

FULFILLING THE MANDATE OF THE CHE

1 PROGRESS TOWARDS THE MANDATE

As has been noted, the responsibilities allocated to the CHE are extensive and varied. Table 2.1, below, indicates the CHE's responsibilities and its progress and activities over the past six years, and especially during the past year, towards their fulfilment.

Table 2.1: Progress towards fulfilling the mandate of the CHE

RESPONSIBILITY	PERFORMANCE TO DATE
<p>1. Advising the Minister on all HE issues on which the CHE's advice is sought</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice given on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HE Amendments Bills of 1999, 2000, 2001 and 2002 - 1999 NSFAS Bill - Shape and Size of HE (2000) - 2002 Regulations for the registration of private providers of HE - New Academic Policy for HE (2001) - Proposed new funding framework (2001) - Criteria and process for determining proposed programme mix and niches of institutions (2002) - Cooperative Governance (2002) - Ministry proposals on institutional restructuring (2002) - Nomenclature of comprehensive institutions (2002) - Conditions and criteria for the use of the designations, such as 'university', 'technikon' and the like, and for offering/awarding degrees and postgraduate qualifications (2003) - Proposed new funding framework (2003) <p>Performance during 2004-2005</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice given on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aspects of Distance Higher Education in South Africa • Comments on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Ministry's Draft Code of Conduct for Cross Border/Trans-national Delivery of Higher Education Programmes <p>Performance during 2005-2006</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CHE provided advice to the Minister on the following policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student Enrolment Plan - Further Education and Training Certificate - Higher Education Qualifications Framework.
<p>2. Advising the Minister on its own initiative on HE issues that the CHE regards as important</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice given on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Private HE (2000) - Weighting of student subsidy and earmarking funds for black students for academic development - NQF Study Team report (2002) - Institutional redress policy, strategy and funding (2003) - NQF Consultative Document (2003) - New Academic Policy process (2003) - Undertaking of investigation and preparation of draft advice on GATS and its Implications for Higher Education

3. Designing and implementing a system for quality assurance in HE and establishing the HEQC

Performance during 2004-2005/2005-2006

- Investigation for the purpose of providing policy advice on
 - GATS and its Implications for Higher Education
 - Building the Responsiveness of Higher Education Project to enable the CHE to advise the Minister
 - Government Regulation, Institutional Autonomy and Academic Freedom
- The CHE also commissioned a report on
 - The Impact of Changing Funding Sources on Higher Education Institutions, which was shared with the Ministry and the DoE.

• Establishment of HEQC

- Established an Interim HEQC in June 2000
- Extensive and ongoing consultations with all key stakeholders
- Applied to SAQA and received accreditation as an ETQA in 2001
- Released for public comment draft *Founding Document* for HEQC
- Produced *Founding Document* for HEQC
- Called for nominations and constituted a HEQC in 2001
- Publicly launched HEQC in May 2001

• Research and development

- Extensive research on various aspects of quality assurance as part of developing programme accreditation and institutional audit policies and systems
- Held national conference on quality assurance with international participants in May 2001
- Conducted evaluation of QPU and SERTEC and produced publication
- Conducted research on QA systems of professional councils and SETAs and produced publication
- Commissioned report on quality assurance terminology
- Produced *SERTEC Transition Plan, 2001–2002*
- Produced directory of ETQAs and Professional Bodies (August 2003)
- Commissioned research on short courses
- Commissioned research on recognition of prior learning
- Commissioned research and held workshop on vocational education
- Commissioned research on NQF Consultative Document proposals

Performance during 2004-2005

- Production of the Improving Teaching and Learning Resource Pack
- Production of the draft Quality Promotion and Capacity Building Development framework document for stakeholder comment
- Research on short courses
- Research on recognition of prior learning
- Research on vocational education

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4. Advising the Minister on the appropriate shape and size of the HE system, including its desired institutional configuration

- Produced Memorandum and met with the Minister (December 1999)
- Established Task Team and produced Shape and Size report (July 2000)
- Extensive engagements with HEIs and stakeholders concerning the Shape and Size report
- Obtained and analysed stakeholder submissions on Shape and Size report in preparation for *National Plan*
- Discussions with Minister and DoE concerning *National Plan*
- Established standing Committee on Shape and Size
- Commented on National Working Group report on restructuring
- Advised on criteria and process for determining proposed programme mix and niches of institutions
- Advised on the Ministry's final restructuring proposals
- Advice to Minister on conditions and criteria for the use of the designations, such as 'university', 'technikon' and the like, and for offering/awarding degrees and postgraduate qualifications (2003)

Performance during 2004-2005

- Initial engagements with the Ministry's proposed student enrolment planning in HE and new admission requirements to HE draft documents

Performance during 2005-2006

- The CHE provided advice to the Minister on the Student Enrolment Plan

5. Advising the Minister on the new funding arrangements for HE

- Established CHE Financing and Funding Task Team
- Advised Minister on weighting of student subsidy and earmarking funds for black students for academic development
- Produced draft document on proposed funding framework (2001)
- Obtained and analysed stakeholder submissions
- Advised on proposed new funding framework (2001)
- Public release of CHE advice to the Minister (2002)
- Established Task Team on Institutional Redress policy, strategy and funding
- Established Standing Committee on Financing and Funding
- Advised on institutional redress policy, strategy and funding (2003)
- Advised on proposed new funding framework (2003)

Performance during 2004-2005

- Commissioning of investigation into financing of HEIs for the purposes of providing possible advice to the Minister

Performance during 2005-2006

- CHE published a report: *The Impact of Changing Funding Sources on Higher Education Institutions in South Africa* (March 2006)

6. Advising the Minister on language policy in HE

- Established CHE Language Policy Task Team
- Task Team report on language policy framework for HE
- Discussed and finalized report of Language Policy Task Team
- Advice and report to Minister on language policy
- Preliminary interaction with Minister regarding advice
- Minister's language policy on higher education draws substantially on CHE advice
- Public release of CHE advice to the Minister (2003)

Performance during 2005-2006

- No further policy work has been undertaken as the Ministry has formulated a policy on language in higher education

7. Developing a means for monitoring and evaluating whether, how, and the extent to which the vision, policy goals and objectives for HE defined in the *White Paper on HE* are being realized, and what their consequences are

- Project and funding proposal produced and submitted to donor – R 2.4 million funding received from Ford Foundation towards building a monitoring and evaluation system
- State of HE Reports of 1998/1999 and 2000/2001 provided as detailed an analysis as feasible on progress towards policy goals
- Establishment of Reference Group to guide development of a conceptual framework and system for Monitoring and Evaluation
- Production of numerous drafts of framework document on Monitoring and Evaluation
- Finalization of a Discussion Document: *Towards A Framework for the Monitoring and Evaluation of South African Higher Education*
- Preparations for release for public comment of Discussion Document

Performance during 2004-2005

- Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of projects
- Commissioning of research for the Triennial Review of Higher Education publication
- Publication of a report on the *State of Provision of the MBA in South Africa*
- Publication of a report, *South African Higher Education in the First Decade of Democracy*

Performance during 2005-2006

- Publication of HE Monitor on *South African Higher Education Responses to Students with Disabilities*
- Publication of HE Monitor on *The impact of changing funding sources of Higher Education Institutions in South Africa*
- Ongoing monitoring and evaluation projects
 - The critical review for the chapters of the Triennial Review was completed
 - Production of Institutional Profiles for University of Cape Town, Stellenbosch University, Rhodes University and Vaal University of Technology
 - Research project on the state of postgraduate education in South Africa
 - Research project on the impact of institutional culture on student throughput – three case studies

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8. Promoting the access of students to HE

- The Shape and Size report
- Provided justification for increasing the participation rate from about 15% to 20%
- Called for increased and widened access – especially for historically disadvantaged
- Called for increased support for the NSFAS and increasing size of grants
- Engagements around RPL and monitoring of developments in this area
- Commissioned research on RPL and short courses
- CHE decision to commission work on the barriers to equity of access, opportunity and outcomes in HE

Performance during 2004-2005

- Ongoing research on RPL and short courses
- Continued work on the barriers to equity of access, opportunity and outcomes in HE
- Project on participation of students in quality assurance and promotion

Performance during 2005-2006

- Research project on the influence that institutional cultures have on access and success of students at three higher education institutions
- In its advice to the Ministry on the Student Enrolment Plan, the CHE emphasized the matter of increased enrolments in higher education and the need to mobilize more finances.

9. Providing advice to the Minister on the proposed new Education Management Information System for HE

- Recommendations made to DoE following presentation on HEMIS in 1999
- Ongoing communication with DoE and SAQA regarding HEMIS and NLRD in relation to CHE databases for monitoring and quality assurance

Performance during 2004-2005

- Ongoing collaboration with DoE and SAQA regarding HEMIS and NLRD in relation to CHE databases for monitoring and quality assurance

Performance during 2005-2006

- Worked with the HEMIS directorate of the Higher Education Branch of the DoE in relation to different aspects of data collection for the HE system
- Advice is no longer necessary as the HEMIS system has been operational since 2000

10. Formulating advice for the Minister on a new academic policy for HE, including a diploma/degree structure which would advance the policy objectives of the *White Paper*

- Academic Policy Task Team with representatives from key constituencies established to undertake work for DoE
- Work suspended for decisions related to Shape and Size; reactivation of work during late 2000
- Work of CHE convened Joint Implementation Committee and IJC fed into work of the Academic Policy Task Team
- Report on *New Academic Policy* (NAP) approved as discussion document by CHE (2001)
- Report handed over to the DoE in late 2001 for public comment process and finalization
- Ongoing communication with Ministry regarding NAP and also with SAQA
- Awaiting final document from DoE for advice

	<p>Performance during 2004-2005</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing communication with Ministry regarding NAP and also with SAQA • Awaiting final document from DoE for advice <p>Performance during 2005-2006</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing communication with Ministry regarding NAP and also with SAQA • Awaiting final document from DoE for advice
<p>11. Formulating advice for the Minister on stimulating greater institutional responsiveness to societal needs, especially those linked to stimulating South Africa's economy, such as greater HE–industry partnerships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project established in 2001 • Project proposal developed and submitted to donor and donor funding secured • Meeting with Minister and discussions with other government ministers and departments and prospective partners • Studies and papers commissioned and published • National colloquium held on 27–28 June 2002 • Publication on commissioned research and colloquium • Colloquium on HE responsiveness at local government level (2003) • Facilitated process to develop an MoU between HEIs in Johannesburg and Johannesburg Metropolitan Council • MoU between HEIs in Johannesburg and Johannesburg Metropolitan Council signed in 2003 • Advice and recommendations to Minister to be finalized in late 2004 <p>Performance during 2004-2005</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing work on the Building the Responsiveness of Higher Education project to enable the CHE to advise the Minister in late 2005 <p>Performance during 2005-2006</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CHE has discharged most aspects of this performance mandate previously. A final document to the Minister of Education on this issue is in production.
<p>12. Appointing an independent assessment panel from which the Minister is able to appoint assessors to conduct investigations into particular issues at public HE institutions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An initial panel established in 1998 • Panel supplemented with new members during 2000 • Panel supplemented with new members during 2001 • Minister used panel members for investigations at a number of institutions • Panel supplemented with new members during 2003 • Minister used panel member for investigation at the University of Durban-Westville <p>Performance during 2004-2005</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing maintenance of panel of assessors <p>Performance during 2005-2006</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing maintenance of panel of assessors • Minister used panel member for investigation at DUT

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13. Establishing healthy interactions with HE stakeholders on the CHE's work

- Bilateral meetings with CTP and SAUVCA during 1999
- Bilateral meetings with SASCO and CTP during 2000
- Bilateral meetings with all national stakeholders during 2002
- Consultative Conference serves as major forum for interaction
- National stakeholders and individual HEIs contribute to the work of the CHE in various ways
- Extensive engagements with national stakeholders and HEIs about Shape and Size during 2000
- Extensive contact with DoE and joint activities in select areas
- Bilateral meetings with various national stakeholders
- Extensive engagements with national stakeholders and HEIs about quality assurance issues

Performance during 2004-2005

- Bilateral meetings with various national stakeholders
- Extensive engagements with national stakeholders and HEIs about quality assurance issues
- National colloquium in November 2004, linked to ten years of democracy

Performance 2005-2006

- The CEO of the CHE and the Executive Director of the HEQC held meetings with SAUVCA/HESA, student organizations, professional associations and SAQA.

14. Producing reports on the state of HE

- Produced a State of HE report for 1998/1999 – extensive report on the state of HE and the work of the CHE
- Produced a State of HE report for 2000/2001 – extensive report on the state of HE and the work of the CHE
- Framework developed for producing ever more comprehensive and analytical reports on the state of HE
- Future State of HE reports will be facilitated by
 - CHE Monitoring and Evaluation activities
 - Protocols with institutions and organizations on data collection and sharing
 - CHE Triennial Review of HE project
 - Effective HEMIS system of DoE
 - NLRD of SAQA

Performance during 2004-2005

- Publication of a major report on South African Higher Education in the First Decade of Democracy

Performance 2005-2006

- No new system review was produced as these are to be produced only every three years.
- Design of a new methodology to analyse the state of higher education that looks at institutional profiles rather than system level data. Four institutional profiles were produced during the financial year under review.

<p>15. Convening an annual consultative conference of HE stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convened <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1st Consultative conference in November 1999 - 2nd Consultative conference in November 2000 - 3rd Consultative conference in November 2001 - 4th Consultative conference in November 2002 - 5th Consultative conference in November 2003 <p>Performance during 2004-2005</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convened Colloquium on the Ten Years of Democracy and Higher Education on 10-12 November 2004 <p>Performance during 2005-2006</p> <p>Decision taken to hold the consultative conferences biennially</p>
<p>16. Participating in the development of a coherent human resource development framework for South Africa in concert with other organisations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributions through attendance at workshops • Informal contributions through HRD discussions in context of NQF • Key issue for Responsiveness of HE project and of HE colloquium of 27–28 June 2002 <p>Performance during 2004-2005</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings with SA Tourism, South African Police Services and other organizations regarding the quantity and quality of human resources • Discussions with SAQA regarding the generalization of the Joint Implementation Plan committee of SAQA, CHE, the South African Police Services and the POSLEC SETA • Contributions through participation workshops, colloquia and meetings <p>Performance during 2005-2006</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with SAQA on Joint Implementation Plan committee related to South African Police Services qualifications • Participation in discussions in the Higher Education Working Group of the President • Attendance of meetings on JIPSA
<p>17. Contributing to the development of HE through publications and conferences</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiated a range of publications: Policy Reports, Research Reports, Occasional Papers, Higher Education Monitor, Newsletters and <i>Kagisano</i> – a HE Discussion Series to stimulate discussion and debate on important issues related to higher education • Initiated a <i>CHE Discussion Forum</i> – five held thus far: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Key Global and International Trends in Higher Education: Challenges for South Africa and Developing Countries (Prof. Philip Altbach) - Globalization, National Development and Higher Education (Prof. Manuel Castells) - A Decade of Higher Education Reform in Argentina (Dr Marcela Mollis) - Tertiary Education in the New South Africa: A Lover’s Complaint (Prof. Bob Wolff) - A Conceptual Critique of the Consultative Document <i>An Interdependent National Qualifications Framework System</i> (Prof. Michael Young) - Numerous conferences, seminars and workshops convened by the HEQC to promote quality and build institutional and individual capabilities

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Performance during 2004-2005

- Production of new Policy Reports, Research Reports, Higher Education Monitors and newsletters
- Seminar on 9 March 2005 on theme of *International Trends in Higher Education Quality Assurance: Some National Perspectives*
- Hosted a national seminar in February 2005 to discuss *Provider Readiness to Offer Programmes Using Distance Education*
- CHE Discussion Forum on 15 July 2004 on *The Role of Private Higher Education in South Africa*
- Partnered the AAU, CODESRIA and UNESCO conference on 27–29 April 2004 in Accra, Ghana, on *The General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) and Higher Education*
- Numerous conferences, seminars and workshops convened by the HEQC to promote quality and to build institutional and individual capabilities

Performance during 2005-2006

- Production of new Policy Reports, Research Reports, Higher Education Monitors and newsletters
- Publication of HE Monitor on *South African Higher Education Responses to Students with Disabilities*
- Publication of HE Monitor on *The impact of changing funding sources of Higher Education Institutions in South Africa*
- Publication of A Good Practice Guide for Quality Management of Research

Overall, within the constraints of human and financial resources, excellent progress has been registered during the past five years, including during the past year with respect to the execution of responsibilities.

2. INTERACTION WITH THE MINISTER/MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Meetings with the Minister

The CHE meets with the Minister of Education on a needs basis and on request. A number of meetings were held with the Minister regarding the national review of MED programmes.

There was also written correspondence on various issues between the CHE and the Minister.

Requests for Advice from the Minister of Education

The Minister requested the CHE to advise her on the following –

- a) Student Enrolment Planning in Public Higher Education
- b) Minimum Admission Requirements for Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's Degree Programmes requiring a Further Education and Training Certificate (General)
- c) The Higher Education Qualifications Framework.

In March 2005 the CHE's *Policy Advice Report: Advice to the Minister of Education on Aspects of Distance Education Provision in South African Higher Education* (March 2004) was released by the Minister for public comment.

Proactive Advice to the Minister of Education

The CHE also provides proactive advice to the Minister. A number of issues that have been identified for possible advice have been the subject of research and investigations:

- a) Barriers (educational, financial, institutional, etc.) to equity of student access and especially opportunity and outcomes in higher education
- b) The funding and financing of higher education
- c) The macro implementation of institutional restructuring and its impact, outcomes and consequences
- d) South African government involvement in and regulation of higher education, institutional autonomy and academic freedom
- e) The General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and its implications for higher education
- f) Internationalization of South African higher education.

Meetings with the Department of Education

The practice of regular meetings between senior CHE staff and senior officials of the Higher Education Branch of the Ministry of Education has continued and provides an important mechanism for addressing various matters.

3. CHE STANDING COMMITTEES, TASK TEAMS AND PROJECTS

CHE activities are undertaken through CHE Standing Committees, Task Teams and Projects.

3.1 Standing Committees

Standing Committees are devoted to key HE policy areas and issues that require the ongoing attention of the CHE. The Chairperson and members of Standing Committees are appointed by the CHE. Provision is made for the participation of non-CHE members with the approval of the CHE Council. While Standing Committees are directed and supervised by CHE members, the CHE Secretariat handles their management and administration.

There are three Standing Committees.

Shape and Size

The *Shape and Size Standing Committee* deals with the issues of the overall capacity (*size* in terms of number of institutions, enrolments and participation rate) of the higher education system in relation to the need to develop high level and varied intellectual and conceptual knowledge, abilities and skills to meet the local, regional, national and international requirements of a developing democracy. This Standing Committee also deals with the development of intellectual and conceptual knowledge and skills as well as the ongoing development of professionals at different levels, for different economic and social sectors, in different fields and disciplines and through different kinds of HEIs and educational and pedagogic modes (*shape*).

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The Committee met to discuss and finalize for submission to the CHE Council advice on the Student Enrolment Plan, the Further Education and Training Certificate, and the Higher Education Qualifications Framework, and also to explore possible new issues for investigation.

The Standing Committee is headed by Prof. SF Coetzee and comprises the following members: Prof. M Ramashala, Dr F Ginwala, Mr J Mamabolo, Mr SBA Isaacs and Prof. S Badat.

Funding and Financing

The *Funding and Financing Standing Committee* deals with all aspects of the funding and financing of higher education. *The Higher Education Act* and the *White Paper* allocate specific responsibilities to the CHE in this regard, such as advising on ‘the policies, principles and criteria that should govern the allocation of public funds among higher education providers’, ‘a mechanism for the allocation of public funds’, ‘student financial aid’, ‘policy regarding public and private financing and provision, the level and distribution of public subsidies to higher education’ and ‘forms of student financial assistance’.

Prof. SJ Saunders chairs the Standing Committee and its members are Ms J Glennie, Prof. B Figaji, Prof. M Ramashala, Prof. S Badat and Prof. RH Stumpf (invited non-CHE member).

The Committee met on various occasions to discuss the funding of higher education, and the CHE commissioned report that resulted in the publication, *The Impact of Changing Funding Sources on Higher Education Institutions in South Africa* (March 2006). There was also interaction with the Financial and Fiscal Commission on the funding of health professional training and with the Department of Education (DoE) on the mobilization of further funding for higher education and the DoE/National Treasury Task Team on higher education funding.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The *White Paper* refers to the CHE advising the Minister of Education on
the performance of the system, having regard to available performance indicators; and
the progress being made towards achieving national equity and human resource development goals and measures to overcome impediments to achieving transformation goals (Section 3.25i & j).

The CHE’s monitoring and evaluation activities are located in the Directorate: Monitoring and Evaluation and are guided and supervised by the *Monitoring and Evaluation Standing Committee*. Prof. AM Perez chairs the Standing Committee and its members include Prof. M Ramashala, Prof. SJ Saunders, and Dr Lis Lange.

During the past year, the following initiatives were undertaken –

- a) Since monitoring and evaluation draw on the analysis of HE data available within the National System of Innovation, the CHE has worked on developing collaborative relationships for the exchange of data with several national bodies. In this regard, the CHE signed a protocol of collaboration and data exchange with the National Research Foundation (NRF) in mid 2005. The CHE has also signed a three-year annually renewable contract with Stellenbosch University’s Centre for Research on Science and Technology (CREST).
- b) The CHE produces a *Higher Education Monitor* series, as a vehicle for the dissemination of the results of CHE in-house and commissioned research reports. During this period the following HE Monitors were produced – *South African Higher Education Responses to Students with Disabilities* and *The impact of changing funding sources of Higher Education Institutions in South Africa*.

- c) A collaborative research project with the HSRC on a tracer study, *Pathways from further education and training to higher education to the labour market: factors affecting student choice, retention, throughput, and destination*; it has entered its final stages.
- d) The Centre for the Study of Higher Education (CSHE) at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) has finalized a study on *equity of access to higher education for disabled students* which the CHE commissioned in association with the Inclusive Education Directorate of the Department of Education. The research report was published as *Higher Education Monitor No.3* in June 2005.

3.2 Task Teams

CHE *Task Teams* are focused on systemic or major HE policy issues on which the Minister has requested the CHE's advice or on which the CHE wishes to provide advice proactively. They are established according to need. The members of Task Teams, including the Chairperson, are appointed by the CHE and non-CHE members may participate with the approval of the Council. The CHE Secretariat is responsible for the management and administration of Task Teams.

Distance Education

The CHE's advice to the Minister of Education on 'the role of distance education in the development of the higher education system' was released by the Minister to stakeholders and the public for comment in March 2005. The Policy Advice Report is available on the CHE's website, as is a major Research Report titled *Enhancing the Contribution of Distance Higher Education in South Africa* on which the CHE drew in providing advice.

South African Government Involvement in and Regulation of Higher Education, Institutional Autonomy and Academic Freedom

In March 2005, the CHE established a Task Team to investigate the past decade of regulation of South African higher education by government and other agencies, and to promote debate on conceptions of institutional autonomy, academic freedom and public accountability, in general, and in the specific context of higher education transformation. Amid concerns and claims by some that the nature of government involvement in higher education is in danger of moving from 'state steering' to 'state interference', the CHE believed it important to undertake a sober and rigorous investigation of the issues, so giving effect to the CHE's responsibilities independently to advise the Minister of Education, to monitor and evaluate higher education, and to contribute to higher education development.

Specifically, the Task Team investigation aims to

- stimulate research and writing
- build shared understandings of institutional autonomy, academic freedom and public accountability, through the creation of various public forums, public discussion and debate on these important principles
- develop consensus, as far as is possible, on the nature and modes of government involvement in higher education transformation, and on the relationships between government and other regulatory bodies and HEIs.

In July 2005, the Task Team agreed on its terms of reference and programme of work. Five key mechanisms were adopted for the purposes of information-gathering, research and engagement: a commissioned overview of recent and current debates; stakeholder submissions; commissioned research; interviews; and structured fora.

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The following progress had been made by end-March 2006 –

1. An overview of recent and current debates in South African higher education concerning academic freedom, institutional autonomy and public accountability was commissioned and completed in October 2005. This served as a point of departure for the Task Team in interrogating submissions (see 2. below) and in commissioning research (see 3. below). The overview was posted on the CHE Website, together with a select bibliography of further reading, as a means of informing and stimulating wider debate.
2. In July 2005, the Task Team issued an invitation to stakeholders (institutions, stakeholder bodies and individuals) to make submissions in writing or in person, on issues falling within the scope of the HEIAAF enquiry. Some 25 written submissions were received by October 2005 (two-thirds of these from HEIs). Themes arising from these submissions were analysed and used to inform the directions of commissioned research (see 3. below) and the kinds of issues to be addressed in regional fora (see 5. below). Given that some stakeholders had been unable to complete submissions within the original timeframe, this date was extended to end-February 2006. In addition, as HEIs had generally been unable to consult all their stakeholders in the process of making formal ‘institutional’ submissions, the Task Team agreed to invite submissions directly from institutions’ academic staff associations, other staff representative bodies, and Students’ Representative Councils.
3. The process of commissioning research began in November 2005, and five independent research projects commenced in March 2006 for completion by July 2006. These are:
 - an evaluation of cooperative governance, matching empirical perspectives with constitutional and public policy perspectives (Dr ‘Maboreng Maharasoa, Central University of Technology)
 - interrogation of the practice of academic freedom in South Africa (and Africa) and implications for the wider practice of intellectual freedom (Dr Adam Habib, Dr Sean Morrow and Dr Kristina Bentley, Human Sciences Research Council)
 - exploration of the potential of a ‘social pact(s)’ for institutional autonomy (Prof. André du Toit, University of Cape Town)
 - focus on theoretical and empirical dimensions of public accountability in South African higher education (Mr Steven Friedman, Institute for Democracy in South Africa and Mr Omano Edigheji, Centre for Policy Studies)
 - cross-cutting theoretical analysis deriving a principled and contextualized framework for the state-sector relationship, taking into account the South African, global and ‘market’ contexts of higher education (Prof. Ruth Jonathan).
4. The Task Team is conducting interviews with selected individuals or groups having relevant knowledge, experience, perspectives or affiliations (especially individuals or groups who have not made submissions). By end-March 2006, the Task Team had met with: members of the Executive Committee of Higher Education South Africa; representatives of the Department of Education; representatives of the Board of the Higher Education Quality Committee; and representatives of the student movement, led by the South African Students’ Congress. A presentation to the Parliamentary Portfolio Committees on Education, and on Science and Technology, had been scheduled.
5. The Task Team is both organizing and accessing structured fora, in order to facilitate discussion, exchange views, and further debate. A key element of the HEIAAF process is a series of regional fora for the purposes of engaging institutional and other stakeholders in the debate. The first such forum was held in Pretoria in March 2006, while five further regional fora (Bloemfontein, Cape Town, Johannesburg, Durban and Port Elizabeth) had been scheduled to take place by the beginning of June 2006. The fora draw on the perspectives of knowledgeable individuals through keynote addresses and discussant responses, while providing ample opportunity for discussion from the floor. In addition, the Task Team participates where possible in meetings and fora convened by stakeholders (e.g. students, trades union), in order to open up debate on HEIAAF issues.

In 2005, Task Team inputs were made at two student movement events, and at the annual congress of the National Union of Tertiary Employees of South Africa.

The Task Team's investigation will culminate in an independent research report; a national seminar for the purposes of disseminating the report; and a report to the Minister of Education (which may be the research report, or alternatively, may be a policy report prepared by the CHE on the basis of the Task Team's independent report). It is envisaged that these outcomes will eventuate in the second half of 2007, while the investigation will be consolidated between April 2006 and mid-2007 through interim reports, publications, further consultations and, possibly, supplementary research.

3.3 Projects

Issues that are not related to the immediate policy advice responsibilities of the CHE are, with the approval and guidance of the CHE, directed, supervised and managed by the CHE Secretariat as Projects. These include:

- research and investigations that give effect to and/or inform the diverse work of the CHE. The results of these can, following discussion by the Council, lead to advice to the Minister.
- reporting on the state of South African higher education
- the annual Consultative Conference
- CHE conferences and discussion forums
- CHE publications and other media
- the production of the CHE Annual Report that must be submitted to parliament.

The CHE's projects seek to give effect to or help facilitate the execution of the responsibilities that have been accorded to the CHE. The requirement to contribute to the development of higher education provides considerable leeway for the CHE to identify systemic and national HE issues that deserve critical reflection and to initiate projects in this regard. The privileged vantage point that the CHE enjoys with respect to national HE and HE-related developments also makes it easier to identify issues for investigation.

The CHE is convinced that its own ability to provide considered, independent and especially proactive advice is dependent on promoting and helping to sustain high quality critical scholarship on South African HE and HE in general. In the South African context, this requires encouraging and helping to develop and nurture a community of HE scholars and policy analysts within and outside HEIs. Through a number of its projects – monitoring and evaluation, critical triennial review of HE, the role of HE in social transformation, to mention just a few – the CHE seeks to involve established and emerging academics and researchers and contribute to building institutional capacity for HE studies.

Building Relationships between Higher Education and the Private and Public Sectors to respond to Knowledge and High-Level Human Resource Needs in the context of Inequality and Unemployment.

The purpose of the 'responsiveness' project was to give effect to the CHE's statutory responsibility 'to formulate advice to the Minister on stimulating greater institutional responsiveness to societal needs, especially those linked to stimulating the South African economy, such as greater higher education–industry partnerships'.

The project has aimed to understand labour market needs, the fit between graduates' skills, competencies and attributes and employers' needs, while reviewing the theoretical and methodological approaches that underpin the issue of responsiveness. In addition, the project brought together leaders of higher education and leaders from the private and public sector and labour unions to talk about expectations, needs, and especially, the possibility of relationships that are not only beneficial for higher education and employers, but also appropriate for the economic and social needs of the country.

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This project, which has been funded by a grant from the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID), is now synthesizing the lessons of the past few years and preparing a Policy Advice Report for the CHE to discuss and approve, before submission to the Minister of Education. This Report takes into account the CHE experience of facilitating actual collaborative partnerships between higher education and different private and public stakeholders (2003), as well as the analysis of the fit between sectoral needs and graduate skills through the lens of the re-accreditation of the MBA.

Triennial Review of HE

This project, funded by the Rockefeller Foundation, entails the production of a research-based publication called the *Triennial Review of South African Higher Education*. The purpose of this publication is to gather specialist research on issues on higher education that are of local importance but have at the same time international resonance. The publication has as its main purposes to reflect on emergent trends and issues in South Africa and to advance new ways of thinking about and understanding higher education. At the same time, the commissioning of research papers for the *Review* from research groups around the country is seen as an ideal opportunity to encourage the involvement of young South African researchers, especially black and female researchers, in a research-based publication.

The following are the research topics that have been commissioned –

- Systemic Governance, Public Accountability and Institutional Autonomy
- Transformation of Institutional Cultures: A Critical Analysis
- Changes and Continuities in South African Higher Education 1994-2004
- Understanding the Discourses of Pedagogy, Change and the Role of Technology in South African Higher Education
- Equity, Access and Success in Higher Education in South Africa for Adult Learners and Workers
- Changing Sources of Funding in South African Higher Education.

Final drafts of the research reports have been submitted to the Editorial Team, and these will be peer reviewed and published as monographs. Articles based on the research will be included in a CHE publication during the second half of 2006.

One of the research reports emanating from the Triennial Review project has been published as the HE Monitor No. 4 *The Impact of Changing Funding Sources on Higher Education Institutions in South Africa*.

GATS and its Implication for South African Higher Education

The aims of the project are to

1. Identify the critical issues and key challenges of principle, strategy, policy and practice that GATS raises in relation to higher education and the implications it has for South African higher education policymakers, regulators (the Ministry and the CHE as far as quality assurance is concerned) and providers (public and private higher education institutions)
2. Describe and analyse the claims being made in the context of GATS at the WTO by a small number of countries on the South African Government with respect to higher education
3. Advance approaches and strategies and possible policy options and recommendations with regard to 1. above
4. Advance approaches and strategies and possible policy options and recommendations with regard to 2. above.

The CHE successfully partnered the AAU, CODESRIA and UNESCO in a conference on 27-29 April 2004 in Accra, Ghana, on GATS and the WTO and higher education, whereafter progress has been made to improve and expand the third draft report, based on ideas and issues that emerged at this conference.

The CHE also attended the AAU General Conference in Cape Town in February 2005, which had as its theme Cross-Border Provision and GATS.

Several bibliographies have been produced as part of the CHE's commitment to the AAU.

A Research Report and Policy Advice Report will be produced.

4. OTHER ACTIVITIES OF THE CHE

4.1 Conferences, workshops and seminars

The CEO of the CHE, the HEQC Executive Director (ED) and other senior staff of the CHE and HEQC addressed and represented the CHE at numerous regional, national and international seminars, workshops and conferences of stakeholders, HE and HE-related organizations, and HEIs. Significant events included:

- the Minister of Education's consultative summit on deepening the policy dialogue in Durban at the end of May/early June, which was attended by the CEO, Prof. Coetzee, Dr Singh and Prof. Africa
- the DoE and Department of Science and Technology conference on Human Resources for Knowledge Production held on 23-24 June 2005 in Cape Town, and attended by CEO and Dr Lange.

4.2 External representation

External representation on other national bodies included:

- Committee of Heads of Research and Technology (COHORT)

The CHE is an active member of COHORT, an important forum that regularly brings together all the heads of science and research councils, national higher education organizations (CHE, Higher Education Branch of the DoE, SAUVCA and CTP) and the Ministry of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology to discuss matters of science and technology, policy and development, and strategies for addressing challenges in these regards. The CHE CEO serves on the Executive Committee of COHORT.

- South African Qualifications Authority
The CHE CEO serves on the SAQA Authority.
- General and Further Education and Training Council (UMALUSI)
The HEQC Executive Director serves on UMALUSI.

External representation on other national bodies included:

- Association of African Universities
 - The CHE has Associate membership of the AAU.
 - A CHE member serves on Scientific Committee of the Study Programme on Higher Education Management in Africa.
- United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)
 - A CHE member serves on the UNESCO Global Forum on International Quality Assurance, Accreditation and the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education.
 - A CHE member serves on the UNESCO Forum on Higher Education, Research and Knowledge.

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- International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies on Higher Education
A CHE member serves on the Board.
- Council for Higher Education Accreditation (USA)
A CHE member serves on the International Commission.

4.3 Current CHE/HEQC International Agreements

- Tripartite MoU with Polytechnic Namibia and Namibian Qualifications Authority
Memorandum of Understanding on HEQC quality assurance support to the Polytechnic Namibia
- Australian Universities Quality Agency
Memorandum of Understanding on HEQC-AUQA cooperation on quality assurance matters
- Quality Assurance Agency (UK)
Memorandum of Understanding on HEQC-QAA cooperation on quality assurance matters
- National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), India
Memorandum of Understanding on HEQC-NAAC cooperation on quality assurance matters
- Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education
Memorandum of Understanding on HEQC-NOKUT cooperation on quality assurance matters

4.4 External donor relations

- Ford Foundation
 - Funding of Monitoring and Evaluation project
 - Funding of Quality Promotion and Capacity Development
 - Funding of the Task Team on South African Government Involvement in and Regulation of Higher Education, Institutional Autonomy and Academic Freedom
- Carnegie Corporation
 - Funding of Quality Promotion and Capacity Development
- Rockefeller Foundation
 - Funding of Monitoring and Evaluation project
- Department for International Development (UK)
 - Funding of Responsiveness project
 - Funding of quality assurance
- CENESA (Netherlands)
 - Funding of quality assurance project on research benchmarking
- Finnish Government
 - Funding of Quality Promotion and Capacity Development (bi-national through the Department of Education)

4.5 CHE publications

In accordance with its mandate to contribute to the development of HE through publications, the CHE and HEQC produce a range of publications – Research Reports, Policy Reports, Policy Advice Reports, Policy Documents, Discussion Documents, Occasional Papers, Conference Reports, Newsletters, Kagisano, the CHE's Higher Education Discussion Series and Organizational Brochures. In addition, when necessary, the CHE also issues Press Releases.

Higher Education Monitor

- *The impact of changing funding sources of Higher Education Institutions in South Africa* (No. 4, March 2006)
- *South African Higher Education Responses to Students with Disabilities* (No. 3, September 2005)

A complete list of all CHE publications since its inception can be found under 'CHE Media'. The CHE website – www.che.ac.za provides electronic versions of all CHE publications.