as Kha Ri Gude had which helped enable it to be a success). It would be disastrous to simply have a name change.

(f) The Adult Education Act (previously the ABET Act) is useless, currently inoperative in reality, and its disappearance would not change a thing. So get rid of it. BUT a whole new comprehensive Adult Education Act is needed.

Point 4:

If all the above matters are to be addressed Boshoff's the time line is ridiculous. It should be held over till 2013 and planned properly.

Point 5.

The quote from the Green Paper does not suggest that all adult education is appropriate for the FET sector (as currently understood).

Point 6.

This comment scares me. It is precisely the danger I foresee in having an Institute in which the Vocational and Continuing Education section will leave other forms of adult education (and particularly popular and community relevant adult education) out in the cold. My international literature survey highlighted the importance of specific adult education legislation.

I have no problem with the Kha Ri Gude Literacy Campaign moving into the oversight of the Department of Higher Education and Training. That is the logical place for it to be if the Adult Education Directorate is there.

Point 7:

Yes and No. Welcomed, subject to many caveats and cautions as above.

Point 8:

Point well taken but these points suggest again the need for a proper comprehensive Adult Education Act.