

Reflections on **Governance**

(System of exercising authority and control)

Implementing the NQF Act

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1 Underlying Assumptions

2 NQF Structures

3 Organisational change

4

Fault-lines

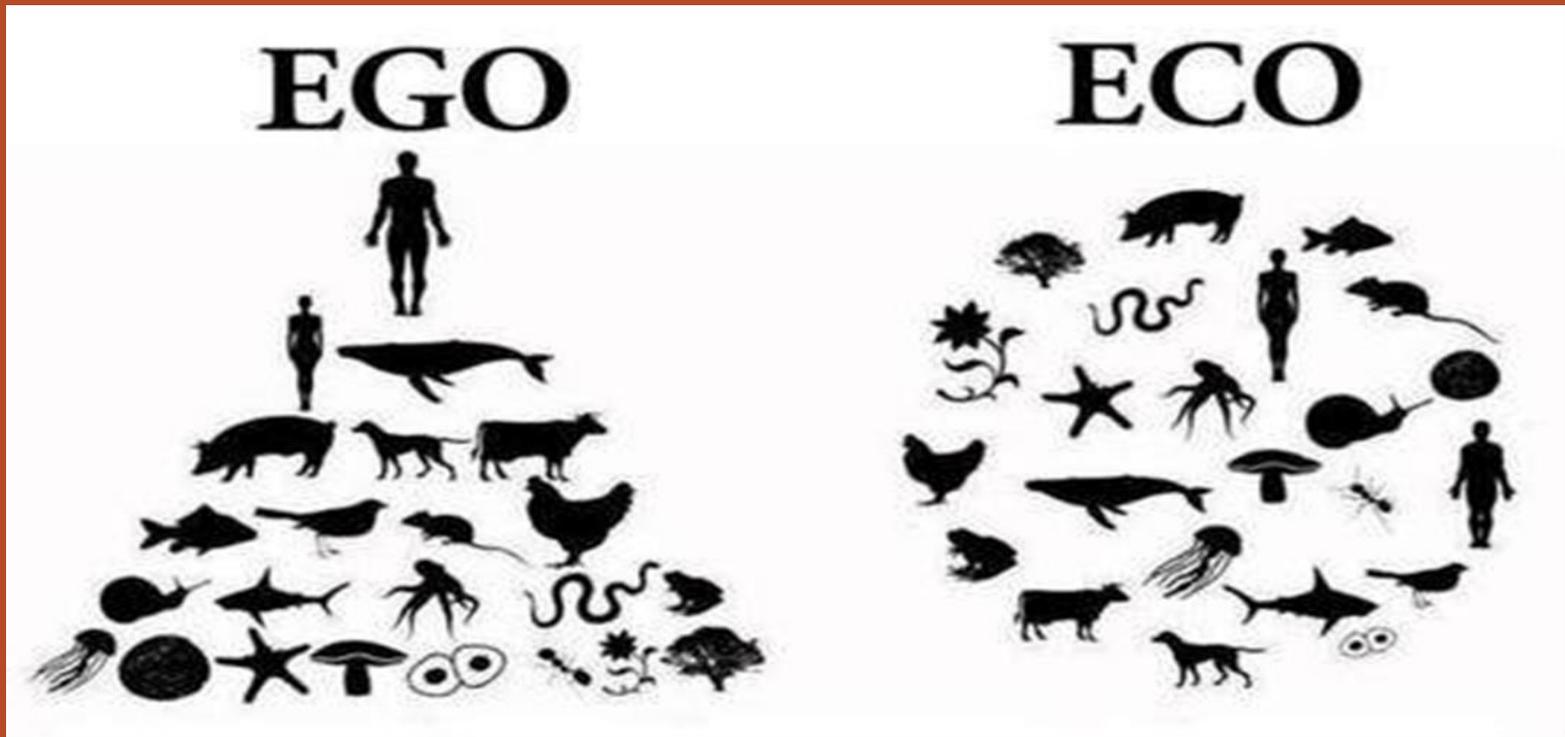
5 Recommendations

6 Taking ideas forward



Ecology of Learning throughout Life

“The planet will not survive unless we become a learning planet” (Confintea 2010)





NQF Act and White Paper on Post-School Education and Training

- NQF principles – single integrated, quality system, with access, portability, articulation, progress, mobility and redress for lifelong learners
- PSET White Paper: Principles of “learner centredness, lifelong learning, flexibility of learning provision, the removal of barriers to access learning, the recognition of credit of prior learning experience, the provision of learning support, the construction of learning programmes so learners can succeed and the maintenance of rigorous quality assurance over the design of learning materials and support systems”. (MHET 2013: 48).



1 MHET

2 DHET

6 Umalusi
(GFETQSF)

5 QCTO (OQSF)

3

SAQA
(NQF)

4

CHE
(HEQSF)



1 Umalusi

2 DBE / DHET

6 SAQA

3 TVET
Colleges

5 Community
Colleges

4 Schools
Public/Private



Systems change: common knowledge, relational expertise and relational agency

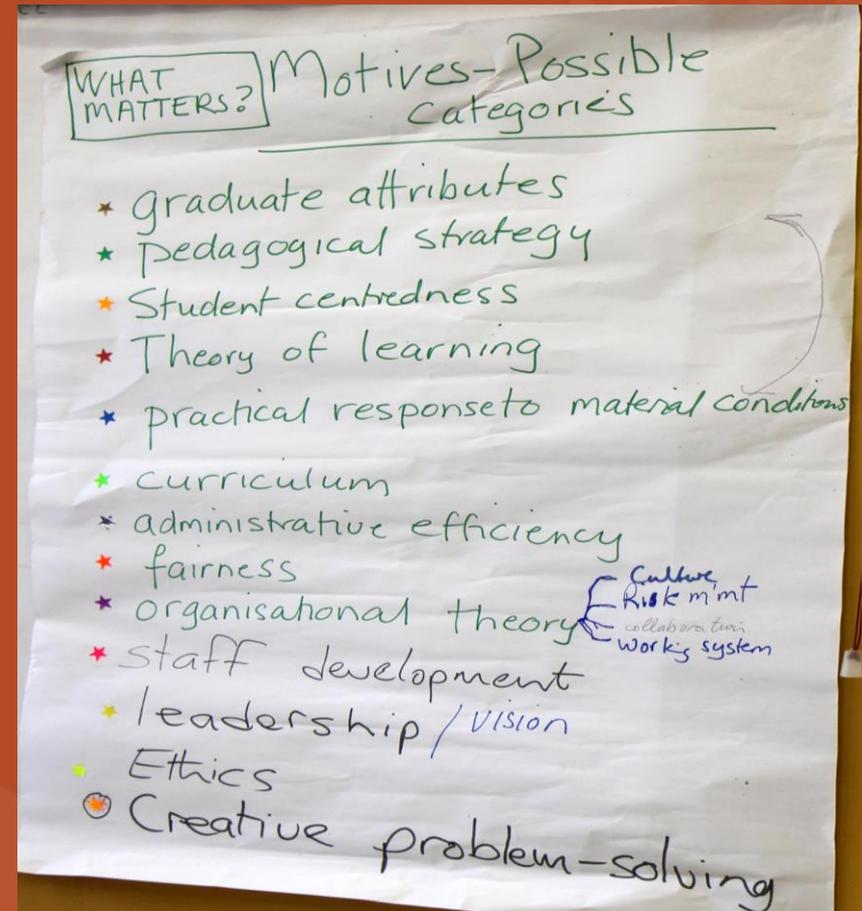
(Anne Edwards, Oxford University)

Edwards' (2011) notion of *common knowledge* is very useful; it speaks to the fact that *to bring about institutional/system change, its not only the surface behaviours that need to change. We need to recognise the 'historically accumulated motives' that have given shape to practices.* Accessing and discussing these often tacitly held motives takes deep and sustained dialogue....we need to take the standpoint of others to understand how and why they are using resources in ways which matter to them.



Building common knowledge

Relational expertise, relational agency and resourceful leadership



Resourceful leadership (Anne Edwards)

Leadership is required to listen, tap into and harvest innovations to help their movement upstream; champions of innovations are needed to realise an integrated education and training system at every level and in every sector and institution. They need affirmation and support to percolate common understandings of integration up, down and around the system. Collaborative relationships are critically important for implementation of the NQF.



Recommendations

NQF is widely recognised as a critical contributor to attainment of the long-term objectives of the South African E&T system. The successes need to be widely acknowledged, celebrated and used as a foundation for further refinement to attain greater efficiency and effectiveness of an integrated system.

Recommendations of the evaluation are welcomed. The devil will be in be in the detail. Significant fault-lines that will need urgent attention from a governance perspective include:



Fault-lines identified

1. Roles and responsibilities particularly of the DHET and the DBE. What are roles and responsibilities of DHET and its branches in implementing the NQF Act? DBE?
2. Status and responsibilities of NQF Directorate in DHET – this needs review - it must not duplicate what SAQA and QCs do, but needs to ensure that the DHET and DBE(?) work in sync with NQF entities to achieve goals of NQF Act and that resources are forthcoming for system wide work?



Fault-lines identified

3. The omission of DBE in the Act needs to be rectified, but what implications will this have for the system as a whole? Will new configurations of the E&T system need to be contemplated for attainment of an 'integrated system'? This relates to 'ownership' of the GFETQSF and avoidance of duplication or parallel developments.
4. System of collaboration to manage relationships to support implementation of Act – CEO's Forum, NQF Forum (has not met since 2012); Inter-Dept NQF SC – their importance needs emphasis and they need strengthening to bring key players into regular contact to deliberate and make decisions.



Fault-lines identified

5. SAQA's apex role needs clearer definition and strengthening to provide leadership as mandated e.g. legislative amendments to Act for coordinating and collating submissions to Minister. QCs should report directly to DG / delegated rep. and DG is responsible for approving strategic plans, budgets, performance targets of SAQA and QCs.

6. QCTO funding model needs to be reviewed based on costed implementation plan which looks at different options/models. Policy uncertainty on future of QCTO vis a vis SETAs needs resolution. Variants of any centralised model of QCTO needs to include more balanced distribution of powers and functions between QCTO and SETAs and professional bodies over short to medium term.



Fault-lines identified

7. Serious under-funding of NQF entities; RPL unfunded mandate – unsustainable. The NQF on a knife edge if this underfunding persists.

8. Working out how sectors / institutions relate across QCs more efficiently – long delays and great complexity.

9. Focus on the main beneficiaries - no mention in the report of the navigational tools required to help the beneficiaries of the system find their way – guidance and counseling for lifelong learners; also need mechanisms for appeals e.g. an ombud as mooted by SAQA. Should the Act be amended to have stronger focus on the vision for NQF?



NQF is complex system

Integrated approaches require profound shifts in the way that the entire E&T system views, engages and develops knowledge - this will necessarily be a contested space where different but interdependent sub-systems work together keeping the vision at the forefront - further recommendations are:

- (1) *a re-commitment to the NQF as essential mechanism towards an integrated, transformed, quality system*
- (2) *recognition of complexities of the project, both theoretically and practically – needs to be research-led and deliberative*
- (3) *Communication, collaboration, coordination require relational expertise and agency across the systems – education and training for all those involved – to build NQF common knowledge*
- (4) *Resourceful leadership needed at all levels of the system with strong, mandated organisational champions – build new generations of NQF leadership*
- (5) *Achieving the goals of the NQF Act requires both PASSION and PATIENCE over the long term.*



Congratulations to DHET, SAQA and QCs for achievements to date. Thanks to the DPME, DHET, Evaluation Team for workable recommendations to continue to improve efficiencies and effectiveness of the NQF. We need to take time to celebrate what has been achieved!



