



# GRADUATE TRACER STUDY

**Sport, Recreation & Fitness Sub-Sector**

**June 2016**



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The production of this Graduate Tracer Study Report for Sports, Recreation and Fitness (SRF) has been a challenging task. Many graduates have moved on since completing their qualifications, which required strong investigative skills and an unrelenting effort to trace them. This was made possible with the assistance of the CATHSSETA and constituent employers in the SRF sub-sector.

FR Research Services would like to extend our gratitude and appreciation to the following:

- All graduates who willingly participated in the survey and gave us their time and effort.
- CATHSSETA for assisting us, especially Ms Duduzile Gama, who provided us with the database of graduates and supported us throughout the process.
- Constituent employers who assisted us with tracing “hard-to-find” graduates and giving their graduate employees the opportunity to talk to us.
- The Administrator of CATHSSETA, Mr Pumzile Kedama, who recognised the necessity of conducting a Graduate Tracer Study for effective skills planning in the sub-sector.
- The FR Research Services team for undertaking the research.

We are confident that the findings of this Report will provide the CATHSSETA with insights to make sound decisions for investments in skills development.

I am hopeful that the information collected will improve the work of CATHSSETA and Department of Higher Education and Training.

Finally, we thank all others who may have played a role in contributing to this research, but have not been specifically mentioned.

**Prof Hoosen Rasool**  
**Lead Researcher**



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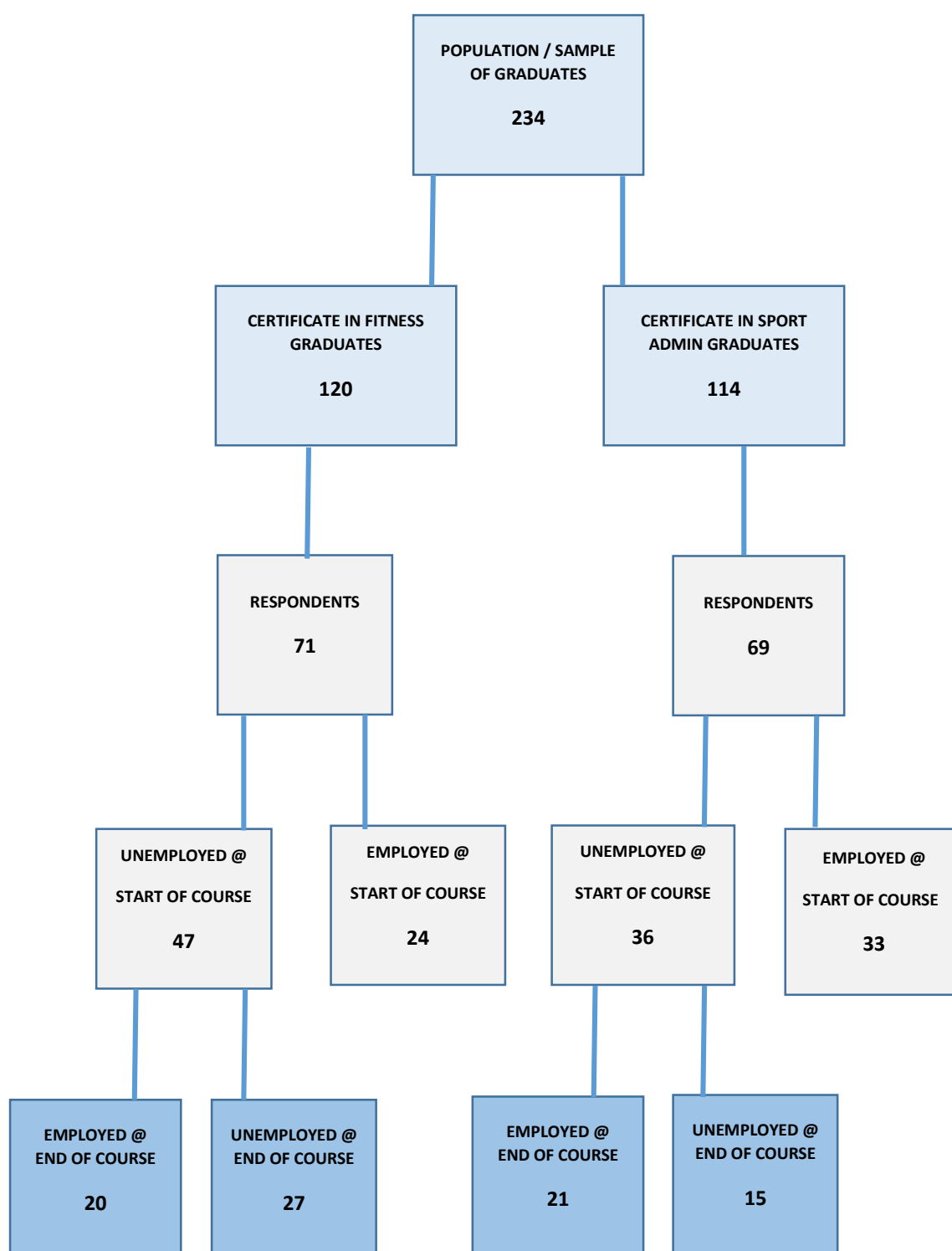
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**STATISTICS AT A GLANCE**



## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This graduate tracer study established the whereabouts of CATHSSETA learners who have completed accredited qualifications in sport, recreation and fitness between 2011 and 2015. We trace graduates for the National Certificate in Fitness (NQF Level 5) and the Further Education and Training Certificate in Sport Administration (NQF Level 4).

The main purpose of this graduate tracer study was to evaluate college-to-work transitions of graduates of the above-mentioned programmes. This would, in effect, provide us with information on the effectiveness of these CATHSSETA programmes for obtaining employment, salary improvement, promotion and further training opportunities for graduates. Essentially, CATHSSETA is interested in determining the value and relevance of these programmes in the labour market.

The recommendations of this study are expected to feed into the CATHSSETA Sector Skills Plan.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

This graduate tracer study is conducted at a critical juncture. The South African economy and education and training system is under considerable stress currently.

**Economy:** The country's economic outlook in 2016 is looking progressively bleak. The South African Reserve Bank revised economic growth downwards to 0.6% from an earlier forecast of 0.8% for the year – warning of a worsening growth outlook. Inflation remains high at 6.7% and the rand remains weak at \$15.90 against the US dollar.<sup>1</sup> To make matters worse, the country's foreign sovereign rating is near junk status. The price of fuel is on an upward trajectory as a result of Rand weakness and higher oil prices. This spells bad news for graduates seeking employment since firms are cutting wage bills in tough times.

**Unemployment:** Unemployment is the major talking point in South Africa with government's *National Development Plan* targeting an unemployment rate of 14% by 2020 and 6% by 2030. However, the actual rate of unemployment is moving in the opposite direction with significant increases in recent years.

Currently, the official unemployment rate in the country for the first quarter of 2016 stands at 26.7%, representing a 2.2% increase compared to the last quarter of 2015. This means 5.7 million out of South Africa's 36.4 million people of working age are unemployed during the first four months of 2016.<sup>2</sup>

The expanded unemployment rate, which includes discouraged job seekers, is 36.3%, or 8.9 million people. The gap between the official and expanded unemployment rates increased from 7.2% in the fourth quarter of 2008 to 9.6% in the first quarter of 2016.<sup>3</sup>

**Youth unemployment:** The official unemployment rate among youth [aged 15 to 34] increased from 32.7% to 36.1% between 2008 and 2014. Since the 2008 recession, the youth unemployment rate has been consistently higher than that of adults, by more than 20%.

While young adults make up between 52% to 64% of the working population, they account for only 42% to 49% of the employed. Close to two-thirds of young people were unemployed for a year or longer, while young people accounted for 90% of those who are unemployed and have never worked before.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Business Day. 2016. A difficult but correct decision, 20 May.

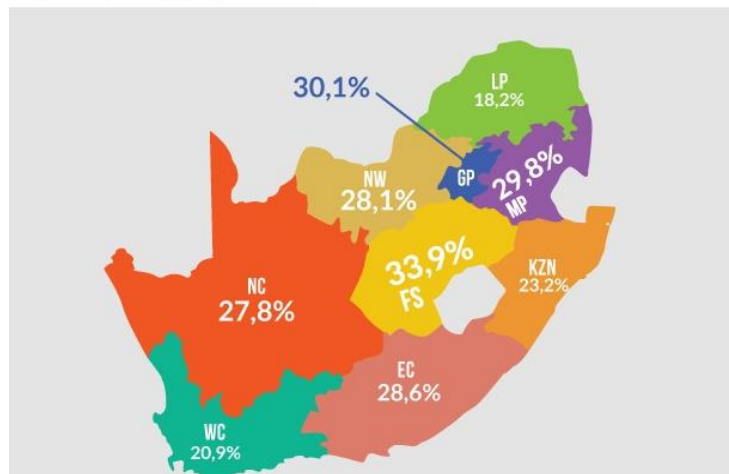
<sup>2</sup> Statistics SA. 2016. Quarterly Labour Force Survey, 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter, March.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Statistics SA. 2016. Vulnerable Groups Series I: The Social Profile of the Youth, 2009-2014 Report, No. 3-19-01.

## Exhibit 1: SA's Alarming Unemployment Figures

### Unemployment rate by province



## UNEMPLOYMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

Results of the 1st Quarterly Labour Force Survey 2016

### Unemployment rate



**HIGHEST RATE ON RECORD FOR SA**  
since survey started in 2008

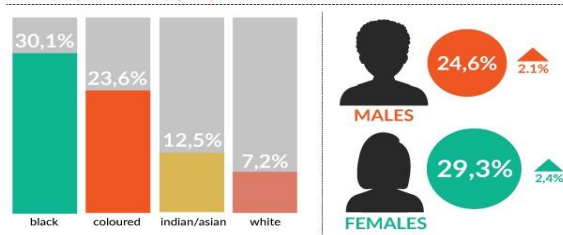


**36.4 million** people are of working age  
**5.7 million** are unemployed

### Top losses



### Unemployment rate by groups

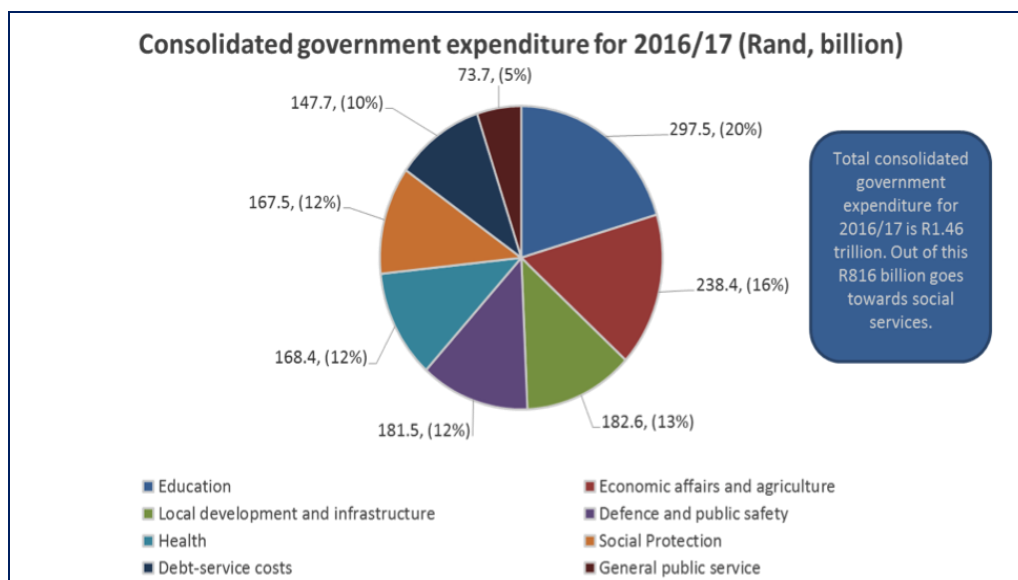




Source: Statistics South Africa (2016)

**Budget Allocation to Education and Training:** The national budget for 2016/2017 shows that education and training is allocated the highest portion for expenditure. Education receives 20% of the national budget in comparison to other sectors. SA is reputed to have one of the highest percentage allocation to education and training among middle income countries. So government's commitment to education and training, and the role it plays in a developmental state is not in question. Despite this, the return on public investments in education and training in SA is very low and a cause of national concern.

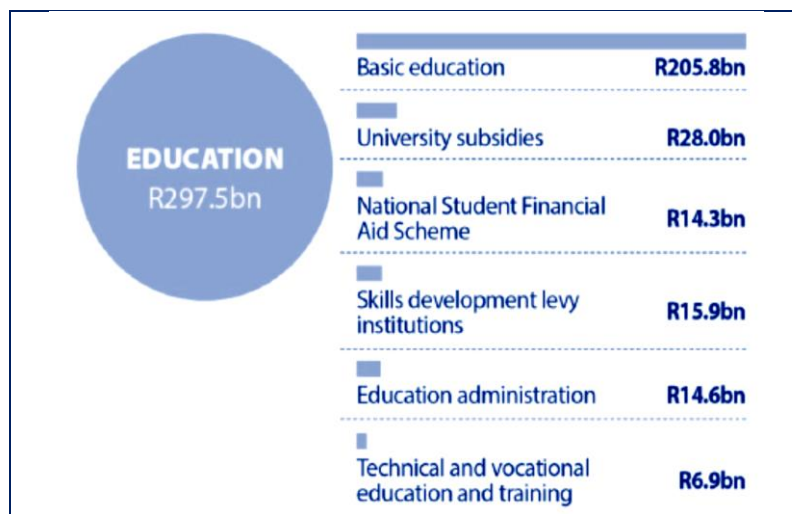
Exhibit 2: National Budget 2016/2017



Source: National Treasury (2016)

SETAs alone received a budget allocation of R15.9 billion in the 2016/2017 budget. However, the return on investment from skills development through the SETA system is weak. Moreover, because tracer and impact studies are not regularised by SETAs and other statutory bodies such as the Council on Higher Education, Quality Council for Trades and Occupations, and Umalusi, it is difficult to make a strong case for effecting much needed educational reforms.

Exhibit 3: Education and Training Allocations 2016/2017



Source: National Treasury (2016)

In such an environment, the need for tracer studies in all sectors of the economy is great.

### **3. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of this tracer study was to track the destinations of graduates and gain insight into the value of CATHSSETA programmes.

The specific objectives of the study were to:

- determine the employment status of the graduates;
- obtain the views of graduates on their qualifications;
- identify blockages experienced by graduates to finding employment;
- examine what needs to be done to improve the qualifications and services offered by CATHSSETA; and
- feed recommendations into the Sector Skills Plan and CATHSSETA planning cycle.

## **4. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS**

### **4.1 Research Design**

This study used a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods and techniques. The qualitative research approach involved interviewing graduates using a semi-structured interview schedule to obtain their perspectives on a range of issues.

The quantitative research approach involved collecting and analysing of numerical data from a tracer study survey instrument.

### **4.2 Research Methods and Techniques**

**Literature Review:** CATHSSETA documents relating to the study were reviewed.

**Survey:** A telephone survey was administered to a sample of CATHSSETA graduates. The advantages of this type of survey are two-fold. Firstly, it is suitable for working with a large sample. And secondly, by conducting a telephone interview, instead of administering a written questionnaire, the chances of a good response rate are relatively high.

**Interviews:** Interviews were conducted on a range of issues with graduates as part of the telephone survey.

### **4.3 Research Instrument**

**Questionnaire:** The main data collection instrument used was a questionnaire which consisted of closed and open-ended questions. The questionnaire was developed around the key variables of research.

**Pilot:** The questionnaire was pre-tested with 20 graduates randomly selected from the CATHSSETA database to minimise ambiguities, enhance clarity, and check internal reliability.

#### 4.4 Sampling

**Population:** The population of the study was 234 graduates from the 2011, 2012 and 2013 sports administration and fitness qualifications.

**Exhibit 4: Graduates (2011, 2012 and 2013)**

PROGRAMMES	2011	2012	2013	TOTAL
National Certificate in Fitness (NQF Level 5)	40	40	40	120
Further Education and Training Certificate: Sport Administration (NQF Level 4)	n/a	n/a	114	114
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>234</b>

Source: CATHSSETA Database: 2011-2013

**Sampling Technique:** All graduates were contacted to participate in the study. Hence, the sample was the population. In addition, snowball sampling was used. Snowballing is a sampling technique which involves using the first identified subject to identify others. In this case, the respondents interviewed were asked to assist in identifying fellow graduates. In particular, they were asked if they knew others who graduated from their cohort and the contact details of such persons. The information provided was used to locate and identify other graduates.

**Sample size:** Two hundred and thirty-four (234) persons graduated over three years. A telephone survey using open and closed-ended items made up the data collection instrument (refer to Appendix 1). It was administered through a call centre between March and April 2016 to all 234 graduates. A total of 140 graduates responded to the survey providing a participation rate of 60%. Hence, the sample size is representative of CATHSSETA graduates.

**Exhibit 5: Sample Size of Tracer Study**

POPULATION	SAMPLE SIZE
234	140 (60%)

Source: CATHSSETA Database: 2011-2013

The breakdown of graduate responses for the National Certificate in Fitness (NQF Level 5) was the following:

Exhibit 6: Response to Telephone Survey for National Certificate in Fitness (NQF Level 5) by Year

PROGRAMMES	2011	2012	2013	TOTAL	RESPONSE RATE
Number of Graduates	40	40	40	120	59%
Number of Respondents	25	21	25	71	

Source: CATHSSETA Database: 2011-2013

The breakdown of graduate responses for the Further Education and Training Certificate: Sport Administration (NQF Level 4) was the following:

Exhibit 7: Response to Telephone Survey for FETC: Sports Administration (NQF Level 4) by Year

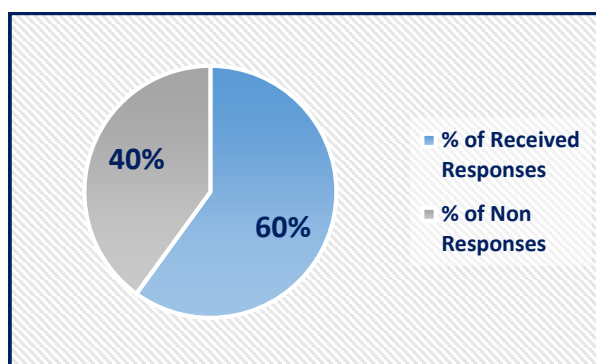
PROGRAMMES	2013	RESPONSE RATE
Number of Graduates	114	61%
Number of Respondents	69	

Source: CATHSSETA Database: 2011-2013

#### 4.5 Data Collection

Through the use of the telephone survey, data was collected from graduates. Data was collected over a period of two months. When computation of the survey feedback began, a total of 140 responses had been received. This represented a response rate of 60%. There was a non-response of 94, representing 40% of the sample.

Exhibit 8: Telephone Survey Responses



Source: CATHSSETA Database: 2011-2013

The following approaches were adopted to collect data:

- A call centre was established. Three researchers contacted graduates telephonically. The questionnaire was administered to graduates and the researchers recorded their responses accordingly.
- In cases where graduates were unwilling to give time for a telephone interview, a questionnaire was sent to them via email (in cases where graduates had such facilities). They completed and returned the questionnaire.
- In cases where a number of graduates were at a single establishment, the distribution and collection of the questionnaires was done through the employer.

Some of the difficulties experienced by researchers included the following:

- Graduates tend to be highly mobile.
- Telephone numbers were incorrect or discontinued.
- Those not in employment were particularly difficult to trace. Generally, employers do not keep records of these learners.
- It was a challenge to get learners on the telephone during work shifts. Therefore, appointments were made to contact them during lunch breaks and in the evening or weekends.

In this study, telephonic interviews proved the most effective and efficient.

#### **4.6 Data analysis**

The nature of data to be obtained from this study was both quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative data, which is mainly from the telephone survey, was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

Qualitative data was coded into themes using grounded theory. Themes were constructed according to issues raised in the investigation.

## 5. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

A total of 234 graduates spread across the years 2011, 2012 and 2013 were surveyed. The graduate numbers and programmes varied from year to year.

Responses from the telephone survey provided information on the following:

- employment;
- salary;
- promotion opportunities;
- better job opportunities;
- training experiences;
- views of the programme;
- suggestions for CATHSSETA;
- personal development; and
- training programmes

### 5.1 Respondents

The breakdown of respondents for the National Certificate in Fitness (NQF Level 5) was the following:

**Exhibit 9: Respondents for the National Certificate in Fitness (NQF Level 5)**

GRADUATES	2011		2012		2013		TOTAL
	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Employed	3	4	3	5	2	7	24
Unemployed	4	14	4	9	5	11	47
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>71</b>

The following is evident with respect to respondents from the above exhibit:



- The National Certificate in Fitness Level 5 programme had graduates in 2011, 2012 and 2013 who responded to the survey, totalling 71, with 21 males and 50 females in the sample.
- In terms of employment status, 24 respondents were employed and 47 unemployed over the 3 cohorts.
- Employment for males and females were 8 and 16, and the figures for unemployment were 13 and 34 respectively.

The breakdown of respondents for the FETC Sports Administration (NQF Level 4) was as follows:

**Exhibit 10: Respondents for the FETC Sports Administration (NQF Level 4)**

GRADUATES	2013		TOTAL
	M	F	
Employed	18	15	33
Unemployed	19	17	36
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>69</b>

The following is evident with respect to respondents from the above table:

- The Further Education and Training Certificate: Sports Administration programme was first offered in 2013
- It had its first cohort of 114 graduates in 2015 with a total 69 responding to the survey, thus having 37 males and 32 females in the sample.
- In terms of employment status, 33 respondents were employed and 36 unemployed.

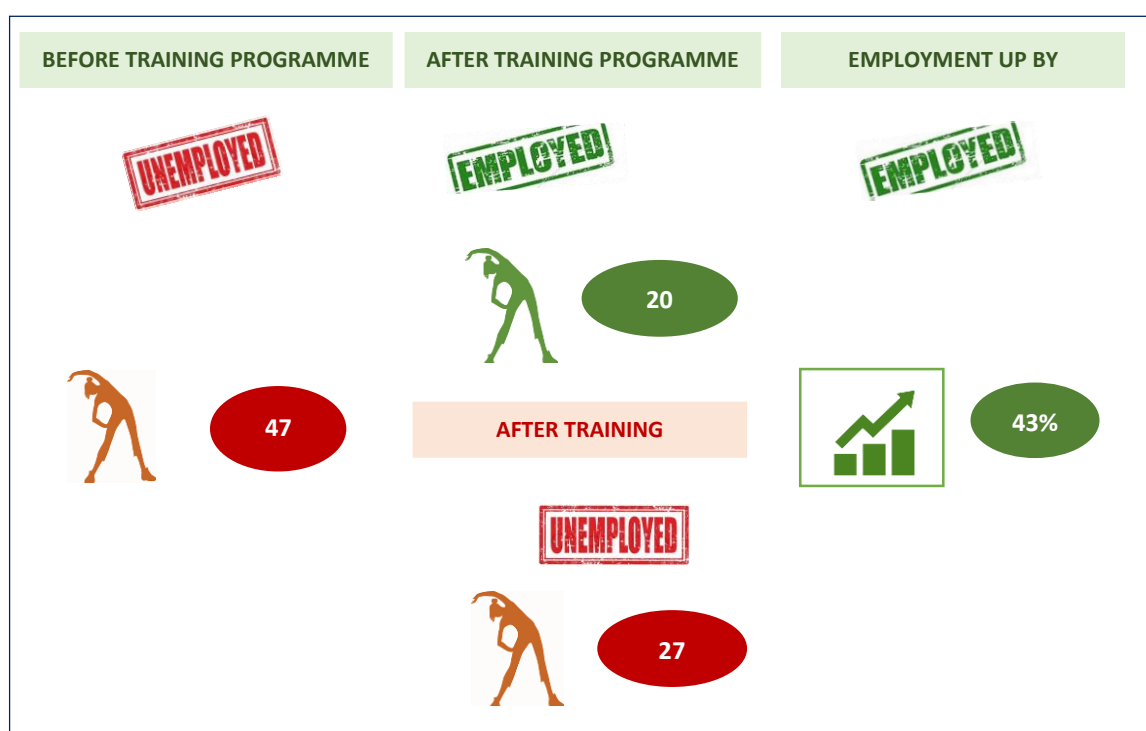
## 5.2 Employment and Unemployment

We were particularly concerned with finding out how many graduates, who were unemployed at the time they started their studies, have since found employment. In other words, the value of the qualification in finding employment.

The exhibits below refer to 47 unemployed learners who registered for the National Certificate in Fitness Level 5 at the start of the programme. The Further Education and Training Certificate: Sports Administration had 36 unemployed learners at the start of the programme.

**National Certificate in Fitness (Level 5):** The effect of the fitness qualification on graduates, who were unemployed at the time they started their studies, was as follows:

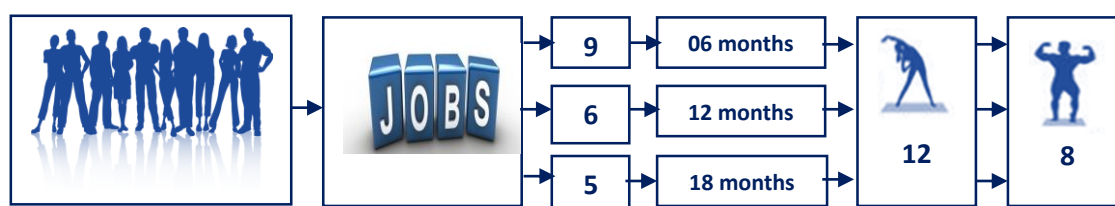
Exhibit 11: National Certificate in Fitness (Level 5), Employment and Unemployment



- Out of the 47 unemployed, 20 found employment after acquiring the qualification representing an labour absorption rate of 43%.
- However, 27 (57%) graduates remained unemployed.

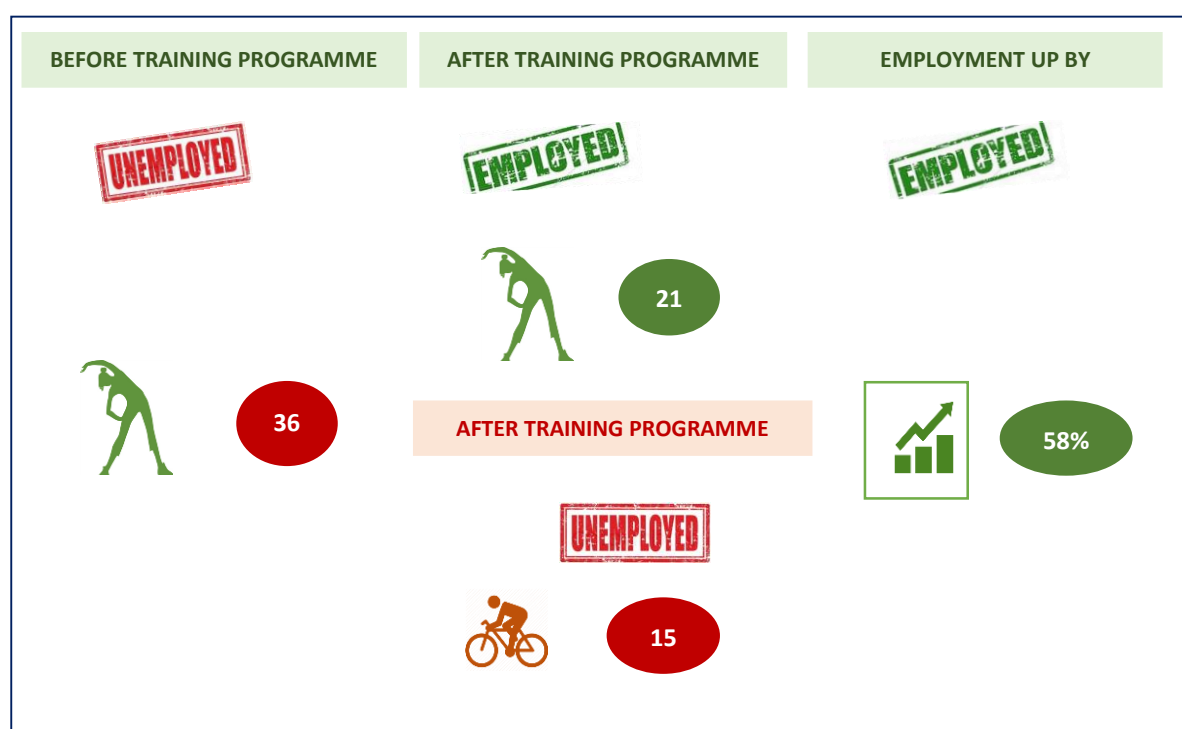
In terms of the duration it took to find employment, the 20 employed graduates (12 females and 8 males) indicated that they found jobs within the following time-span:

Exhibit 12: National Certificate in Fitness (level 5), Duration to find a Job



**FET Certificate in Sport Administration (Level 4):** The effect of the sports administration qualification on graduates, who were unemployed at the time they started their studies, was as follows:

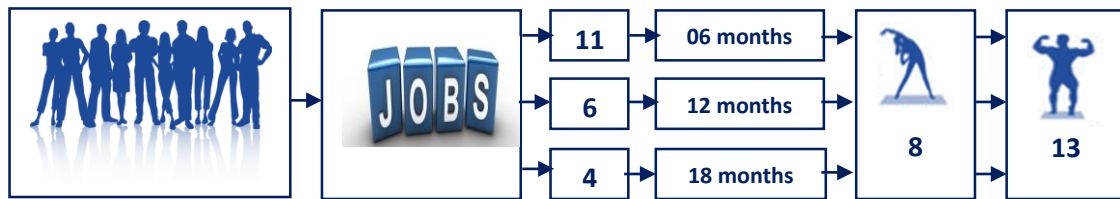
**Exhibit 13: FET Certificate in Sport Administration, Employment and Unemployment**



- Out of the 36 unemployed, 21 found employment after acquiring the qualification representing an labour absorption rate of 58%.
- However, 15 graduates (42%) remained unemployed.

In terms of the duration it took to find employment, the 21 employed graduates (8 females and 13 males) indicated that they found jobs in the following time-span:

**Exhibit 14: FET Certificate in Sport Administration, Duration to find a Job**



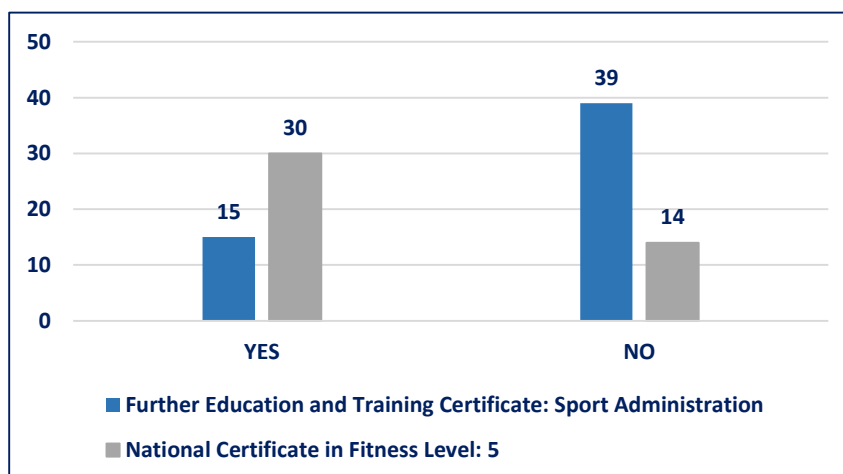
### 5.3 Qualification Mismatches

Mismatches refer to the extent to which workers are employed in industries for which they have been trained or qualified. Mismatches occur when workers' qualifications are not well-matched with their current jobs. For example, if a worker has achieved a qualification in fitness, a match would occur if the worker is employed by a gymnasium as a fitness instructor. A mismatch would result if that same worker is employed in a bakery as a shop assistant.

With respect to graduate destinations, YES indicates a skills match and NO a skills mismatch. We are working with the following numbers:

- A total of 54 employed graduates for the Sports Administration qualification (33 graduates that were already employed at the start of the programme plus 21 graduates that found jobs after the programme).
- A total of 44 employed graduates for the Fitness qualification (24 graduates that were already employed at the start of the programme plus 20 graduates that found jobs after the programme was completed).
- In total we are examining skills matches/mismatches for 98 employed graduates over the 2 programmes.

Exhibit 15: Qualification Mismatches



- A certain degree of skills mismatch is inevitable and normal in the labour market. What the normal rate of a skills mismatch is, cannot be answered with certainty, but high rates are likely to suggest a need for active policies that foster adjustments.
- Most of the graduates of the Further Education and Training Certificate: Sports Administration (54) did not get employment in the sports sector. Only 15 were employed in the sports sector. This is a skills match rate of 28%.
- Thirty (30) graduates who obtained the National Certificate in Fitness qualification obtained employment in an industry related to their qualification, whilst 14 graduates were employed in other fields. This is a skills match rate of 68%.
- With respect to skills mismatches (graduates not finding jobs for which they have been specifically trained), it is necessary to raise the following questions:
  - Why are graduates not finding jobs?
  - What can be done to improve college-to-work transitions?
  - Should we review who is enrolled on these programmes?
  - Is there a need to improve the programme?

#### 5.4 Graduate Destinations

We were interested in finding out in which industries graduates are currently employed. We also want to find out the job titles for:

- Those graduates that were employed at the start of the training.
- Those graduates that were unemployed at the start of the training, but found employment after the training.

**National Certificate in Fitness (Level 5):** The job titles and industries of the 44 employed graduates in National Certificate in Fitness (Level 5) are the following:

Exhibit 16: Graduate Destinations in Fitness



**FET Certificate in Sport Administration (Level 4):** The job titles and industries of the 54 Further Education and Training Certificate in Sport Administration are the following:

**Exhibit 17: Graduate Destinations in Sports Administration**



- Most graduates, 50% are in hospitality and retail has 22%. Only 28% are matched to the sport industry.

## 6. IMPACT OF THE QUALIFICATION ON GRADUATES

All respondents (Fitness 71 and Sports Administration 69) were requested to provide feedback on the impact of the qualifications on their work and personal lives in terms of the following:

- Salary – has the qualification improved your salary?
- Promotion - has the qualification led to a promotion?
- Better jobs - has the qualification led to a better job?
- Further studies – have further studies been done?
- Personal development - has the qualification improved your personal development?

**National Certificate in Fitness (Level 5):** The responses indicate the following:

**Exhibit 18: Impact of Fitness Qualification**

CATEGORIES	Certificate in Fitness	
	Yes	No
Salary – has the qualification improved your salary?	54%	46%
Promotion - has the qualification led to a promotion?	18%	82%
Better jobs - has the qualification led to a better job?	7%	93%
Further studies – have further studies been done?	14%	86%
Personal development - has the qualification improved your personal development?	64%	36%

- Whilst it is expected that the achievement of the qualification would lead to a salary increase, this occurred in just 54% of graduates.
- Opportunities for promotion, better jobs and further studies appeared low, whilst the programme was viewed as beneficial in 64% of the cases.
- Currently, the labour market is performing poorly, which could possibly be the reason for limited job opportunities for graduates.

**FET Certificate in Sport Administration (Level 4):** The responses indicate the following:

**Exhibit 19: Impact of Sports Administration Qualification**

CATEGORIES	Certificate in Fitness	
	Yes	No
Salary – has the qualification improved your salary?	62%	28%
Promotion - has the qualification led to a promotion?	16%	84%
Better jobs - has the qualification led to a better job?	13%	87%
Further studies – have further studies been done?	6%	94%
Personal development - has the qualification improved your personal development?	72%	28%

- Whilst it is expected that the achievement of the qualification would lead to a salary increase, this occurred in just 62% of graduates.
- Opportunities for promotion, better jobs and further studies appeared low, whilst the programme was viewed as beneficial in 72% of the cases.
- Currently, the labour market is performing poorly, which could possibly be the reason for limited job opportunities for graduates.



## 7. FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING CERTIFICATE: SPORT ADMINISTRATION

The main characteristics of the qualification are given below:

### FET Certificate in Sports Administration

<b>Minimum Credits</b>	172	<b>NQF Level</b>	04
<b>Purpose</b>			
In the context of the sport industry, this qualification will enable a learner to acquire the knowledge skills and values that will enable them to administer, organise and facilitate creative and innovative sports programmes and physical activities within communities. A qualifying learner will be able to plan and implement safe sport experiences, and as such, contribute to the community and the sport industry itself.			
<b>Exit Level Outcomes</b>			
In particular, they will be able to:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Perform sport administration functions.</li> <li>▪ Plan and organise sport activities for an identified target group.</li> <li>▪ Promote the benefits of sport and fitness participation.</li> <li>▪ Apply exercise and fitness principles related to sport activities.</li> <li>▪ Demonstrate entrepreneurial skills in the SMME business environment.</li> </ul>			
<b>Rationale</b>			
<p>South Africa has a well-developed and extensive sporting history as well as a multitude of amateur, community, professional and national sporting codes and bodies, which are spread nationally, with many international linkages. The sporting community consists of a number of role-players, from sporting individuals and teams, through coaches, trainers, agents, motivators and medical specialists, to volunteers, administrators, and support personnel. In addition, there are also many related industries such as caterers, organisers, hospitality, sports entrepreneurs as well as the media related to the sporting environment, where mass participation in a variety of sport and physical activities from grassroots level, is able to create a learning path to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sports Club administrator.</li> </ul>			

- Community sports leader.
- Corporate sports officer.
- Sports facility administrator.

*Source: SAQA*

## **7.1 Programme Content**

Most graduates (72%) indicated that they benefited from the programme. They felt learning about managing a small business and entrepreneurship enabled them to acquire greater confidence and know-how on starting their own businesses. They also gained a better understanding of the sports industry and where they can apply for jobs. Graduates felt that learning components such as administration and events co-ordination will help them in seeking employment in other industries, besides sports.

There was a general consensus that the programme contributed very positively to trainee's personal development, and in some cases, made them more confident for the future. There were a few graduates who were unable to find jobs, and hence viewed the programme negatively.

A few graduates mentioned that they needed to study sports administration at least to an NQF Level 5 and possibly 6, since a Level 4 qualification is insufficient to find jobs. They felt that they were effectively competing against job applicants with higher education qualifications.

## **7.2 Experiential Learning**

A number of graduates indicated that experiential learning should be systematically organised in the workplace. Although they were working towards different learning components, they were not subjected to learning experiences across all components.

Others complained that there was no formally organised learning on-the-job training. Many felt that there was a need for better supervision of trainees in the workplace. One graduate suggested that trainees should be rotated in the work environment and sent to other firms for experiential training, if the expertise did not exist in their firm.

Graduates also felt there was a need for coaching and mentoring during the work placements.

## **7.3 Assessment**

Some graduates felt that there was over-testing in the programme. They also felt that the assessment tended to be too formal. Most graduates felt that the standard of assessment was high – it compelled them to work hard to prepare for assessments. They felt that most of the assessments should involve practical work tasks.

#### **7.4 Quality of Instructors**

Most graduates felt that instructors knew their work, but tended to be too theoretical. There was a need for more instructors with relevant practical experience in the field of sports administration.

#### **7.5 Other comments**

Although 21 (58%) unemployed trainees who were unemployed at the start of the training found jobs, a relatively high number, 15 (42%), remained unemployed after the training.

A more worrying concern was that 12 graduates (22%) found jobs in the retail industry and a whopping (27) 50% found jobs in hospitality. Out of the 27 employed graduates in hospitality, 24 were employed as cleaners. This qualification mismatch should be a concern for CATHSSETA.

The key issue is: why are graduates with a sports administration qualification working as cleaners in the hospitality industry and, in some cases, as clerks in the retail industry?

Some graduates responded by saying that they were encouraged to go on the programme, but found it practically impossible to secure work. There were many instances where graduates had sent out hundreds of CV to potential employers without any success.

Some of the reasons cited for not finding employment after graduation included: lack of work experience; lack of jobs in sports administration; poor state of the labour market; lack of networks; certificates not given to graduates; and rising wage costs.

A number of graduates expressed concern that there were no job opportunities in the sports administration in the rural areas. Others indicated that there were limited opportunities to find jobs in sports administration. Another common reason given was that firms want individuals with degrees, not certificates.

Graduates were asked to what extent they were assisted with finding employment by training providers. Only 34% of unemployed graduates stated they had received assistance and the remaining graduate respondents asserted that they had not received any kind of assistance.

From those graduates who did receive assistance in finding a job, the assistance took the form of giving reference letters and referrals to clients of the training providers. It is noted, however, that such help was often given by instructors rather than through any systematic student support system.

## **7.6 Suggestions for Improvement**

The following suggestions for improvement were made by graduates:

- “Extend the programme to 2 years.”
- “Increase the content of the programme.”
- “Secure employment for potential work before the programme ends.”
- “Conduct tracer studies to determine the impact of the programme. This would help to address issues that may arise from the study.”
- Help unemployed graduates to find a job.”
- “Give my certificate timeously for employment purposes.”
- “Align programmes with university qualifications so we can benefit when we do tertiary studies.”
- “The programme should focus more on sports administration than fitness.”

## 8. NATIONAL CERTIFICATE IN FITNESS (NQF LEVEL 5)

The main characteristics of the qualification are as follows:

### National Certificate in Fitness

<b>Minimum Credits</b>	137	<b>NQF Level</b>	5
<b>Purpose</b>			
A qualifying learner who has achieved this qualification will be able to:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Design and implement a physical activity programme for apparently healthy individuals, plus screen, assess and monitor health related fitness programmes, without direct supervision.</li> <li>▪ Promote and provide safe and effective physical activity participation to meet participant/s fitness requirements. In addition, this qualifying learner will have the knowledge for appropriate referral to other health care providers.</li> <li>▪ Further their learning, practice and career within the fitness and/or associated industries and through their own personal growth.</li> </ul>			
<b>Exit Level Outcomes</b>			
In particular, they will be able to:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Demonstrate knowledge of the fitness environment and the context in which physical activity takes place.</li> <li>▪ Conduct and interpret pre-participation screening for physical activity readiness.</li> <li>▪ Assess, evaluate and monitor health related fitness components.</li> <li>▪ Feedback and refer as it relates to physical activity.</li> <li>▪ Design, demonstrate and lead exercise programmes.</li> <li>▪ Implement, monitor and modify exercise programmes.</li> <li>▪ Motivate and support fitness participants in making activity related and wellness decisions.</li> <li>▪ Demonstrate entrepreneurial, administration and business skills.</li> <li>▪ Project and conduct oneself in a professional manner.</li> </ul>			
<b>Rationale</b>			
To date, there is no legislative framework to regulate the fitness industry in South Africa, as a result it has poised difficulties to maintain and monitor standards of qualification being			

offered by education providers. The SAQA Act, 1995 through the National Qualification Framework, has given this industry an opportunity to develop acceptable fitness industry education and training standards.

This fitness certificate aims to do the following:

- Ensure that the fitness practices applied adhere to sound principles drawn from exercise science and safety principles.
- Develop appropriate fitness skills and knowledge base required by broader fitness, sport and recreation industry.
- Enhance the standards of fitness practitioners, thus giving credibility and respect to the whole industry.
- Align fitness education and training to the international fitness community.

*Source: SAQA*

## **8.1 Programme Content**

Most graduates (64%) indicated that they benefited from the programme. For example, 54% of employed graduates indicated that they received a salary increase on completion of the programme.

Many felt that the programme was very comprehensive and covered a wide range of areas that would enable a graduate to work as a fitness instructor or fitness manager. Some felt that the entrepreneurship component of the programme enabled them to market fitness services and products, especially gym membership and health food products.

The learning components on nutrition, health and safety, physiology and exercise routine, gave them much needed theory and application skills to instruct gym members.

Some graduates felt that the programme should be extended to 18 months, with the final 6 months devoted to experiential learning.

## **8.2 Experiential Learning**

A number of graduates indicated that experiential learning should be systematically organised in gyms and other workplaces. Although they were working towards different learning components, they were not subjected to learning experiences across all components. Others complained that there was no formally organised on-the-job training. Many felt that there was a need for better supervision of trainees in the gym and workplace.

## **8.3 Assessment**

Most graduates were of the view that the programme was addressed comprehensively. There was a good blend of theory and practical. Most graduates felt that the standard of assessment was high – it compelled them to work hard to prepare for assessments.

#### **8.4 Quality of Instructors**

Most graduates felt that instructors knew their work and had a good knowledge of theory and practice. Most instructors have good work experience in the fitness industry.

#### **8.5 Other Comments**

Although 20 unemployed graduates (43%) found jobs, a relatively high number 27 (57%) remained unemployed after the training.

A more worrying concern was that 11 graduates (25%) found jobs in the retail industry and (3) 7% found jobs in hospitality. The 30 employed graduates (68%) who are working in the fitness industry is a much higher proportion than sports administration. It shows that the qualification has some traction in terms of qualification matches.

A number of graduates expressed concern that there were no job opportunities in fitness in the rural areas since there were no gyms. Other reasons included: lack of work experience; lack of jobs in fitness industry; more training needed; they had not received their certificates; firms offer low wages; and did not apply for employment. Another common reason given was that firms want individuals with degree programmes, not certificates.

Graduate respondents were asked to what extent they were assisted with finding employment by training providers. Only 70% of unemployed graduates stated they had received assistance and the remaining graduate respondents asserted that they had not received any kind of assistance.

From those graduates who did receive assistance in finding a job, the assistance took the form of giving reference letters and referred to a client of the training providers. It is noted, however, that such help was often given by instructors rather than through any systematic student advisory system.

#### **8.6 Suggestions for Improvement**

The following suggestions for improvement were made by graduates:

- “Extend the programme to 18 months.”
- “More learning needed in nutrition.”

- “Get the fitness industry in rural areas”.
- “We need jobs in the fitness industry. The SETA should get us involved in community sports.”
- “We should be given jobs in schools as fitness instructors.”
- “I would recommend it to others because I enjoyed it.”
- “I can make people around our community aware of fitness and its importance.”
- “It’s a waste of money (R25 000 per learner) because there was no job at the end of the qualification.”
- “The selection process was not good at all.”
- “I have learnt to write business plans and created an NGO but funding is extremely difficult to come by.”
- “I still want more of this qualification.”
- “After the qualification, CATHSSETA should organise internships for graduates.”

### **8.7 Experiences of Researchers**

The database was outdated which made it difficult to access the contact details of sports administration and fitness graduates. This is a problem for training providers if they are required to undertake their own tracer studies in later years.



## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The recommendations highlighted below are based on the findings of the study which were obtained from graduate feedback.

### **9.1 Database Management**

- CATHSSETA and training providers should update graduates' contact details on their database, so that they can be tracked.

### **9.2 Career Counselling**

- More attention should be given by training providers to inform trainees about the nature of the learning programme, job prospects currently and in the future, remuneration, career pathways, and further learning opportunities.
- There should be proper screening of potential trainees before enrolment on a programme.
- A pre-vocational school guidance training programme should be developed and offered to school counsellors to inform them about the sports, recreation and fitness industry. It would be an added advantage to empower CATHSSETA training providers and TVET instructors with such a training programme.
- More services should be provided by CATHSSETA by way of trainee counselling and support.

### **9.3 Employer and Training Provider Perception Surveys**

- Employer and training provider perception surveys should be administered for these programmes.
- A staff satisfaction survey should be administered to constituent employers on the services provided by CATHSSETA.

## **9.4 Employment of Graduates**

- CATHSSETA should engage with a range of SRF bodies with a view to secure employment for graduates.
- CATHSSETA should engage with development organisations to assist emerging entrepreneurs in SRF.
- Firms and training providers should be required to assist graduates secure employment as part of the service level agreement.
- Graduates should be provided with support in the form of information to secure employment. This should include development of CVs, attire, conduct and preparing for interviews.
- CATHSSETA should establish a labour market observatory that will collect and analyse information on job prospects for trainees for specific qualifications.
- Programmes with prospects for employment should be offered to trainees in rural areas.
- CATHSSETA should devise a strategy to assist graduates with employment and self-employment opportunities in rural areas.
- Regional labour centre offices should be engaged to providing support services to graduates by assisting with work placements and internships.
- Introduce a reward scheme for training providers that link their graduates to employment.

## **9.5 Curriculum Review**

- There should be regular curriculum reviews of the qualifications by employers to ensure its relevance to the needs of firms in the sector.

## **9.6 Instructor Development**

- To determine the nature and extent of instructor competencies empirically, it is necessary to conduct a skills audit of instructors for CATHSSETA accredited training providers. This audit will reveal the following about the body of instructors:
  - their current qualifications;
  - their technical work experience;
  - the currency of their qualifications and work experience;

- knowledge and skills gaps;
  - future individual training needs; and
  - overall assessment of the qualifications, work experience and skills of instructors.
- The Skills Audit will culminate in the development of a Capacity-Building Plan and strategies for upgrading the knowledge, qualifications and skills of instructors.

## **9.7 Experiential Learning**

- Experiential learning should be formalised and systematised as part of the curriculum and assessment for all qualifications in the sub-sector.
- A sample of visits should be undertaken by the ETQA personnel of CATHSSETA to employees to ensure that experiential learning is taking place.
- Training providers and employers should be responsible for finding trainees work place training opportunities.

## **9.8 Entrepreneurship**

The entrepreneurship education component should be strengthened by the following:

- researching the state of entrepreneurship in the sports, recreation and fitness industry to better understand what should be done to increase self-employment manner.
- Strengthen entrepreneurship in the curriculum.

## APPENDIX A: INSTRUMENT FOR TELEPHONE SURVEY



## TELEPHONE INTERVIEW INSTRUMENT FOR TRACER STUDY

Interviewer Name				Date				
Identify CATHSSETA sub-sector based on graduate qualification <i>(insert X)</i>								
Gaming & Lotteries		Arts, Crafts and Heritage			Sports, Recreation & Fitness			
1.	Interviewee Name	Gender		Race <i>(insert X)</i>				Age
		M	F	A	W	C	I	O
2.	Where you employed at the time you were studying for your CATHSSETA qualification?							
	Yes (employed) <i>(insert X)</i>		No (Unemployed) <i>(insert X)</i>					
<b>Ask question 3 below, only if the person indicated Unemployed in question 2.</b>								
3.	How long did it take you to find your first job after completing your CATHSSETA qualification?							
	Duration							
<b>Ask these questions to all interviewees:</b>								
4.	Are you currently employed in the industry related to your CATHSSETA qualification? <i>(insert X)</i>						Yes	No
5.	In what industry are you currently employed?							
	Name of Industry							

6.	What jobs have you found since completing your CATHSSETA qualification in terms of: Job title, industry and years of service?				
	<b>Job Title</b>		<b>Industry</b>		<b>Years</b>
	<b>Job Title</b>		<b>Industry</b>		<b>Years</b>
	<b>Job Title</b>		<b>Industry</b>		<b>Years</b>
	<b>Job Title</b>		<b>Industry</b>		<b>Years</b>
	<b>Job Title</b>		<b>Industry</b>		<b>Years</b>
	<b>Job Title</b>		<b>Industry</b>		<b>Years</b>
7.	What difference do you think that the CATHSSETA qualification has made to your career and life in terms of: salary, promotion, better job opportunities, further studies, your personal development, etc.				
8.	What are your views on the CATHSSETA qualification? How can it be improved?				
9.	Please make any other comments regarding your CATHSSETA learning experiences?				

**Thank you!**