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## GOVERNMENT NOTICES • GOEWERMENTSKENNISGEWINGS

## DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

NO. 1224

02 NOVEMBER 2017

**POLICY FOR THE POST-SCHOOL EDUCATION AND TRAINING CENTRAL APPLICATION SERVICE**

I, Dr Bonginkosi Emmanuel Nzimande, MP, Minister of Higher Education and Training, in terms of section 3 of the Higher Education Act, 1997 and section 41B of the Continuous Education and Training Act, no 16 of 2016, hereby publish the *Policy for the Post-School Education and Training Central Application Service* as a guide to the intended establishment of a Post-School Education and Training Central Application Service (PSET CAS).

The *Policy for the Post-School Education and Training Central Application Service* should be read in conjunction with other policy documents affecting Post-School Education and Training (PSET) institutions in South Africa and is part of a broader focus on building the capacity of the post schooling system.

The Policy provides a statement for the establishment of the PSET CAS, the governance structures and operational rules that will enable its successful launch and sustained service to the applicant community. It includes an overview of the policy context, defines the scope of the PSET CAS, describes the key responsibilities of stakeholders involved in and affected by the PSET CAS, and proposes transitional arrangements that enable the preparation for and eventual operational launch of the PSET CAS.

The electronic version of the document will be available on the Department of Higher Education and Training's website ([www.dhet.gov.za](http://www.dhet.gov.za)).



**Dr BE Nzimande, MP**  
**Minister of Higher Education and Training**

Date: 26/05/2017



higher education  
& training

Department:  
Higher Education and Training  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## Department of Higher Education and Training

### Policy for the Post-School Education and Training Central Application Service

February 2017

**Policy for the Post School Education and Training Central Application Service  
2016**

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## 1 Preamble

The White Paper for Post-School Education and Training (2013) indicates that Career Development Services (CDS) and Central Applications Services (CAS) are integral components of the post-school education and training system. The White Paper recommends a seamless service from school level with appropriate learning pathways and assistance with career decisions including a simplified and cost-effective application process for post-school study.

The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) has over the past three years undertaken a significant volume of work to identify a number of mechanisms for the establishment of an entity to function as a CAS. DHET must now establish a permanent institutional process and structure to coordinate and manage activities as proposed in this policy.

This policy will inform the functioning of the CAS.

## 2 Abbreviations and Acronyms

CAS	Central Application Service
CDS	Career Development Services
CET Act	Continuing Education and Training Act, 2006
CETC	Community Education and Training College
CHE	Council on Higher Education
CIE	Cambridge International Examinations
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DoE	Department of Education
DPME	Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
HEA	Higher Education Act
HETMIS	Higher Education and Training Management Information System
HEQSF	Higher Education Qualification Sub-Framework
IEB	Independent Examination Board
M & E	Monitoring and Evaluation
Minister	Minister of Higher Education and Training
NCAP	National Career Advice Portal
NHEIAS	National Higher Education Information and Application Service
NLRD	National Learners' Records Database
NPHE	National Plan for Higher Education
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSC	National Senior Certificate
NSFAS	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
PAIA	Promotion of Access to Information Act
PFMA	Public Finance Management Act
POPI	Protection of Personal Information
PSET	Post-School Education and Training
QCTO	Quality Council for Trades and Occupations
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SDA	Skills Development Act, 1998
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
TVET	Technical and vocational education and training
White Paper	White Paper for Post School Education and Training (2013)

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### 3 Definitions

In this policy, words/phrases have the following meaning:

*Clearing House:* The clearing house function will match a student with available PSET opportunities, if a student is not accepted by his/her chosen institution/s

*Conditional acceptance:* Offer by institution subject to conditions e.g. submission of Grade 12 results and or achieving specified grades in certain subjects of the NSC or NCV

*Entering:* Commencing studies in the first year at an institution not previously attended by a student

*Higher Education Programmes:* Academic Programmes offered from NQF level 5

*Minister:* Minister of Higher Education and Training

*Interface:* Refers to a process to verify supplied information in a cost-effective, efficient and fast manner within a specific timeframe without the possibility of affecting the integrity of data system

*Points-of-Presence:* A physical location whereby prospective applicants can access the CAS

*Post-school:* All post-school education from NQF level 1

*Public Institutions:* All public education institutions established by DHET, i.e. Public Higher Education Institutions/Universities, TVET Colleges, Community Education and Training Colleges

*Private institutions:* Any institution registered or conditionally registered as a private higher education institution in terms of Chapter 7 of the Higher Education Act, and private colleges as registered in terms of the Continuing Education and Training Act.

*Qualifications/Programmes:* Refers to qualifications and programmes, as well as part-qualifications and part-programmes, registered on the NQF

*Referral:* A student who is not offered a place to study by his/her chosen institution/s will be referred to other PSET opportunities

*Take-up rate:* The percentage of students registered in year (n) in terms of offers made.

*Transfers:* Transfers between institutions after completion of 1<sup>st</sup> year

*Turnaround times:* Sector agreed milestones and cut-off dates to be determined

*Undergraduate:* The term covers all undergraduate post-school study, not only undergraduate degrees

### 4 Policy Context

The Education White Paper 3 (DoE: 1997) proposed that a National Higher Education Information and Application Service (NHEIAS) with regional centres needs to be established to facilitate the administration of student applications. This should satisfy the information needs of applicants, and provide guidance on careers and include information on labour market trends.

The National Plan for Higher Education (NPHE) of 2001 confirmed the proposal for a National Higher Education Information and Application Service (NHEIAS) to be established. In accordance with the NPHE, a Ministerial Working Group was established in 2001.

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The need for a Central Application Service was reaffirmed by the White Paper for Post-School Education and Training (2013). The White Paper views the CAS as “a crucial move towards supporting informed access to universities and other PSET opportunities for students, and to make the choices and placement of students across the system more effective.” The White Paper recommends: “a seamless service from school level with appropriate learning pathways and assistance with career decisions including a simplified and cost-effective application process for post-school study”. It is therefore the intention of the CAS to serve as an administrative service that will streamline and reduce the cost of applications, enabling multiple applications at a single cost, provide institutions with information on available applications, provide applicants with information on programmes, facilitate career guidance and enable the Ministry and institutions to monitor equity demographics.

### 5 Purpose

The purpose of this policy (and the CAS) is to provide a single, affordable, easy to understand **application** process, giving applicants access to multiple institutions covering the entire PSET sector. It will also facilitate planning for and reporting on the entire PSET sector.

### 6 Scope

This policy intends to meet the needs of the CAS, the DHET, institutions and applicants.

Participation is compulsory for all public institutions under the jurisdiction of the Minister. Departmental Colleges under the jurisdiction of other Ministers will be afforded the opportunity to participate.

The focus of the CAS is strictly applications handling, not admissions. The CAS cannot be held liable for institutional decisions to accept or reject any application, nor can it or any of its employees accept such liability.

This policy applies to all entering candidates into PSET institutions that the applicant has not previously attended (including school leavers from Grade 9 to Grade 12, foreign students and adult learners), but excludes postgraduate students, transfers between institutions and conversions to another course within the same institution.

The CAS will only handle applications for programmes leading to NQF qualifications and part-qualifications that have been accredited by the appropriate Quality Council. Programmes not leading to NQF qualifications and short courses are therefore excluded. The CAS will not be responsible for any admission decisions, or placement in residences or funding allocations. The CAS will facilitate an application process that will enable these decisions, by collecting and relaying to institutions all information required to make these decisions.

Requests for accommodations and financial assistance will be recorded through the application process, for consideration by the institution upon admission in the case of accommodation and by NSFAS in the case of funding requested.

### 7 Legislative Context

This policy is based on and conforms to the Constitution of South Africa, 1996 as well as all other applicable legislation. The CAS will also operate within this legislative context. The applicable legislation is set out below:

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**7.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act No. 108 of 1996)**

The Constitution places a duty on the State to respect, protect, promote and fulfil the rights in the Bill of Rights (Section 7). The right to education is set out in Section 29:

- (1) - Everyone has the right:
- a) to a basic education, including adult basic education; and
  - b) to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible.

The right to administrative fairness is set out in Section 33.

- (1) - Everyone has the right to administrative action that is lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair.

**7.2 Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act No. 101 of 1997, as amended)**

The following sections of the Act are important for the purposes of the CAS:

**Section 37:**

- (1) Subject to this Act, the council of a public higher education institution, after consulting the senate of the public higher education institution, determines the admission policy of the public higher education institution.
- (2) The council must publish the admission policy and make it available on request.
- (3) The admission policy of a public higher education institution must provide appropriate measures for the redress of past inequalities and may not unfairly discriminate in any way.
- (4) Subject to this Act, the council may, with the approval of the senate -
  - c) determine entrance requirements in respect of particular higher education programmes;
  - d) determine the number of students who may be admitted for a particular higher education programme and the manner of their selection;
  - e) determine the minimum requirements for readmission to study at the public higher education institution concerned; and
  - f) refuse readmission to a student who fails to satisfy such minimum requirements for readmission.

**Section 65D:**

- (1) No person may offer, award or confer a degree, or a higher education diploma or a higher education certificate, provided for on the HEQSF unless such degree, diploma or certificate is registered on the sub-framework for higher education on the National Qualifications Framework contemplated in section 1(b) read with section 13(1)(h) of the National Qualifications Framework Act.
- (2) Notwithstanding subsection (1), a public higher education institution intending to offer any education programme or trade and occupational learning programme that leads to a qualification or part-qualification on the sub-framework for trade and occupation contemplated in section 7(c) of the National Qualifications Framework Act may offer the qualification or part-qualification subject to –
  - g) the approval of the Minister; and
  - h) compliance with any condition set by the Minister.

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**7.3 National Student Financial Aid Scheme Act, 1999 (Act No. 56 of 1999, as amended)**

Section 18 is important for the purposes of the CAS and this policy: Any student may, subject to the provisions of this Act, apply in writing to the NSFAS for a loan or a bursary on an application form determined by the board.

**7.4 General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, 2001 (Act No. 58 of 2001, as amended)**

Section 16 is applicable to the CAS and this policy.

- (1) Umalusi as the Quality Council for general and further education and training as contemplated in the National Qualifications Framework Act has the functions contemplated in section 27 of that Act.
- (2) The Council is responsible for the sub-framework for general and further education and training of the National Qualifications Framework determined by the Minister in terms of section 8(2)(e) of the National Qualifications Framework Act.

**7.5 Continuing Education and Training Act, 2006 (Act No. 16 of 2006, as amended)**

The following sections of the Act are important for the purposes of the CAS:

**Section 17:**

- (1) Subject to applicable policy determined by the Minister, the council of a public college determines the admission policy of the college, after consulting the academic board and with the approval of the Member of the Executive Council.
- (2) The admission policy of a public college may not unfairly discriminate in any way and must provide appropriate measures for the redress of past inequalities.
- (3) The council may, subject to applicable policy, the approval of the Head of Department and after consultation with the academic board –
  - a) determine admission requirements in respect of particular further education and training programmes;
  - b) determine the number of students who may be admitted for a particular further education and training programme and the manner of their selection;
  - c) determine the minimum requirements for readmission to study at the public college in question; and
  - d) refuse the readmission of a student who fails to satisfy the minimum requirements for readmission.

**Section 43:**

- (1) The Minister may prescribe minimum norms and standards for further education and training programmes, leading to qualifications within the sub-framework for general and further education and training contemplated in section 7(a) read with section 13(1)(h) of the National Qualifications Framework Act, that are offered at colleges.
- (2) Quality assurance must be conducted by Umalusi in terms of the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, 2001 (Act No. 58 of 2001).
- (3) A public college may only provide higher education programmes under the authority of a higher education institution.
- (4) A public college intending to offer the higher education programmes contemplated in subsection (3) –
  - a) must apply to the Minister for permission to offer such programmes after the commencement of this Act; and

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- b) may offer such programmes only after the permission contemplated in paragraph (a) is published by the Minister in the Gazette.
- (5) A college may apply to the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations established in terms of section 26G of the Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act No. 97 of 1998), for accreditation as a Skills Development Provider in order to offer qualifications registered on the sub-framework for Trades and Occupations contemplated in section 7(c) of the National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008 (Act No. 67 of 2008).

**7.6 National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008 (Act No. 67 of 2008)**

Section 13(1)(l) and (m) are applicable to this policy and to the CAS.

Section 13(1) The SAQA must, in order to advance the objectives of the NQF -

(l) with respect to records of education and training, maintain a national learners' records database comprising registers of national qualifications, part-qualifications, learner achievements, recognised professional bodies, professional designations and associated information;

(m) with respect to foreign qualifications, provide an evaluation and advisory service consistent with this Act.

**7.7 Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999, as amended)**

As the CAS will be a public entity, the following sections of the PFMA are specifically applicable:

**Section 1:**

"national public entity" means -

- a) a national government business enterprise; or
- b) a board, commission, company, corporation, fund or other entity (other than a national government business enterprise) which is-
  - i. established in terms of national legislation;
  - ii. fully or substantially funded either from the National Revenue Fund, or by way of a tax, levy or other money imposed in terms of national legislation; and
  - iii. accountable to Parliament.

**Section 47:**

- (1) The Minister, by notice in the national Government Gazette –
  - a) must amend Schedule 3 to include in the list all public entities that are not listed; and
  - b) may make technical changes to the list.
- (2) The accounting authority for a public entity that is not listed in either Schedule 2 or 3 must, without delay, notify the National Treasury, in writing, that the public entity is not listed.
- (3) Subsection (2) does not apply to an unlisted public entity that is a subsidiary of a public entity, whether the latter entity is listed or not.
- (4) The Minister may not list the following institutions in Schedule 3:
  - a) a constitutional institution, the South African Reserve Bank and the Auditor-General;
  - b) any public institution which functions outside the sphere of national or provincial government; and
  - c) any institution of higher education.

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### 7.8 Other Legislation

Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment Act, 2003 (Act No. 53 of 2003)  
Preferential Procurement Policy Framework Act, 2000 (Act No. 5 of 2000)  
Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 (Act No. 2 of 2000)  
Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, 2000, (Act 3 of 2000)  
Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013 (Act No. 4 of 2013)  
Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act No. 97 of 1998)

## 8 Objectives/Outcomes

The CAS has the following objectives:

- 1) Making available access to information on the full range of educational opportunities and training, and making available career-related information to assist in making informed study choices;
- 2) Making the application process across multiple institutions affordable and available to all applicants;
- 3) Reducing the administrative burden of application processing for institutions;
- 4) Optimising the placement of applicants in appropriate studies which includes a clearing house facility;
- 5) Facilitating the applications process so that institutions are able to make timely offers to applicants;
- 6) Improving the predictability of the take-up rate per institution and programme;
- 7) Collecting and providing accurate and timeous data;
- 8) Providing information on applications for the entire PSET system for national reporting purposes;
- 9) Providing all potential entrants into the PSET sector a single point for application to all their chosen education and training opportunities in the sector, combined with applications for accommodation and financial assistance;
- 10) Establishing a centralised platform and capability for the receiving of applications from applicants and the submission of these applications to the relevant PSET institutions;
- 11) Promoting and ensuring awareness of the centralised application process for all potential entrants into the PSET sector;
- 12) Providing an efficient interface with PSET institutions to submit relevant applications to them and to receive back information on the acceptance or otherwise of these applications, continually maintaining the status of the application and informing the applicant accordingly;
- 13) Ensuring the capability to provide application advice as well as to be able to refer applicants for career counselling where indicated; and
- 14) Obtaining the advice of SAQA with regard to the acceptance of foreign qualifications and the content and requirements of such qualifications where applicants holding foreign qualifications apply to a South African institution.

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## **9 Participating Institutions**

All public PSET institutions are required to participate in the CAS. However, a process of phased implementation will be followed, commencing with public Higher Education institutions (Universities), the Colleges in terms of the Continuing Education Act, and then learnerships / qualifications coordinated by the SETAs and other PSET opportunities.

The CAS will gradually be made available for the participation of private institutions. The CAS may further be made available to institutions under the jurisdiction of other Ministers (e.g.) Nursing Colleges, Agricultural Colleges, and Police Colleges).

## **10 Responsibilities of DHET**

The DHET will be responsible for:

- 1) The policy and legislative matters supporting the establishment and operations of the CAS;
- 2) Creating an Inter-branch Policy Committee to advise on all policy matters;
- 3) Ensuring that all the necessary policy and legislative structures are in place to ensure compliance with the implementation and operating requirements of the CAS; and
- 4) Amending Section 37 of the Higher Education Act, 1997 and Section 43 of the Continuing Education and Training Act, 2006 to make the submission of applications through the CAS mandatory.

## **11 Responsibilities of CAS**

CAS will be responsible for:

- 1) Implement a marketing strategy to communicate services to prospective applicants
- 2) Receiving and processing all applications to all participating institution;
- 3) Receiving and processing, including reconciliation, all payments of application fees;
- 4) Establishing and managing a comprehensive database of all applicants;
- 5) Establishing a call centre to assist with various enquiries;
- 6) Transferring applicant data to institutions in an appropriate format for incorporation into their student systems
- 7) Facilitating the interface of this database with the information required and maintained by service partners (institutions) and information providers (e.g. SAQA, Department of Home Affairs). The databases of the following institutions / departments are those with which interfaces are envisaged:
  - a) SAQA National Learners' Records Database and National Qualifications Registry;
  - b) DHET: National Career Advice Portal;
  - c) Council on Higher Education;
  - d) Department of Basic Education;
  - e) Department of Higher Education and Training;
  - f) Umalusi;
  - g) QCTO;

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- h) Department of Home Affairs; and
  - i) Others to be determined;
- 8) Acting as a clearing house for applications, which includes referrals for career counselling and assistance to applicants to identify and apply for alternative education and training opportunities in the case where initial applications have been rejected or identified as to be rejected;
  - 9) Comprehensive monitoring and evaluation of the application process including the provision of all data and reports to the DHET and participating institutions to enable them to select and register students effectively for the programmes that they offer;
  - 10) Monitoring the implementation of DHET policy and advising the Minister on issues relating to the efficient implementation of policy;
  - 11) Providing an on-going training service for all relevant staff members;
  - 12) Determining criteria for the identification of "Points of Presence", which will be used as service centres;
  - 13) Advising the Minister on regulations for alternative access into PSET opportunities.

**12 Responsibilities of Institutions**

The responsibilities of each of the institutions will be as follows:

- 1) Participating in the CAS. This will be compulsory for all public institutions offering PSET opportunities;
- 2) Listing all accredited programmes offered and ensure the submission of updated information relating to the specific programmes, including the minimum admission and selection requirements of the institution for each course, to the CAS so that applications can be submitted against these offerings.
- 3) Submitting information on new programmes accredited with minimum requirements for each programme;
- 4) Receiving the application data from the CAS relating to all applications made to that institution;
- 5) Selecting students based on the applications received and communicating both with the students and with the CAS relating to the decisions in regard to the selection of students;
- 6) Communicating information relevant to a student's progress from application through to admission;
- 7) Making offers to students;
- 8) Providing any additional information, including final registration of students, which will assist in completing the data set enabling effective planning and sector management;
- 9) Adhering to sector-agreed milestones and cut-off dates to ensure that the selection process is timeous and efficient;
- 10) Marketing its own programmes;
- 11) Recruit its own students.

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- 12) Become a possible "Point-of-Presence".

### **13 Responsibilities of Applicants**

Applicants will be responsible for:

- 1) Submission of complete applications;
- 2) Giving limited consent to share information (applications) with institutions to which the student applied;
- 3) Responding promptly to requests for additional information;
- 4) Responding promptly to offers made by either accepting or declining the offer/s;
- 5) Keeping lines of communication open, including ensuring that contact information such as email and cell phone numbers are updated and working;
- 6) Enquiring if no communication is received; and
- 7) Giving limited consent, at the discretion of the applicant, to share information with institutions, if their initial application is unsuccessful, for clearing house purposes or other advisory services.

### **14 Selection Cut-off Dates**

CAS will work with the various sub-sectors of the PSET sector to determine standard application cycles including standards for conditional offers, acceptance of offers and offer expiry dates. The enabling legislation must allow CAS, in consultation with the respective sectors of the PSET, to determine cut-off dates as set out in 14.1, 14.2 and 14.3 and to specify the method of publication/communication thereof.

#### **14.1 First round application cut-off date**

This date is the cut-off point for the first round of assessments by individual institutions based on NSC Grade 9 - 11 marks (as applicable to the type of institution) which enables provisional acceptance by institutions. Multiple provisional acceptances to individuals may then be recorded by the CAS enabling an individual to accept one or more of the provisional acceptances. Where not accepted within a reasonable timeframe, institutions can withdraw offers and then make offers to other applicants.

#### **14.2 Subsequent cycle cut-off dates**

The first round's cut-off date could be followed by a number of iterative rounds of provisional offers, from the respective institutions.

#### **14.3 Offer expiry dates**

Offers made by institutions will have expiry dates, to be agreed within the sector such as 3 weeks past a cycle end date for conditional offers and 6 weeks past cycle end date for non-conditional offers. This will allow institutions to withdraw offers not taken up, at their discretion.

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## **15 Funding**

The CAS is intended to be self-funding through application fees paid by applicants.

At this point, and based on the principle of self-funding, the following funding requirements are envisaged:

- 1) The CAS will be funded through a combination of application fees and voted funds;
- 2) It is the intention that the CAS, once fully established, will be self-funding on an on-going basis out of application fee income; and
- 3) Seed funding in the form of grants and other funding sources will be obtained to fund the establishment of the CAS.

The financial costing model for the CAS may need to be reconsidered, if there should be a change in the way Higher Education and Training Institutions are funded as a consequence of the recommendations of the Presidential Commission on fee free education.

## **16 Application Fees**

Fees will be determined by the Board of CAS, subject to approval by the Minister. Such fees will include:

- 1) A standard single application fee for all South African applicants (and SADC members).
- 2) A standard application fee for an application to university studies from non-SADC applicants, even if alternative educational opportunities are also indicated among the applicant's choices. These should be higher than those for SADC applicants.
- 3) A fee for change of mind with respect to study/studies applied for will be charged, after allowing one free change of application.
- 4) Application fees for other subsectors of the PSET sector e.g. the TVET and CET sectors will be investigated for subsequent phases.

## **17 Integration with NSFAS**

Applications to the CAS will provide applicants with the opportunity to immediately capture and submit a funding application which will be routed directly to NSFAS. The funding application should immediately be reviewed by NSFAS to provide an immediate response based on the data provided, in terms of the applicant's funding eligibility. This will not be a commitment to funding but merely an indication that the applicant may be eligible for funding. The funding agency will consider the funding modality.

This information, once returned to the CAS, will be included in the data provided to institutions regarding the individual's application and funding potential. Once NSFAS has reviewed applications at its various cut-off dates, NSFAS needs to update the individual's funding status to provisional funding, being a commitment to funding subject to acceptance at an accredited institution. This information shall again be made available to all institutions to which the individual has applied to confirm the provisional allocation of funding from NSFAS.

Acceptance by an institution, communicated to the CAS will then be passed on to NSFAS so that their records can be updated. NSFAS will then expect to receive final confirmation of

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registration at that institution prior to confirming funding, signing loan agreements and disbursing funds.

NSFAS must confirm its commitment to fund as soon as possible.

### 18 Interfaces with Career Development Services (CDS) and National Career Advice Portal (NCAP)

*The Apply Now!* Programme of DHET is at the interface between the CDS and the CAS as it covers areas of both components by assisting to promote applications for programme but also to motivate applications in time for the normal admissions term. The CAS will assist by identifying where applicants do not meet statutory minimum admission requirements for chosen programmes and refer them to CDS, if necessary. Therefore CDS will receive data from the CAS and advise the applicant accordingly.

### 19 Clearing House

If an applicant is not accepted into their programme of choice, they will be referred to CDS. Career counselling should be given and recommendations on alternative opportunities should be made. Applicants should be referred to alternative opportunities.

This clearing house function will also involve the institutions making unsolicited offers to applicants for places for training or education where students have not been accepted in their preferred courses (subject to consent by the student for data to be shared).

### 20 Governance

The CAS will be established as a public entity through enabling legislation, as a separate juristic person, as approved by the Minister of Higher Education and Training. It will be reporting to the Department of Higher Education and Training with its mandate derived specifically from its enabling legislation.

The Board of the public entity will be the accounting authority and the Board will be accountable and responsible to the Executive Authority, the Minister of Higher Education and Training.

The public entity will establish its own policies and operating procedures in line with legislative requirements such as procurement in terms of the PFMA.

A Draft Bill for the establishment of the Central Application Service as a national public entity will be finalised. It will present the underlying governance and management structures required to give effect to the establishment, governance, management and operations of the entity. It will state the responsible authority for developing and implementing policy.

### 21 Board of CAS

The Board of CAS will be constituted as follows:

- 2 members of the CAS Executive management (Chief Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer);
- 13 Non-Executive Board Members representative of the PSET sector as follows:

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- Four members from universities;
  - Two members from TVET colleges;
  - Two members from SETAs and the skills sector (skills development levy institutions);
  - One member from community colleges;
  - Three other Non-executive members with experience and involvement from across the PSET sector; and
  - One Member to be nominated by the Minister.
- The Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Board should be elected from the non-executive members.
  - Each Board member should serve for a period of four years and be eligible for re-appointment but may not serve as a member of the Board for more than two consecutive terms. The process for filling vacancies on the Board is set out in the draft bill.
  - The Minister of Higher Education and Training as the executive authority will be responsible for the appointment of the Board of the CAS through a process of requesting nominations for this Board from the public and direct stakeholders. The required competencies of the Board Members will be stipulated in the CAS Bill..

## 22 Board Committees

The Board should establish at least the following Board committees:

- An Executive Committee comprising at least the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Board.
- An Audit and Risk Committee should be established in terms of the Treasury guidelines regarding the formation of audit committees as provided in terms of section 77 of the PFMA.
- A Human Resources and Remuneration Committee, again, comprising a maximum of three members of the Board and at least two other non-board members, including the executive Head of Human Resources.
- An Information, Communication and Technology Committee, comprising of a maximum of three (3) members of the Board, including the CFO and a non-executive Board member, and at least two other non-board members, including the COO and the CIO/IT Executive. It is recommended that an outside ICT Expert is invited to be a member of the ICT committee.

## 23 Advisory Committees and User Groups

The Board must also establish Advisory Committees to assist it.

- Each Advisory Committee should represent a different sector in the larger PSET sector.

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- An Advisory Committee will be made up of the following persons: the Chief Executive Officer; the Chief Operating Officer of the CAS; and between five and eight representatives (not Board members) nominated by the respective sector with a thorough understanding of the sector requirements and objectives. The Advisory Committees may, at their discretion, establish User Groups to deal with the functional aspects of the interface and integration between the CAS and the various service partners. It is envisaged that separate User Groups will be established for each of the major sectors within the PSET sector based on the expectations that the interfaces and data requirements may be specific to each sector.
- A User Group should comprise of at least the following: the Chief Operating Officer of the CAS; the Information Technology Executive of the CAS and between five and eight users of the CAS services nominated by the sector as a whole.

## 24 Management

The management of the CAS will comprise the following:

- Chief Executive Officer who is also the accounting officer of the CAS;
- Chief Financial Officer;
- Chief Operations Officer;
- Information Technology Executive;
- Marketing and Outreach Executive; and
- Planning and Monitoring Executive.

## 25 Outreach

Outreach will include the entire marketing and outreach process of the CAS which is aimed at ensuring appropriately completed and submitted applications from various sources. *The Apply Now!* Programme of the DHET is an integral part of the outreach process.

Points-of-Presence will be established through defined criteria. Relationships will be established with a number of service partners in order to provide technology access for potential applicants who may not have their own individual or at home access to online or mobile applications. It is necessary to consider receiving both manual applications and online applications at access points to support the prospective student in submitting an application.

The outreach activities include:

- School visits;
- Career fairs;
- Sending relevant printed material on the CAS directly to schools and universities, and directly to students on request;
- Handling walk-ins;
- Identifying access points such as libraries and municipal offices;
- Dealing with social media; and
- Dealing with call centre queries.

The responsibility to recruit students and to market their own qualifications and programmes remains with the institutions.

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## **26 Monitoring and Reporting**

The monitoring and reporting of the CAS as a public entity is described in the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for CAS and is based on the South African Government M&E policies and frameworks:

- Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) Guideline 3.1.5 “Functions of an M&E Component in National Government Departments” updated 31 March 2014 (for set-up of entity);
- DPME Framework for Strengthening Citizen-Government Partnerships for Monitoring Frontline Service Delivery (CBM Framework), August 2013;
- National Treasury: Framework for Managing Programme Performance Information May 2007;
- PFMA Regulations provides requirements for reporting;
- Requirements of the Auditor General.

CAS will also have to comply with the requirements of the Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 and the Protection of Personal Information (POPI) Act, 2013.

## **27 Transitional Arrangements**

### **27.1 Seed Funding**

National Treasury and the National Skills Fund will be engaged to secure additional funds.

### **27.2 CAS Project**

Until the entity has been established, the preparation, development and administration necessary to prepare for the establishment of the CAS will be conducted through a DHET project. Implementation of the CAS system will first be piloted and the rollout of the service will be conducted through a phased approach

### **27.3 Recruitment of Staff**

The recruitment of staff will commence after the entity has been established by legislation.

### **27.4 Location of CAS**

It is proposed that CAS will be located in Gauteng, Tshwane. This is appropriate since it is the administration capital of South Africa and hosts other key service partners such as CHE, SAQA, SETAs, and QCTO. Regional centres and Points-of-Presences will be phased in overtime.

### **27.5 Admissions Policies**

The Universities and TVET Colleges will need to ensure that their Admissions Policies and procedures are compatible with the process of applications of the CAS.

### **27.6 Participation of Private Institutions**

It is proposed that the participation by private institution will in time be compulsory. Compulsory participation could be enforced through the registration requirements in the applicable

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Regulations. This could be implemented through a prescribed timeframe to accommodate the additional applicant volumes.

The DHET already has a database of registered private colleges and higher education institutions and their registered qualifications. Participation of private institutions would benefit both the students and the institutions.

### **27.7 Procurement**

The CAS will develop its own procurement systems based on the technical specifications and business requirements of the PSET sector, but could make use of the existing systems of public universities in the interim up until the time that the entity is operational.

### **27.8 National Learners' Records Database (NLRD)**

As the NLRD remains the responsibility of SAQA, the National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008 must be amended to impose a statutory responsibility on SAQA to make the NLRD available to the CAS. The legislation should enable CAS to use the NLRD for application purposes and communication to the applicant when previous certification has taken place.

### **27.9 Verification of Grade 9 to 12 Results**

A mechanism will be established to verify the examination results of applicants with Grade 9 to 11 and 12 results as well as for applicants with a National Certificate (Vocational), NATED, CIE, NASCA, CET, and CETC certificates.

### **27.10 Site of Delivery**

All applications through CAS will be for a programme delivered at a specific site or campus as institutions have multiple campuses or delivery sites. Where a higher education qualification of a university is delivered at a college in terms of S48 of the Continuing Education and Training Act, 2006, site accreditation needs to be obtained.

### **27.11 Databases**

The necessary steps must be taken to ensure that the CAS has access to all the necessary relevant databases such as the matriculation results of DBE and IEB.

### **27.12 National Student Financial Aid Scheme Act, 1999**

The NSFAS Act, 1999 must be amended to align with the NSFAS Student Centric Approach, so that qualifying students will receive notification of funding independent of the institution that accepts the student.

### **27.13 Phasing in of the system**

The phasing in of the central application system and service in public and private higher education institutions / higher education colleges / university colleges / TVET and CET college and private colleges will occur at a date(s) determined by the Minister.

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