



higher education & training

Department:
Higher Education and Training
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

Public invited to comment on Draft Policy Framework for the Provision of Distance Education in South African Universities

Pretoria, 29 May 2012 – The draft Policy Framework for the Provision of Distance Education in South African Universities has been released for public comment.

"The draft policy document provides an overview of the policy context, and describes the distinctiveness and purpose of distance higher education, identifies mechanisms for steering distance education provisioning and for creating an enabling environment for quality distance higher education," Minister of Higher Education and Training (DHET), Dr Nzimande said.

He added that the framework was also part of a broader focus on building the capacity of the education system.

"Through this policy framework, we really seek to resolve many areas of uncertainty and provide strong support for the progressive development of South African distance higher education as an indispensable and integral component of our national higher education system," said the Minister.

The Minister also sees the need for collaborative development of a national set of programmes targeted at South Africa's burgeoning unemployed/ not in education youth designed to enable them to become financially productive and socially invested members of society. This initiative would be most appropriately located at the FET/HET interface. In addition, there is need for the development of high quality formal professional qualifications for unemployed graduates to address national priorities such as the increased demand for teachers and social workers. The Draft Policy provides a framework for the expansion and regulation of quality distance education at higher education institutions to meet these needs.

All interested persons and organizations are invited to comment on this draft Policy Framework, with comments expected to reach the Department by no later than 2 July 2012. The full document is available on the Department of Higher Education and Training's website (www.dhet.gov.za).

Comments and further enquiries should be directed to Dr E L Van Staden at vanstaden.e@dhet.gov.za or 012 312 5889.

Issued on behalf of the Ministry for Higher Education and Training.