

**QUALITY ASSURANCE FOR TEACHER EDUCATION IN MERGING HISTORICALLY
DISADVANTAGED INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

by

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*T*o my husband André

and my children

Fanie, Adri, Mike, Maretha and Tiaan

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SUMMARY

Quality assurance for teacher education in merging historically disadvantaged institutions of higher education

by

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Arising from a literature study, the notions of quality and quality assurance (QA) were described. A literature study was undertaken regarding the current South African national QA policies on teacher education. A case study was conducted at Tshiya College of Education, which merged with the University of the North: Qwaqwa Branch during the rightsizing of higher education in 2001. The establishment of a QA system for teacher education, on micro level, was critically described.

Action research was used to investigate the process of QA. A steering committee was established. Two QA seminars contributed toward an awareness campaign. A SWOT-analysis was done. A QA policy was designed, including a framework-for-action which was action researched by volunteers. Researchers developed their own improvement plans by: compiling their job descriptions; rating their effectiveness of task execution; and attending to emerging quality gaps to determine focus areas. Professional development was emphasised. Improvement plans for Micro Teaching and Media were action researched. Taxing circumstances, resulting from the higher education transformation and its effect on the research, were reported.

Data emerged from describing the action research phases: planning, implementation, observation, and reflection for re-planning. Self-, peer-, and student-assessments were utilised. Apart from discussions and meetings, the researchers kept diaries and forms were designed for assessments. In both improvement plans, reflection-in-action led to identification of unforeseen weaknesses which were addressed as side-spirals of the

original plans. Reflection-on-action took place at a formal meeting to which external evaluators were invited. Strengths and weaknesses were determined and findings corroborated and clustered toward final recommendations.

Intrinsic motivation was described as a precursor to involvement in QA. Leadership/management/planning was seen as creating infrastructure to encourage employees to focus on quality and movement toward the institution's vision. Implementation was described as taking action to put a realistic plan into practice. Teamwork was identified as a hallmark of action research and emphasis was placed on collective wisdom. It was concluded that meritorious modelling meant that educators should lead by example.

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ACRONYMS

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
ARCS	Attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction
AS/NZS ISO 9001	Australian Standards/New Zealand Standards ISO 9000 series
CCERSA	Committee of College of Education Rectors of South Africa
CE	College of Education
CEs	Colleges of Education
CHE	Council on Higher Education
COLTS	Culture of Learning, Teaching and Service
COTEP	Committee On Teacher Education Policy
CS	Colleges and schools
CTP	Committee for Technikon Principals
CUP	Committee of University Principals
DoE	Department of Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EE	Environmental Education
ELRC	Education Labour Relations Council
EPU	Education Policy Unit
EQA	External Quality Assessment
ETD	Education Training and Development
ETDP	Education Training and Development Practice
ETQA	Education and Training Quality Assurance Body
ETQAs	Education and Training Quality Assurance Bodies
FET	Further Education and Training
FSHFETT	Free State Higher and Further Education and Training Trust
HAIs	Historically Advantaged Institutions
HDI	Historically Disadvantaged Institution
HDIs	Historically Disadvantaged Institutions
HDU	Historically Disadvantaged University
HE	Higher Education
HEDCOM	Heads of Education Departments Committee
HEI	Higher Education Institution

HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
HEQC	Higher Education Quality Committee
HOD	Head of Department
HODs	Heads of Department
INQAAHE	International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education
MT	Micro Teaching
NCATE	National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education
NCHE	National Commission on Higher Education
NDoE	National Department of Education
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSB	National Standards Body
NSBs	National Standards Bodies
NSE	Norms and Standards for Educators
NSTETD	Norms and Standards for Teacher Education, Training and Development
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
PIs	Performance Indicators
QA	Quality Assurance
QPU	Quality Promotion Unit
RAU	Rand Afrikaans University
RDP	Restructuring and Development Programme
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SA	South Africa
SACE	South African Council for Educators
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers Union
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SAUVCA	South African Universities' Vice-Chancellors' Association
SERTEC	Certification Council for Technikon Education
SETAs	Section Education and Training Authorities
SGB	Standard Generating Body
SGBs	Standard Generating Bodies

SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
TP	Teaching Practice
TQM	Total Quality Management
TSUD	Teacher Supply, Utilisation and Development
UFS	University of the Free State
UK	United Kingdom
UNIQWA	University of the North: Qwaqwa Branch
URHE	Unit for Research into Higher Education
USA	United States of America
WITS	University of the Witwatersrand

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RESEARCH DESIGN

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

Because of the development of the global market place and new technology, the contemporary business environment - including education, which became a commodity in 1995¹ - now draws its professional work force from all corners of the globe (Lenn 1997a: 109). In order to be internationally recognised, respected, marketable and academically mobile, educators have to assure others that the quality of their system meets world-class standards. Therefore, in this new, borderless educational arena, quality, purpose and responsibility become major priorities of higher education institutions (HEIs) around the world (Bamba 1997:17; Jacobs 1997b:88; Horsburgh *et al.* 1997:73; McVicar 1997:133; Yeboah 1997:239). Internationally the importance of quality assurance (QA) in higher education (HE) has been highlighted by various factors, such as massification, globalization, financial stringency, and demands from governments and the public for the improvement of educational institutions and their accountability. The fact that international organisations such as the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE), The Centre for Quality Assurance in International Education and The European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education, were established, indicates the strongly felt need for bringing about consistently high standards of performance at educational institutions in today's interdependent world (see 2.4.2.2). In the South African context universities and technikons have since the early 1990's joined the international striving toward excellence (Noruwana 1993:38). Colleges of Education (CEs), at one of which the concern for doing this research arose, did not form part of HE and were therefore less involved in the 'pursuit of academic excellence'. In 1998, QA was a totally new concept for CEs, especially for historically disadvantaged colleges. It was recognised, however, that South African institutions offering teacher education could

¹ The General Agreement on Trade and Services became legally effective on 1 January 1995 (Ascher 1997:2).

pursue quality education by making use of the existing national and international support systems. In the event, CEs were incorporated into HEIs before this research was completed; the college where the action research took place being incorporated into a historically disadvantaged university (HDU), the University of the North: Qwaqwa Branch (UNIQWA).

During the time of the research, South African educational institutions operated within a major educational transformation process (see 1.4). One of the actions taken by the Ministry of Education, and documented in the *White paper: Education and training in a democratic South Africa: first steps to develop a new system* (RSA 1995b), in order to transform the education system in South Africa (SA), was to call for a national Audit on Teacher Education in 1994. One of the objectives of the Audit was to evaluate the quality of teacher education programs offered (Department of Education [DoE]1995, Appendix A:1). The focus of one of the six sub-sectoral reports was on CEs.

The view was expressed that the quality of teacher education was the biggest challenge confronting education in SA at the close of the twentieth century. *'Policies for teacher supply, utilisation and development (TSUD) lie at the heart of this challenge because teachers are the most critical influence on quality'* (DoE 1995:23). Bengu (1998) echoed this crucial statement by saying that *'teachers hold the future of the nation in an almost literal sense'*.

After the National Department of Education (NDoE) had had a 'bosberaad' with all provincial educational leaders, academic staff of the eight CEs in the Free State were called to an urgent summit at Kroonstad (9 March 1998). The problem of poor results in the November 1997 examinations were discussed and solutions sought. It was evident that national educational leaders were concerned about the quality of work done at CEs. The Committee of College of Education Rectors of South Africa (CCERSA) summit (19 - 20 November 1998) also expressed the above-mentioned concern.

1.2 MOTIVATION FOR RESEARCH

The report on the National Teacher Education Audit (DoE 1995:52-79) stated clearly that the quality of teacher education at CEs was uneven, low and poor with students seldom

having meaningful exposure to the realities of schools and classrooms. On the whole, CEs were reported as not being cost-effective institutions, with a wastage of resources resulting from the 20% to 35% failure rate. The emphasis in teacher education in SA was on quantity rather than quality. At many contact colleges, staff were poor professional role models because of their absenteeism, unpunctuality, 'moonlighting' and lack of dedication. To make things worse, staff appraisal was not undertaken at most colleges. Administrative inefficiency appeared to be a problem in most sectors. According to Niemann and co-workers (1999:7) students entered teaching education programs without any intention of teaching, but merely to obtain a HE qualification in the absence of other affordable options. At many contact colleges student behaviour was undisciplined and destructive. With regard to physical facilities, the lack of maintenance was indicated as a major problem in the college sector. The lack of security on college campuses as well as tension often existing between contact colleges and surrounding communities, led to vandalism, theft and sexual abuse.

Vosloo (1994:4) describes the inadequacies of CEs when he refers to *'disparate standards of pre-service teacher education and ... education that does not adequately match students' learning with the demands of classroom practice'*. The national policy on TSUD (DoE 1996a:4) expresses the need for QA as follows: *'... the teacher education system as a whole pays little attention to defining or developing quality and has no ongoing QA system in place to maintain quality teacher education'*. The above statements show clearly that quality improvement was desperately needed in CEs. The same conditions also applied to teacher education offered at HDUs.

The future of CEs was being negotiated. Radical parties such as the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU), represented at the Free State Higher and Further Education and Training Trust (FSHFETT) meeting on 24 November 1998, suggested that the authorities should *'get rid of Colleges of Education'*. The National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) recommended that teacher education should be seen as a unified field and that it belonged in HE (RSA 1996a:55)(see 1.4). The Minister of Education (Bengu 1998) reported as follows:

We all know that the Apartheid government established colleges of education as if they were spaza shops. The result is a plethora of colleges, most of them only a little better than high schools, graduating teachers into an oversubscribed school system. Quality both in the colleges themselves and at the schools has been the casualty. That explains why the proposed rationalisation has had to go beyond merely reducing the number of colleges ... and why we have decided to incorporate colleges of education into the HE sector.

For a College of Education (CE) to be part of the above-mentioned unified HE field, under the jurisdiction of the NDoE, it would have to prove itself fit for quality work. The report on Open Learning (DoE 1995, Appendix C:1) mentioned the need for a teacher education sector that could deliver educators of quality. The same report (DoE 1995, Appendix C:3) asked for a clearly specified set of quality indicators to ensure quality and to reveal areas in need of development.

During a Free State provincial workshop (Bloemfontein, 24 and 25 March 1998) on the revision of *Norms and Standards for Teacher Education, Training and Development* (NSTETD), the concept of QA was for the first time introduced and discussed with delegates, *inter alia* from CEs. Chapter Eight of the document under discussion at the workshop, addressed the topic of QA and generated much discussion, since it had not appeared in the first edition of NSTETD. QA was referred to on the agenda as 'silences that still need to be addressed'.

At the above-mentioned workshop it was stated that CEs would have five years to prepare themselves for an external quality evaluation by a national committee. A technical committee would be working on criteria for such assessment. In 1998 the following criteria were suggested for the interim: management and administration; funding and financial independence; infrastructure (resources); staff development; research; QA of programs, *etcetera*. On 16 November 1998, the Committee On Teacher Education Policy (COTEP), also published guidelines and a checklist to CEs to assist them in developing their own internal quality criteria and performance indicators (PIs).

If, during the external quality evaluation, a college were to be found unfit for the job, it would be given time to improve. If it did not respond satisfactorily, funding would be taken away, its qualifications would not be recognised and this decision of the committee would be made known in the media. This was a formidable ultimatum delivered to CEs (see 2.4.3.3 par 3; 1.4 par 7). Looking back, after three years, one realises that none of these planned actions were implemented. Husén (1997:30) mentions that the concept of quality is often used as a weapon in the political debate on educational policy. This does not seem to be out of line with world trends since Webstock and Schreiner (1997:212) mention that in most systems QA is directly linked to funding and punitive sanctions. Mosdell (1997:162) reports that in Britain a Further Education Funding Council *'operates within an inspection framework which provides for four-yearly inspections of all Further Education Colleges, the results of which are made public'*. In the Netherlands the minister also has the right to stop financing programs lacking quality (Kalkwijk:1997:91-93). The way forward for CEs in SA that wanted to survive, therefore could be spelt out in two words: quality assurance (see 2.5).

Since the NDoE is responsible for *'the development and monitoring of national norms and standards'* (DoE 1996a:7) it would have to set standards and built capacity to achieve these standards for which it is responsible. In the past, SA never had legislation to govern the CE sector (Vosloo 1994:4), but in recent years quite a number of governance mechanisms were developed and put in place to tighten control over the outcomes of teacher education. These are: Norms and Standards for Teacher Education, Training and Development (NSTETD), Norms and Standards for Educators (NSE), the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), Education and Training Quality Assurance bodies (ETQAs), the South African Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (SACATE), National Standards Bodies (NSBs), Standards Generating Bodies (SGBs), the Educators Quality Committee (EQC), the Council on Higher Education (CHE), the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC), and others.

For institutions offering teacher education, in order to have their programs accredited by QA mechanisms like these mentioned above, capacity building and upliftment of standards

were inevitable. In a democratic new SA these mechanisms might be seen as state driven bureaucratic control (Graham & Barnett 1996:176). Wise (1997:12), on the other hand, points out that accreditation standards are the bedrock on which established professions such as medicine and law have built their reputations.

1.3 PROBLEMS ANTICIPATED

Globally, considerable research has already been done on QA. In SA the stimulation to engage in issues surrounding quality in HE emanated from the establishment of the Certification Council for Technikon Education (SERTEC) in 1986 to ensure the quality of programs at technikons, as well as the investigation into universities undertaken by the Committee of University Principals (CUP) in 1987 (Muller 1997:37). Although HEIs were involved in research on QA since then, CEs were not part of the HE sector and therefore did not become part of the emerging awareness either. Subsequently many changes took place in teacher education, some of them very painful but possibly strategically sound (Lubisi 1999:1). Some CEs were rationalised and changed into Further Education and Training (FET) Institutions, while others, like Tshiya CE where this research-concern emerged, were earmarked by the NDoE for incorporation into universities and technikons. In order to address the above-mentioned inadequacies of teacher education, previously offered at CEs and now to be continued at universities, 'tailored' research on QA in teacher education became extremely necessary.

This research, however, presented its own problems. The many different definitions of and views on quality problematised the study and its determination. Ashton (1997:15) mentions that *'quality systems vary with different structures, ownerships and procedures being used'*; even income and social imperatives have an impact. De Gast (1997:50) supports this view when he remarks that quality can have a different meaning for every institution and can only be understood in the context of an institution's own goals. According to Webbstock and Schreiner (1997:211) we need to reach *'consensus of subjectivities'* if we want to understand quality. Russell (1997:193) characterises quality as an elusive concept constantly in need of clarification.

There is also no easy way to generate acceptable criteria to determine levels of quality (Vroeijenstijn 1997a:205; Webbstock & Schreiner 1997:213). Even though a common 'yardstick' might be developed to measure achievements, Clark (1997:38) argues that it will be unreasonable and counterproductive to use the same set of criteria to assess quality aspects in the heterogeneous HE sector. Fish (1991:24) draws attention to the human factor often being left out when quality is assessed:

... the end product of teacher education is human beings who are still learning to be teachers. At what point is the teacher to be measured/inspected for standards? How can we standardise teachers? Should we wish to?

Clark (1997:40-44) discusses a number of recurrent problems that emerged during four years of quality assessment done in the United Kingdom (UK). He mentions dilemmas like finding a suitable assessor for a specific area, to avoid what happened in the UK where external assessors did not understand interdisciplinary areas that they had to assess. This resulted in the reports being rejected by the providers. If external assessors are not used peer review and self-evaluation have their own problems. De Gast (1997:50) reports that in the Netherlands peer review was found to be time-consuming and costly and self-evaluation at course level was not standardised and at times not even applied. There must be a healthy liaison between internal self-evaluation and an external review (Ashton 1997:12). It would be a challenge to create an appropriate evaluation framework for modern HE (Clark 1997:48).

1.4 THE CURRENT POSITION OF COLLEGES OF EDUCATION

Another major problem emerged during the period of this research. The research was done during a time of turbulence and transformation, especially with regard to the future of CEs. The NCHE Report (1996b:8,9) recommended that a single coherent national HE system should be established. The Commission's proposals envisaged the incorporation of CEs into universities and technikons (see 1.2 par 3). According to the *Education White Paper 3: A Programme for Higher Education Transformation* (RSA 1997a:15), such a single co-ordinated system for HE would:

overcome the fragmentation, inequalities and inefficiencies that characterise the present system;
facilitate the development ... of a range of institutional programme offerings through a single NQF, based on flexible entry and exit points which will enhance horizontal and vertical mobility; and
improve the responsiveness of HE to social and economic needs in general and the labour market opportunities in part.

In terms of the constitutional provision (Schedule 4 of the Constitution of the RSA, 1996, Act No 108) that tertiary education is a national competence, all colleges offering HE programs, such as CEs, should fall under the jurisdiction of the National Department. The Higher Education Act of 1997 No 101 (section 21)(1) enables the Minister of Education to declare the incorporation of a CE into the national public HE system. The transfer of CEs, from provincial to national jurisdiction, was since 1997 the subject of many discussions among academics, professionals and politicians. The *Education White Paper 3* (RSA 1997a:19) recommended that a task team, under the auspices of the Heads of Education Departments Committee (HEDCOM), should take this matter forward. The Task Team were appointed in August 1997 and presented their final report to HEDCOM, and to the Council of Education Ministers, in mid 1998. In June 1998, the NDoE released another document entitled *The Incorporation of Colleges of Education into the Higher Education Sector* which indicated that a Transition Committee would advise and co-ordinate the incorporation process (DoE 1998h:20). Badsha (DoE 1998h:i) states the following in the preface of this document: *'The new framework provides a golden opportunity to restructure and retool colleges of education to meet the challenges that confront teacher education, in particular the need to improve quality'*.

Two models for incorporation were put forward. A college could opt to be incorporated into a university or technikon, or to become an autonomous CE if the college had at least 2000 full-time students. No CE in the country qualified for the second option and therefore the first option became the only option. In March 1999, Niemann and co-workers published *A Framework for the Incorporation of Colleges of Education into the Higher Education and*

Further Education and Training Sectors, as part of the University of the Free State's (UFS) Unit for Research into Higher Education's (URHE) biannual newsletter. In this document two main issues were addressed. Perspectives were shared about a possible method to incorporate CEs into the Free State HE sector, and a viable alternative was provided for rationalised CEs to become part of the FET sector. Many meetings and workshops with representatives from colleges in the Free State, were initiated by the URHE to communicate possibilities regarding the establishment of regional initiatives for the restructuring of HE and FET in the Free State.

The complex and difficult incorporation process proceeded at a much slower pace than anticipated. In time it became clear to the NDoE that the original framework had to be adapted (DoE 2000:1). In a circular to the members of provincial steering committees for the incorporation of colleges, the Director-General of the NDoE (DoE 2000:8), said:

It has now become apparent this process is unlikely to reach a satisfactory conclusion ... There are two major reasons for this. Firstly, the rapidly changing contexts of higher education in general and teacher education in particular have invalidated the assumptions on which the original process was based. Secondly, unforeseen impediments specifically in regard to labour issues have arisen.

The last sentence of the quotation emphasises the very tense human resource issue that emerged from the incorporation process. In the same circular (DoE 2000:2) it was announced that the NDoE intended to appoint a national steering committee, the third of its kind within the NDoE, and an outside agency to facilitate the fast-tracking of the long delayed incorporation process.

For a number of reasons there was unhappiness among college personnel and other stakeholders, pertaining to the way that the incorporation process was dealt with. May (2000) reported:

This has been the toughest and most depressing year of my tenure as Executive Director of CCERSA. There were times when I seriously questioned the wisdom of continuing with this work when so many had lost

their faith in the colleges of education sector. Even people who previously supported us, now seem to sing a different tune.

Among many others, one of the main concerns of CEs was *'the lack of adequate consultation in this process, especially concerning the implementation of the model, where national unions and CCERSA have been excluded from the process, as well as the college councils and the members of staff'* (Nicholls 2000b:1). Different CEs prepared reports to reflect their own unique circumstances. During June 2000, urgent reports of concern were submitted to the Minister by the National Professional Teacher's Organisation of South Africa, SADTU, and CCERSA. After a meeting between the Minister and the provincial representatives from the executive committee of CCERSA, Taylor (2000:1) reported that *'the Minister seemed genuinely struck by the seriousness of the situation'*.

Nevertheless, in the *Sowetan* of 15 June 2000, public notice was given by the Minister of Education, Kadar Asmal, of his intention to declare Tshiya CE a sub-division of UNIQWA, with effect from 1 January 2001. With this final declaration published, two years after the start of this research project, many staff members at Tshiya CE became uncertain about their future in teacher education and displayed low morale. The staff in general were no longer interested in QA. It became clear that the government would not implement its threat of a quality evaluation of CEs (see 1.2 par 6 &7). With no external pressure for QA it became obvious that the research focus had to be revisited. Many options were weighed and discussed. A decision was taken by myself as the researcher, interested colleagues, the QA Committee, the Rectorate of Tshiya CE and the Dean of the School of Education at UNIQWA, to continue with the action research. It seemed no longer viable to involve all staff members in an institutional QA plan but rather to call for volunteers. After many discussions it was decided to focus on a personal, professional improvement plan for volunteers.

1.5 THE RESEARCHER'S POSITION

I was in a unique position for doing this action research. I had served on the staff of a CE for thirteen years and was grappling on a daily basis with the realities of the situation and its problems. The incorporation of Tshiya CE into UNIQWA demotivated staff members,

including myself. With regard to the research, the many changes taking place necessitated a paradigm shift from improving the programs and adjacent areas of the whole institution to a personal, professional improvement plan for volunteers, focusing to a great extent on the teaching and learning process. I was convenor of one of the QA committees at Tshiya CE, that is the Quality Assurance Committee for Programs, the Teaching and Learning Process and Assessment (QA Committee²). This committee, which consisted of six members, had a good track record of team work, since it had steered the staff of the College from 1995 - 1997 to re-curriculate their programs to an outcomes based approach. For some staff members it was not a first experience to be part of a research project, since they had already been involved in a previous research project undertaken by myself at the College. The unsettling circumstances of the incorporation process of the College caused some of the members of the steering committee to resign. Fortunately other members were still willing to steer the action research on QA and a few new members even joined the group.

Being a head of department at the College, and having played a leading role in curriculum development in the past (1995-1997) and now in QA, I was aware that my own subjectivity in the research would be a limitation. The fact that the College became part of UNIQWA during the time of the research meant that more stakeholders would be involved. More perspectives were considered to eliminate this limitation to a certain extent. Strategies to neutralise biased information were adopted to help minimise personal subjectivity. They were:

- encouragement for input from as many stakeholders as possible
- the use of triangulation; bringing different kinds of evidence into some relationship with each other to compare and contrast the evidence (Elliot 1991:82)
- to see the researcher's own role as that of a research facilitator or consultant who acts as catalyst to help all stakeholders understand problems that confront them and to support them as they work toward effective solutions (Stringer 1996:22)

CEs were rationalised during the later period of this research. To motivate a staff of 63 to participate in a QA program, was difficult and became impossible toward the end of 2000

² This committee became the steering committee for the action research.

(see 1.6 par 2). Nevertheless, it was decided that research regarding teacher education was still a burning issue which needed to be addressed.

From a literature search by the subject librarian, 373 titles of publications emerged, addressing the following key concepts : QA; teacher education; standards; and excellence. This proved that 'the wheel had already been invented'. Blake (1994:26) states that '*education is awash with the rhetoric of quality*'. It was nevertheless a challenge for me to contribute toward base-line research for teacher education offered at a merged HDU/CE. Two warnings were taken into account, namely that professional or management scepticism could be a barrier to the implementation of quality management (Navaratnam 1997:17), and that quality can only be built over a period of time (Ngwenya 2000:2).

1.6 PROBLEM STATEMENT

How can the quality of teacher education at a HDU, 'receiving' a historically disadvantaged college of education, be improved through the implementation of a QA system? The following research questions were formulated:

1.6.1 How is quality defined? What is QA and what is the philosophy behind it?

1.6.2 What current South African national QA policies on teacher education exist?

1.6.3 How can the establishment of a QA system for teacher education programs, at a merged HDU/CE in the Free State, be described critically and evaluated by means of action research? Initially, the following research questions were developed early in 1999 by nine area-related QA committees established by the management of Tshiya CE:

1.6.3.1 *Management*

What should a QA policy for teacher education programs entail? How should such a policy be designed and implemented? How should such a QA policy effectively be managed?

1.6.3.2 *Programs*

Are the teacher education programs relevant to the needs of the learners? Do the programs provide the learners with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes according to NSE (DoE 1998d)? Do the curricula of the different programs meet the standards laid down by SAQA to be registered on NQF Level Five?

1.6.3.3 *The teaching and learning process*

How does effective teaching and learning take place? What is the place of Didactics in the teacher education curriculum?

1.6.3.4 *Assessment*

What does an appropriate, continuous assessment model look like? Should marks or icons be utilised in true Outcomes Based Education (OBE) fashion? Should examinations still be written? To what extent should there be open book assessment? Seeing that there are time boundaries, do learners fail? How many supplementary opportunities should learners have?

1.6.3.5 *Staff Development*

How can academic and support staff be assisted in their personal and professional development to be responsive to the vision of the institution? What is the place of tutoring and mentoring in an effective OBE system? How can personal commitment and team work be enhanced?

1.6.3.6 *Resources*

How can existing human and physical resources fully be utilised and extended? What will ensure that equipment be kept safe, in good condition and up to date with current technological developments? How can a well equipped media centre be established?

1.6.3.7 *Marketing and Fund Raising*

How can a constant flow of income be ensured to provide for QA? How can the status of teacher education at a historically disadvantaged institution (HDI) be upgraded in order to attract academically strong students? What are the possibilities regarding bursaries?

1.6.3.8 *Security, safety and health*

What is necessary to secure the campus and the institution's property in order to create a safe and healthy environment conducive for teaching and learning?

1.6.3.9 ***Student Support Services***

How can students at a HDI, studying at tertiary level in their second and third language, be assisted to cope with English as medium of instruction? How can students be assisted in attaining basic transferrable skills? How can a one-stop-student-support-service-centre be put in place to attend to academic, financial, emotional, moral, and health needs of students?

Owing to the rationalisation of CEs and the fact that the external threat of Government to evaluate CEs had faded, only a few staff members were voluntarily willing to participate in the action research. Therefore, all these focus areas could not be attended to at first, but only a few selected ones (printed in bold). A QA policy from area 1.6.3.1 as well as two improvement plans focusing on the teaching and learning process from 1.6.3.3 were action researched. An improvement plan was also developed for student support services to assist students with English as medium of instruction (see 1.6.3.9). However, the lecturer who wished to undertake this was transferred to a school before the research could be implemented. Because many of these areas are interlinked, the first and the third questions from 1.6.3.5 were also addressed. Seeing that QA is an ongoing process, the other research questions could still be addressed as part of the institution's QA program.

1.7 AIM OF RESEARCH

In order to critically describe the establishment of a QA system for teacher education at a merged HDU/CE, I as the researcher, aimed to:

- Conduct a literature study in order to describe what quality is; what QA is; as well as the philosophy behind it.
- Describe the current South African national QA policies on teacher education.
- Do a case study at UNIQWA:Tshiya (Tshiya Centre) in the Eastern Free State by designing a QA system for teacher education improvement and facilitate the

implementation thereof through action research at the institution (at instructional program level)(see 2.4.2.4). A self-reflective spiral of planning, acting, observing, reflecting and re-planning would be entailed in a framework-for-action for improvement.

- Describe the phases of the action research and the strengths and weaknesses that occurred from analysing and interpreting observations and reflections; collect and file data during the entire period of the action research; and discuss emerging findings.
- Provide recommendations for the assurance of quality teacher education.

1.8 RESEARCH DESIGN

Although action research is a relatively, unexplored research method in South African education, it was used as an empowering strategy to help personnel at an educational institution to research, and gain understanding of, the different notions of quality and the concept QA. The aim was for participants to continuously assess and improve the quality of their practices and finally to adopt ownership of a life-long self-improvement model (Kells 1993:10). According to Navaratnam (1997:7) this should be a never-ending journey.

Zuber-Skerritt (1996:11) distinguishes three types of action research:

- Technical action research which aims to improve the effectiveness of educational or managerial practice. The practitioners are normally co-opted and depend greatly on the researcher as a facilitator.
- Practical action research which aims at the practitioners' understanding and professional development. The role of the researcher is Socratic in nature and should be seen as an attempt to encourage practical deliberation and self-reflection.
- Emancipatory action research which not only focuses on technical and practical amelioration of practices, but also on changing systems (e.g. curricula and the QA thereof). The empowerment and self-confidence of participants become important focuses. The research also attempts to solve complex problems in new situations, such as Curriculum 2005/21 and QA, and to work collaboratively as a 'community of scholars' toward achieving solutions. This form of research is based on

predictions of future needs, visions of a better and fairer world, the development of critical thinkers, self-assessors and learning how to learn. Teachers therefore ask critical questions, challenge previously held beliefs, query current systems and act as agents for change and the setting of broad objectives (Zuber-Skerritt in Hay and Buchner 1998:7). Emancipatory action research is applicable to social research aimed at social reconstruction and transformation and, with reference to this research, to the reconstruction of quality paradigms.

Of the three types of action research mentioned above, emancipatory action research was applied in this research. It can be defined as

... a form of collective self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social or educational practices, as well as their understanding of these practices and the situations in which these practices are carried out ... The approach is only action research when it is collaborative, though it is important to realise that the action research of the group is achieved through the critically examined action of individual group members (Zuber-Skerritt 1996b:147).

According to Hay and Buchner (1998:7), the value of emancipatory action research lies in the fact that:

- results gained from the research might advance knowledge in the field of study
- it will lead to practical quality improvement
- it gives educators the opportunity to work collaboratively with colleagues, students and other stakeholders
- it gives all people concerned equal partnership in the enquiry
- it increases self-reflection, self-evaluation and responsibility toward persons and groups
- groups learn progressively and publicly by doing and by making mistakes in a self-reflective spiral of planning, acting, observing, reflecting and re-planning

The above-mentioned statements underscore the aim of this research - to facilitate the

development and implementation of a QA system, in a collaborative way, at a merged HDU/CE, by willing staff members involved in teacher education. Emancipatory action research was chosen as a research method to empower staff members to acquire knowledge and insight in their own situation and to implement streamlined and highly effective (quality assured) actions in their personal and professional lives.

An action-based case study was done at Tshiya Centre. Purposeful sampling was done of the CE in the Eastern Free State to form the case study. The specific CE was a critical-case since the study illustrated 'some phenomenon dramatically' (McMillan & Schumacher 1993:380), which was that a QA system could be established in a higher education institution (HEI) in the uncertain times of the transformation of teacher education in SA during 1998 - 2001 (McMillan & Schumacher 1993:380)(see 4.3).

The researcher's role was that of a participant researcher (see 1.5 for the researcher's position and 4.4.1 for the researcher's role). Entry into the field was obtained by doing research at my workplace (Tshiya CE)(see 4.4.2). Formal permission for the research was obtained from the Rectorate of the CE and the Dean of the Faculty of Education at UNIQWA. In order to have as much support as possible and to adhere to the principle of transparency, the staff at the CE were kept informed about the research. After a call for voluntary participation, seven staff members volunteered for participation in the action research project.

A central/steering committee, consisting of the seven volunteers at Tshiya Centre, was established to facilitate and oversee the action research. A QA policy was designed. Part of the QA policy was a suggested framework-for-action according to which staff members could improve their practices. Two workshops were presented to assist participants with background knowledge about action research, the concepts 'quality' and QA, as well as the designed QA policy and the framework-for-action. Improvement plans were developed. Ideas were corroborated by discussions and implemented by means of action research for one semester - which is an academic unit - from February to June 2001. The one semester research period covered the full cycle of action research. It was concluded

with a formal reflection meeting where strengths and weaknesses were identified for re-planning the next cycle (see 5.8.4).

The planning phase started when three willing staff members reflected on their current practices and identified their strengths and weaknesses according to their rated job performance. The weaknesses indicated quality gaps. An own personal identification of the area to be improved was important to ensure that the participants took ownership of their self-compiled strategic plan for improvement. Information that emerged from reflecting collaboratively with colleagues and available line-managers on current practices, assisted the three willing staff members to set goals, outcomes and PIs for themselves during the **planning** stage of the action research. The following areas were covered: Micro Teaching (MT), Teaching Media as an important part of Didactics Education (Media), and Rapid and Perceptive Reading Skills (English). Before the implementation phase started, the researcher who focused on English, was transferred to a school and could no longer participate.

The MT- and Media-plans were **implemented** from February to June 2001, in the normal class situation, according to the normal time table of two willing staff members at Tshiya Centre. Eleven academic weeks were utilised.

Self-, student- and peer-**observations** were done throughout the period of the action research. Diaries, questionnaires, checklists and discussions with students, colleagues and managers enabled staff members to monitor their own progress. Informal interviews were conducted with key persons/groups such as student groups, colleagues, heads of department and the Rectorate, to obtain different perspectives about the viability of the QA improvement plan. External opinions were obtained as far as possible during meetings and workshops.

The analysis of data gathered during observation, enabled the researchers, the QA Committee, colleagues, invited students, the Directorate of Tshiya Centre, and invited external observers to **reflect** on progress made by individual participants and on the

effectiveness of the QA framework-for-action in general. Reflection was done in a critical and self-critical way to bring about changes for the better (Hay & Buchner 1998:14). Schon (Zeichner & Liston 1996:14) identified two types of reflection, which are:

- reflection-in-action where practitioners reflect during the action
- reflection-on-action where reflection occurs before and after the action

Both types of reflection were used in this research. The action research cycle was completed by obtaining ideas for further improvement when **replanning** the next cycle.

Data emerged from the different phases of the action research cycle. Diaries, anecdotal records, plans/notes, questionnaires/checklists, and discussions contributed toward corroboration, qualitative measurement and analysis. One participant worked with a small group while the other one worked with 67 students. The students' evaluations of the total action research process were quantitatively analysed. Students and staff members were informally interviewed during the reflection phase of the action research to obtain information about their experiences of the action research and perspectives about the QA policy, the framework-for-action and the viability thereof. Data obtained from such interviews were reflected in the researchers' diaries.

Data analysis was done by grouping information under the headings of the action research phases. Seeing that the aim of the action research was for the different participants to '*learn ... by doing and by making mistakes in a self-reflective spiral of planning, acting, observing, reflecting and re-planning*' (Hay & Buchner 1998:7), strengths and weaknesses of each phase were identified and described. External evaluators joined the meeting of the participants, invited guests, and the steering committee for reflection on the work done. Suggestions for further improvements to be implemented in the next cycle were made. The QA policy and framework in general were also reviewed.

The research was conducted in six phases. The first phase of preliminary data collection took place over a period of two years, from August 1998 to November 2000. Observations, a literature study, workshops and seminars, meetings and discussions with colleagues as well as informal conversational interviews contributed toward a body of

knowledge regarding QA for teacher education. From August to November 2000, the second phase of the research entailed deliberations to gain entry into the field. During the third phase three volunteers planned the improvement of self-determined quality gaps. The duration of the planning phase was from November 2000 to January 2001. The fourth phase consisted of the implementation and observation of two of these improvement plans. It took place from February to June 2001. The fifth phase of reflection overspread the implementation and observation phase and was concluded with comprehensive evaluation done during the reflection meeting held on 12 June 2001. During July to November 2001, the final and sixth phase was completed. It comprised the description of the action research cycle, the concluded findings and discussions thereof. Recommendations based on the findings followed and were concluded with final perspectives.

The most important limitations of this research could be captured in the following: the time frame of 1998 - 2001 in which the research was done and the influence of the rationalisation of CEs on it; poor motivation of staff members at the institution where the case study was done; the possibility of subjectivity in doing research at one's own institution; the lack of proper QA funding; the short period of one semester for completion of the action research; and the fact that action research is not 'neat' research (see 4.7).

1.9 CHAPTER DIVISION

Chapter One introduces the research report by posing the problem and describing the research design. **Chapter Two** reports on a literature study regarding quality and QA in HE. The current South African national QA policies are outlined in **Chapter Three**. The research design, which is a case study undertaken by means of action research, is described in **Chapter Four**. In **Chapter Five** a QA policy, including a framework-for-action to improve performance, is suggested. A description of the action research cycle for one semester follows. Findings of the action research are discussed. **Chapter Six** offers a synthesis of the research findings and recommendations based on literature study, inputs from the reflection meeting, and logical deductions made. A summation and final perspectives conclude the research report in **Chapter Seven**.

1.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter sought to disclose the urgent need for the development of a QA system for teacher education at a merged HDU/CE. During the period of the research, 1998 to 2001, teacher education in SA underwent major changes. These changes and its influence on the research were described. CEs traditionally specialised in preparing teachers in a practical way with emphasis on professional competences, while universities concentrated on the preparation of teachers as subject-specialists. These two approaches will have to be merged in the new scenario (Jansen 2001:9). To meet all the requirements of the new set of formulated QA policies (see Chapter Three), the merged universities/colleges will be forced to give attention to the quality of their teacher education programs.

Action research was identified as the most suitable research method. Among other advantages, this research method ensured that all stakeholders were, from day one, involved in the promotion of quality. With the rightsizing of the HE sector in SA the institutions are not stable - a prerequisite for the establishment of an institution-wide QA system (see 5.4.4.3 par 2; 5.6.1.1). Therefore the research was adapted into a personal, professional improvement plan. In Chapter Two the concept of quality and QA are discussed in order to provide a background for the development of notions of quality and a system to improve the quality of teacher education at a merged HDU/CE.

QUALITY ASSURANCE: A NOTIONAL OVERVIEW

2.1 THE CONCEPTUALISATION OF QUALITY

Anyone who attempts a notional overview of QA, is overwhelmed by the number of publications available on the topic, with the number of publications possibly also representing the number of divergent views being held. In order to find one's way through this maze of literature, it may be useful to try to find answers to the simple questions: What?, Why?, How? and By Whom?

Globally, there has recently been a neo-conservative political wave where concepts like the market, competition, productivity, cost-effectiveness, free choice, excellence, efficiency, accountability, professional competence, and accreditation set the context (Ahlström & Kallós 1995:25) for the demand for QA in different spheres of life. HEIs are frequently the focus of attention since they represent valuable resources for any country. They produce the educated men and women that often become the social, political, technological, economic, and religious leaders of the country (Ratcliff 1997:2). Because of the changes that have occurred in the restructuring of the education system as well as the wide-reaching transformation in education policy and practice in SA, the above-mentioned concepts are frequently heard in discussions among educationists. QA has become imperative for those who are concerned about the future of education in SA. Without knowing what quality means, however, it is not possible to give serious consideration to QA (Webbstock & Schreiner 1997:211). Hence a short overview of a few notions of quality is offered.

2.1.1 What is quality?

The abstract notion of quality cannot be framed by means of a single definition or description. It is not neutral or self-evident (Starida 1995:116). Quality is a highly contested concept since people in different contexts have different understandings of what

it means (DoE 1998d:140; Van Vught & Westerheijden 1995:99-101; Vroeijenstijn 1995:13; Wall 1995:129; Starida 1995:116; Strydom 1995:18). Ngara (1997:173) supports the above view by stating that quality is a multi-faceted concept, comprising many aspects that are applicable at different levels. Vroeijenstijn(1995:12) states categorically that it is a waste of time to look for a definition. Nevertheless, some of the many notions of quality include the descriptions that follow.

According to Starida (1995:115) the meaning of the term 'quality' is best conveyed by the Greek word *peoteta* which was used by Plato and Aristotle to single out certain characteristics that were considered to be distinctive of a thing - distinguishing it from other types. The term is also related to specific attributes of people - usually 'good qualities'. Within this framework, quality becomes a multi-value concept depending on the situation (different definitions of quality in different historical and social contexts) and also a multi-level concept involving different frames of reference in which it can be analysed. However, instead of trying to identify the essence of quality, it would be more appropriate to define the term as the means to attain set aims.

Verkleij (1999b:2) describes quality as follows: *'One feels it, one smells it, one discusses it, informally you recognise it when you see it'*. Noruwana (1999) says: *'You sense it in a good essay'*.

Lategan (1997:74) quotes Tade Akin Aino as follows: *'Quality is a most elusive notion. Virtually everybody recognises it when it is seen but scarcely anyone can specify its components or features with any degree of precision or confidence'*.

Vroeijenstijn (1995:13) compares quality with love, saying that *'everybody talks about it and everybody knows what he or she is talking about. Everybody knows and feels when there is love. Everybody recognises it. But when we try to give a definition of it, we are left standing with empty hands'*. The same author (Vroeijenstijn 1995:14-16) says we should not speak of 'quality' as a single concept, but rather of 'qualities'. Quality is a matter of negotiating among all parties concerned since quality will be specified by the

outcomes of such negotiations about the expected requirements. He further states that quality is not the same as 'efficiency' or being 'excellent'. We can talk about good, better and excellent, but we should not talk about good quality, better quality and excellent quality. In striving for quality we should only say: 'we will do what we promise to do'.

Collins (1990:34) quotes Flemming and co-workers who explicitly state that quality is never an accident. It represents the wise choice of alternatives and cumulative experiences of many employees in an organization. Quality demonstrates the success of a determined purpose. At the Free State Provincial Conference on QA (2000), the following notion of quality was printed on the program without mentioning the source, though it is reminiscent of the views of Flemming and co-workers:

Quality is

never an accident

it is always the result of:

- *intelligent direction*
- *high intention*
- *the wise choice between many alternatives*
- *sincere effort*
- *skilful execution*

Lategan (1997:6) quotes Barnett, who describes quality as a personal and social construct:

...what we mean... and intend by... "quality" in the context of higher education is bound up with our values and fundamental aims in higher education. We cannot adopt a definite approach to quality in this sphere of human interaction without taking a normative position, connected with what we take higher education ultimately to be. In turn, what we take higher education to be will have implications for how we conceive of quality, how we attain it, how we evaluate our success in achieving it, and how we approve it.

Kistan (1998:2) supports the view of Barnett by stating that although quality is a widely used concept in industry where clearly definable products exist, the concept is more difficult to define in HE.

Harvey and Green's (1993:11-27) classic description of five discrete but inter-related ways of thinking about quality in HE is often quoted, and is given below. The interpretation of these notions by the Quality Promotion Unit (QPU) in its *Manual for Self-evaluation of Universities* (QPU 1997:5,6), is given in italics:

- The exceptional view sees quality as something special. Traditionally, quality refers to something distinctive and élitist, and, in educational terms, is linked to notions of excellence, of 'high marks', unattainable by most.
This is a very traditional view, where certain universities thought of setting high standards, and others try to emulate these role models.
- Quality as perfection sees quality as a consistent or flawless outcome (the quest for zero defect). In a sense it 'democratises' the notion of quality and if consistency can be achieved, then quality can be attained by all.
Comparison is made by professions when the outcomes of programs are compared with standards set by themselves.
- Quality as fitness for purpose sees quality in terms of fulfilling a customer's requirements, needs or desires. Theoretically, the customer specifies requirements. In education, fitness for purpose is usually based on the ability of an institution to fulfil its mission or a program of study to fulfil its aims.
This definition is most widely used in HE. An institution is required to formulate its missions and goals and is then evaluated against itself.
- Quality as value for money, sees quality in terms of return on investment. If the same outcome can be achieved at a lower cost, or a better outcome can be achieved at the same cost, then the 'customer' has a quality product or service. The growing tendency for governments to require accountability from HE, reflects a value for money approach. Students increasingly require value for money because of the increasing cost of HE for them.
Quality is measured in terms of PIs like failure rates and teacher to student ratios.
- Quality as transformation is a classic notion of quality that sees it in terms of change from one state to another. In educational terms, transformation refers to the enhancement and empowerment of students or the development of new knowledge.

The student is regarded as a person being transformed. This process continues in his/her productive life. The notion of "value-added" is also relevant here, in the sense of what value is added to a person's knowledge, life skills, earning power, etcetera.

Lategan (1997:81) adds a sixth point to the above list, that is:

- quality as consistency. This is the notion of correspondence to description or conformance to specification or standards (a yardstick or benchmark as a basis of measurement). It suggests increasing accountability in, course design for example, student entitlement, standard setting, *etcetera*.

Kistan (1998:3) adds

- the ISO 9000³ concept of quality, where quality is evaluated in terms of customer satisfaction. This concept has been used by technikons, partly because it does provide a good benchmark for industry which especially employs professionally trained graduates. The general feeling is that ISO 9000 is more applicable to institutions offering service-oriented training, as opposed to subject-oriented teaching.

Horstburgh, Geall and Moon (1997:73,74) comment on the above-mentioned notions by stating that transformation provides the only meaningful notion of quality. If HE is not about transforming the life experiences of students by enhancing and empowering them, then it can hardly be fulfilling its potential. Transformation enables a person to think and reflect critically, to cope with continuous change, to question and to challenge. Transformation also includes the acquisition of appropriate personal and social skills, a positive self-image, confidence, and life-long learning ability (see Appendix A).

At two Free State provincial workshops on QA (UFS: 11 June 1999 and 6 August 1999),

³ ISO is a shortened version of ISOS meaning uniform, homogeneous, equal. ISO 9000 standards ensure uniformity and predictability of products, i.e. reliability and quality control. Although ISO 9000 standards involve a system originally designed for manufacturing, they are being used more and more in education (Liston 1997:117).

the notion of quality 'of' purpose was also discussed. The present turbulence in South African HE is compelling institutions to reflect once again upon their vision and mission statements (also referred to as statements of purpose [Siebörger & Macintosh 1998:75]). Curriculum redesigns and restructuring are taking place because of the need for fitness of purpose (Noruwana 1999). According to Newton (1999) a South African HEI's notion about quality should be in line with the South African Government's Restructuring and Development Program (RDP). Newton's appeal is in line with a handout of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)⁴, quoted in *A policy framework for quality assurance in the education and training system in South Africa the Framework for Quality Assurance* (DoE 1998c:8), stating that education should produce citizens that can contribute toward the economic and social development of a nation. In the light of the above, HEIs should re-evaluate the fitness of their purposes for the present education scenario in SA. Only thereafter can fitness for purpose be pursued.

According to the QPU (1997:6,7) the notion of what is meant by quality should be shaped by the following four considerations:

- the concept of quality is always influenced by political and economic developments
- the notion of quality used in audits should be adaptable to suit the circumstances of each and every institution
- the notion of quality used in audits would typically consist of a combination in various degrees of emphasis of the different concepts of quality
- this openness and flexibility in the approach to the definition of quality does not, however, imply that there is uncertainty or a lack of clarity in the approach

From 1998 to 2000 CEs received four policy documents on quality. The first, *NSE* (DoE 1998d:140), advocates the notion of fitness for purpose as a workable definition in the colleges' framework, which is the ability of the institution to fulfill its mission, programs, aims and objectives, determined on the basis of clients' needs and with reference to specified desired outcomes. The second document, *A Policy Framework for QA in the*

⁴ UNESCO (1997:2). *Monitoring and Evaluating the Quality of Education*.

Education and Training System in SA (DoE 1998c), concentrates on QA only, without defining quality. The third document, *Guidelines on QA in Teacher Education* (DoE 1998b), reiterates fitness for purpose. The fourth document, *A Founding Document: QA in Colleges of Education*, quotes Persig from his book *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* saying that quality is 'the inverse side of caring ... a feeling of identification with what one is doing' (Nicholls 1999:3). This last document further states that the quote from Persig is a good descriptor of a professional educator and a worthy goal of quality professional teacher education.

While taking note of the many notions of quality described above, I regard as particularly relevant and useful the view of Lategan (1997:97) who states that the best approach for an institution is to have an over-arching definition of quality in which different concepts of quality are accommodated (see Appendix B: 2.3). Such a notion should be negotiated by all stakeholders involved to ensure that they accept responsibility for and ownership of quality and the assurance thereof at their institution. The University of Natal reported that they started the process of QA at their institution with a day-long, university-wide workshop, unravelling the concepts of quality and QA (Webbstock & Schreiner 1997:211). If this time-consuming route is not followed it will be impossible to motivate staff for QA.

2.1.2 What is quality assurance?

Quality has always been a tacit assumption within the delivery of education, but demonstrating its existence is complex (Collins 1990:34). A college's definition of quality will in part determine the strategies it will employ to assure or improve it (Sallis 1994:231).

Collins (1990:35-39) describes QA as an organizational plan of action formed by those involved in the delivery of a service to the recipients of the service. It is a plan of action that aims at organizational excellence in order that a service may be delivered. It focuses, with check-list rigidity, on the pre-determined components of the delivery system. A comprehensive QA program includes assessment and assurance which involve problem identification, as well as initiation and monitoring of remedial actions. QA can be seen as 'the hub of the wheel around which all quality-related activities revolve' (Shanahan in

Collins 1990:36). In summary, all QA programs:

- emphasize effectiveness and efficiency
- seek excellence
- assure that criteria are met
- assure that costs are contained
- eliminate unnecessary services
- demonstrate efficient use of resources

A Policy Framework for QA (DoE 1998c:5) reiterates the view of Collins by stating that *'quality assurance represents the planned and systematic actions necessary to provide confidence that the education provided is meeting expectations and is relevant to the needs of South Africans'*. It further requires (DoE 1998c:9,17) QA to monitor and evaluate the performance of the various levels of the education system in: achieving the specific goals at each level; and the overall objectives of the system. It also includes the management of previously defined quality in activities that are used to provide maximum confidence that acceptable levels of quality are achieved in all aspects of setting, delivery and review of standards in the education system. In the educational context, QA processes have typically focused on the following essential elements:

- monitoring and evaluating learner achievement
- quality audits and reviews
- program and service reviews
- accreditation (of providers, learners and educators as assessors)

Noruwana (1999) views QA as mechanisms for ensuring that quality control techniques are carried out as a means of gaining information so that errors can be designed out. Siebörger and Macintosh (1998:75) see QA as a process by which the structure and systems within a school are organised to ensure that certain standards of quality are achieved and maintained. It may involve aspects such as staff development and ways of checking to see whether the school operates in accordance with its mission. One of the ways of maintaining quality is to have outside assessors visit the school to see how well it is keeping to its aims.

Navaratnam (1997:7) has a pragmatic view of QA and describes the 'quality journey' from the perspective of education and training as *'an integrated, customer-driven approach undertaken by an organisation with the commitment of management and employees to improve processes, products and services and which embraces cyclical continuous improvement strategies through an interdependent system of planning, implementing, evaluating and decision making'*. This quality journey includes:

- becoming a leading competitor in meeting customer requirements
- embracing an optimal strategy for quality implementation
- placing an emphasis on incremental and continuous quality improvement
- considering quality as a management method that can be implemented sequentially to improve the outcomes
- allowing for value added quality progress as a strategic and non-reversible organisational thrust in the short, medium and long term

For Navaratnam (1997:8-13) the quality journey plan consists of six interrelated and interdependent core areas to be implemented as follows:

- phase 1: awareness and self-assessment
- phase 2: training, team-building and communication
- phase 3: quality planning
- phase 4: implementation process
- phase 5: comprehensive evaluation
- phase 6: continuous improvement

The phases in the quality journey plan are designed to be complementary to each other and to involve every process, every employee and every measurement which impacts on all the details of implementing quality management in an organisation (see Appendix E).

According to Kistan (1998:11) it may be true to say that the definitions of QA are vast and confusing, but the process has brought with it a drastic mind shift, re-structuring and awakening - in fact a refreshing dimension to what one is doing and for what purpose. He reports that QA has almost singly contributed to the transformation of the HE sector in many countries. It has been responsible for a major paradigm shift from a *'protected'* to an *'exposed'* system.

Although the implementation of QA in well-managed industry, commerce and other public services is characterised by an attitude that is both positive and developmental (Bagwandeem 1993:95), this is not always the case in education. According to Strydom, as cited in Bagwandeem (1993:95), the whole spectrum of QA among academic staff worldwide is fraught with difficulty. It is a very controversial and mostly ill-defined matter. For some the process of QA is regarded as a set of humiliation rituals. Quite understandably, suspicion and misconceptions bedevil the process of QA. Professional reluctance to participate in self-evaluation or to implement recommended changes may occur because of common psychological experiences such as threats, fears and anxieties (Holtzhausen 1999). It is no easy task to explain away the apprehension about QA as a simple reaction to the unfamiliar or the unknown, or uncertainty about the precise form of QA, casting doubt on the credentials of evaluators and the consequences of the report. Since there are such strong reactions from those involved in the evaluation process that seeks to assure quality, it is important to level the playing field of evaluators and evaluatees. Educational leaders can play a vital role in creating a more trusting environment in which open and responsive dialogue can be conducted.

Since QA is not negotiable, it is important to have a commitment from all stakeholders to ensure their co-operation in the QA process. They should also realise that QA *'requires a long term commitment. It is not just another project. It is a journey and not a destination. For this reason, (it) is not "achieved", but is always something to be striven for'* (Strydom & Lategan 1996:35-36). For education managers to be motivated themselves, and to transfer their motivation to their staff to get involved in the quality journey, they need to understand why QA is needed.

2.2 WHY QUALITY ASSURANCE IS NEEDED

The current debate about quality in teacher education globally takes place in a general social, political and economic context (Sander 1995:97; Buchberger & Byrne 1995:11; Ahlström & Kallós 1995:31; Starida 1995:116) and developed as a response to the demands for accountability in education from different stakeholders like politicians, taxpayers, employers, parents, students and jobless alumni (Noruwana 1999). Noruwana

(1999) points out that, *'many parents are jobless - now they are making sure about their children's futures. Programs should be adapted because trained people have to come back for retraining'*. A discussion of Vroeijenstijn's (1995:2-4) five reasons necessitating QA globally, follows.

2.2.1 Public demand

More students are enrolling in HE, causing pressure on national budgets. Expenditure per student is much lower. Governments must assure societies that this does not endanger quality. This problem has been aggravated by economic recessions. On behalf of society, governments have sought a better insight into costs and quality of HE (see 2.2.8). Sander (1995:97,98) stresses the same facts from a German view. In their final recommendations for the transformation of education in SA, the NCHE requires accountability from a person/body to those in whose interests action has been taken and an account of the way in which duties have been performed and resources used (NCHE 1996b:156)(see 2.2.8).

2.2.2 Demand for relevant programs

Since 1985, society has globally become more interested in HE. The relationship between HE and the labour market became, and is still, a topic for discussion. Since the unemployment figures are high, it is expected from HEIs to steer the student flow in the wanted direction for available jobs. Stetar (1999) motivates HEIs to be *'job creation engines'*.

2.2.3 Demand for maintaining academic quality

Since 1950, what has been referred to as a 'quality gap' has crept into HE. On the one hand, governments are striving to increase the numbers of students enrolled in HEIs: massification occurs. (This is a general term in HE, referring to the process to move away from an élite system to a mass system which demonstrates an increased and wider participation in HE [NCHE 1996a:158]). On the other hand we see a continuous decrease in investments while, quite ironically, there is an increased demand from governments for accountability from HEIs regarding the quality of their work (see 2.3.3 bullet 7; 2.3.5.2). Galluzzo (1996:14) states categorically that *'the equity agenda has eroded the excellence*

agenda'. Jacobs (1997:145) says that providers of HE are experiencing pressing circumstances and have to improvise in many fields owing to the relative scarcity of resources. The question is whether HEIs will still deliver the same quality within the given boundary conditions. According to Holtzhausen (1999:5) expansion without consideration of additional inputs needed, will affect quality. The challenge to HEIs is to do more with less money in order to maintain or improve quality.

2.2.4 Transformation, globalisation and internationalisation

Regarding transformation, Kistan (1998:1) reports as follows: *'Worldwide, higher education is undergoing major changes in its organisation. In this context, the concept of quality assurance control has emerged as a primary instrument for evaluating accountability in higher education systems'*. Globalisation refers to the increasing intensification of worldwide social and economic relations, which link distant places and communities in a network of interdependence and interactions to such an extent that local happenings are shaped by remote events, and world affairs are conversely affected by things that occur in local, regional or national contexts (NCHE 1996b:157)(see 2.2.11).

Student and other professional exchanges and international co-operation require insight into quality. There has always been an exchange of students between countries and therefore answers are needed to questions such as, 'Will the course be recognised internationally?' or 'Is it good enough?' The European Union with an open labour market inquires about the quality of the curricula and the standards of graduates. *'Throughout the globe, nations and regions are preparing themselves for the global marketplace, including the increased mobility of professionals across national borders'* (Lenn 1997b:16).

2.2.5 Autonomy requires quality assurance

Owing to underlying societal and political trends, governments have since 1980 abandoned the idea of strongly steering the development of HE. With mass access to HE, the system became so complex that central control became inefficient (Maasen 1995:71, 73,84). The rapid change of scientific and technological knowledge also necessitated a more flexible system, so that many decisions could be made at institutional level. Therefore in many

European countries governments are promising more autonomy to HEIs in exchange for QA. Goedegebuure and co-workers (1994:1) report that *'national governments retain the prerogative to set broad policies, particularly budgetary ones, while increasingly transferring the responsibility for growth, innovation and diversification to individual institutions'*.

In the South African context Noruwana (1997:63-73) and Maharasoa (1999) add to the list of reasons for QA. A discussion of these reasons follows.

2.2.6 The demand to redress the imbalances of the past

Because of the inequalities and imbalances that resulted from the Apartheid legacy, the South African HE system needs QA. Historically disadvantaged institutions (HDIs) such as CEs, the focus of this research, lack basic resources and infrastructure needed to sustain their current programs, let alone develop new ones. A deliberate program of redress is needed to 'level the playing field' in the HE sector. If this is not done, HDIs will still unfairly be compared with historically advantaged institutions (HAIs) in SA and in other countries. This unfortunate situation calls for the promotion of quality, especially in the CE sector.

2.2.7 Competition between higher education institutions nationally and internationally

In the current post-apartheid scenario in SA, there is a movement of learners from HDIs to HAIs where very good infrastructure, resources and programs are available. A movement of learners from one country to another, observable within the Free State region, for example from Lesotho to SA, also takes place. This tendency of learners to seek enrolment at a HEI that has acquired a good reputation for quality programs and offerings, results in competition between HEIs. Hence they are forced to attend to QA to be competitive.

2.2.8 The security of funding

In SA there is a move toward a programs-based funding approach. Programs addressing the socio-economic needs of the community and the country, will be funded by

Government in alignment with its RDP program and that of sponsors from other countries. Closely linked is also the performance-based approach in other countries.

Universities have come under increasing pressure for accountability as public expenditure on them has risen. One form of accountability ... to use is performance-based funding (which) aims to ensure that universities are funded on what they achieve according to agreements with the funding authority, not simply on attempts to achieve (Anderson et al. 1997:9)(see 2.2.1).

There are various forms of performance-based funding in the world. Sweden, Denmark, England, Tennessee, Chile and Australia all have their own specific performance-based funding. Generally, there has been a reduction of public funds in SA in recent years, and this has had an impact on the quality of education, with special reference to the teaching function (Holtzhausen 1999:7). According to research results obtained during 1999 by the URHE, situated at UFS, the majority of universities in SA that are involved in self-evaluation and QA reported that negative economic factors inhibit their QA activities.

2.2.9 Compliance with stipulations of the professional bodies

The South African Council for Educators (SACE) was established in response to Act No 76 of 1998: *Employment of Educators Act*, 1998. SACE aims to enhance the status of the teaching profession, and to promote the development of educators and their professional conduct. These aims are reflected in its motto 'Towards Excellence in Education'. It is currently expected of every educator in SA to register with SACE. This is an embracement of the idea of licencing educators. SACE states that it will seek ways to ensure that educators are exemplars of life-long learning. This may mean that educators will have to prove that they have improved their qualifications before the next date for re-registration. The intention to ensure a culture of continuous further study among educators, does not necessarily mean better teaching and learning in the classroom. Some educators neglect their duties at work while they study, and others study further in fields or subjects which they do not teach. Omari (1995:10) expresses the view that the cornerstone of excellence at a university is, *inter alia*, to address the problem of the psychological and physical absence of staff members.

On the handout that SACE circulated in celebration of World Teachers' Day on 5 October 1999, teachers were commended for the 'sterling work' done by the profession. SACE also re-affirmed its commitment to high quality learning for all South Africans. QA is needed to deliver sterling work in the CE sector.

2.2.10 Conformity with policy and legislative stipulations

In SA cognisance must be taken of the post-1994 structural innovations designed to promote and enhance quality indices in the provision of education (Nicholls 1999:51). The legal framework of QA in South African HE, is mainly contained in the *SAQA Act* (No 58 of 1995) and the *HE Act* (No 101 of 1997) (Helepi 1999). The latter provides guidelines, structures and quality operations for the co-ordination of QA in the HE. The HEQC was established as a permanent committee of the CHE, with prescribed functions of institutional auditing and quality promotion (Van der Westhuizen 1999). It will soon be expected of all HEIs to prove their adherence to these stipulations. (See Chapter Three for national QA policies).

2.2.11 General improvement of services within higher education institutions

If recommendations, resulting from continuous research at local, national and international level, were to be implemented, it would promote the desire for improvement, in order to stay competitive (see 2.2.4). QA mechanisms are necessary to promote and monitor such improvements.

2.2.12 Quality of programs and methodology to accommodate a diverse student population

The global trend of massification in HEIs included the addition of members of society who did not traditionally participate in HE. Adaptation in the provision of HE, harder work as well as creative changes in methodology were needed to maintain and improve the levels of quality (Jacobs 1997a:145). Frantz and co-workers (1996:42,43) report that the socio-economic backgrounds of students have become more diverse in the United States of America (USA) since 1995. Many students from disadvantaged backgrounds have special needs because of limited English proficiency and poor learning skills. The same situation

occurs presently in SA where HAIs are restructuring their programs to provide for the needs of students from HDIs. A general transferable skills module has already been implemented at UFS⁵ and at Rand Afrikaans University (RAU⁶), including topics like note taking, speed reading, study methods, time management, handling of stress and improving the learner's competence in English. The diverse cultural and academic backgrounds of learners will require teachers to be skilled in addressing a range of learning styles to meet the special needs of their students (Frantz *et al.* 1996:43)(see 2.3.5.5). Contact hours spent on multicultural issues could also be valuable in such a module (see 2.3.5.4). Cameron (1996:226) reports as follows:

The school-by-school homogeneity that was the hallmark of the Fifties has given way to a rich cultural diversity. Young people from a wide range of racial and ethnic backgrounds fill today's yearbook pages, and their families rightfully expect schools to address their individual needs.

Frantz and co-workers (1996:54) also advise that teachers should be taught how to adapt instruction appropriately, including using multilingual and multicultural approaches, simplifying English and using sheltered-language techniques, employing individualized instruction and instructional materials, and increasing the use of audiovisual and hands-on approaches. Given our country's history, and experience, it can be concluded that student teachers are not well prepared to address the special needs of the learners reflecting the rainbow nation of SA in many of our classrooms.

2.2.13 Keeping pace with technological advancement

During the twentieth century we progressed from an agricultural nation to an industrial nation. That took decades to happen. Recently, at mind-numbing speed, we became part of the Information Age (Cameron 1996:226). HE is an information-intensive industry. Both hardware and software are used to handle information. Progressive technological advancement is constantly needed to maintain a competitive advantage (Holtzhausen 1999:4).

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QA needs to contribute toward the country's technological development, including new methods of instruction to provide for distance education, the most vulnerable mode of education in a free-market situation (Melck 1999:6). To keep pace with global developments, the use of and participation on the Internet has become very important. To meet the need for discussions about the daily practice of QA, the Association of Universities in the Netherlands took the initiative by establishing a home page on the World Wide Web with connections to the Web sites of the European Quality Assessment Agencies (Vroeijenstijn 1997b:14,15). More than 900 quality assessment reports from the UK are available on the Internet (Clark 1997:40). Facilitators of learning, as well as learners, need to be familiar with the latest technological advancements to enable them to participate effectively in the outside world. Wise (1996:191) warns that we must make sure that we do not produce student teachers for a nation that, in many ways, no longer exists, since technology has changed the way we work and live.

Arguing pragmatically, basic and elementary facilities for tertiary education, like up-to-date media centres, were urgently needed at historically disadvantaged CEs in SA. Book provision is widely regarded as the single most cost-effective factor in upgrading educational quality (Burchan *et al.* 1991:95). At the institution where the case study for this research was done, Internet facilities were only installed during 1999. By 2001, the single computer linked to the Internet was still available to staff only, and not to students.

2.2.14 Facilitating the planning process

There is a common relationship between strategic planning and Quality Assurance. Strategic planning is holistic in that it focuses on goals, purposes, values and mission. It is internally and externally focused, it is an ongoing process and not a one-time planning effort, and it pursues a blend of qualitative and quantitative approaches for improvement (Morta 1999:4).

Once the staff of an institution have a clear understanding of their own notion of quality and QA, all inputs and processes at the institution can be planned in order to achieve the wanted quality outputs. A substantial amount of planning is necessary to provide a set of

action plans resulting in concrete strategies to achieve the set goals (Nicholls 1999:29; Navaratnam 1997:16). In other words, all planning will be steered by the institution's quality notion toward its quality vision (see 5.8.1).

It was stated in the first paragraph of this chapter that an attempt needed to be made to answer a few simple questions about quality. We have discussed What? and Why?. Before we attempt the How? question, it is important to take note of the interrelationship between quality and standards. Wilson and Ball (1996:121) state that *'current strategies for improving the quality and outcomes of education involve the articulation of standards pointed at several key parts of the educational system'*.

2.3 WHAT ABOUT STANDARDS?

The concept 'standards' is a major topic, with an extensive literature. For the purpose of this study it is necessary to comprehend its proper place in the QA cycle.

2.3.1 Clarification of terminology

Certain terms need clarification since they are all related to the understanding of the place of standards in QA. The notions of quality were discussed (see 2.1). In *NSE* (DoE 1998d:x), the term 'standard' is defined as benchmarking achievements. Lategan (1997:90,91) differentiates further between academic standards, which measure the ability to meet specified levels of academic attainment; standards of competence, which measure specified levels of ability on a range of competencies; and service standards, which are devised to assess identified elements of the service or facilities provided, for example maximum class sizes. Brennan (1996:13-16) adds seven more variants to the categories of standards. They are: program standards, graduate standards, process standards, outcomes standards, intrinsic standards, extrinsic standards and explicit standards. A summative discussion of these standards can be found in Lategan (1997:92,93).

Stetar (1999) views the term 'benchmark' as a point of reference for making measurements, something that serves as a standard. 'Re-engineering' is related to benchmarking in the sense that it is a fundamental rethinking and radical redesign of

processes to achieve dramatic improvements in critical measures of performance. 'Norms' are seen as effective means for the attainment of specific goals. 'Accreditation' is a procedure by which an authoritative body gives formal recognition that an institute, body or person is competent in terms of a specific purpose. It is sometimes used in the same breath as 'licensing' and used for 'gatekeeping' (Andrew 1997:168).

2.3.2. The concept 'standards'

Standards provide a basis for making judgements about program characteristics needed to produce qualified graduates ... In the sense that the term is usually used, standards for program accreditation, the ... implementation of standards are a hallmark of all professions. They evidence a degree of professional solidarity, a commitment to the profession, and a willingness to assume responsibility for the performance of graduates (Moss 1996:75,76).

Andrew (1997:168) points out that writers use the term 'standards' in different ways without bothering to unpack the differences. Firstly, 'standard' implies something common or agreed upon. Hence the use of the terms 'standard shift' or 'standard issue'. The current push toward national curriculum standards is an attempt to define a common curriculum, one that best reflects a current consensus of important knowledge in the disciplines. The second use of the term 'standards' is to convey an assessment of quality. Andrew (1997:168) explains it as follows:

This usage carries clear ... evaluative connotations. To say that a program or institution or even a person has high standards is to pay a great compliment. They only accept the best ... To say a person, institution, product, or performance sets the standard is to mean that this person, institution, product, or performance is a model ...

Saying that a program or institution meets a minimum standard ... is saying that those in the institution are of acceptable quality ... and that the graduates perform acceptably. On the other hand, to say that a program or

institution has low standards is to say that almost anyone will be acceptable ... and graduates might be inferior.

He further argues that standards are sometimes seen as the answer to all questions, the magic ingredient to restructuring all of education. New curriculum standards will create better education, new accreditation standards will produce better teacher education, and new licensing standards will provide better teachers. Standards bearers think simple legislation of new standards and a system of assessment will make all things well. On a more positive note, a valuable perspective comes from Darling-Hammond (1996:14) who says that the use and admonishment of standards should not only be used to control teaching and learning, but rather to build the capacity of teachers.

Nevertheless, research to benchmark the best practice in teacher education is necessary and might be a powerful lever for change. A system of standards and assessments will do two things: it will (a) enforce minimum standards for preparation of teachers and entry into teaching, and (b) establish high standards with voluntary tests for identifying teachers who excel (Andrew 1997:175). Minimum standards are entry hurdles or gates, not something to aspire to but a sieve to sift out those with *subpar* qualities (Andrew 1997:169).

2.3.3 Why standards?

The development of the evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning, involving a systematic application of the 'fitness for purpose' notion of quality, brought about the need for monitoring the expected outcomes. The intention of standards is to prove to external stakeholders that appropriate levels of achievement were reached (Moss 1996:76). Galluzzo (1996:11-14) discusses a variety of reasons for getting standards in place in Colorado - especially from the public's view. In the South African context we can take serious note of these reasons, which are briefly outlined below.

- Lost faith
Many people have lost faith in the ability of teachers to deliver to the workplace

students who are prepared to excel on the job. State laws allowing creativity in education are experienced as problematic.

- The information age

Since new technology is making more information available to an increasingly larger segment of learners, the traditional curricula have become blurred. In such a rapidly changing educational environment, standards need to be addressed.

- Reforms gone awry

The concept of critical thinking is criticised as a threat to established values. Competency-based education is viewed as restrictive and is therefore critically scrutinised.

- International comparisons

'When people read that American students consistently score "last out of ten countries" on three-step math problems, it is difficult to convince a sceptical public ... (about) ... basic academic skills being taught' (Galluzzo 1996:13).

- Product orientation

The current emphasis on problem solving and inquiry learning represents a process orientation to education. In this climate, the 'products' of the system are not always well defined. Because of the eroded product, education as process has also come under increased critical scrutiny.

- Social promotion

There is a social inclination to protect learners' self-esteem and to promote them on 'seat time' (attendance only). Standards, it is argued, would restore a norm of social order and shift the focus to learning.

- Equity versus excellence

In striving to educate all students, education authorities have 'watered down' the education that the talented deserve (see 2.2.3). This is a fundamental problem in a democratic set-up, one that will probably never be resolved. The fact that learners with special needs are increasingly accommodated in mainstream education, aggravates the problem. One teacher can hardly attend to the needs of a diverse group of learners without neglecting the progress of some of them.

Many of the above-mentioned concerns and pleas for standards are red lights flickering for education in SA, presently being transformed toward some of the mentioned problem areas such as competence-based education and moving learners with special learning needs to the main stream. Taking note of the lessons learned by other countries will enable South African educationists not to make the same mistakes.

At present, in SA, national and institutional policies set the standards to be met on the NQF - the linchpin of the government's plan for education in SA (Van der Westhuizen 1999; Fourie 1999). The fact that the CUP reported in 1987 that academic standards in different universities varied greatly, proved that standards were then regarded as important and universities were evaluated and compared according to pre-determined PIs. When a single NDoE was established in SA, the historically advantaged population were afraid of a 'lowering of standards', but Noruwana (1999) asked critical: '*Is it so?*' We can add to that by asking: Which standards are we referring to? Are the standards still relevant in the current South African context? - and were the different interest groups involved in setting the standards?

2.3.4 Coherence between quality and standards

2.3.4.1 Different views

The relationship between quality of process and standards of output is viewed differently by different countries and even by different institutions. For example, the fitness for purpose view, commonly used in education, is specified by its desired outcomes (Lategan 1997:94; Clark 1997:38). According to this view the standard is already stated in the outcome. According to Van Damme (1999) one of the basic characteristics of the European approach to QA is to use PIs. Woodhouse (1999) states that one of the basic tasks of an External Quality Assessment (EQA) agency is to benchmark standards. Rozsnyai (1997:3) regards quality as something pragmatic to be determined through the criteria one uses to examine it, as well as to what degree goals are met. Lenn (1997b:16) praises the accounting profession for the international standards of quality that they have set. Kalkwijk (1997:8) says that '*procedures ... (should) ensure that the quality of quality*

assurance meets the standards'. For the purpose of this study it will suffice to accept that quality and standards are closely interwoven.

2.3.4.2 *On the national platform*

In the South African context a whole chapter of *NSE* (1998d:138-159), concerns itself with QA. A set of general quality criteria is included for five aspects of teacher education. By way of setting minimum standards, detailed assessment criteria for every competence expected of student teachers are listed (DoE 1998d:69-78). Level descriptors for every criterium will ultimately be developed by SGBs. Evidently then *NSE* benchmarks both quality and standards. Although the two terms, quality and standards, are not separated in relevant South African policy documents, they both aim at improving teacher education to a satisfactory level. The *Education White Paper 3* (RSA 1997a:12) states: '*Applying the principle of quality entails evaluating services and products against set standards, with a view to improvement, renewal or progress*'.

2.3.4.3 *Lessons to be learned from the United Kingdom*

Clark (1997:38-46) indicates that the high degree of autonomy in HEIs in England and Scotland regulates the assessment of student achievement. Clark reports that although quality assessment does not evaluate levels of achievement (standards) in the UK, academic peers do it anyway. Aims and objectives of the program are taken as a framework and the program is evaluated as to what degree it meets its own objectives and aims.

2.3.4.4 *Accreditation and quality assurance*

The interrelationship between the two concepts, quality and standards, is confirmed when one considers the practices of assessors. The two terms, accreditation and QA are used to indicate two distinct but related phenomena (Simmons 1995:11). Wong (1997:5) reports that, besides academic accreditation, the Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation developed a role to support the development of QA systems inside institutions. From New Zealand, Scanlan (1995:10) reports that accreditation to teach programs is based on quality management systems which meet specific criteria.

Clark (1997:46) describes accreditation (determining the level of outcome - standard) as looking at output, while quality assessment looks at the process. He further explains that it is difficult to find mechanisms of evaluation that measure output standards independently, with the result that evaluators are often driven back to process and input measures. Elliott (1999), chairperson of SAQA, supports this view, saying that accreditation in the future South African education system calls for a quality system to be in place. Discussing the Education and Training Quality Assurance body's (ETQA) criteria for the accreditation of providers and qualifications, she expresses the view that an institution's mission statement should reflect its degree of excellence, and that standard setting and QA should be separated.

2.3.4.5 Total Quality Management and ISO 9000?

Lessons learned from Total Quality Management⁷ (TQM) and Continuous Quality Improvement suggest that quality assessment and evaluation of output (standards) cannot be separated. To invest in the development of staff who are working on the standard of the product during the process, will reduce possibilities of errors at every stage of operation, which is better quality management than to reject the failed product at the end (Clark 1997:37). Different authors support this notion that development of the whole human resource division enhances quality and promotes high standards (Elliott 1996:58; Wilson & Ball 1996:121,122; Galluzzo 1996:14; Tumapon 1997:199).

TQM often incorporates ISO 9000 standards but the question may be asked, whether ISO 9000 standards work for the education sector (see 2.1.1, par 8, bullet 7). Liston (1997:117-120) reports on research done in Australia into the acceptance of ISO 9000 standards at 35 universities. There was little evidence of commitment to the use of ISO 9000 standards. Liston attributes the lack of commitment to very little experience of competitive pressure from the education marketplace. This scenario is fast changing. In SA, government subsidies to HEIs have been drastically cut, causing fees for tertiary education to increase. Owing to privatisation in the HE sector, open and flexible learning

⁷ TQM implies attention to detail and acting on even minute deficiencies in order to try to make literally everything to do with an institution better, from multi-million rand budgeting to cutting the grass the moment it becomes less than manicured (DoE 1999:12).

packages, and the use of multimedia and other technologies, students are no longer forced to make use of local providers. The competition in education is therefore increasing.

Since 1994 the Australian Standards/New Zealand Standards ISO 9000 series (AS/NZS ISO 9001)⁸ have contained a quality improvement element, although this component and a customer focus are generally not key factors in the application of such a standards system. It is incumbent on HEIs to implement some form of quality management system. Liston (1997:120) advocates the integration of ISO 9000 Standards into a TQM system using criteria such as those for the Australian Quality Assessment or the Baldrige Awards in the USA. They will ensure that:

- the customers' needs and opinions are taken into account
- a competitive strategy, including knowledge of the competition, is developed
- the needs of the market are addressed
- procedures (as simple as possible) to ensure quality performance are in place
- performance measures are developed
- processes are reviewed continuously to eliminate waste
- effective communication is ensured
- evidence of continuous improvement is sought

2.3.5 Setting and controlling standards are 'tough stuff'⁹

2.3.5.1 Stakeholders demand guarantees

Although HEIs in the UK have a high degree of autonomy it did not prevent the demand from stakeholders for an explanation of the standards setting processes as well as their benchmarking and monitoring activities to guarantee their achievements (Clark 1997:38). According to Wong (1997:5), academic freedom and autonomy carry the responsibility for achieving and maintaining the highest standards and quality in tertiary education. The CE sector in SA had previously virtually no autonomy (Kistan 1998:9), but since teacher education programs were phased into HE in 2000, note should be taken of these statements.

⁸ The ISO 9001 Standards for education and training were approved and published in Australia in 1995.

⁹ Term borrowed from Darling-Hammond. Education Week, 16(3), Sept. 18, 1996:14.

2.3.5.2 *Many aspects differentiate standards*

The massification of HE is one of the major issues for setting standards (Jonathan 1999; Van Damme 1999; Holtzhausen 1999)(see 2.2.3). Prior to 1992, only academic degrees at university level in the UK had to be monitored, with a relative absence of explicit concern for general skills development or vocational training (Clark 1997:45). Globally, traditional universities and the former polytechnics have merged to create a heterogeneous HE sector, sometimes called a 'mass HE sector'. Since the merging brought academic and vocational preparation together, it is difficult to obtain consensus on standards. A wide range of programs is offered, with different mixes of traditional, academically relevant, or broad, culturally relevant, or vocationally relevant outputs. To further problematise the articulation of valid comparisons across such a diverse range of outputs, the mass HE system resides within a cultural context where more than market forces are expected to differentiate the standards of output of the various providers.

2.3.5.3 *An Outcomes Based Education-approach to standards*

Wise and Leibrand (1996:203) discuss the explicit standards of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), located in Washington DC. The NCATE expects teacher candidates to demonstrate specific skills. These skills are reminiscent of what is demanded of teachers by the new OBE approach to teaching and learning in SA. Their candidates should be able to:

- use strategies for developing critical thinking, problem solving, and abstract reasoning
- use formal and informal evaluation strategies to ensure continuous student learning
- use educational technology competently, including the use of computers and other technologies for instruction and student evaluation
- manage a classroom skilfully
- collaborate effectively with parents and others in the community
- use research based principles of effective practice - a reference to the ability to explain why a certain strategy is used and why a certain way is decided upon to teach a particular idea

These standards are part of and parcel of the new model set of licencing standards oriented toward outcomes. Colleges and departments of education are expected to monitor and evaluate the progress of teacher candidates throughout their program of study and to use performance assessments as a part of the evaluation. Teacher preparation gradually moves toward performance-based instruction and assessment. The basis of accreditation is evolving to focus on three areas: the work of the candidates to determine whether that work models content-area standards set by subject-matter groups; the work of the faculty to find out whether its members model instructional skills that candidates should develop (see 6.3.5); and performance assessment to see if a system is in place to evaluate and improve individual performance. This can serve as a good example of the coherence between quality of process and standards of output - a matter of importance to CEs, like Tshiya CE, that embarked on the OBE approach and had to negotiate with the provincial DoE about the final summative assessment of their final-year OBE students.

2.3.5.4 Lessons learned from American research

After extensive research, a report entitled *What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future*, saw the light in 1996. This report is discussed by Andrew (1997:167-173). The report contains both prescriptions and examples for improving recruitment, preparation, and retention of good teachers. Under the heading, 'Organizing Around Standards', the report identifies the following eight areas for new emphasis in teacher preparation:

- stronger disciplinary preparation
- greater focus on learning and development
- more knowledge about curriculum and assessment designs
- greater understanding of how to help special needs students
- multicultural competence (see 2.2.12)
- preparation for collaboration (see 6.3.4.1)
- technological skills (see 2.2.13)
- strong emphasis on reflection and inquiry (see 5.9.3.8)

2.3.5.5 A vocational education perspective

Lynch, the director of the school of Occupational Studies (1996:71), also listed PIs

covering key issues regarding standards of quality to be addressed in teacher education. They are (a) the societal need for a professional, well-educated teaching force; (b) teachers who are prepared and empowered to make responsible, relevant program, curriculum, and instruction decisions; (c) teachers who have comprehensive knowledge of children and youth, including how they learn and develop; (d) teachers with a rich repertoire of pedagogical skills, including knowledge and application of constructivist theory and active engagement techniques; (e) teachers as members of learning communities; and (f) teachers with the ability to diagnose, assess, prescribe and evaluate students' learning styles, and use appropriate instructional methods to maximize student learning. Although no list of key issues regarding quality can be regarded as complete, every contribution adds to a more detailed picture. It is important to remember that reform in teacher education should be viewed comprehensively and holistically (see 5.9.2.1 par 2). Galluzzo (1996:17) advocates a more systemic view, since meaningful and lasting educational reform cannot be accomplished by changing single elements within the system.

2.3.5.6 Core competencies

One attempt to set standards was to move away from the outcomes of a subject or program and concentrate on general criteria such as, 'What can be expected of a graduate'? Gnanam (1999) supported this view when he said that one should focus on core competency because of the changing trend in the job market, the premium placed on higher levels of academic knowledge, and core skills and maturity that develop with the additional years spent in the system. According to Gnanam (1999) core competencies of a graduate include:

- subject knowledge and understanding
- subject-specific skills
- cognitive skills (subject neutral)
- general skills (subject neutral)(see Appendix A)

Clark (1997:46, 47) reports that this notion of core competencies was not favourably received by academics in the UK. They argued that the broad aims of a program have considerable effects on its outcomes and that there should at least be a differentiation between two broad categories which are outcomes of programs preparing students for professional practice, as opposed to an academic career (research).

2.3.5.7 The entrance level

A crucial element, not mentioned so far but highlighted by Andrew (1997:173), is the fact that success in producing quality teachers is determined largely by the quality of the candidates admitted. In no other profession is the following combination of qualities more essential: effective interpersonal skills for dealing with adults and children; organizational abilities; outstanding communication skills; good academic skills; clear thinking; intellectual curiosity; flexibility; perceptiveness; the ability to exercise good judgement and make decisions in a complex, rapidly changing environment; ethical behaviour; and a commitment to care for each and every child (Andrew 1997:173). Of course candidates of quality are looking for quality institutions and quality programs. High academic standards, superior teaching, substantive course work, a well-organized and guided clinical experience, and a high success rate of graduates will attract high quality candidates. If the exit level of teacher education is benchmarked, the entrance level needs equal attention.

2.3.5.8 Standards and effective learning

Part of the 'tough stuff' in determining standards is the fact that what is set down on paper, is not always implemented in practice (see 6.3.3). It is, furthermore, difficult to obtain consensus on standards. To define the 'product' of the education system is no easy task; and, above all, education planners cannot guarantee that their standards will ensure that all students learn what they must learn in order to function effectively in 21st century classes (Lynch 1996:73).

On a more positive note, standards can be the engine to change the structure of teacher education programs. Standards ensure the preservation of free and public education in a democratic country. On a standards-based basis, it is possible to identify clearly what it takes to earn and maintain a teaching license. If educators implement standards wisely and cautiously, these standards can be the principal element that brings all students closer to excellence in education (Galluzzo 1996:17)(see 1.2 par 9).

2.3.6. Distinction between quality and standards

The concepts of quality of process (hence the provision of good value for money) and of

proper output standards are quite distinct. It is possible to have a program that has high standards but is of low quality (Clark 1997:47). To deliver HE of high quality and to maintain a high standard are two distinct though related demands. Both concepts are needed in order to capture the demands of a HE system that will feed the cultural and intellectual needs of the 21st century and provide the foundation of the knowledge-based economics to which we are moving.

Given the range of qualifications in HE, different people will make different contributions to their societies. At each level of attainment it is expected that quality processes of teaching/learning will provide learners with experiences of high quality that satisfy the 'fitness for purpose' intention. Monitoring of standards will be necessary to ensure that successful students have achieved the required levels of attainment for vocational or research activity or continued personal development.

The assessment of quality will assure that teaching/learning processes give value for money, deliver the aims stated, have continuous quality improvement built into them and give satisfaction to students during their course of study. Both internal quality assessment and external evaluation should respect the academic autonomy of HEIs while they should contain essential elements of operation that are external to providers. This will be easier for quality assessment than for achieving standards regulation. To establish uniform inter-institutional standards will diminish the freedom of action of individual institutions. Strides have already been made in quality assessment, but the development of academic standards that will be sufficiently flexible to meet the needs of a mass HE system has barely begun (Clark 1997:48).

We will now embark on the field of methodology in order to address the question: How? and By whom? should quality assessment be done?

2.4 THE ROLE OF EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL EVALUATION

2.4.1 Change initiated accountability

HE is a labour intensive enterprise, and as it is financed by governments, the taxpaying

public and (more and more) by parents, these stakeholders increasingly demand accountability from HEIs - rightfully so, since massification, demographic changes in student population and scarce resources contribute toward the lowering and attrition of academic standards (Jacobs 1997a:146)(see 2.2.3). At policy level QA is about power and control of standards, measured in terms of accountability. At institutional level QA is about student experience and achievement. With the growth and change in HE, these micro-level (institutional) processes have become more visible, more important and more costly to societies. In a variety of ways, the traditionally private lives of HEIs are being opened up to wider public scrutiny. As a consequence, governments are formulating increasingly explicit policies about what they want from HE (Kistan 1998:2)(see Chapter Three).

In SA, before 1994, HEIs were not accountable to anyone but themselves. After 1994, with the birth of democracy, HEIs were to be accountable to all stakeholders for their operations and, for the first time, the quality of work done at CEs, became an issue (see 1.2 par 3). In February 2000 all rectors of CEs had, for the first time, to account at provincial meetings with the minister of education for the bad results of their final-year students of 1999. They also had to suggest plans for improvement. As a follow-up, the minister held regional meetings with all staff members and students of CEs in March 2000 when the Culture of Learning, Teaching and Service (COLTS) campaign was launched. The rectors of CEs had to compile and read a statement of commitment of behalf of their institutions. This was a step toward accountability for quality in the colleges sector.

Lessons can be learned from other countries, including the Netherlands, where, according to De Jong and Prins (1995:37), the Dutch HE sector was also drastically restructured after 1985. Through a comprehensive merger operation forced by the ministry - as with CEs in SA - small educational institutes at the higher vocational level had to be upgraded to become different but equal counterparts of the universities. National policies for quality control and assessment were put in place to improve accountability.

2.4.2 The external- internal evaluation issue

2.4.2.1 Quality assurance mechanisms

Quality assessment procedures may be thought of as the keystone of the system of quality

control. Quality assessment in most countries is based on internal and external quality assessment, with a self-evaluation report as link between the two (De Jong & Prins 1995:38)(see 2.4.3.5). External quality assessment is needed to satisfy the need for accountability but it does not necessarily lead to improvement of quality. Harvey (1997:67) expresses his opinion as follows: *'External quality monitoring makes no attempt, in most countries, to encourage quality learning. On the contrary it tends to be conservative, driven by accountability requirements. If quality is to be enhanced it needs to be driven internally within institutions'*. According to Verkleij (1999b) there are many different ways to tell the truth during an external quality assessment session, and it is normal human behaviour not to provide the rope to be hanged with.

Stakeholders are looking for continuous improvement of the quality of education, and this seems to be possible only if all masks are dropped during honest, internal self-evaluation and a transformative approach is accepted by all staff. For many reasons, for example extra work, expenditure, and exposure to colleagues, it is not easy to motivate staff for internal assessment without external pressure. Furthermore the internal assessment is guided by the external assessment, and there should be a healthy liaison between the two. The ideal seems to address both quality improvement and accountability. In the South African context, the *Education White Paper 3* and *The Higher Education Bill* proposed that the QA system should have at least two simultaneous purposes, that are public accountability and institutional improvement (Kistan 1998:11).

To ... (manage) the EQA-process, is like navigating between two extremes. When one aims only at improvement, the system will be shipwrecked ... because the outside stakeholders will ask for accountability and design their own EQA system. If accountability is emphasised too much, the system will disappear ... because improvement will be hindered or even made impossible. The challenge is to keep on course and, by doing so, reconcile the two purposes in one system. It will not be easy, as can be seen by looking at the experience of the Netherlands (Vroeijenstijn 1995:33).

Jacobs (1997:181) does not agree with Vroeijenstijn's view that accountability and improvement are not easily reconciled within one QA mechanism. According to him, experience in SA with external QA at program level has proved the contrary. In order to marry the two concepts Harvey (1997:69) advocates that external quality monitoring needs to shift from assessing provision to auditing improvement. Jacobs (1997:173) believes that a distinction between internal and external QA mechanisms should not cause them to be viewed as being separate issues. Both are integral components of the total QA. In the South African context SERTEC has developed the requirements for self-evaluation by the technikons in co-operation with those institutions, in such a way that as little conflict as possible exists between the internal and external requirements of QA.

The QA mechanisms applied, differ from country to country but all utilise the same general methods of internal self-evaluation, reporting, external QA and reporting thereon. It is clear however, that the external QA bodies arose because the belief in the traditional external examiner system as adequate QA, is diminishing. It has also become evident that the EQA by bodies established for the purpose, without the co-operation of the HEIs, is inadequate. The HEI itself remains the main, but not the only, role-player in the assurance of adequate levels of quality in HE (Jacobs 1997a:147). At this point in time in SA, the development of a tailor-made QA system, vital to the successful transformation of teacher education programs of CEs into HEIs, has to be given high priority.

2.4.2.2 International co-operation

The need for finding mechanisms to satisfy the demand for accountability has led to the world-wide establishment of internal and external QA mechanisms in HE. EQA bodies are annually increasing in all parts of the world. International organisations with interests in QA are established at an increasing rate. An example of such an organisation is the INQAAHE, that biennially organises international conferences to share ideas and research results, circulates a newsletter and communicates on the Internet (see 1.1 par 1).

2.4.2.3 Quality assessment bodies

QA in HE is in most countries the responsibility of either government bodies, statutory

bodies or voluntary free associations. Examples of voluntary QA bodies are the QA arm of the Association of Universities in the Netherlands, the HEQC of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals in the UK, and the QPU of the South African Universities' Vice-Chancellors' Association (SAUVCA). Examples of statutory bodies that function independently are the Scottish Vocational Education Council, the *Comité National d'Evaluation* in France and SERTEC in SA. These bodies report directly to Parliament or the State President. Examples of Government QA bodies are the New Zealand Qualifications Authority and SAQA (Jacobs 1997a:148-150).

2.4.2.4 *Types of external quality assessment*

Two types of external quality assessment generally found, relate to the institution as a whole and to each individual program separately. These two types of QA have different aims. Institutional audit aims at the external assurance of the adequacy and success of the internal QA mechanisms applying to every aspect of all spheres of activities at the institution. Quality evaluation at instructional program level aims to ensure the success of the provision of the relevant educational component and the standards of the products.

2.4.2.5 *Models of evaluation systems*

Kells (1993:10) reminds those working in the system that the schemes they choose should be appropriate to the nature of the HE system that one seeks to maintain and develop; the procedures should squarely fit the purposes intended. Kells (1993:10,11) tabulates four basic models of evaluation systems, which are:

- The Americas Model which focuses heavily on improvement; both the institution and programs; self-assessment and peer review; goals and their achievements; and guild standards.
- The Continental European Model focuses on the purpose of public assurance with less emphasis on improvement and peer pressure to achieve it; programs rather than the institution; peer review and exclusive reliance on unwritten guild standards as opposed to goal achievement.
- The British Model focuses on assuring consistency of quality; a framework of norms

and grading standards; individual external examiners for course content and students' results as well as meta-evaluation¹⁰ of quality control systems.

- The Scandinavian Model is a variation on the Continental European Model. It relies heavily on institutional self-assessment; institution-based quality control systems; annual reports to the government about results of these efforts and a departure from regular cyclical external reviews to selected or *ad hoc* reviews.

In trying to find a model fit for South African needs, two of the above mentioned models apply. The British Model applies in so far as unity of standards and evaluative controls on the content of programs and the nature of the end product are concerned. The Americas Model will fit the purpose of different expectations from different institutions measuring themselves against their own mission statements. Colleges will also be interested in the targeting of scarce resources and should therefore use some comparison in at least some parts of the system. To monitor and review programs, cyclical schemes will apply. For improvement there should not be time limits, strict comparisons and 'anti-Robin Hood'¹¹ attitudes. Investment, self-evaluation, responsible and helpful peer review and strong links to planning and budgeting should be sought.

2.4.2.6 *Improvement: the ultimate goal*

For external evaluation of quality to be effective and to lead to improvement in the long run, the provider should give full participation with respect to QA. The provider is responsible for the provision of adequate levels of quality in HE and can therefore no longer attend to QA in reaction to demands of EQA bodies only. Providers should put mechanisms in place for continued internal assurance and improvement of the levels of quality. Such mechanisms should deal with every operational unit in the institution, which are academic, financial, or other support units. Jacobs (1997:151) advises that '*The assurance of adequate quality in any endeavour should be a way of life and not a system that is suddenly imposed on the institution*'. Letuka (1999) shares this view by saying that quality

¹⁰ Meta-evaluation refers to the evaluation of evaluations for the purpose of providing primary evaluators with feedback about technical matters and any restricted perspectives that may be implicit in their work (Hay 1999:2).

¹¹ Term borrowed from Kells (1993:11).

should be seen in all that you do. In *A Founding Document: QA in CEs*, Nicholls (1999:20) advises as follows:

Quality assurance cannot be established via ... inspection or the watchdog syndrome, as effectively the institutional players are disempowered and the scrutineers become ... the management of the institution. It is the essence of professionalism that self-evaluation guides the striving for quality. No autonomous professional has a monitoring system constantly in place, unless a second opinion is requested voluntarily ... Colleges of Higher Education need to develop to the stage where they consist of self-critical communities ... to develop guidelines of professional quality collaboratively and to institute a system of voluntary peer review in the nature of formative professional feedback which could inform self-evaluation and professional development.

2.4.3 Institutional self-evaluation: a prerequisite for quality assurance

Self-evaluation is widely regarded as integral to and indispensable for a QA system; hence the following pragmatic overview of possibilities to initiate institutional self-evaluation without disregarding the external pressure from professional bodies like SAQA and the HEQC in the South African context.

2.4.3.1 A strategic plan for quality assurance

'The strategic plan is a thoroughly documented set of aims for quality definition, quality assurance and quality improvement together with a thoroughly documented set of quality assurance procedures. This is also known as a Quality Policy' (Jacobs 1997a:163). The above-mentioned plan should be drafted and approved by the highest authority within the institution. A commitment to it from management, staff and students is crucial. To ensure its viability, everyone should take ownership of the plan.

The three-year or five-year strategic plan of the institution will contain a plan for QA. The plan will be based on the mission statement of the institution. Goals will be set relating to the assurance and improvement of all aspects of education at the institution within the time

frame the strategic plan refers to. The procedures, indicating all aspects for the action plan, will be documented and disseminated to all units. It will contain information about the self-evaluation reports to be compiled by all units. Guidance for the procedures and the reports is provided in the requirements of the external QA body. It will be indicated how the internal self-evaluation or evaluation committees will be constituted and how they will conduct their evaluation. All involved should have a clear indication of the requirements of the process and the responsibilities of each person therein (Jacobs 1997a:164,165).

2.4.3.2 *Strategies for quality assurance*

An institution may develop a variety of strategies to monitor its QA obligations. According to De Jong and Prins (1995:39) the development of a coherent, systematic system for internal quality assessment in HEIs includes: a theory in action; identification of objects and their PIs; registration and data-analysis; definition of norms; communication flows, *etcetera*. Such a system should not only include the primary processes of education which are input, throughput and output of students and the teaching practice, but should also focus on the educational organization, which include policy, climate, infrastructure, materials, teaching- and ancillary staff.

In a very basic and practical mode for CEs Nicholls (1999:21,22) suggests an effective system to work through existing hierarchical structures. An annual report by the Heads of Department to the Rector could be valuable, especially if an open relationship of trust exists between the persons concerned. Such a report could include:

- internal departmental moderation
- written reports on external moderation of question papers and scripts plus external moderation of year marks, including practicals
- internal departmental assessment of staff
- student evaluation of courses
- student evaluation of lecturers (voluntarily)

A similar mechanism could be applied administratively, with the Registrar reporting to the Rector on specific key areas. All extra-curricular activities could also be covered in the same way by the convenors thereof. These reports could form the basis for a Rector's report to the College Council.

Another strategy could be to consider processes under the following headings:

- inputs referring to resources, staffing, students and curricula
- processes referring to teaching and learning, student support, feedback mechanisms (e.g. assessment and staff development)
- outputs referring to formative and summative assessments including results-analysis, external examiner reports and student satisfaction

In general, the outcomes of QA objectives should be measurable, apportion accountability and be contained within the corporately defined parameters.

At a QA workshop for CEs, Nicholls (1999) offered many valuable ideas about QA and the assessment thereof. His views are paraphrased in the ensuing paragraph. It should be remembered that QA is a generative process. It can also be an incremental process. We will have to answer the question: 'What value have we added since we were together last?' It is not Big Brother telling you what to do, but interaction between all stakeholders. QA is about partnerships and sharing. It has to come from within. It is everybody's business. Start by asking questions. Management-wise, ask the Rector what he can boast about. Something has to happen to the people in an institution. Performance on the job is what is looked at and therefore feedback is needed. You have to account for what you do. The teaching institution should grow as a self-critical, academic community. QA is a definite program - not how we felt about it on Friday. The program needs approximately two hours per week. Highlight all the time what you ought to be doing and develop a culture of reflection. Develop an instrument to assess with and improve it while using it. Although you have to compare yourself with somebody, remember that it is developmental and not comparative in nature. Capacity-building goes hand in hand with QA. Regarding the scope of QA, it is wide and extensive and stretches through TAM, from the big issues to the small things. It is about the monitoring of systems. Any tapped strategy or system needs to be contextualised for the institution and its purpose. QA is as good as the weakest spot in the chain.

2.4.3.3 Internal assessment of quality

Self-evaluation is a process of reflecting, according to the strategic QA plan, on the

objectives, activities and performance of the institution and the persons in it, and assessing whether educational objectives are met. In essence the following two questions should be answered: *'Are we doing what we set out to do?'* and *'How can we improve on the above?'* (Nicholls 1999:39). Should it be found that any current practice needs improvement, quality outcomes should be formulated and plans be put into practice to meet them. Internal processes should involve a measure of peer review which is beneficial to the reviewer and the reviewed (Nicholls 1999:39). The division of Quality Audit of the HEQC of the Committee of Vice-chancellors and Principals in the UK, based its QA on the following seven questions which could serve as a basis for internal QA:

- *'What are you trying to do?'*
- *Why are you trying to do it?'*
- *How are you trying to do it?'*
- *Why are you doing it that way?'*
- *Why do you think that it is the best way of doing it?'*
- *How do you know it works?'*
- *How do you improve it?'* (HEQC 1994:3)

Individual institutions should develop an instrument for assessment of whatever they co-operatively have decided to evaluate and improve. It might be a questionnaire in the form of a checklist accompanied by a rating scale and space for writing down more information. Interviews according to a 'buddy system' might be considered but this method is more time consuming. The assessment procedure should be negotiated with all staff members for maximum acceptance. It should not be too time consuming or complex and people should not be swamped in preparation and paperwork (Webbstock 2000; Blake 1994:30).

Nicholls (1999:48-49) advises from lessons learned from international experience that QA measures can be counter-productive if: uniformity is enforced; QA is emphasised at the expense of operational roles; the system is prescribed; quality control is a bureaucratic and top-down concept; external interaction is typified by paternalism; quality indicatives are burdensome; arbitrary and subjective criteria are used; creativity and individual flair are not

catered for; and the QA is sanction based. *'The overriding danger consists in falling foul of the "naturalistic fallacy" of moving from an identified factual premise to an evaluative conclusion as if it is a logical extension (the "is-ought question")*. *There are no universally valid guidelines - there are only better or worse quality processes for each institutional context'* (Nicholls 1999:50).

Bagwandeem (1993:95,96) offers the following valuable ideas to establish a healthy climate for the QA process:

- Evaluation and assessment should be dynamic, democratic, and developed on the basis of confidence and integrity.
- Any educational institution should be entitled to evaluate an individual's performance.
- Both evaluator and evaluatee should be trained for evaluation and assessment.
- All human beings should be seen as individuals of worth with unique talents.
- Evaluators should endow the evaluatee with a keener spirit of responsibility and achievement.
- A psychological support system needs to be developed by means of a strong relationship built, on honesty, between evaluator and evaluatee.
- The evaluatee must be fully cognisant of the criteria and purpose of the evaluation.
- The evaluatee must be allowed to contribute information to, comment on, and review the report on the evaluation.
- The evaluatee should be legally empowered to contest the summative findings.
- Since a variety of sources for data are necessary, evaluation should be done on a continual basis.
- The QA evaluation is complex and comprises input, process and output. Therefore, the QA program to be devised must be quite obviously cost effective, time effective and administratively manageable.

2.4.3.4 *Quality promotion*

Ideally quality promotion should result from EQA. According to Nicholls (1999:50-51), quality promotion will only occur if the QA system: is rooted in the culture of the institution;

is developmental in nature; is based on honesty, reality and transparency; consists of multi-year cycles with different major aspects coming under review in each cycle; gains opinions systematically in the process; makes provision for unbiased highly qualified and knowledgeable external peers to assess the validation of the institution; has adequate funding to support infrastructural development and recommendations for improvements; is responsive to governmental and other stakeholders; involves establishing and maintaining self-improving processes; involves everyone in the institution; and is streamlined and effective.

2.4.3.5 *The self-evaluation report*

De Jong and Prins (1995:40) stress the importance of the self-evaluation report as a very important tool (see 2.4.2.1 par 1). In the Netherlands a faculty has to write down in forty pages, an analysis of the goals, the curriculum, the courses, input, throughput and output data on students, the organization, the infrastructure and the staff of a particular field of study. Every analysis is followed by one or more realistic options for solving real or potential problems. The end of the document contains a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT)-analysis. During the EQA the report will be studied and discussed by the visiting body (see 5.8.4.3). The EQA report on the institution is usually made public.

2.5 **QUALITY ASSURANCE AND COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA**

CEs were first informed about QA in 1998 (see 1.2 par 5). Although the available literature offers evidence of Government's concern about the poor quality of the work done at colleges, no external pressure was put on colleges to design and implement QA. Later it became clear that Government planned to address this problem by means of the rationalisation of CEs. At the launch of the COLTS-campaign in 2000, the Free State Minister of Education, Mr Papi Kganare, raised his concern in an address to college lecturers and students when he said: '*... we are not happy about the outcome of results at different colleges*' (Kganare 2000:1). He further said that colleges were the weak link in the education chain. The minister urged colleges to recommit themselves to the pursuit of excellence. He concluded with the following admonition: '*If you continue doing the things you used to do, expect the same results. The difference is, we will not allow*

business as usual. You have been brought together primarily by teaching and learning and if this does not happen then we have no space for you' (Kganare 2000:11).

In the *Founding Document: QA in CEs* (Nicholls 1999:1-3,8,9), a first of its kind, orientation concerning quality in colleges is provided. The CE sector was poised to move out of an era of being administered by the provinces (like the school sector) to taking their place in a national, integrated HE sector to be characterised by competence and efficiency. Since CEs came from different ex-departments of education with varying degrees of excellence, all colleges needed to develop into the quality institutions envisaged in the *White Paper: A Program for HE Transformation* (July 1997) and the *HE Act* (101 of 1997).

With the incorporation of CEs into universities or technikons, it was assumed that the receiving institutions would provide a quality thrust in their interaction with the college that was incorporated. There is no doubt that such interaction could hold the seeds of collaborative endeavours which could be quality enhancing. However, the assumption that all universities hold a monopoly on good quality and all CEs were quality deficient should be treated with caution. Another moot point was the question of whether the criteria of quality excellence in universities and technikons readily translated into the same quality criteria in colleges. Further questions were raised about the extent to which suitable universities and technikons might be arbiters of excellence and whether the accreditation of college qualifications should be entrusted to them.

In instances where universities and colleges have worked in partnerships, the colleges have benefited in terms of quality. However, it was argued that it was more of a sensitive interaction aimed at empowering self-assurance within an institution and the persons working there, rather than an imposition of quality requirements *per se*. Seeing that quality control may not result in an enhancement of quality, mutual trust and respect and a partnership approach were likely to be more productive.

The NDoE acknowledged the fact that all CEs needed capacity building to become part of the HE sector. This capacity building process would implicitly represent the crucial initial stages of quality promotion - a first step on the road to QA. There were two aspects of lack

of development that needed to be addressed. The first aspect was that pre-1994 funding deficiencies translated into deficiencies in many facets of the CEs: administration, academic, management, governance, staffing and infrastructure. Secondly, further post-1994 deficiencies occurred by way of rationalisation of CEs, voluntary severance packages and redeployment based on the 'last in first out' formula which lowered morale, the lack of progress in implementing Government's intention with CEs, the drop in recruitment because of the lack of financial aid for students, and the problems encountered by teachers in the schools. These deficiencies could serve as a base on which to build quality promotion. If the quality of the staff was to be a first objective of any QA program, then it was of the utmost importance to address the negative effects of the rationalisation process on the morale of staff.

The capacity-building indicatives envisaged for CEs need to precede the more formal quality promotion and QA initiatives required of the HEQC for this sector. The development of QA systems is an incremental process. Important goals of a capacity-building program are to develop high quality management processes as well as an institutional environment conducive to empowerment *via* the enhancement of lecturer knowledge, skills and attitudes. This ensures, *inter alia*, optimal institutional management based on strategic planning and educational programs which are responsive to the needs of society. Any process of capacity building must entail the necessary financial resources for the optimisation of the staff in an institution. May (2000) voiced his concern that teacher education would, under the auspices of HE, be further away from funding resources. Financial criteria impact on educational criteria and *vice versa*. The balance should be found in efficiency *versus* effectiveness ratios.

In 1994 Jacobs and co-workers did research on future challenges for CEs for Black students. From a national survey it was then concluded that the following fields needed serious upgrading: (a) resources, (b) academic standards, (c) basic, modern management principles, (d) the productivity curve of staff, (e) support services, (f) the establishment of partnerships and (g) research (Jacobs *et al.* 1994 :108,109). Seven years later, all these mentioned fields are still relevant - not excluding the need for quality development. The

Founding Document: QA in CEs (Nicholls 1999:17) argues that quality development should commence by addressing the human resource sector since quality is a function of people.

It is crucial to involve the staff concerned in the conception, implementation, and evaluation of any quality assurance measures in an institution. Negotiating the principles is everybody's responsibility. In the process, the persons responsible for the delivery of quality will develop their own goals, conceptions of meaning and standards related to quality concerns. In this process, colleges will articulate their own criteria and establish their own standards of competence (quality). In this way, concerns about quality become integral to the system rather than a system of external ad hoc checks and reviews (Nicholls 1999:17).

2.6 CRITIQUE OF QUALITY ASSURANCE

Four problems regarding QA were touched on earlier. They are: the elusive nature of the concept quality; the problem of finding suitable criteria for evaluation; apprehension about QA; and lessons learned from four years' experience of quality assessment in the UK (see 1.3; 2.1.2 par 8; 2.3.4.3).

The nature of QA is a contested terrain. There is no common notion as to what the meaning of quality and QA for CEs should be. The generally accepted notion of quality in South African education, which is fitness for purpose, is contested by Bunting (1993:19,20) who believes that the notion not only restricts all considerations of quality to entities or activities for which definite purposes can be defined, but furthermore implies that it is possible to agree on means of assessing the degree to which these entities or activities fulfil their purposes. To prove his statement he asks why people pay more for certain things and throw others away. They do so, he argues, because some things are obviously better than others, and this 'betterness' cannot only be fitness for purpose. In my opinion, fitness for purpose can be narrowly understood in the context of this study as tailored education toward achievement of the institution's vision, which is a pragmatic view.

The debate about the place of standards still continues. Webbstock and Schreiner (1997:214) report as follows on a workshop held at the University of Natal where the understanding of quality emphasised improvement:

One point worth noting is the absence of the term standards ... It was felt by the participants that if quality were to be defined by a set of standards then these would be set at some level which would be attainable by the average student. The consequence of this would be that quality would be seen as a mediocre level which was not in keeping with a strongly held feeling that quality was concerned with achieving beyond the minimum standards... Quality is about producing lifelong learners and this too cannot be measured relative to a set standard to be attained at the end of a university career.

Another moot point is whether the focus of a quality review should be on the institution, its programs, its departments, or the staff. The contestation may further occur conceptually or with its implementation. Clark (1997:41) points out the problem of dividing the academic enterprise into manageable pieces for assessment. Increasingly it happens that HEIs restructure their curriculum around topic areas such as the environment, women's studies or African studies instead of offering traditionally known subjects like Geography. This phenomenon has an attached problem, that is to find competent external assessors whose judgements will not be rejected by the providers. In the UK a team of academic and professional peers are used to carry out the assessment process. This too has its problems. What is meant by peer? Is it merely someone teaching the same subject or someone appointed by the vice-chancellor? There is rarely consensus as to who are the recognised experts representing the cutting edge of innovation in a specific field. Another related problem is the type of judgement given by peers. Will they consider and respond to an honest attempt to deliver standard practice or will they be looking for the cutting edge of innovation?

What is meant by measuring quality outcomes? What are the measurable and concrete outcomes that constitute quality in CE's terms? For example, can we refer to the student pass rate? Is that a valid and reliable measure of quality? Many would contest this suggestion. The validity of quantitative information in assessing accomplishments has been queried. *'Can quality be measured in quantity terms, or are they by definition antithetical?'* (Nicholls 1999:48).

The same problem occurs with benchmarking. What constitutes an excellent institution to be looked at for comparative purposes? This question is further problematised by the fact that various CEs are at different stages of development and universities and technikons differ from colleges in their mission statements. Kistan (1998:13) reports that *'the country has inherited very diverse and disparate higher education institutions from the previous apartheid government. The process of quality assurance needs to take into account this factor in order to succeed'*.

Finding and agreeing upon a suitable measuring instrument is difficult. According to Clark (1997:38) a common yardstick for measuring outputs does not exist. Alderman (1996:5) says *'in a higher education system as richly diverse as we now have in Britain, they cannot be judged against some super-benchmark. There is no "gold standard"'*. On the other hand Nicholls (1999:49) points out that subjective criteria will not aid the quality process and suggests that criteria should be specific, measurable and appropriately benchmarked. Can TQM be seen as managerism which is technicist, meaning that it is not the intrinsic goodness of the enterprise that counts, but delivering what the customer requires? TQM has five worthwhile principles by which any institution can benefit. They are to: (a) concentrate on the customer, (b) do it right, (c) communicate and educate, (d) measure and record, and (e) do it together (Morta 1999: Annexure D:2). The University of the Western Cape follows the TQM approach to a great extent for their non-academic staff. The technikons too, follow the TQM approach.

What will the approach for the quality processes be? Will there be finely articulated procedures, good relations with outside agencies of quality, the establishment and maintenance of a healthy organisational climate, or customer orientation? Is the implementation of AS/NZS ISO 9001 Standards a possibility? (see 2.3.4.5 par 3).

Kistan (1998:12,13) mentions a few significant problems concerning QA. The introduction of QA systems into the functioning of institutions by governments and external agencies are sometimes perceived as intrusion, interference and a top-down policing (see 2.1.2 par 8). Even with the establishment of an internal QA system quality control may not result in enhancement of quality. Mutual trust, respect and a partnership approach are likely to be

more productive. *'Hard choices must be made in connection with the initiation and the ownership of the QA system, and how this system must be phased into a fairly chaotic HE system full of uncertainties and suspicions, has not been fully addressed'* (Kistan 1998:13). Kistan is also concerned about the fact that QA systems apparently face the limits of a 'one size fits all approach'. HEIs remain very diverse in history, local cultural attributes, size, mission and clientele served. Kells (in Kistan 1998:13) also warns against the copying of an existing model for QA without tailor-making it for a specific institution's needs.

According to Clark (1997:43) new problems arose in the UK as the assessment program built up experience. The first is the role of self-assessment since it seemed as if providers rate themselves continuously higher than the external assessors, and further the reports read more like bids for resources than as self-assessments. Perhaps it is naive to expect effective self-criticism in a report submitted to external assessors. It might be more effective to ask providers for an accurate presentation of the academic programs rather than to expect them to criticise themselves. The second problem concerns the tension between the prompt provision of the results at the completion of the visit of an external panel versus the production of accurate and robust judgements when the final reports are published. The publication of such reports may take up to six months to be released, meaning that the institution can only then begin to act upon the essentials of the judgements. A further key question is whether the results of QA processes should be confidential or public knowledge.

Strydom (1997c:110) says there might be a problem of expecting too much too soon from QA. The ideal QA system can only be phased in over a period of time since efforts need to centre around building a culture of ethical behaviour, high standards, self-regulation, *etcetera*. He adds that the training of persons in the application of QA, peer evaluation and the setting up of mechanisms for its implementation are other problems still to be addressed.

The cost of the QA activities is a significant problem. *'Quality assurance is costly in both time and effort and it remains to be seen to what extent the higher education sector and*

the government will be able to sustain the road already embarked upon' (Muller 1997:57). The costs can broadly be put into three categories: (a) cost of running a national QA system for HE; (b) cost to individual institutions of meeting the system's requirements; and (c) the effective cost of time given freely by honorary auditors and assessors (Kistan 1998:13). It needs also to be stressed, once again, that QA is a never-ending journey, meaning that the above-mentioned costs will be permanently on the budget.

2.7 SUMMATION

To answer the question *What?*, a few notions of quality and QA were discussed. Regional, national and international opinions were given to answer the question of *Why?* QA is needed in teacher education. Subsequently the coherence between standards and quality was discussed. *How?* and *By whom?* were addressed by discussing the liaison between internal and external evaluation. The state of affairs, referring to quality and QA in the unique context of CEs, was reviewed (see 2.5). Finally, views of QA, as reported by different authors, were given.

One of the numerous tasks of the new democratically elected government in SA, was to transform and restructure the HE sector. This gave rise to several policy and legal initiatives to transform HE after apartheid. Quality imperatives are not the preserve of institutions acting on their own. Cognisance must be taken of the post-1994 structural innovations designed to promote and enhance quality indices in the provision of education (Nicholls 1999:51). Chapter Three deals with these emerging policy developments regarding QA in SA.

CURRENT SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICIES ON TEACHER EDUCATION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The quality movement in South African HE is substantially being shaped by the legislative and policy direction of the new democratic government. The previous Minister of Education, SME Bengu, stated the following at the beginning of the process of transformation and restructuring of the education system of SA: *'Our message is that education and training must change. It cannot be business as usual in our schools, colleges, technikons and universities'* (RSA 1995b:5). As the new democracy in SA matures, the role of every sector and its contribution to consolidating and extending the new democracy are reviewed to ensure proper alignment with the development goals of the country. The education system has been a major area of contestation owing to the inequities that characterized the former apartheid education (Muller 1997:35).

3.2 A SHORT DEVELOPMENT HISTORY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

In view of the fact that CEs were incorporated into HEIs, QA policies directed toward HE were relevant for this study. In the absence of a strategic plan of action for HE, QA policy implementers and institutions had to rely on the recommendations of mostly international experts and the available policy documents to develop a workable QA system for the HE band which would eventually fulfil the national and local needs of the community. Van der Westhuizen (1999:1) reports that, over the past ten years, various initiatives contributed toward developing and establishing a workable QA system for South African HE. The stimulation to engage in issues surrounding quality in HE emanated from the investigation into universities undertaken by the CUP in 1987. The CUP is now known as SAUVCA. The CUP Report indicated that the academic standards at universities vary greatly - from excellence to standards that are scarcely acceptable at tertiary level (Strydom & Lategan 1996:10).

During the same period there were a number of developments that focused on quality and QA. Some of these emanated from political changes in the country. The increasing pressure for access into HE, and particularly the entry into the system of students with education deficits that had accumulated because of the legacy of apartheid education, gave momentum to quality issues (Van der Westhuizen *et al.* 1999:348). Another major development that necessitated HEIs to respond to QA demands, was the establishment of the legislative environment that led to the development of the NQF as administered by SAQA. The NQF represents a state-initiated, state-controlled and state-co-ordinated system of QA that poses challenges to the traditional academic freedom and autonomy of HEIs (Muller 1997:38). At the same time SERTEC, established in 1986 by means of the *Certification Council for Technikon Education Act* (Act 88 of 1986), evolved an own approach to ensure quality programs at Technikons with some reference to institutional level. One full cycle of program evaluation visits had already been completed by SERTEC at the time when the university system started their preliminary investigations in 1994.

In 1995 the CUP approved the establishment of the QPU to ensure that universities evolved an own system of QA in line with their needs, which differed somewhat from those of technikons. The QPU was a QA agency founded voluntarily and paid for by the university system. It placed a strong emphasis on quality improvement in the whole university system. With their first objective in mind, which was to assist universities in establishing internal QA systems for self-evaluation (QPU 1997:1), the QPU started in 1997 to audit the mechanisms and procedures for QA at universities. A further impetus came from the *NCHE Report: A framework for transformation* (1996b) as well as the *Draft White Paper on HE* (1997d) in which the formation of the CHE with a HEQC was foreseen (Muller 1997:38,39). Unfortunately, in the light of these further national QA developments, the work of the QPU was terminated in January 1999 with the view of establishing one QA body for all HEIs. The fact that SAUVCA decided to terminate the work of the QPU was significant in the sense that it was a confirmation that the universities would transfer their ownership of QA to the CHE. The only reason given was that '*SAUVCA does not wish to duplicate the work of the HEQC*', and it was suggested that '*the past QPU auditing process be regarded as a useful formative experience for SAUVCA and the institutions which have been audited*' (SAUVCA 1999:2).

The issue of academic freedom and autonomy in universities has always influenced the establishment of any QA system in comparison with ... the technikon system that originated out of a more closed system of certification. The paradigm shift based on the concept of people's education and a new systematic approach to reconstruction and development demanded a new approach to quality and QA in the education system after 1994 (Van der Westhuizen 1999:3).

The post-1994 education system had to reflect the country's RDP program. President Mandela appointed the NCHE in February 1995 to advise the government of national unity on *'issues concerning the restructuring of HE by undertaking a situation analysis, formulating a vision for HE and putting forward policy proposals designed to ensure the development of a well-planned, integrated high quality system of HE'* (NCHE 1996b:1). The report on the massive, two-year-long, developmental research undertaken by the NCHE, entitled *A Framework for Transformation* (NCHE 1996b:1), served as the cornerstone of the South African QA system.

3.3 NATIONAL COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

In their report (NCHE 1996b:1) the Commission recognised that the HE system in SA had considerable capacity in research, teaching, physical and human resources, but was *'fundamentally flawed by inequities ... and distortions deriving from its history and present structure'*. Together with equity, democratisation, development, academic freedom and institutional autonomy, effectiveness and efficiency, quality was recognised as one of the fundamental principles that should guide the restructuring of the new HE system for SA.

For the NCHE the pursuit of quality implied maintaining and applying academic and educational standards, both in the sense of minimum expectations and requirements that should be complied with, and in the sense of ideals of excellence to strive for. These expectations can differ from context to context, depending on the specific purposes pursued. Applying the principle of quality entails evaluating services and products against set standards with a view to improvement, renewal or progress. Quality is sometimes equated with *'fitness for purpose'*. In the case of HE, international recognition is also an important normative notion in assessing standards (NCHE 1996b:72,73). Amongst other

recommendations the NCHE saw quality and QA '*... not only as an internal institutional matter, but also as an essential ingredient of an emerging new relationship between the government and HE*' (NCHE 1996b:108). The government is responsible to steer the overall mission and goals of the HE system through sets of incentives like earmarked funding and regular evaluation of institutions and programs rather than through detailed regulation and legislation.

A differentiation is also noted between the principles of quality and of effectiveness and efficiency. It is stated that the principles of effectiveness and efficiency are related though distinct. An effective system leads to desired outcomes. It does the right things. An efficient system works well without duplication or waste. It does things right. It makes optimal use of available means (NCHE 1996b:73,74).

Effectiveness and efficiency together constitute important principles for assessing past and future systems of higher education. Effectiveness demands the continuous review of aims ... in the light of changing needs. Efficiency demands continuous improvement of the methods and instruments needed to achieve these aims (NCHE 1996b:74).

The Commission found that the QA mechanisms varied across the three tertiary education sectors investigated in SA. In the college sector the dominant form had been national, provincial or departmental set exams at exit levels for certificate and diploma programs. In the technikon sector SERTEC had performed important program accreditation which incorporated significant international common features. In the university sector quality was ensured through professional accreditation and, in some cases, a peer-based system of external examination. The establishment of the QPU by the CUP is mentioned in the NCHE Report as a new development (NCHE 1996b:108).

The NCHE Report proposed major innovations in HE policy and planning. The creation of a single co-ordinated system of HE was proposed. Two of the key mechanisms needed were a new qualifications framework and a QA system. For the purpose of this research the incorporation of CEs into universities and technikons (NCHE 1996b:283-286), was relevant and hugely influenced the research.

A program-based definition of HE was suggested. It was an attempt to give effect to the principles of relevance and greater responsiveness to a wide range of social and economic needs (Van der Westhuizen *et al.* 1999:349). The understanding of the boundaries between HE and other levels of education depended on the notion of HE programs. NCHE (1996b:84) spelled out the requirements for future programs and emphasised that programs should be almost invariably trans-, inter- or multi- disciplinary, and could be trans-institutional as well. Private HEIs offering trans-national programs were already established (Subotzky 1999:30)(see 3.12.3.2 i). It was essential that such programs be offered within a coherent qualification framework.

The framework should include intermediate exit qualifications within multi-year qualifications and should consist of a ladder set of qualifications at HE certificate, diploma and degree levels. All HE programs should be registered on the NQF, at minimum, at the exit level of whole qualifications. NSBs will determine the appropriate form of registration in terms of unit standards within qualifications. Effective articulation mechanisms between the different qualifications should be developed since problems of articulation had often been most acute in the past.

The *SAQA Act* (RSA 1995a) made provision for the establishment of bodies responsible for monitoring and auditing the achievements of education providers. Programs offered should meet the standards and qualifications approved by the relevant NSBs (NCHE 1996b:108,109).

A QA system should be established. The NCHE (1996a:74; 1996b:108,109) believes that a comprehensive, development-oriented QA system is central to a single HE system. It is an essential mechanism to tackle quality differentials across institutional programs. It is also meant to be an important element in the governance of institutions and it is one of the ways to draw private HE into the system.

A HEQC should co-ordinate QA in HE as a committee of the CHE. The HEQC should act as an umbrella body, with specialist groups undertaking the external evaluation function

at institutional and programs level. The focus of the HEQC should be on QA at institutional and programs level. Different structures and procedures will be needed to assess research quality and productivity.

To ensure the legitimacy and acceptance of the QA system it should be based on an agreed-upon framework underpinned by the following three principles:

- Criteria and procedures are to be formulated in consultation with HEIs.
- Its purpose should be formative, focusing on improvement and development rather than punitive sanctions. It should not be directly linked to funding (see 1.2 par 7).
- Procedures should include a combination of institutional self-evaluation and external independent assessment (NCHE 1996b:109).

The QA system should encompass three functions, which are (a) institutional auditing to be undertaken at least every five years, focusing on improvement at institutional level; (b) program accreditation to grant or maintain accreditation to programs that have met the minimum standards as determined by the relevant NSBs; and (c) national and institutional quality promotion through the development of quality promotion strategies (NCHE 1996b:109-110).

The institutional auditing and program accreditation functions should be the responsibility of the HEQC, functioning as an independent statutory body. The HEQC should be managed by a board of individuals drawn from inside and outside the HE system. The HEQC should develop QA procedures for program evaluation. SERTEC should form the nucleus of the HEQC since it has considerable experience in accrediting technician programs, whereas the QPU should undertake developmental and capacity-building functions related to quality promotion on an agency basis for the CHE (NCHE 1996b:110). This HE transformation process led to the acceptance of a number of policy documents and related acts to establish the political forum for a QA system at macro level (Van der Westhuizen 1999:4).

3.4 HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY PAPERS

3.4.1 The Green Paper on Higher Education

Following the NCHE Report, the Green Paper on HE was published in December 1996. This document uses the NCHE Report as its primary resource and urges all stakeholders to make a study of the Report. Virtually all the NCHE proposals on QA and program assessment and accreditation are endorsed. Reference is made to the fact that QA of programs has been a priority within HE internationally in recent years as a way of ensuring accountability and value for money. The proposal that QA in HE should be co-ordinated by an independent umbrella body, the HEQC, is also approved. It furthermore proposes that the HEQC should register with SAQA as the ETQA for HE (RSA 1996b:32).

Lategan and co-workers (1998:7) point out a number of problems related to the Green Paper proposals. The first is the fact that the HEQC, proposed to be a statutory body, will have to register as an ETQA with SAQA which is also a statutory body. Secondly, the relationship between statutory bodies becomes more complicated if the statutory powers of the proposed CHE, those of universities and of professional councils are taken into account. Thirdly, SERTEC is proposed to form the nucleus of the HEQC. The QA model according to which the program accreditation of SERTEC was designed, might not fit university and college programs since these institutions differ from technikons in their program offerings. Van der Westhuizen and co-workers (1999:352) are of the opinion that the functions and procedures, posited in the Green Paper, demonstrate conflicting perspectives on the proposed QA system.

3.4.2 The White Paper on Higher Education Transformation

The *White Paper on Higher Education Transformation* establishes a comprehensive and ambitious transformation agenda to harness HE to overcome social inequities, contribute to reconstruction and development and enable SA to engage effectively with globalisation (RSA 1997e:iii). The White Paper introduces new modes of national and institutional governance. At a national level, co-operative governance requires the definition and sharper clarification of the roles, responsibilities and functions of the HE Branch of the CHE and its HEQC, SAQA, professional councils, Section Education and Training Authorities (SETAs), and key stakeholder bodies.

The White Paper endorses the principle of quality to maintain and apply academic and educational standards, both in the sense of requirements to meet the mission and in the sense of ideals and excellence. Seeing that the White Paper is a political document, more emphasis is placed on a political understanding of HE and little is said about the process of quality and how quality can be improved within institutions. The document leaves the initiative to the universities to develop their own QA procedures within the guidelines given in the proposed HE legislation. According to Van der Westhuizen and co-workers (1999:353), the White Paper should be read in conjunction with the recommendations of the NCHE Report and the Green paper. The NCHE is more specific with regard to the meaning of quality and QA, while the Green Paper gives guidelines for the institutionalisation of QA.

The White Paper proposes that the single co-ordinated HE system should use a program-based approach. *'Higher Education comprises all learning programs leading to qualifications higher than the proposed Further Education and Training Certificate or the ... [Grade 12] certificate'* (RSA 1997e:17). This implies that HE takes place in a multiplicity of institutions, using a variety of methods, and is directed toward an increasingly diverse body of learners. These programs should be fully compatible with all the components of HE, which are teaching and learning, scholarship and research, community development and extension services (RSA 1997e:17).

The principle is endorsed that a single qualifications framework should be developed for all HE qualifications in line with the NQF. All national and institutional HE programs should be registered on the NQF, minimally at the exit level of whole qualifications (RSA 1997e:21).

The White Paper endorses QA arrangements for the system as follows: The primary responsibility for QA rests with the HEIs. An umbrella national authority for quality promotion and QA is necessary. This body will be the HEQC, established as a permanent committee of the CHE within the framework developed by SAQA. The previously mentioned functions of the HEQC are also endorsed but no mention is made, as in the previous papers, of the roles to be played by SERTEC and the QPU, or the future

functioning of these two structures (RSA 1997e:22). It is further proposed that the CHE may charge fees for services rendered to institutions by either the CHE or the HEQC. No tariffs are mentioned but Van der Westhuizen and co-workers (1999:355) and Muller (1997:53) suggest that institutions will have to budget for such expenditures, as they could have an influence on the cost-effectiveness of the institution.

3.4.3 The Higher Education Act

The *HE Act* (No. 101) was accepted in 1997. It provides guidelines, structure and quality operations for the co-ordination of QA in HE. It requires the CHE to establish a HEQC *'to perform the quality promotion and quality assurance functions of the CHE in terms of this Act'* (RSA 1997c:12). These functions are outlined in the Act as (a) to promote QA in HE, (b) to audit the QA mechanisms of HEIs, and (c) to accredit programs of HE (RSA 1997c:10). In addition the Act specifies that the HEQC must comply with the policies and criteria for ETQAs, formulated by SAQA in terms of section 5(1)(a)(ii) of the SAQA Act, 1995. With the concurrence of the CHE, the HEQC may delegate any QA functions to other appropriate bodies capable of performing such functions.

With the promulgation of the SAQA Act and the HE Act, teacher education was defined as part of HE. Colleges joined universities and technikons as part of the HE sector. In future, the ways in which qualifications would be generated and registered and learning programs designed, delivered and funded, and 'quality assured', would depend on their location in different fields and levels of the NQF, not their institutional base (NSE 1998d:9).

3.5 THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (NQF)

The *SAQA Act* (No 58 of 1995) had already been accepted before the publication of the NCHE Report. The Act provides for the establishment of the NQF as the focus and linchpin of the government's plan for systemic transformation of the education system in SA. It also serves as the instrument through which access, quality, redress and development effectively engage in the move toward a truly learning society (NCHE 1996b:104,105; RSA 1998a:2). All HE programs, national and institutional, have to be registered on the NQF, minimally at the exit level of whole qualifications (RSA 1997e:21

[2.65-6]), and should give effect to critical learning outcomes (RSA 1998a:2). The objectives of the NQF are to:

- create an integrated national framework for learning achievements
- facilitate access to and mobility and progression within education, training and career paths
- enhance the quality of education and training
- accelerate the redress of past discrimination in education and employment opportunities
- contribute to the full personal development of each learner and the social and economic development of the nation at large (NSE 1998d:10; Ximiya 2000)

The adoption of an outcomes-based NQF, has the following important implications for HE. There is a shift from institution-based funding to program-based funding; from tightly controlled entry points to institutions, to flexible movement into and out of institutions within an open learning system; from fixed admission requirements and exit points in formal institutions to recognition of prior learning (RPL) which will change admission requirements. Learners will exit learning programs at different levels and they will educate themselves and one another within the non-formal, informal and the formal system (see 3.12.3.2 i).

The *SAQA Act* further provides for the establishment of bodies responsible for registering and monitoring the achievements of education providers offering programs that meet the standards and qualifications on the NQF.

3.6 SOUTH AFRICAN QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY (SAQA)

SAQA was established in October 1995 to provide for the development and implementation of an NQF and to provide for matters connected therewith. SAQA as a body is representative of the key stakeholders in education and training. Members are appointed in terms of the Government Gazette No. 913 of 31 May 1996.

To ensure that the goals of the NQF are met, and that there is an efficient and effective organisational structure to manage the qualifications framework, SAQA has set up two sets

of bodies under its authority, each with specified functions and processes. First there are the SGBs and the NSBs which are responsible for the standard setting and registration process of Unit Standards and qualifications on the NQF. The other set of bodies involved themselves with the QA process. They are different ETQAs of which the CHE, with its established HEQC, will be involved with QA of HE. They will generate quality criteria by which to accredit providers and to monitor and audit the quality of their programs (NSE 1998d:11-15; Ximiya 2000).

From a learner's perspective, SGBs and NSBs are the guarantors that qualifications registered on the NQF are internationally comparable and of high quality. Likewise, the ETQA is the guarantor of the quality of learning programmes provided by a "constituent provider" (NSE 1998d:15).

The role of SAQA is crucial as it must oversee the interaction of the different stakeholders and create a system for regulating the registration of qualifications and assuring the quality of learning programs and providers.

3.7 NATIONAL STANDARDS BODIES

In the *SAQA Act* (RSA 1998a:4) the concept of a National Standards Body (NSB) is explained as a body '*responsible for establishing education and training standards or qualifications, and to which specific functions relating to the registration of national standards and qualifications have been assigned*'. An NSB forms an integral part of SAQA, reports to SAQA and is registered by SAQA for a three year period after which the NSB should apply for re-registration if their task is not completed. An NSB may be de-registered by SAQA if it fails to perform its duty. The *SAQA Act* (1995a:12) makes provision for the establishment of 12 NSBs, each dealing with a particular area of learning. The NSB 05 deals with Education, Training and Development (ETD).

National stakeholder bodies with a key interest in the field of learning and which fall into one or more of the under-mentioned six categories of organisations, may nominate members to serve on the NSB. The six categories are: State Departments; Organised Business; Organised Labour; Providers of Education and Training, Critical Interest Groups;

and Community/Learner organisations. Each mentioned category is entitled to a maximum of 6 representatives with 36 being the maximum number of representatives forming an NSB, unless SAQA deems otherwise. Reference Grouping of organisations, affected by the activities of an NSB, is created to indicate the NSB and to make submissions to SGBs and the NSBs concerning standards and qualifications which affect such organisations (RSA 1998a:14,15). SAQA maintains a register of members of the Reference Grouping.

The functions of NSBs are to:

- define the boundaries of the discrete field for which it is constituted
- recommend to SAQA a framework of sub-fields to be used for establishing SGBs
- establish or withdraw SGBs within the framework of sub-fields
- ensure that the work of SGBs meets the requirements for registration of standards and qualifications
- recommend to SAQA the registration of standards and qualifications on the NQF
- update and review qualifications
- liaise with ETQAs regarding procedures for recommending new standards and qualifications, or amending registered standards and qualifications
- define requirements of moderation to be applied across ETQAs
- appoint office-bearers as required to carry out the functions designated, in consultation with SAQA
- perform other functions as may be delegated by SAQA (RSA 1998a:12-17)

In order to provide a set of core outcomes for all qualifications on the NQF, SAQA has described critical cross-field outcomes which must be integrated into all qualifications. These common core outcomes are essential for creating portability and flexibility between qualifications, while the possibility of diverse purposes is essential for creating depth and specialisation within qualifications. Critical outcomes are to be interpreted, shaped and woven into qualifications to fit the purpose of the qualification. The NSB may construct a set of generic standards for the ETD field drawn from the contextual standards in the different sub-fields. In order to 'peg' qualifications onto the NQF accurately, and thereby to provide ETQAs with the ability to evaluate learning programs against explicit

benchmarks, the NSBs were to develop level descriptors (NSE 1998d:40,41). At the time of writing (November 2001), this process had not yet been completed.

3.8 STANDARDS GENERATING BODIES

In the SAQA Act (RSA 1998a:5) the concept of a Standard Generating Body (SGB) is explained as a body *'responsible for establishing education and training standards or qualifications, and to which specific functions relating to the establishing of national standards and qualifications have been assigned'*. There is a one-word difference between the definitions of NSBs and SGBs. An NSB 'registers' whereas an SGB 'establishes' national standards and qualifications. Each NSB may establish such SGBs in its own defined field as are required by the sub-fields recommended to and accepted by SAQA.

Specific steps are prescribed in the Act (RSA 1998a:17,18) for the recognition, establishment and registration of an SGB. SAQA may withdraw the registration of an SGB if the NSB is of the opinion that the SGB fails to perform its functions satisfactorily. An SGB shall dissolve when its registration expires or when it has completed its brief as defined in its certificate of registration. As in the case of NSBs, there are prescribed requirements to be adhered to when organisations, which have key education stakeholder interest in the sub-field, are invited to nominate members to serve on the SGB. The maximum number of representatives forming an SGB may not exceed 25 unless SAQA deems otherwise.

In the Government Gazette No.806 of 25 June 1999, public notice was given by NSB 05 of the establishment of the SGB for Educators in Schooling. It was registered for a period of three years. The SGB was composed of the following representatives: 9 from University Faculties of Education; 4 from Technikon Schools of Education; 6 from CEs; 4 from Professional Bodies; and 2 from the State. Their brief was described as follows:

- identify the integration, quality and equity priorities in schooling Education Training and Development Practice (ETDP)
- identify the competence necessary to produce ETDP outcomes and distinguish the

- competences that will be generic to the field from those specific to schooling ETDP
- design learning pathways for schooling ETDP
- generate the following 7 qualifications in accordance with SAQA requirements for competences in schooling ETDP: Higher Certificate in Education, Diploma in Education, Further Diploma in Education, Post Graduate Certificate in Education, Bachelor of Education, Advanced Diploma in Education, and Bachelor of Education (Honours)
- recommend the above-mentioned qualifications, generated by the SGB, to the NSB
- recommend criteria for the registration of assessors and moderators for schooling ETD (RSA Government Gazette 1999:5)

With a view to making a constructive intervention, the following broad developmental objective was formulated: *'SAQA facilitates the establishment, organization and/or capacity building of seven Standards Generating Bodies in four sub-fields of the ETD field to ensure that standards and qualifications for educators are developed and registered on the NQF'* (RSA Government Gazette 1999:2). Various outputs were identified for the work of SGBs which included the establishment of SGBs for Educators in Schooling; Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET); Early Childhood Development (ECD); and Occupation-Directed Learning. An SGB for assessor standards was established. The feasibility of SGBs for Development and for HE and Training were examined. SAQA received a letter of intent to establish an SGB for Environmental Education (EE). An unpublished report (EE 1999:3) argued that all teachers should be 'environment literate'. The report also entailed 9 EE outcomes for teacher education and showed how these EE outcomes relate to the 6 ETDP competences.

The SGBs had to generate standards according to the following broad stages: systems analysis; crunching outcomes; narrow consultation; finalised outcomes; narrow and technical consultation; wide consultation; reversioning; and submission (RSA Government Gazette 1999:3). The SGBs for Schooling liaised closely with the SGBs and the ETQAs that emerged for the school curriculum and General and Further Education and Training certificates. This highlights the crucial mediating role to be played by the SGB, between

the disciplinary bases concentrated in HE and the curriculum practices at General Education and Training and Further Education and Training levels. To ensure a close integration of occupational, academic and professional requirements, the SGB for Schooling and the DoE had to work closely together to ensure that employer requirements were met and that qualifications could be allocated Relative Education Qualification Values in a coherent manner to promote professional educator development. A similar relationship had to be established between the SGB and SACE to ensure that professional requirements were integrated into qualifications (NSE 1998d:56,57).

3.9 EDUCATION AND TRAINING QUALITY ASSURANCE BODIES

The SAQA Act of 1995 and the ETQA Regulations of 1998 (RSA Government Gazette 1998a) provide the framework for the implementation of the QA systems and processes required by the NQF. The total quality system of the NQF takes as a point of departure the separation of standards setting and QA functions specified in section 5 of the SAQA Act. It provides for the registration of bodies responsible for establishing education and training standards or qualifications, as well as the accreditation of bodies responsible for monitoring and auditing achievements in terms of such standards.

In essence, the quality process is seen to begin with standards setting and the registration of standards and qualifications on the NQF. Once registered, ETQAs can then be accredited to monitor and audit the provision and achievement of specified standards and/or qualifications. Evaluation and reporting requirements for accredited bodies (ETQAs and providers) provide a direct and dynamic feedback mechanism to standards setting, ensuring the continual improvement of the standards and qualifications registered on the NQF (RSA 1998a:8).

ETQAs are responsible for assuring learning achievements through the registration of assessors, the accreditation of providers and a quality management system. HEIs are therefore accountable to the ETQA for management, development and delivery of learning programs, as well as for ensuring the quality of the learning experience according to the requirements of the registered qualifications. Moderating bodies have to ensure that the

assessment of registered outcomes is done in a fair, valid and reliable manner (Van der Westhuizen *et al.* 1999:356,357).

According to Ximiya (1999:15) the CHE, through its HEQC, will be accredited as the education and training sub-system sector ETQA for monitoring and auditing the delivery and assessment of standards and qualifications registered in the HE Band (levels 5 - 8 on the NQF), in partnership with accredited professional bodies and/or SETAs in specific occupational areas. Criteria which ETQAs have to comply with include the following: there should be a justifiable need for such an ETQA; the ETQA should have a primary focus for its QA activities based on the identified mission of the sector concerned; the ETQA should not duplicate the functions of another existing ETQA (in the HE sector this criterion could be operationalised by focusing the HEQC on institutional QA, while sector specific ETQAs, such as professional bodies, could focus on the QA of programs); and the ETQA should have the capacity to perform the functions assigned to it by SAQA.

Van der Westhuizen and co-workers (1999:357,358) express the opinion that the NQF with its attending structures such as NSBs and ETQAs will have major implications for program assessment and accreditation in South African HE. The QA of HE programs which will be applied by ETQAs, of which the HEQC will be one, provides an important developmental link between the existing processes for the approval of program provision and the eventual accreditation of providers. The challenges for providers of HE programs are daunting: a massive attempt at program reform toward the development of NQF alignment features will have to be made.

*Implementing these reforms of academic practice will absorb all the energies of these institutions and will bring about major improvements in quality while also putting into place the most important requirements of any quality assurance system: clearly defined outcomes against which the quality of student performance and institutional provision can be assessed (Gevers *et al.* 1999:29).*

3.10 THE HIGHER EDUCATION QUALITY COMMITTEE

To advise the CHE on the most appropriate way to fulfil its QA responsibilities, a Quality Task Team was established. The Task Team had interactions with SAUVCA on its QPU and with SERTEC. Since 1995, five institutional audits of South African universities were managed by the QPU. SERTEC has been involved in program evaluation at technikons since 1988. Both SERTEC and the QPU established national and international contacts with HEIs, counterpart QA bodies as well as with professional boards and employers. According to the Task Team Report (CHE 1998), both SERTEC and the QPU have admirers and detractors concerning the quality of their operations. It was suggested that an independent evaluation of their work was necessary in order to provide a clearer indication of the strengths and problems inherent in the current arrangements.

The Task Team analysed extensive documentation on QA in HE in SA, the UK, the Netherlands, France, Belgium, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Australia and New Zealand to enable them to identify similarities between local and international trends. In its report to the CHE, the Task Team proposed two options: a model where the HEQC would function as a national body accepting operational responsibility for QA, and a model where operational responsibility was devolved to collective institutional arrangements (CHE 1998:1,2). The HEQC would play a monitoring role only and act as a meta-evaluator (HEQC 1999). Preference was given to the first model for the following reasons:

- It would address the legacy of the fragmented HE system of the past and develop a national identity for QA within a unitary HE system.
- It would bridge the binary divide and integrate the separate QA arrangements as carried out by SERTEC and the QPU.
- It was necessary to include in the QA system colleges for which no national arrangements existed.
- Such a model had been chosen by both developed and developing countries.
- The work of the HEQC could be better integrated with the rest of the CHE's work.
- Better co-ordination with SAQA requirements as well as the QA arrangements of professional boards would be possible (CHE 1998:3).

This would mean that SERTEC and the QPU would be absorbed into the HEQC. The expertise and staff of these two bodies were to be retained in the HEQC (Brink 1999:12).

As a single national body, the HEQC could give greater effect to the co-ordination with SAQA requirements as well as the QA arrangements of professional boards. Initially the Task Team intended to bring colleges, identified to form part of the HE sector, under the auspices of existing or new QA arrangements. Since the rationalisation of CEs in 2001, no such institutions existed any more.

The Task Team suggested that the HEQC need not become operationally involved in QA in the sense of conducting quality evaluation on institutional and program level itself. However, the HEQC would have a monitoring function with regard to QA in having devolved the operational QA functions to other bodies, such as evaluation committees consisting of relevant experts from HE. On contextual issues the Task Team reported that greater systemic and institutional attention to quality issues in SA was required in order to make HE more responsive to:

- demands for greater social and financial accountability of HE
- demands for value for money (efficiency and effectiveness) in a context of financial constraints
- changing needs and aspirations of a diverse student population
- massification and its possible impact on standards
- socio-political transformation needs
- market/employer needs
- increasing international mobility of scholars and the need for equivalence of qualifications and training
- requirements of a national system of innovation (CHE 1998:2,3)

The following important principles that must inform a quality system for HE, were identified by the Task Team:

- a clear indication of what elements are to be considered in determining quality
- quality requirements must be appropriate to contextual needs
- the quality system must be nationally coherent and transcend the current binary divide
- the quality system must be underpinned by a formative developmental philosophy

- for the strengthening of HE and should be reassuring rather than threatening
- a sense of ownership by stakeholders
 - a model of self- regulation by HEIs and validation by HEQC and peers, an acceptable balance between institutional autonomy and innovativeness on the one hand and national coherence within a common framework on the other, the development of greater self-evaluation capacity, available resources to increase institutional research and develop appropriate strategies for self-regulation possibly through national funding arrangements
 - the HEQC should be seen as an objective, independent body responsible to the CHE but acting on behalf of the HE community (CHE 1998:2)

The Task Team proposed a threefold definition/approach to quality, which are (a) fitness for purpose (to be established through a consideration of the system and stakeholder needs - the goals indicated in the White Paper on HE will provide the framework for debate); (b) value for money; and (c) potential for transformation/innovation (CHE 1998:2).

The scope of the HEQC's work is described as: institutional audits; program evaluation and accreditation; assessment of new qualifications; and research evaluation (This could be done by the HEQC itself or in collaboration with the National Research Forum and other agencies whose functions include research evaluation). Other activities of the HEQC would also include the engagement in quality promotion; making recommendations to SAQA and NSBs; accredit private HEIs; conducting/commissioning research on quality issues; and maintaining a database of relevant information and co-ordination with other databases like the DoE, SAUVCA and the Committee for Technikon Principals (CTP) (CHE 1998:4).

At its first meeting on 11 June 1999, the interim HEQC established three sub-committees to undertake a range of investigative, evaluative, regulatory and consultative tasks. The brief of each sub-committee is described below.

Sub-Committee One: This committee should oversee the evaluation of SERTEC and the QPU; liaise with SERTEC and the CTP about transitional arrangements for SERTEC; liaise

with SAUVCA about QA at universities following on the closure of the QPU; map the educational component of the work of the professional bodies with a view to making proposals about appropriate relationships around QA between the HEQC and such bodies; and map the educational component of the work of the SETAs with a view to making proposals about appropriate relationships around QA between the HEQC and SETAs.

Sub-Committee Two: The brief of this committee is to clarify the different functions of accreditation, registration and certification and the differential responsibilities of SAQA, the DoE and the HEQC in this regard; clarify what is involved in the accreditation of HE providers, including the accreditation of HE programs linked to accredited providers; review teacher education programs and their requisite QA processes; review QA issues in relation to colleges; and look at NQF Level 5 programs in industry. The work of this committee is relevant for the purpose of this research.

Sub-Committee Three: This committee will prepare a founding document for the HEQC including key priorities and principles for a national QA system that will take issues of context, need and capacity into account; addressing the role and responsibilities of the HEQC as an ETQA within the SAQA framework; attention will be given to strategies for transcending a binary or trinary divide in the QA system; reflections on best practices with examples from this continent and other developing societies; and identifying a longer term research and training agenda for the QA system in this country (CHE 1999:3-5).

The CHE expected the interim HEQC to have completed its preparatory work by mid 2000, after which the establishment of the HEQC followed. Main challenges were:

- setting up the HEQC as an ETQA that is responsive to NQF/SAQA requirements
- establishing a clear role for the HEQC in co-ordinating the QA work of multiple ETQAs in HE - partnerships with professional councils, relevant SETAs and other QA bodies
- establishing a link between HEQC work, the work of the CHE and the DoE around QA and the three-year rolling plan exercises; the new funding dispensation; and the shape and size exercise

- establishing a QA system that ensures that HE yields a balance of foundational, work-based and reflective competences required by society and the economy
- establishing a sound relationship between accountability and development in the work of the HEQC
- finding the balance between internal assessment and monitoring of quality and external regulation by peers/stakeholders/the HEQC and developing capacity for self-regulation
- assuring quality across multiple modes of teaching and learning made possible by the IT revolution and the expansion of electronic delivery possibilities
- establishing a QA system that will be cost effective and efficient, yielding continuous improvements in the quality of teaching and learning in HE without stifling innovation or only generating an expensive and excessive bureaucracy (CHE 1999:5)

3.11 POLICY DEVELOPMENT FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN TEACHER EDUCATION

Currently in South Africa, education management, school governance and teaching practice are undergoing dramatic transformation. The catalytic role of the teacher in the process of transformation ... is central to the concerns of policy makers. This is evident in four major policy documents, produced since 1997, which attempt to redefine and regulate the teaching profession. These are:

Norms and Standards for Educators
Code of Conduct for Educators
Manual for Developmental Appraisal
Duties and Responsibilities of Educators.

Collectively, these policy documents define employer requirements, provide frameworks for professional development and appraisal, define professional conduct, and specify the duties and responsibilities of educators. As such,

they represent a significant shift in the way teaching is constructed as a profession (Barasa & Mattson 1998:42).

3.11.1 Norms and Standards for Educators

COTEP, appointed by the NDoE, issued a discussion document of NSTETD in 1996. In September 1997 COTEP appointed a Technical Committee to revise the interim NSTETD. Their brief was to articulate norms and standards to meet occupational criteria for employment by the DoE; the professional criteria for registration by SACE; and the academic criteria for qualifications to be registered on the NQF. The first two sets of criteria are indicative of how the Department has constructed the roles and competences of the ideal educator. The latest edition of NSE was issued as a policy document in February 2000, to be read in conjunction with the final draft of September 1998.

The functions of the NSE are to define employer requirements, including evaluation of qualifications, for the NDoE as employer of all educators in public institutions. It also provides a system for the professional development of educators. Another major feature, addressed in the NSE, is the presentation of a holistic view of the educator as someone with a range of competences which are:

- practical competence (skills) - the demonstrated ability, in an authentic context, to consider a range of possibilities for action, make considered decisions about which possible action to follow and to perform the chosen action; it is grounded in
- foundational competence (knowledge) - where the learner demonstrates an understanding of the knowledge and thinking which underpins the action taken; it is integrated through
- reflexive competence (values) - in which the learner demonstrates the ability to integrate or connect performances and decision-making with understanding, and with an ability to adapt to change and unforeseen circumstances, and to explain the reasons behind these adaptations

Competences are not the same as the 'old' subjects or content knowledge. Their achievement, acting competently, requires the integration of knowledge with skills and

values, and acting competently in diverse situations. SAQA requires that assessment of competence be integrated and applied. The smallest 'unit of assessment' must include an integration of knowledge with skills and values which are applied in practice in a specialised context (NSE 1998d:25)(see 5.9.2.1). This is a major shift from the previous view of an educator, as a technician whose major role was to implement already-designed syllabi without much reflection on actions taken. What is now required of an educator is to be a self-directed professional who can reflect on actions with a view to adaptation.

The complexity of teaching as a process is further affirmed by the fact that the teacher is now expected to perform six major roles competently: those of learning mediator; interpreter and designer of learning programs and materials; leader, administrator and manager; scholar, researcher, and lifelong learner; community, citizenship and pastoral role player; and learning area/subject/discipline/phase specialist (DoE 1998d:53,54). The roles may be viewed as performance criteria. Taken as a whole, they describe a competent teacher. The roles serve as 'standards' or 'benchmarks' at which all learning programs for educators should aim, and as a basis for performance management by the DoE. The applied competences attached to each role are described in Section Six of NSE (1998d:69-78).

Section nine of the NSE (1998d:138-159) introduces the important concept of QA of providers and programs for teacher education. The discussion includes a motivation for QA, the approach to QA and examples of standards to consider in order to develop a high quality learning environment. Cognisant of the many HE providers and contextual diversities in educational development, NSE defines the roles that HE providers must prepare educators to play so that they can perform their jobs competently. NSE does not prescribe the curriculum content or pedagogical processes to be adopted but asks that cognisance be taken of the fact that qualifications should promote professional development within the guidelines developed by SAQA. Of particular importance in designing qualifications are:

- the requirements laid down by the Minister of Education, including job, post level and workload descriptions, performance and promotion criteria

- the developmental appraisal criteria approved by the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC)
- the Code of Conduct of SACE (NSE 1998d:58)

The QA processes allow program designs to be flexible and to respond to contextual needs. *'This is in line with the increasing evidence that the effectiveness of organisational structures and programmes is dependent on their dynamic nature and contextual sensitivity'* (Barasa & Mattson 1998:49).

The Technical Committee states that it is beyond the scope of NSE to prescribe the QA measures and mechanisms that may be put in place by SAQA, the CHE and the HEQC. NSE does, however, make recommendations about internal QA criteria and procedures for teacher education. NSE (1998d:149-159) contains examples of standards which staff may consider as they develop, manage and assess a high quality learning environment. Detailed criteria are laid down for: Institutional Policy and Planning; Developing Learning Programs; Teaching and Learning Processes; Staff Development Strategy; and Sound Organisational Infrastructure. Providers are urged to put in place an internal review system. The characteristics of the process suggested, resemble those of the action research cycle (NSE 1998d:145,146).

3.11.2 The South African Council for Educators Code of Conduct

SACE is a statutory body. The resolution to establish the Council was taken in the ELRC in 1994. It was established as per Government Gazette Notice No 16037 of 17 October 1994. It has 45 members representing two stakeholders - 15 members nominated by the Minister of Education and 30 members representing the organised teaching profession. SACE has legislative powers to determine criteria for entry into the profession through registration of educators. SACE regulates the ethical conduct of its members through the *Code of Conduct* and disciplinary structures. SACE also takes responsibility for defining and promoting the ethics and values of professionalism, while the NDoE and the ELRC are concerned with the occupational requirements, and SAQA with the academic requirements of the profession.

The *Code of Conduct* adopts the language of roles and competences, listing twenty-two statements which describe the ethical behaviour of educators under the headings of seven roles. These roles describe the conduct of the educator in relation to the learner; the parent; the community; colleagues; the profession; the employer; and the Council (Barasa & Mattson 1998:53). The *Code of Conduct* recognises that professionalism among educators entails not just individual conduct, but the practice of teaching and learning, which impacts on the overall quality of education in the country.

Barasa and Mattson (1998:55,56) warn that the SACE Code is very optimistic about the practice and conduct of its members and suggest an appropriate program of professional development which actively promotes the values and ethics enshrined in the *Code of Conduct*, otherwise SACE and its Code might be seen as merely playing a prescriptive and punitive role.

3.11.3 The Education Labour Relations Council Manual for Developmental Appraisal

In 1996 the ELRC commissioned the University of the Witwatersrand (WITS) Education Policy Unit (EPU), to develop appraisal criteria for educators at all post levels. As the legal employer of all colleges and schools (CS) educators, the NDoE needs a means of appraising the competence of teachers to facilitate the personal and professional development of educators in order to improve the quality of teaching practice and education management. According to the ELRC Task Team, the introduction of appraisal was driven by the need to (a) create a nationally unified system of appraisal; (b) recognise the work of dedicated educators; encourage professional development and quality service delivery; and (c) lay a foundation for performance management.

The *Manual* regards developmental appraisal as an ongoing process, including: self-evaluation; peer-evaluation; collaboration; reflective practice; and interaction with panels. The process is expected to be co-ordinated by a staff development team, consisting of the principal, elected staff members and other stakeholders. Every educator should have a portfolio in which his ongoing development is recorded. Mbali (1999:209) also describes the use of such portfolios to develop reflective practitioners. This will become a valuable

asset to an educator's *Curriculum Vitae*. In Table 3.1 Barasa and Mattson (1998:57) summarise the types of documentary forms to be included in an educator's file as follows:

TABLE 3.1 A SUMMARY OF THE TYPES OF DOCUMENTARY FORMS TO BE INCLUDED IN AN EDUCATOR'S FILE

Form	Purpose	Completed by
Personal details form	Record of personal particulars; academic, professional and other qualifications; teaching, management and other experience	Appraisee
Professional growth plan	Plan for development in a 6-month cycle, reflecting objectives, activities, resources and key PIs	Appraisee and panel
Prioritisation form	A list of core, optional and additional criteria (with each core criterion and its associated performance expectation defined in the <i>Manual</i>). A simple scale is used to determine areas of priority for each development cycle	Appraisee and peer
Discussion paper	A list of questions designed to evaluate the success and the difficulties of the Professional Growth Plan within a development cycle	Appraisee and panel

The *Manual* provides a week-by-week management plan for a six-month development cycle. It further consists largely of the 'Instruments for Developmental Appraisal' for the following post levels: Teacher, Level One; Head of Department, Level two; Deputy Principal/Principal, Level three; and CS educators based outside institutions. These 'instruments' are the forms listed in the table above. Descriptions of the core criteria for each post level are given. The labelled 'criteria' in the *Manual* strikingly refer to educators' roles described in NSE, and what are called 'performance expectations' are evidently 'competences'. Therefore these two policy documents complement each other.

For successful implementation, the *ELRC Manual for Developmental Appraisal* relies heavily on the assumption that educators possess a high degree of reflexive competence. The teacher is expected to undertake self-analysis and introspection of his performance, learner questionnaire results and school development plans; identify and prioritise his professional development needs; formulate objectives; select and execute activities within time frames; and reflexively interpret and analyse the extent to which his performance met the objectives in serving the needs of clients - with a view to rethinking ongoing practice. Barasa and Mattson (1998:62,63) are of the opinion that educators will need training for their appraisal task. This applies to all members of the appraisal teams, before implementation of the policy.

3.11.4 National Department of Education Duties and Responsibilities of Educators

The Education Laws Amendment Act of 1997 gave the Minister of Education power to determine job descriptions for educators at various levels. Actually, the Labour Relations Act gives all employers the right to set job descriptions. The *Duties and Responsibilities of Educators* policy document was devised to provide job descriptions for different post levels against which educators could be legally appointed, promoted and appraised by the DoE. The preamble to the document describes the changing role of the educator with reference to the new curriculum, emphasizing the 'shift from control to leadership'.

For each post level the document lists duties and responsibilities of educators under the heading of particular roles. For post level one, there is a list of 23 responsibilities under four headings: teaching; extra and co-curricular; administrative; and interaction with stakeholders. For each post level, the list of responsibilities is followed by the heading 'communication' and a list of responsibilities related to co-operation and collaboration within the school, contact with parents, professional development and public relations. Detailed descriptions of each responsibility can be found in the original document (Barasa & Mattson 1998:63,64). From the perspective of QA, the NDoE *Duties and Responsibilities of Educators* document outlines occupational criteria/requirements expected of all educators and encourages a measure of accountability. Nothing is left to the subjective interpretation of individuals.

3.12 TEACHER EDUCATION DOCUMENTS FROM THE NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

3.12.1 Guidelines on Quality Assurance in Teacher Education

COTEP established a sub-committee with its brief to develop a QA instrument that could be applied by teacher education institutions to assist them in developing their own internal quality criteria and PIs. Guidelines and a checklist were developed, based upon Chapter Nine of NSE called Procedures and Criteria for Quality-Assuring Teacher Education (DoE 1998d:138-159). This document, dated 16 November 1998, was circulated by the Directorate of HE Colleges to all institutions offering teacher education.

In the seven-page guidelines, seven areas of QA are discussed briefly. A short motivation for the document is given. A recommendation for the establishment of an own internal QA committee at every institution is made. Four purposes of QA are listed. A definition of quality, that is fitness for purpose, is given. Guiding principles on the developmental nature of QA are stated. The formation of consortia between institutions is encouraged since it can play an important catalyst role in enhancing QA. National policy on HE and QA are briefly touched on.

Lastly, an internal review process or self-evaluation is motivated and discussed. The nine steps suggested are: defining purpose; planning; gathering information; making judgements; reporting; taking action; monitoring action; and finally re-defining the vision and re-planning. These steps compare well with the steps taken during action research.

The internal QA checklist consists of questions on the following areas: Institutional Policy and Planning; Development of Learning Programs; Teaching and Learning Processes (including courses, teaching methods, course materials, assessment, and learner support); Tutor and Staff Development Strategy; Sound Organisational Infrastructure (management and administration); Information Systems; Inter-institutional collaboration; and QA. All the questions should be answered according to a rating scale. It is stressed that it might be necessary to adapt both the guidelines and the checklist to fit local circumstances.

3.12.2 A Policy Framework for Quality Assurance in the Education and Training System in South Africa

On 4 December 1998 the 68-page discussion document of the *Policy framework for quality assurance in the education and training system in SA* (DoE 1998c) was circulated to institutions offering teacher education. Public comment was invited. The same unaltered document was used as a framework for discussions at the Free State Provincial Conference on QA, held on 3 and 4 May 2000.

The table of contents of the document includes a background and contextualisation of QA for SA. It also touches on legal, political and social imperatives. A conceptual framework is given of goals and essential elements of a QA framework. The elements of a QA Framework are described (DoE 1998c:17)(see 2.1.2 par 3) and a scheme is outlined (DoE 1998c:18). Performance monitoring and an evaluation plan are discussed. As part of the QA process, learner achievement is described at micro and macro levels. A discussion about the area of reviews and audits is followed by the topic 'accreditation'. The role of the ETQAs is spelt out. The meaning of 'provider', within the education context, is clarified as well as the functions that ETQAs may delegate to constituent providers. Finally, functions that ETQAs may carry out themselves are analysed.

As already mentioned, the NDoE took the *Policy framework for quality assurance in the education and training system in SA inter alia* as the basic document for their 'QA and continuous quality improvement model', as discussed at the Free State Provincial Conference on QA (May 2000). Although the deliberations were aimed at QA at school level, it was of importance to providers of teacher education in order to prepare their 'products' for what would be expected of them regarding QA in the teaching field.

3.12.3 A Call to Action: Mobilising citizens to build a South African Education and Training system for the 21st century (*Tirisano*)

3.12.3.1 The Minister's call for action

At the first Cabinet meeting after the 1999 elections, President Mbeki asked whether the South African education system was on the road to the 21st century. In an attempt to reply

to the President's question, Minister Kadar Asmal explored the education terrain. After consultation with all the main stakeholders in education, he concluded that the educational condition of the majority of people in this country amounted to a national emergency. The nation had to be prepared for the demands of the 21st century. What was required was a fully functioning system of good quality education at all levels, from early childhood to university and beyond. President Mbeki charged all teachers to teach, learners to learn and managers to manage.

Asmal announced a national mobilisation for education and training, under the slogan *Tirisano*, meaning working together.' Asmal asked for a commitment from all provincial education authorities and all stakeholders, to work together with the Ministry of Education to attack the most urgent problems. He further stated that a National Education Parliament would be summoned annually to reflect on the state of education and training; to take stock of the collective progress in attacking the priority areas of need; to build solidarity among the main actors in education delivery and the NDoE; and to point the way forward (RSA 1999a:6).

Asmal set up a rough balance sheet of the assets and liabilities of the current education and training system. Strengths to build on were strong and committed leadership for the 21st century and excellent policies and laws. The most troubling features of our education and training system were identified as rampant inequality; low teacher morale; failures of governance and management; and poor quality of learning. Our country had a long way to go, and no time to lose (RSA 1999a:5). The following priorities were identified by Asmal to receive urgent attention. We must:

- a. make our provincial systems work by making co-operative government work
- b. break the back of illiteracy among adults and youth within five years
- c. see to it that schools become centres of community life
- d. end conditions of physical degradation in South African schools
- e. develop the professional quality of our teaching force
- f. ensure the success of active learning through OBE
- g. create a vibrant FET system to equip youth and adults to meet the social and

- economic needs of the 21st century
- h. implement a rational, seamless HE system that grasps the intellectual and professional challenges facing South Africans in the 21st century
 - i. deal urgently and purposefully with the HIV/AIDS emergency in and through the education and training system

3.12.3.2 *A review of responses to the Minister's call for action*

The EPU at WITS asked ten educationists for responses to the Minister's statement. The reason for reviewing the Minister's priorities was:

The Minister's statement is an instructive starting point from which to analyse developments in education and training and represents a signpost against which the past and future paths of educational developments can be evaluated. ... The Minister's statement has great value because it seeks to encompass the totality of educational changes ... (Motala, E. 1999:4).

An overview of the educationists' responses to the Minister's statement follows.

a. Introduction

Motala, E. (1999:4-7) welcomes the Minister's openness and honesty. Since 1997 there have been calls, not only from education but from all sectors, for Central Government to intervene to safeguard the overall project of transformation because it proceeded at a too slow pace. We need action. Pronouncement of priorities is one thing but contending with the realities of implementing them, is something else (see 6.3.3). Three areas not mentioned by the Minister, that need to be addressed, are gender issues; rural education and ECD. Motala seeks to establish the extent to which the Minister's analytical points of departure resonate with his nine priority areas:

i. Rampant inequality and *tirisano*

Despite the best intentions, poverty and inequalities still persist in SA and will have to be dealt with by directive policies. The Minister acknowledged that the scope of the problem was vast. Appeals to employers to run ABET programs were made in the past but without visible success. Poor communities cannot help themselves, as was sometimes expected

of them in the past, since they have structural barriers. The notion of *tirisano* operates from the assumption that all social groups have a common interest, which is not the case. The notions of volunteerism and partnerships also require more consideration. The global problem of racial integration (Smuts 1996:10) is marked by conflict in a number of instances in SA. It has *inter alia* been observed that different stakeholders and cultures give different meanings to educational reform. It is the Minister's view that reform in education will only be possible if there is a conscious shift to equalising the conditions of learning for all.

ii. Teacher morale

There is a relationship between low teacher morale and the rationalisation process. An attempt was made to effect a more equitable allocation of teaching personnel between rich and poor schools, but the 'unintended consequence' was a limited redistribution of educator personnel and the flight of many experienced educators from the profession. The educator:learner ratios, based on defensible educational criteria, could not be implemented because of budgetary constraints. *'What is required is a much fuller discussion ... about the investment in personnel expenditure ... strategies must be put in place for a better distribution ... of limited resources ... (and) ... more realistic time frames and targets must be established for the achievement of ... goals'* (Motala, E. 1999:7).

iii. Contested reform and social possibility

Change has to take place within highly contested demands. Social conceptions of change are driven by race, class, gender and geographic location. These fundamental differences will have to be acknowledged more openly so that the discourse about the reform process, could recognise the limitations. Researchers will have to investigate more fully how the process of reform is advanced in divided societies and what the causes are for failure and/or success.

b. Priority One: Co-operative governance

According to Motala (1999:8) one of the most complex areas of education transformation has been the establishment of decentralised governance at provincial level. Four reasons

why the Minister's statement on co-operative governance is welcomed are:

- It establishes the Minister's overall political responsibility for managing the education system, although he does not have executive authority with regard to primary and secondary education. According to the Constitution, HE is solely the responsibility of the NDoE.
- The slow pace regarding the reform of provincial education is seen within the historical context of provincialisation.
- Joint accountability is established between provincial and national spheres for delivery of education at provincial level.
- There is a clear acknowledgement that provinces can only implement national policies with the assistance of the NDoE.

The implementation of quality education programs at provincial level is limited. Motala, S. (1999:8) reports that since 1995-1999, commentators have advanced a range of reasons for this, including:

- poor financial management and budgeting processes (Naidoo & Pintusewitz in 1998)
- the nature of national budgeting systems (Van Zyl in 1998)
- the limiting nature of the macro-economic framework (Swilling in 1997)
- inherited backlogs in education (Chisholm *et al.* in 1999)
- poor management capacity and inadequate use of information systems for proper planning (Ncholo in 1997)
- the establishment of national norms based on principles of equity and redress without considering organisational, financial and service delivery implications for the provinces (Motala, S. in 1997 & 1998)

Overall, the emphasis is on the need for a greater degree of co-ordination and direction by the NDoE. The complexity of national-provincial relationships, the implications of fiscal federalism, and the specific conditions in which provincial education reform is occurring have not been clearly interrogated by those who have to implement policies. *'Many found the environment of provincial financing mechanisms and implementation bewildering'* (Motala, S. 1999:9).

Motala, S. (1999:9-11) attempts to locate education reform within broader structural reform. The specific nature of national-provincial relations and the constraining nature of existing provincial budgets and expenditure are highlighted. Motala, S. argues that unless these concerns are addressed, the possibility of delivering quality education at a provincial level will continue to be limited.

c. Priority Two: Illiteracy among adults and youth

Concern was expressed by educators of adults that the Minister's vow, to 'break the back of illiteracy among adults and youth in five years', was impossible to fulfil. The concern seemed to be that rhetorical support was not matched by thoughtful planning and adequate resources. The major issues were numbers, finance and a bad track record of previous attempts. There were 9 - 12,5 million illiterate adults in SA. In the more than two decades that the state, the private sector and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) offered literacy programs, they had scarcely reached 1% of the total population of illiterates in the country. It was highly unlikely that the situation could be reversed within five years, given the size of the problem (Castle 1999:12).

In the 1998/1999 financial year, 0,8% of the total national education budget was allocated to ABET who was one of the first areas to face cuts when provinces faced a financial squeeze. 432 ABET-centres were closed in the Eastern Cape during 1998. In 1999 the ABET funding declined in three other provinces. Increasingly, the financial burden was placed on the learners who could not afford to pay since they were often unemployed, women, and people living in rural areas.

ABET Policy is part of the larger process of developing policy frameworks for education and training in SA. The change of government in 1994 brought new conceptions of adult literacy as part of the RDP Program. It was seen as a vehicle to achieve equity, redress and development of the previously disadvantaged. Two government departments were responsible for ABET policy. The NDoE published its *Policy Document on Adult Basic Education and Training* in 1996. It was based upon the principles of equality, redress, development, reconstruction, access, integration, partnership, sustainable use of

resources, a flexible curriculum, OBE standards of attainment, RPL, and cost-effectiveness (NDoE in Castle 1999:12).

The Department of Labour pushed for the development of the NQF and the *Skills Development Act* (1998b). The NQF is contested terrain since, conservatively interpreted, it emphasises the economic benefits to be gained from an educated population. From a progressive perspective it is seen as an enabling, democratic and holistic approach to meet human needs. However, ABET also needs an approach where 'human values' predominate, not 'human capital'. A further concern was that if ABET should defend its place in the NQF, literacy educators should have been trained, and paid professionals who would be accountable for quality service. In 1999, adult educators in government service did not receive adequate training, their qualifications were not recognised by the state, and they were remunerated at the level of matriculants (Castle 1999:12).

The *Ithuteng Campaign* (Ready to Learn), in 1996, was a dismal failure. It called for the efficient delivery of high quality ABET programs by a multiplicity of stakeholders from the public sector, NGOs and the private sector. Difficulties existed from the start. Many provinces lacked personnel and facilities. ABET directors were unfamiliar with the new policies and discourse of ABET. Cascade training did not materialise. Managerial and logistic support was lacking. In many provinces, learning materials were never delivered. Teachers and managers were unpaid for months. NGOs were generally not paid. There was no monitoring or evaluation of services. The media (Sunday Independent, 5 May 1999, in Castle 1999:13) reported that the *Ithuteng Campaign* disillusioned educators and made them sceptical of 'visionary' programs which lacked the planning and resources needed to succeed.

To summarise: a solution will entail increasing state funding; rethinking the educational theories, methodologies and practices which comprise the curriculum; and revitalising state structures and NGOs in ABET (Castle 1999:14).

d. Priority Three: Schools as centres of community life

According to Vally (1999a:14-17) the Minister's statement focused on the pivotal role of governing bodies as the indispensable link between schools and the communities they

serve. Essential to the Minister's vision is the importance of community 'ownership' of the school, encompassing the idea of a neighbourhood school. The *South African Schools Act* (1996c) is also built on this notion. It is a fact, however, that there are many schools that no longer enjoy the support of the people of the neighbourhood, because many parents exercise their right to choose the 'best' school for their children: they are prepared to sacrifice a great deal in order to enrol their children in better-resourced schools than those in or near to the townships. Parental participation in school government is in such cases difficult or impossible.

The notion of community participation has emotional appeal but the reality is that as societies are fragmented along lines of class, colour and gender, it becomes difficult to sustain an unqualified commitment to community participation. While 'community' should actually provide a strong sense of solidarity, it may also mask fundamental differences among groups.

The Minister emphasised the need to support governing bodies in poorer areas but did not say how this would be done. A number of analysts have commented on the fact that inequalities between schools were not reduced. Schools are differentiated by class owing to the market competition and the user-fees model of schooling. Since governing bodies are allowed to employ additional teachers, using their own financial resources, it leads to further discrepancies between schools. The more affluent schools are able to choose the most skilled teachers to the disadvantage of those schools that have less to offer. Writers such as Karlsson and co-workers (1999:16) showed that community participation in the governance of education has not led to the attainment of greater equity in education. The main beneficiaries are schools serving communities who can contribute the most resources.

It was pointed out that the state seemed to be shedding its responsibility for the provision of education and transferring it to school governing bodies. Parents serving on governing bodies viewed their role as co-opted fund raisers carrying out provincial and national level instructions, and not as decision makers. Vally (1999a:15-16) states that *'the burden of establishing, exempting and retrieving fees will be particularly onerous on governing bodies*

without the requisite expertise and skills'. Governing bodies will require extensive training in financial and administrative management, resulting in increased costs - yet funds are not available.

The Minister also expressed dismay at the high levels of violence and the high failure rate, but did not refer to any specific program to deal with these issues. Concern was expressed about the use of corporal punishment but nothing was said about training educators in effective alternatives. Sexual violence and harassment of female learners is endemic at many schools, yet there has still been no implementation of the Gender Equity Task Team's recommendations released in October 1997.

Counselling is non-existent at most poor schools. Budgetary constraints prevent education departments from employing specialised teachers to assist schools with a track record of violence. There is a critical need for rehabilitation centres. A cluster of schools could be assigned skilled trauma counsellors. These counsellors could also train teachers to deal with conflict and violence.

The Minister's community school idea was intended to boost the flagging COLTS campaign. For a number of reasons the COLTS campaign has met with varying degrees of success. Many studies made recommendations on a number of issues in addressing a 'collapsed' culture of teaching and learning. Those have been largely ignored. The problem is that *'homogenising solutions are inappropriate in dealing with the complexities and highly unpredictable character and uniqueness of individual schools and particular contexts'* (Vally:1999a:17).

e. Priority Four: Ending physical degradation in schools

The constraining nature of national and provincial financial frameworks and the socio-economic context in which educational reform is occurring, has already been discussed. The overall slowness of infrastructure delivery in housing, health and education pointed to the limits of the government's public works program (Star, 10 September 1999, in Motala, S. 1999:17).

While improvements in access have been welcomed, there continues to be a serious shortage of classrooms. In 1999 there were more educators than classrooms, with the result that some provinces only utilised 70-80% of all educators (Motala, S. 1999:17). Schooling was occurring in extremely unequal conditions. Up to one-third of all schools lacked basic resources. The expenditure on capital and non-personnel items was curtailed in most provinces in 1998/1999, and had declined to undesirable levels (*Intergovernmental Fiscal Review 1999*, in Motala, S. 1999:17).

Also significant was the increasing number of parents who chose to send their children not to 'neighbourhood' schools but to former Model C schools, now public schools. The consequences for the school governance and community participation were significant, because parents were taking their expertise and financial contributions elsewhere - away from the schools that needed them most. Conservative estimates noted that addressing the infrastructural requirements outlined in the *School Register of Needs Survey* (DoE 1997c), would have required R3 billion per year over a period of 10 years (Crouch in Motala, S. 1999:18).

Farm schools might have been considered as schools 'where the need was greatest'. In 1998, 88% of farm schools did not have running water; 56% did not have electricity; 100% were without fencing; and the majority did not have essential teaching and learning resources. Taking cost effectiveness of public spending into consideration, a suggestion was put forward to amalgamate some schools and put transport schemes in place (Motala, S. 1999:18).

While the rural development program was welcomed, it needs to be noted that the RDP also called for an integrated rural program. This program did not achieve its goals because it lacked a detailed plan of action and was without clear objectives. The question was, how to engage the government on issues affecting rural schools when officials did not have the time or resources for regular visits to farm schools?

Post-1994 education policy never really attended to the serious difficulties that rural schools faced and therefore Minister Asmal's call was indeed a 'new' direction. What is

now required is a strategic framework for mobilising rural communities to develop a rural development strategy. The high priority placed on education by rural communities indicates that educationists need to be part of such discussions. According to Motala, S. (1999:18) recent research suggests that innovative reform requires a minimum threshold of institutional efficiency to have any impact. Without a significant increase in the ability of the system to maintain routine functions, no innovation will be possible.

The validity of current demand for QA at micro level through the use of PIs and self-evaluation needs to be questioned, in the absence of minimum learning conditions. Appropriate indicators should be devised to encourage progress toward acceptable minimum standards of basic facilities and conditions for teaching and learning in schools.

The improvement in physical infrastructure has turned attention to the improvement of quality in our schools - a point that the Minister referred to as a key failure of our current education system. The emphasis of the RDP-COLTS initiative was both on improving the physical infrastructure of schools and the development of the capacity for school governance. Adequate physical resources, learning facilities, equipment and sound management practices were seen as a pre-condition for the provision of quality education. If the government was going to 'deliver', upgrading material and non-material resources would create an enabling environment for quality improvement.

f. Priority Five: Developing teacher quality

Modiba (1999a:20-22) reports that, since 1994, attention has focused sharply on developing a professional teaching force. The National Teacher Education Audit served as a basis for various initiatives such as: the SACE's code of conduct for educators in 1995; the ELRC's manual for the developmental appraisal of educators in 1995; COTEP's NSTETD in 1997, NSE in 1998 and 2000; SADTU's 1998 proposals for the professional development of educators; and the completed report of the President's Education Initiative research project in 1999. These were impressive initiatives but there were still many important questions to address. Modiba's view (1999a:20) is that the Minister's statement had much to do with the extent to which teaching quality and teacher morale had been subject to greater public scrutiny and debate. Political ideals constituted a significant

component of the new vision which was articulated around notions of professional development that are primarily self-initiated.

The Minister proposed a 'carrot and stick' strategy as a way to improve the quality of education offered in schools - 'recognising outstanding teachers' and 'defining professional standards to be used to influence and judge quality of service provided'. There is little doubt that teacher quality is related to the ability to create learning environments that are productive. The art of teaching is a complex, subtle and sensitive affair that is hard to pin down with simple rules or to transmit merely through advice on strategies. The question of what is needed to improve the quality of teachers, needs a realistic approach.

Although the Minister's strategies are encouraging, the irony is that they are not new and continue to give little recognition to the fact that professional development for the majority of teachers in this country is becoming increasingly constrained by a structure and content largely determined by agencies which have little or no direct knowledge either of the broader context within which teachers have to teach or of training for such contexts (Modiba 1999a:21.)

The Minister's vision would have been more appealing if it had highlighted a precise and focused strategy for tackling the challenges.

Commenting on the Minister's views, Modiba (1999a:22) makes the following three relevant points:

- Firstly, when attempts are made to improve schooling, concerted efforts must be made to ensure that existing attributes in teachers' practices - especially the understanding of their context - are not eroded by the development initiatives. Teachers' understanding is contextual and cannot be dealt with in isolation from such understanding. Besides the constraints in the classrooms, teachers are grappling with issues threatening their personal lives like rationalisation, rightsizing and redeployment resulting in insecurity and low morale.
- Secondly, it is important to use context-specific language in raising awareness of issues that need development. Many of the Minister's views only highlighted aggregate variables. Attempts to improve quality should recognise that conditions

differ for different constituencies. The Minister's statement did not adequately utilise existing evidence on aspects of education, particularly evidence about important differences between contexts and context-specific variables.

- Finally, more information should be made available on the possible differential effects of inequalities on teaching effectiveness throughout the country. The emphasis should be on success for all students and staff and the attitude should furthermore be that operations can be carried out.

g. Priority Six: Ensure the success of active learning through Outcomes Based Education

Mahomed (1999:22-24) discussed this priority and stated that it was a broad reiteration of the policy and implementation processes of the period 1995-1999, with the focus on correcting the course taken. The recognition of difficulties of the existing curriculum, the policy-orthodoxy turns taken in the unfolding of Curriculum 2005, and the need for improved delivery were highlighted as challenges. In the curriculum terrain, this was even more the case, because the overall need for effective delivery of the existing and the new curricula far outstripped the resources available. *'There is a heavily unequal, skewed distribution in the development work currently underway and teacher development skills and efforts are scarce and scattered'* (Mahomed 1999:22). The Minister required a correction of this state of affairs by pulling together resources and expertise of all kinds.

To put it mildly, a great deal is expected of OBE-teachers. The OBE approach and the NSE require teachers to adapt to new roles (see 3.11.1 par 4). These roles are *inter alia* those of curriculum developer and facilitator of learning. The Minister reiterated the significance of developing 'the power of independent thought and inquiry' in learning. Learners should learn from the environment under the wise guidance of their facilitators. Teachers are expected to cope with new terminology (*'Complex jargon'* [Sunday Times, 4 June 2000]); make use of a variety of methodologies; organise knowledge into learning areas; work collaboratively with other teachers in related fields; engage in culturally relevant forms of pedagogy; understand the everyday life of their learners in order to construct programs that are useful to their learning; master the continuous assessment model while administering the results of learners meticulously; and work with classes

where the size is determined by a 1:40 ratio. This can be described as a challenge for the committed and the brave, even if they had all the support and resources needed.

A further challenge for curriculum delivery lies in the balance that will have to be struck between providing support materials to teachers and enabling them to be critical, independent curriculum developers. Externally prepared support materials tend to de-skill teachers. The alternative option will empower teachers to engage in intellectual work and to develop individual, original approaches to teaching and learning. It will also imply that curriculum policy would be implemented differently depending on context. This is the rationale behind Curriculum 2005, that the same curriculum could be unfolded in different ways at different schools.

The other side of this equation is the finding in the National Teacher Education Audit that the majority of teachers in the country have not been prepared in their pre-service teacher education to make curricular decisions. Thus, it would be difficult for them to meet the Minister's expectations without support and guidance. If success is reliant upon proper support, timeous delivery and retention of learning support materials to schools are important. Given the problems experienced during 1994-1999, the logistical challenge of timeous delivery is enormous. The re-negotiation of relations between national and provincial departments is critical to improve co-ordination (see 3.12.3.2 b). More and better regular monitoring mechanisms, which include the establishment of target PIs for provinces, should be emphasised.

A Curriculum 2005 Review Committee was appointed early in 2000. Their recommendations were published in *The Sunday Times* (4 June 2000) and on the same day discussed by the Minister on the SABC 2-program, *Newsmaker of the week*. The committee said '*it is clear ... that implementation of Curriculum 2005 cannot continue in its present form*' (Sunday Times, 4 June 2000:6). The recommended changes were aimed at improving teachers' classroom-practice. The envisaged improved curriculum would be called Curriculum 21 - a curriculum for the 21st century. A few basic changes to C2005 were suggested. In general, Curriculum 21 would be a streamlined curriculum; plain language would be used and a reasonable time frame would be set for outcomes to be

reached. A National Curriculum Statement was expected in June 2001 explaining clearly what was to be learned and at what level it was to be tested.

Viewing the 2000-review change in the light of the Minister's call for action, the following key recommendations from the Review Committee on improving the curriculum were welcomed by all in the system:

- adequate resourcing was the most vital precondition to its success
- authorities should find other ways to release resources, than through the retrenchment and redeployment of teachers as these were likely to demotivate the teachers who remain in the system
- the content in the early years of schooling should be clarified
- a national strategy for training of teachers should be developed as well as follow-up support in the short term
- clear guidelines should be given to publishers about what support materials schools require - a national list of textbooks is needed
- curriculum changes should become the core business of special units in the national and provincial departments, adequately staffed with trained personnel
- transport should be provided to curriculum officials so that support could be provided to schools (Sunday Times, 4 June 2000:6)

h. Priority Seven: A vibrant Further Education and Training (FET) system

Mohammed (1999:24-27) reviews this priority. The FET sector comprises a pivotal and diverse part of the education and training sector. It consists of 8 000 providers (excluding private companies), 3 million learners, and an estimated national investment of R10 billion annually. This sector is also the most complex of the entire educational spectrum, encompassing young learners completing their formal compulsory education, older learners returning to study as full-time and part-time students, those on day release from training schemes, those in the workplace, and those in the classrooms of colleges. This sector reflects a unique interface with the world of work.

FET straddles two vital junctions which are government policies seen to be crucial to the macro-economic labour market and human resource development policies; and the

junction between GET, HE and Training, work, community and personal life (Kraak, in Mohammed 1999:25). The government's conception of FET is underpinned in the *Education White Paper 4* (1998f) and the *Further Education and Training Act* (1998c) which must be read in conjunction with the *Skills Development Act* (1998b).

FET policy in SA has become one element of broader economic policy as a new human capital view of education has taken hold. The notion that there is a direct relationship between education and economy has yet to be proved, although the South African education and training policy increasingly accepts this relationship uncritically. There is a tension between the principle of redress and the human capital theory. The concept of 'social development' is not adequately explained and linked to 'economic growth'. It is noted that the FET policy's goals, as reflected in the *Green Paper on Further Education and Training*, could contradict attempts at redress.

An FET system which places less emphasis on redress and promotes narrowly-defined vocational goals aimed at meeting the labour requirements of capital will not, as the Minister hopes, make for a vibrant FET system consistent with the needs of our society (Mohammed 1999:25).

Even those who broadly approved of the framework of the new FET policy have raised concerns. The idea of modern apprenticeships/learnerships was considered. Modern apprenticeships could help to forge relationships between colleges and the workplace. It was argued that the ideals of the *Skills Development Act* (1998f) can be accommodated comfortably within the FET sector, easing the closure of CEs. A Human and Science Research Council study of technical colleges in KwaZulu-Natal sheds light on possible gaps and Mohammed (1999:26) proposes the following: it is vital for the state to prioritise localised and regional strategic plans for co-operation and resource-sharing amongst FET institutions; FET institutions should be responsive to the needs of the disadvantaged communities; and although it seems as if FET institutions are incapable of addressing the distinct training needs of the emerging market, for example eco-tourism, there is an *ad hoc* informal arrangement with industry, with companies requesting customised training courses for their specific needs. The state will have to find effective ways of communicating the labour market requirements to FET institutions.

A key proposal of the *Green Paper on a Skills Development Strategy (1997b)* was that learnerships should replace the current system of apprenticeships. A learnership would contain structured learning and structured work experience. The former - located in learning institutions - would comprise fundamental, core and specialised subjects, and would be accredited through the NQF. Troubling patterns were the following: learnership costs ranged from R13 000 - R30 000 per learner per year; some Industrial Training Boards conceded that the level of training offered by providers was extremely low, but suggested that, as in the past, existing training colleges be utilised; without a regulatory framework, as in the past, discrepancies regarding learnership development and administration would appear within industry.

Mohammed (1999:27) summarised his views by suggesting that besides improvements in teaching and learning, the education system should work toward equivalence between different learning contexts. Learners should also be allowed to progress between formal and non-formal education programs; to move between different educational institutions; and to have their prior experience accredited. Such a flexible approach would facilitate the career path of learners through institutions of learning as well as through industry. Colleges within the FET sector should have modular programs, be outcomes-based, have links to industry, and be more receptive to community needs.

i. Priority Eight: A rational, seamless higher education system

The Minister's intention to review the 'institutional landscape' of HE has resulted in much speculation and discord amongst academics. It could be a step toward promoting the regional sharing of resources including academic staff and libraries, eliminating wasteful duplication, and encouraging synergies between disciplines, universities and communities. The Minister's moves toward systematic rational planning must be supported, but the moves must be guided by a responsibility to meet social needs and not merely to implement short-term cost-cutting measures. The Minister's statement did not deal with issues like dwindling resources, cuts in state subsidies, or escalating student debt. The NCHE favoured the expansion of enrolments from a broader distribution of social groups. The increases in student fees and the difficulties in obtaining and repaying loans place HE beyond the reach of students from poor communities. We have also witnessed the

retrenchment of staff at tertiary institutions, the downgrading and closing down of academic programs and bridging courses, and the outsourcing and privatisation of support services. Vally (1999a:28) mentions that formal knowledge and power remain tightly bound in HEIs. Financial inaccessibility might nullify innovative aspects of the NQF such as the RPL, aiming at breaking down discriminatory barriers to access.

Subotzky (1999:28-31) notes that the Minister once again formulated a number of visionary goals for HE, reminiscent of the NCHE Report and the subsequent *White Paper on Higher Education Transformation*. Asmal (in Subotzky 1999:28) called for institutions to become more efficient and accountable, for a safe and secure environment, for all stakeholders to contribute toward good and co-operative government, and for HEIs to become 'vibrant centres of community and cultural life'. With these calls, there can be no serious contention from any quarter.

There are indications that the new ministry wishes to tackle difficult decisions, the most difficult of which is the shape and size of the system. The Minister pledged that he would not hesitate to take action with all deliberate speed. The urgency to take action was motivated by concerns for efficiency, effectiveness and equity. Inefficiency ran deep and was characterised: by institutional and programmatic duplications; instances of poor quality; unsatisfactory success rates; lack of adequate financial management; many HDIs were in a financially precarious position; crippling reductions in enrolments; ongoing instances of corruption; and crises in leadership. Enrolments remain skewed toward social sciences and humanities with a resultant shortage of science, engineering and technology graduates. Curricula are not sufficiently geared toward providing the high-level knowledge and competences for a knowledge-based economy and for reconstruction and development. Further links with industry and the community are needed. Deep race, gender and institutional inequalities persist.

The key question is: how will the Minister determine what action is needed? Will he favour 'light steering' by means of financial incentives and leverage? A constraining factor here is the fact that *'the revamped funding formula is still unavailable and that planning still occurs in a vacuum created by the absence of a coherent management information system'* (Subotzky 1999:28). If the Minister decides to steer more directly, the policy

framework for transformation provides him with strong statutory powers to shape the system as he deems fit. However, he has said that no mergers would be enforced without thorough planning and consultation. To act in a coherent, rational and politically circumspect way, Minister Asmal needs reference points which he referred to as a strategic plan for the sector. Guided by a careful analysis of quantitative and qualitative development needs of the HE sector, such a strategic national plan for HE could begin to identify the shape and size requirements of the system, as well as the required skills and knowledge levels of graduates.

In the absence of an effective regulatory framework, the Minister needs to address the rapid proliferation of local and trans-national private HEIs, some genuine but many unscrupulous. Urgent legislative changes necessitated all private HEIs to register with the NDoE for institutional registration and with SAQA for accreditation. Part of the challenge is to deal with new forms of technology-driven distance education programs, because some trans-national institutions do not always have a physical presence in the country and therefore do not constitute a legal entity which is accountable in terms of local law.

The Minister was concerned about the downward trend in student enrolment since it impacts directly on the size-and-shape of HE. Probable reasons may be: the financial crisis faced by students at HDIs; the shrinking pool of school leavers with matriculation exemptions; the attraction of private providers offering short-cycle, job-oriented programs; negative student perceptions concerning the quality of the local public education sector in comparison with overseas programs; the choice of students for overseas programs and accreditation to provide options to emigrate and to pursue a career abroad.

The Minister wanted a commitment from institutions to 'the recruitment of mature age students', applying RPL. It is a normative goal that cannot easily be implemented. While it is a noble equity-driven goal, RPL has proven difficult to actualise in HE. Academic literacy cannot easily be made to correspond with practical and indigenous knowledge. Important though these are for both equity and the participation of communities in sustainable development, they are not commensurate with 'academic standards'.

The Minister ... is now challenged to turn rhetoric into reality. This ... means fully recognising the complexities involved ... Other pressing challenges not specifically mentioned (are): finalising the funding formula, the development of a management information system, providing effective incentives for regional co-operation, establishing a quality assurance system, and building the required managerial, financial and academic capacity (Subotzky 1999:31).

j. Priority Nine: HIV-AIDS and education

Reviewing this urgent priority Crewe (1999:31-33) reports that the education system is for various reasons particularly vulnerable to HIV/AIDS. Its vulnerability lies not just in the fact that young people are at risk, but at a number of levels of its operation, development and management.

Teachers are seriously affected in many ways. They are the interface between the epidemic and society. They have to face the effects of HIV/AIDS on the lives of the pupils they teach. Teachers must understand what it will be like to teach children whose parents, siblings, relatives and friends are infected or dying of AIDS. These pupils have to deal with the stigma of HIV/AIDS, the illness itself, possible death for themselves or people near to them, and fear of the future. Teachers will have to understand what this means to pupils' ability to learn and they will have to adapt their teaching methods and expectations. Counselling skills will be required to deal with children and parents. They will have to learn how to deal with people who are both infected and affected.

In addition, teachers have the responsibility to teach pupils about HIV/AIDS and about the effects the epidemic will have on SA and its development. This will effect how teachers prepare pupils to take up their role in a country which in all respects will be very different from the one we know today. Society has to understand the epidemic to reduce the levels of stigma and discrimination and to become part of the team to turn the epidemic around and limit the number of new infections.

In order to address these concerns the Departments of Health and Education established the National Project Committee for HIV/AIDS and Life Skills. Through the Provincial Health and Education Committees, and in collaboration with NGOs, a training program for teachers was established. More than 13 000 teachers were trained. The success of the program rests on how this training translates into (a) the training of other teachers; (b) school based programs; (c) peer education programs together with (d) clinic services.

Inherent in such a program is the tension between the reality of the epidemic and the morality of it. Many teachers feel that value-building and socialisation education have important roles to play. There are teachers who say that pupils will have to learn to 'behave' and practice abstinence and delayed sexual initiation. Crewe (1999:32) does not think the latter is an option in most South African schools and that teachers holding such views would not be suitable for AIDS education. Young people will have to learn to have the confidence to change their behaviour and practise safer sex, including the choices about abstinence, faithfulness and the use of condoms.

Tough decisions will have to be made about what to teach to pupils and how it will be taught. It will include a commitment from principals and provincial education departments that HIV/AIDS will be integral to all spheres of school life, and that all subject areas will have a clear focus in this direction. It should not be regarded as a separate component of the curriculum. Emerging problems seem to be teachers who were trained but have resigned, or have been redeployed; or not given time or facilities to utilise their training. Obviously, education managers have not come to a full understanding of the AIDS problem.

The *National Education Policy Act* (1996) now contains the National Policy on HIV/AIDS for Learners and Educators in Public Schools, and Students and Educators in FET institutions. The crucial provisions in the Act are HIV/AIDS education at all levels (in 1999 a primary school program was piloted for implementation throughout the country); non-discrimination with regard to learners, students and educators with HIV/AIDS; protection and confidentiality; and a safe school environment. Dealing with HIV/AIDS through tertiary

education means that all places of learning will have HIV/AIDS as priority curriculum component to ensure that all professionals are AIDS-literate when they enter the workforce.

Of great concern to the education sector are the following:

- AIDS will decrease the number and supply of educators.
- The provision and quality of education will be affected. Policy will have to be developed on how to care for those infected while they are still in the system.
- Families affected by AIDS, as well as the education sectors dealing with staff losses and benefits, may struggle to afford the provision of education.
- Education will compete with Health and Welfare for money.
- The AIDS epidemic will affect staff at all levels including labourers, administrators, and professionals in low, middle and the highest ranks.
- The number of school entrants is likely to decrease. Children may be kept out of school for home nursing, agricultural labour or because of the lack of money.

All these aspects will have an impact on the planning of education - the number of teachers, classrooms and textbooks as well as the curricula for teacher education. To date there is very little indication of any planning done that seriously considers the possible educational, demographic and financial effects of AIDS on the education sector.

Related problems that will have to be dealt with are: older male pupils who are forcing female pupils into sexual relationships; teachers who trade sex for marks; and unequal gender relations and sexism within schools. Crewe (1999:33) says that all this colludes in one or other way with the epidemic. Education is central in the fight against AIDS. *'Many of Minister Asmal's visions for education simply cannot happen within the context of a major HIV/AIDS epidemic. An uncontrolled and misunderstood epidemic, as we have now, has the potential to undermine completely all the development gains that South Africa is hoping to make through improved education'* (Crewe 1999:33).

3.12.4 Founding Document: Quality Assurance in Colleges of Education

At a national CCERSA QA workshop (10 November 1999), the *Founding Document: QA in CEs*, directed to the situation at CEs, was discussed. The following appeal for

commitment appears at the end of the document and, although it is not stated in so many words, it explains that the document has tailor-made the HEQC's QA-initiatives for CEs: *'This document must be workshopped by personnel in the colleges of education destined for higher education in order to secure a common understanding of the principles and practices of quality assurance in order to gain the commitment of the college personnel to quality assurance initiatives promoted by the HEQC'* (Nicholls 1999:54). A great deal of this *Founding Document* for CEs was already discussed (see 2.4.3.2; 2.4.3.3; 2.4.3.4; 2.5).

For the sake of an overview, the table of contents of the document entails the following broad categories: an orientation to quality and QA; the scope of QA in teacher education; the commencement of a process of quality development - including institutional accreditation, auditing and self-evaluation, the role of management in realising quality, quality through persons (staff development), personal developmental appraisal against set criteria, and a program validation process (accreditation); student selection and induction; key resources needed; conditions of service and QA; external assessment; a critique of QA; and the role of the HEQC in establishing QA in colleges of HE.

This *Founding Document* concludes with a summation of basic characteristics of an institutional scheme for quality development which are likely to lead to improvement. They are: the system should be rooted in the culture of the institution in question; it should be developmental; it should be honest and responsibly transparent to stakeholders without damaging the institution in the process; it should employ multi-year cycles of activity-reviews with all major aspects of the institution coming under review in one cycle; it should employ systematically gathered opinions of both clients and professional participants at the institution; the institution's self-evaluations about its performance should be validated through the use of unbiased, highly qualified external peers; the system should be adequately funded - including both support of an effective infrastructure for quality development and funds to support the recommended improvements which result from the quality development activities; and the scheme should be generally responsive to reasonable requests from Government and other stakeholders (Nicholls 1999:53,54).

3.13 CONCLUSION

Reviewing the QA policy documents that were developed for the post-1994 South African education system since the NCHE Report of 1996, one has to applaud the mammoth task done so far. A huge amount of manpower and many hours of research went into these efforts to establish appropriate QA policies for South African education. Asmal (RSA 1999a:2) proudly announced: *'I was told by everyone I met that we have created a set of policies ... in education ... that are at least equal to the best in the world'*. Effective implementation of the policies would enable South African educationists and educators to be internationally recognised and respected, and to be able to respond to global challenges. During the time of this research, teacher education found itself in a phase between policy establishment, and policy implementation.

The broad scope of QA policies that was described, provided a valuable overview to understand the place of QA of pre-service teacher education in the overall framework of education in SA. The *SAQA Act* (RSA 1995a) provides for the establishment of bodies to monitor and audit the quality of providers of education. The HEQC, a permanent committee of the CHE, will provide the needed national authority for QA in HE. Once Sub-Committee two of the HEQC has come into operation, QA for teacher education will be addressed by them and external guidelines will alleviate insecurities regarding internal efforts toward QA in the contextual diversity of HEIs. NSTETD (DoE 1997a), NSE (DoE 1998d), and NSE (RSA 2000) serve as important guidelines in *'redefining and regulating the teaching profession'* (Barasa & Mattson 1998:42). Nicholls's (1999) *Founding Document: QA in CEs* provides valuable and tailored advice for QA of teacher education programs at merged HEIs, since it was initially designed for Colleges of HE, which were in the end rationalised.

Major difficulties were *inter alia* the challenge for HEIs to reform their programs toward NQF alignment; the constraining nature of the budget; and the fact that those who had to implement policies needed to take ownership of them and needed training for this. These difficulties had to be faced in the presence of dwindling resources, cuts in state subsidies, escalating student debt, and low morale of educators at HEIs facing rightsizing of HE

issues threatening their personal and professional lives. The biggest concern was the question whether the government would 'deliver' in the sense of physical resources, learning facilities, equipment and sound management practices. A range of reasons for limited delivery in the past included the lack of precise strategy to make the vision a reality; unrealistic time frames; a very optimistic code of conduct from SACE and the ELRC Manual for Development Appraisal, expecting a high level of professional development and self-initiated reflexive competence from educators (see 3.11.2 par 3; 3.11.3 par 4); and insufficient support of those who had to implement the government's plans, like the introduction of OBE. The ultimate need was for education leaders to turn rhetoric into reality, to adopt a realistic approach, and to spend time and energy only on planning that could be implemented. Political ideals constituted a significant component of the new vision which was articulated in the new policies. The critique of the Minister's nine priorities for improving education and training in SA focused attention on the 'big picture' and the vast range of problems for which student teachers must be prepared during their pre-service education (see 3.12.3).

In the end, fitness for a new era *via* educational transformation, is necessary. Of concern is the need to serve a new social order, meeting pressing national needs, and responding to new realities and opportunities. These objectives need to be achieved *via* the introduction of a process of QA, especially that of teacher education since *'teachers hold the future of the nation in an almost literal sense'* (Bengu 1998).

While educators wait for QA policies to be implemented, there is no reason why QA for teacher education cannot be established by a core interest group at institutional level. Persig's notion of quality, being *'the inverse side of caring ... a feeling of identification with what one is doing'* (Nicholls 1999:3), enhances the thrust for getting involved with QA. QA is more than a response to outside pressure. To be able to determine quality gaps in teacher education as it was offered at a CE (and later a merged HDU/CE) during 1998 - 2001, and to implement planned improvement, action research was studied and undertaken as part of this research. Chapter Four contains the research design.

THE RESEARCH DESIGN: A CASE STUDY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

When this research was initiated in 1998, the need for QA at CEs was a non-negotiable issue. It was a matter of survival for the institutions (see 1.2 par 6,7). By November 1997, the steering committee for the re-curriculation of Tshiya programs toward an outcomes based approach, had completed their task. The next logical step for the steering committee was QA of the 'new' programs, in order to ensure that the College 'stayed afloat'. Early in 1998, structures for QA were already in place at the College and I was heavily involved with QA. For doing research on QA, it was logical and pragmatic for me to select my own institution for a case study. The Rectorate was grateful that research would be done at Tshiya CE, and appreciation of the benefits that action research would bring to the institution.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (1993:376-7) case study designs are appropriate to describe and analyse a situation or process voiced by participants in a particular situation. The authors add that case study designs are used (a) when the context of the events is important and self-evaluation by the participants is desired; (b) when the scope of the program evaluation is broad, including strengths and weaknesses; (c) when process evaluation is desired; and (d) when the focus is evaluation of individualised outcomes. All these mentioned aspects were entailed in this research. Sampling and the problem of gaining entry into the field were therefore solved by the situation. It was only late in 2000, when this research was already two years in progress, that an official announcement was made that Tshiya CE had to merge with UNIQWA. Adaptations regarding the research had to be made along the way as the steering committee had to 'go with the flow' of the rightsizing of HE.

In this case study design, the research focused on '*one phenomenon, which the researcher selects to understand in depth*' (McMillan & Schumacher 1993:375). This one

phenomenon was the establishment of a QA system for teacher education programs at the merged HEI which was formed by incorporating Tshiya CE into UNIQWA. The aim of this research had a programs-view, focusing on teacher education programs offered at Tshiya CE. The relevance (see 1.2) and purpose (see 1.7) of this study have already been explained. Action research was justified as the most appropriate method for the purpose of this research, which was to *'reflect on your practice and change it in the light of what you learn'* (Mc Niff *et al.* 1996:8). I aimed to make the research relevant to the teaching-learning situation at Tshiya CE. The research design was outlined (see 1.8).

4.2 RESEARCH METHOD

4.2.1 Action Research

Action research as a concept, a philosophy and a methodology of learning has become a major research tool which is attracting a great deal of attention all over the world. The new operation of collaborative individuals were no longer prepared to tolerate the implacable imperatives of institutionalised education. They found an alternative in the emancipatory processes of action research (Zuber-Skerritt 1992:2). Action research is the process of evaluating the effectiveness of materials and processes used to achieve student learning. It is not a 'quick fix' for all school problems but it can lead to the selection of the best option for a specific situation (McLean 1995:6,7). In short, action research is a spiral of cycles of action and research consisting of four moments: plan, act, observe and reflect.

In 1950, the process of action research was conceptualised by Kurt Lewin for application in the field of social psychology. Walker (1990:57) quotes Simon saying that a form of research is needed *'which seeks directly to penetrate into, illuminate, and so improve the process of education'*. Action research was adopted and applied to the educational arena by Corey. Its popularity declined in 1960, but it re-emerged in 1970 when teachers in the UK, Australia and the USA became increasingly involved in a form of research which sought to address the issues which concerned teachers most in their everyday practices. Teachers gathered data on their own through colleagues' class visits, *etcetera*, in order to address a specific concern. The findings of such actions formed the basis of an action plan to improve the problem under investigation. Through the work of Kurt Lewin,

Lawrence Stenhouse, John Elliott, Stephen Kemmis and others, this approach to research has become generally known as action research (Sherwood 1992:10).

One widely accepted definition of action research is that of Kemmis and Carr (Zuber-Skerritt 1996b:147) who state that it is

a form of collective self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve ... their own ... educational practices, as well as their understanding of these practices and the situations in which these practices are carried out ... The approach is only action research when it is collaborative, though it is important to realise that the action research of the group is achieved through the critically examined action of individual group members.

Grundy and Kemmis explain further that *'all actors involved in the research process are equal participants, and must be involved in every stage of the research ... The kind of involvement required is collaborative involvement ... (which is) a hallmark of action research'* (Zuber-Skerritt 1996b:5). Educational action research can be seen as *'a family of activities in curriculum development, school improvement programmes ... These activities have in common the identification of strategies of planned action which are implemented and then systematically submitted to observation, reflection and change'* (Flanagan *et al.* 1984:3,4). According to Kemmis and McTaggart (in McNiff *et al.* 1996:9) the linking of the terms 'action' and 'research' highlights the essential feature of the method: trying out ideas in practice as a means of improvement and of increasing knowledge. It is not a program or specific intervention, but a process for determining what works best (McLean 1995:3). It should be noted that action research is more likely to lead to the 'fine-tuning' than to the wholesome 'abandonment' of past practice.

Good action research shares the basic characteristics of all good research, but it also has its own special characteristics. McNiff and co-workers (1996:14) provide the following summary: Action research shares the following characteristics with other research: it leads to knowledge; provides evidence to support this knowledge; makes explicit the process of enquiry through which knowledge emerges; and links new knowledge with existing

knowledge. Action research is different from other research because: it requires action as an integral part of the research process itself; is focused by the researcher's professional values rather than by methodological considerations; and is necessarily 'insider' research, in the sense of practitioners researching their own professional actions.

McNiff and co-workers' (1996:16) practical guide to action research states that it involves the following main features: a commitment to educational improvement; a special kind of research question; putting the 'I' at the centre of the research; a special kind of action that is informed, committed and intentional; systematic monitoring to generate valid data; authentic descriptions of the action; explanations of the action; new ways of representing research; validating claims made as a result of the research; and making the action research public. The same authors (McNiff *et al.* 1996:8) believe that well-conducted action research can lead to one's personal development, better professional practice, improvements in the institution at which one works, and making a contribution to the good order of society.

Zuber-Skerritt (1992:15) describes action research by the acronym CRASP representing the following: C = Critical (and self-critical) collaborative enquiry by; R = Reflective practitioners being; A = Accountable and making the results of their enquiry public; S = Self-evaluating their practice and engaged in; and P = Participative problem-solving and continuing professional development. These acronym descriptions are common HE goals all over the world but they are difficult to put into practice. Action research may provide a practical solution for the problem. The main benefits of action research are greater job satisfaction, better academic programs, improvement of student learning and practitioners' insights and contributions to the advancement of knowledge and practice in HE.

4.2.2 The purpose of action research

Action research enables teachers to become reflective practitioners and, in the words of Lerman (1993:7), *'to open our eyes to our situations'*. According to Blay (1994:2), Adler (1992:4), as well as Maher and Alston (1990:5) action research encourages teachers to become adventurous and critical in thinking. Action research can be applied to educational problems at any level (McLean 1995:47). Blay (1994:2) and McNiff and co-

workers(1996:8) say that action research does not seek to formulate new theories that can be applied to reform practice; its purpose is to subject theory to the conditions of practice and examine practical action in a concrete situation. There is a constant interplay between theory and practice. For the purpose of researching the establishment of a QA system, action research was considered appropriate to implement a suggested framework at the CE (see 1.8; 4.2.4), and to '*subject theory to the conditions of practice and examine practical action in a concrete situation*' with a view to continuous improvement (Blay 1994:2).

4.2.3 Three types of action research

Grundy (in Walker 1990:59) describes three modes of action research - technical, practical and emancipatory - based on Habermas's three constitutive knowledge interests (see 1.8). Technical action research emphasises rule-following, control and pre-packed materials designed by outside experts for implementation by researchers. The technical form promotes efficient and effective practice by teachers but precludes any concern for the teachers' own understanding of such practice. In the end the teacher-researchers are instruments of change and the nature of the change is reproductive. Practical action research fosters the development of the teacher's personal judgement and understanding in decisions about practices. Proposals for action claim to be intelligent rather than correct, to provide guidance rather than direction. The focus is on informed action to promote change. Such action research, however, lacks a critical focus on how action is structurally located.

By contrast, emancipatory action research '*promotes a critical consciousness which exhibits itself in ... practical action to promote change*' (Grundy in Walker 1990:59). The guiding ethic of such research is the social and political ideal of freedom, equality and justice. Teacher-researchers should involve a constant dialectic between themselves as 'agents' in the classroom and as being part of the wider society. According to Zuber-Skerritt (1992:36) and Walker (1990:59) action research is emancipatory when it aims not only at technical improvement, at the participants' transformed consciousness and change within their organisation's existing boundaries, but when it also aims to change the system itself or those conditions which impede desired improvement in the organisation.

According to Zuber-Skerritt (1992:11) the three types of action research are developmental stages, and it therefore makes sense to start with technical enquiry and progressively develop through practical to emancipatory action research. However, the ultimate aim should be to improve practice in a systematic way and, if warranted, to suggest and make changes to the environment, context and/or conditions in which that practice takes place, and which delay desirable improvement.

4.2.4 Emancipatory Action Research: the best option for this research

The use of emancipatory action research was motivated for researching the establishment of a QA system (see 1.8). In short, emancipatory action research focused on empowerment of participants. It attempted to solve complex problems in new situations and strove toward collaborative teamwork in order to achieve solutions. Emancipatory action research was based on predictions of future needs and betterment. It developed critical thinkers and self-assessors. Participants therefore asked critical questions, challenged previously held beliefs, queried current systems and acted as agents for change (Zuber-Skerritt in Hay and Buchner 1998:7). Emancipatory action research aimed at transformation and to the comprehension of notions of quality and the establishment of a QA system. A suggested QA framework was put into practice, observed and reflected upon, with attempts at further improvement to be undertaken continuously and cyclically.

4.2.5 How to do action research

Most skills needed by teachers to perform action research, are known already. They are the same skills needed to assess good practice and make administrative decisions (McLean 1995:6). A significant feature of action research is the cyclic pattern described by Kemmis and McTaggart (1982:7); McNaught, Taylor and O'Donoghue (1990:11); and Carr and Kemmis (1991:185). They stress four main moments of the cycle:

- Step 1 developing a plan of action to improve what is already happening
- Step 2 implementing the plan of action
- Step 3 collecting data and observing the action in the context in which it occurs
- Step 4 reflecting on these effects as a basis for further planning

Colyn and Breen (1989:248) emphasise that action researchers impose discipline on their systemic enquiry into their praxis by using the above-mentioned action research cycle. By transforming action research cycles into spirals of action, the dynamic of the research and its capacity to adapt to new influences can be shown. By employing a variation of the spiral which allows for other issues to be investigated as side spirals, the complex business of real life can be accommodated (McNiff *et al.* 1996:22).

Blay (1994:2) and Kemmis and McTaggart (1982:9) describe the start of the process of action research as follows: a general idea for improvement emerges; one decides on a field of action where it is possible to have an impact; a general improvement plan is designed and broken down into achievable steps; the first step is implemented and progress is observed; as data starts coming in, circumstances, action and effects are evaluated; and reflection and evaluation prepare the way for re-planning. More practical advice is given by McNiff (1988:58) who lists six questions for professionals who want to evaluate the quality of their teaching. They are: What is your concern?; Why are you concerned?; What do you think you could do about it?; What kind of 'evidence' could you collect to help you make some judgement about what is happening?; How would you collect such 'evidence'?; How would you check that your judgement, about what has happened, is reasonably fair and accurate?.

Data gathering or 'evidence' may include the keeping of a diary to record as much detail as possible; the taping of discussions to observe interactions; the researcher joining groups of learners while another facilitator leads the session; asking a colleague to visit the class for observation and evaluation, regular report writing and oral feedback during meetings. In HE, student-assessment may be valuable. Minutes of meetings can also serve as valuable sources of information, especially to identify problems.

Furthermore, McLean (1995:7-9,46) suggests implementing action research in three phases:

- Conceptualisation - referring to careful consideration of what constitutes the particular teaching-learning or administrative process under study (inputs); what results it is expected to promote (outcomes); and how the inputs might promote the outcomes. The research is conceptualised by considering how inputs will manifest

themselves in the outcomes. Action research is to determine whether this has happened. In many cases, just the process of carefully considering the inputs and outcomes brings about a clearer understanding, and ideas for improvement.

- Implementation - when the data needed for conducting action research are gradually gathered and analysed. It entails three components: measurement of the outcomes, describing performance criteria, and comparing current performance with the set criteria. Many action research projects simply involve using data from regular practice and comparing them to past performance.
- Interpretation - based on more than 'it feels good' criteria. Judgements are made about the effectiveness of the practice under study. This phase brings together the findings of the research from the second phase with the conceptualisation from the first phase.

The above-mentioned practical guidelines were taken into consideration when a framework-for-action for assuring quality at Tshiya Centre was designed. During the action research at Tshiya Centre, the QA framework-for-action suggested that every participant planned, implemented, observed and reflected on his/her self-designed improvement practices. To lead the way in an unfamiliar situation, broad guidelines were laid down in the framework. To prevent a top-down policy, the framework-for-action was workshopped with all voluntary participants and their inputs were asked for. It was further expected from participants to complete the framework according to their own-compiled job descriptions; to determine their own quality gaps; and to set aims and performance measures for themselves. These steps assured a bottom-up policy as well as ownership of a QA-plan 'for yourself - by yourself'. Before implementation, every individual's improvement-plan was discussed with colleagues, the steering committee for the action research, and their line-heads to ensure that it was in accordance with the mission of Tshiya Centre. To ensure a success-experience, Strydom's advice (see 2.6 par 12) was followed and participants were warned not attempt too much at first.

4.3 SAMPLING

In contrast to probabilistic sampling where simple random or stratified sampling is applied, purposeful sampling was done in this research. According to McMillan and Schumacher

(1993:378), purposeful sampling refers to the selection of an information-rich case for studying a phenomenon in-depth without the need to generalize findings to a larger population. The researcher aimed at *'the extension of the understandings, detailed descriptions that enable others to understand similar situations and extend these understandings in subsequent research'* (McMillan & Schumacher 1993:394). The purposeful sampling further increased the utility of information obtained from the sample.

If a distinct group such as the participants in an innovative College project are studied, it is classified as a typical single-site study (McMillan & Schumacher 1993:375). In this typical single-site study, one information-rich case was purposefully selected. Since the term 'case' refers to an in-depth analysis of a phenomenon, Tshiya Centre was selected because *'people involved in a particular event'* (McMillan & Schumacher 1993:379), could be located there and were likely to be informative about the research focus. The management and staff were involved in QA activities which were the focus of the research. It was expected that the establishment of a QA system would occur on the selected site and that it would be possible to critically describe the process. The description above explains why Tshiya Centre was judged to be an information-rich case, suitable for in-depth study of its QA activities (see 5.2.1). The sampling could also be described as theoretical judgement. According to McMillan and Schumacher (1993:380) theoretical judgement refers to sampling being done by an information-rich researcher of *'information-rich situations known to ... be attempting to implement the concept'* - in this case the establishment of a QA system. The 'information-rich' researcher has been a staff member at Tshiya CE for thirteen years; had represented the College at various meetings and workshops; was aware of the attempt to implement QA at the College; and had been involved in the process from the start. The site was therefore purposefully decided upon because of prior information known to the researcher.

Tshiya Centre was a critical-case sampling at a particular moment in history since the study illustrated *'some phenomenon dramatically'* (McMillan & Schumacher 1993:380), that was the establishment of a QA system at a HEI in a time of extreme turbulence in teacher education in SA during 1998 -2001.

4.3.1 The college used in the case study: Tshiya College of Education

The College was situated in Qwaqwa, in the Eastern Free State. To a great extent, it served a Sotho-speaking community from the Free State although Zulu-speaking students from Natal later enrolled in increasing numbers. The number of students in 1989 was 900, and this enrolment was maintained until it declined, in line with the country-wide decreasing enrolment for teacher education, to 500 in 2000. In the structure of the Tshiya programs, the admission requirements corresponded with those of NSTETD (DoE 1997a:52-55). It sometimes happened that the admission requirements had to be lowered in order to enrol the required number of students.

The majority of students came from an inferior schooling system and had huge backlogs in their knowledge and skills. The pass rate of Tshiya's final year students was shockingly low - approximately 30% in 1999. During numerous staff meetings about the poor performance of the Tshiya-students, a list of problems was drawn up and prioritised. Many students battled to comprehend English as medium of instruction. They had poor reading and writing skills and struggled to answer higher order questions. They lacked good study methods and time management. These symptoms clearly indicated a lack of basic transferable skills necessary for success in HE.

The majority of physical facilities reflected Tshiya's historically disadvantaged history. Although there were five well-equipped workshops for the Technical program as well as a computer centre, the four hostels, laboratories and the library were sub-standard. The classrooms were often dirty and without furniture. In some classes the doors did not have handles and window panes were broken. These circumstances did not reflect an environment conducive to good teaching and learning and hampered the presentation of true OBE.

The different programs offered at Tshiya CE were:

- Diploma in Education: Secondary
- Diploma in Education: Secondary (Technical)
- Diploma in Education: Pre-primary and Junior primary
- SYSTEM Program (Students and Youth into Science, Technology, Engineering and

Mathematics) - a government sponsored, four-year RDP-program offered to students who had failed Mathematics and Science in Grade 12, equal to the Diploma in Education: Secondary

- EMSCEP Program (ESCOM Mathematics & Science Education Program) - a three-year, ESCOM sponsored, program offered to students who had failed Mathematics and Science in Grade 12

Until 1999, Tshiya had 63 academic staff members. Since 1998, the Tshiya staff comprised approximately 60% staff members with an African cultural background and 40% with a Western cultural background. The Rectorate comprised a rector, a vice-rector and a senior Head of Department (HOD). The academic qualifications of the staff ranged from masters degrees to teacher education diplomas. In general there were good working relationships between staff members.

CEs were criticised country-wide for their low standard, and this necessitated QA urgently (see 1.1 par 4;1.2). Since 1996, the Tshiya staff followed the instructions from the NDoE to re-curriculate their programs to an outcomes based approach in order to prepare student teachers for Curriculum 2005/21. The Tshiya staff received written compliments from the NDoE for good work done in this regard. These programs were approved by COTEP and HEDCOM and phased in during 1998. The Rectorate established nine QA committees early in 1998 to assure high quality of the 'new' programs (see 1.6.3). The new curriculum forced the staff to initiate many workshops for themselves in an attempt to become acquainted with OBE. The QA Committee for Programs, Teaching and Learning and Assessment, developed assessment forms for biennial internal moderation. These forms were externally evaluated by the URHE at UFS and were adapted in accordance with suggestions made. For the above mentioned reasons QA was already taking place, since 1998, in an informal way at Tshiya CE.

A major decline in staff morale resulted from the announcement in 1999, that CEs were to be rationalised. By January 2001, the year for which the implementation of the action research was scheduled, only 34 staff members remained at Tshiya Centre as seconded staff to see the 'pipeline' students through. At first it was argued that the 'blessing in

disguise' was that most staff members who voluntarily remained seconded, had the students' best interests at heart. This was undoubtedly true, and might therefore have favoured the QA initiatives. Unfortunately, the need to survive compelled many more staff members to leave the College during the first half of 2001. Substitutes, completely unfamiliar with the situation, had to be found to complete the work of the 'informed' Tshiya workforce.

4.3.2 University of the North: Qwaqwa Branch: The higher education institution into which Tshiya College of Education was incorporated

It was decided by the NDoE that Tshiya CE should be incorporated into UNIQWA by January 2001. UNIQWA is situated five kilometres from Tshiya CE. UNIQWA was a satellite campus of the University of the North and its main catchment areas were the Free State and Kwa-Zulu Natal. Teaching and Learning, as well as Research Excellence at UNIQWA were promoted in written documents, while community outreach services became a priority. UNIQWA's publicity slogan was 'The community - We care'.

Of special interest for this research was the fact that UNIQWA had a Centre for Educational Advancement. A brochure handed out at the Staff Orientation and Teaching Development Workshop on 29 January 2001, contained information about the Centre. The Centre had a Governing Board with representatives from each Faculty. Seven worthwhile objectives were guiding the work done at the Centre toward student and staff support and development. The Centre's mode of operation was an integrated and cost effective approach to delivery of academic support. These arrangements of the Centre complemented the work of the Student Monitoring Committee, the Academic Support Committee and the Development Committee. Staff were trained annually by means of workshops. Regular lunch hour seminars were held to provide in further needs for staff development and support programs.

The circumstances at UNIQWA were very much the same as at Tshiya CE. Both these institutions were historically disadvantaged. Tshiya CE had staff members who lectured at UNIQWA on a part-time basis and they reported that the quality of the students' work

there was in general the same as at Tshiya CE. The UNIQWA facilities were slightly better than those at Tshiya CE. The staff at UNIQWA also experienced job-insecurity because of UNIQWA's incorporation into UFS.

According to the Dean of the Faculty of Education there were, early in 1999, no formal QA actions at UNIQWA except for the above-mentioned staff development efforts. Visiting academics from Georgia stimulated UNIQWA staff to hold round table discussions about QA. Two professors from the university of Georgia shared their efforts regarding QA. I was invited to attend these discussions.

In May 2000, the Dean of the Faculty of Education at UNIQWA granted me permission to continue with the action research at Tshiya Centre which would, by then, soon be incorporated into UNIQWA. Two QA seminars, held at UNIQWA, were initiated by myself as an awareness campaign for this research. All suggestions regarding the research were favourably accepted and supported by UNIQWA. The Faculty of Education made special arrangements to accommodate the first seminar and the second seminar fitted well into the annual staff development workshop.

4.4 ETHICAL ISSUES

4.4.1 The researcher role

This term refers to the relationships acquired by and ascribed to the researcher in interactive data collection - appropriate for the purpose of the study (McMillan & Schumacher 1993:415). My role in this research was that of a participant-observer since I held a formal position in the institution. My roles were those of HOD, lecturer, convenor of a curriculum development committee and, at the onset of the study, convenor of the QA Committee for Programs, the Teaching and Learning Process and Assessment (QA committee for Programs). These roles existed whether or not the study was conducted. The role of participant-observer is used in special circumstances since the external validity of the findings may be limited. There is the possibility that findings could be distorted because of '*observer-setting interaction effects*' (McMillan & Schumacher 1993:416). As one of the participants in the action research, I became '*immersed in the situation and the*

phenomenon studied' (McMillan & Schumacher 1993:374). I assumed interactive social roles in which I recorded observations and interactions with participants in many situations. I also assumed the role of pure participant since I lived through the experience and recorded personal insights.

During the initial and reflection phases of the action research, the role of interviewer was created for the purpose of the study. McMillan and Schumacher (1993:427) describe the 'elite interview' as focusing on persons who are influential and well informed within the institution, its relations to other institutions, and especially the legal and financial structure of the institution. 'Elites' that were informally interviewed for the purpose of this research were the Rector and later the Rectorate of Tshiya CE, the Dean of the Faculty of Education at UNIQWA, and a visiting professor at UNIQWA responsible for assisting research at UNIQWA. Other informants that were approached in an informal conversation mode were the QA officer of the University of Natal and a senior researcher at the URHE at UFS. I met the latter three informants by attending regional and national workshops and seminars regarding QA. All these informants contributed insights and meaning because they were comfortable in the realm of either QA or the situation at the institution where I implemented the action research.

The interviews during the awareness phase took the form of the interview guide approach because the topic was selected in advance but I determined the sequence and the wording of the questions during the interview. These interviews could also be described as informal and conversational in the sense that questions emerged from the immediate context and were asked in the natural course of events. Informal conversations are described as an integral part of participant observation (McMillan & Schumacher 1993:426). The aim of these interviews was to determine the need and viability of the intended research.

4.4.2 Gaining entry into the field

I held a position in the institution which assured a natural entry into the field. During 1998, QA was the topic of many discussions in the staff room of Tshiya CE since the survival of the College was at stake. The attitude and support of colleagues for the research, and

especially the QA Committee, were determined through informal discussions. Formal entry into the field was gained by means of a written request for permission, directed to the Rectorate of Tshiya CE, followed by a meeting and discussions with them. The Rector announced the commencement of the research to the staff and their support was requested. When it was announced that Tshiya CE would merge with UNIQWA, written permission was also obtained from the Dean of the Faculty of Education at UNIQWA and was followed by numerous informal and formal discussions by telephone, and *via* faxes and personal visits. The students were also informed about the research in the normal class situation and their participation was requested. Later, documents reflecting the steps of the improvement plans, were put on the bulletin boards in the classes and they were discussed with the students.

4.4.3 Developing interpersonal skills

Action research is about people researching their own practice and it is essentially collaborative. McNiff and co-workers (1996:30) warn that *'you will need to cultivate ways of working with other people and you may find that your relationships vary'*. The same authors give practical advice on the following important areas to be developed for successful completion of action research: listening skills; management skills; collaborative skills; intra-personal skills; inclusive ways of researching; and your style of language (McNiff *et al.* 1996:32-33). I gave attention to these aspects.

4.4.4 Confidentiality

Names and places are routinely coded by researchers so that participants and settings cannot be identified. Because of the purposeful case sampling of this research, a description of the specific site was given. The nature of this research was not a highly sensitive inquiry and participants joined voluntarily. When confidentiality was discussed with the QA Committee, participants mentioned that they had the desire to improve their practices and did not have a problem with student or peer criticism. It was argued that according to the way that we intended to do action research voluntarily, according to a suggested framework for improvement, no harm could result from the research. One participant even quoted Covey (1992:253) saying, *'feedback is the vital lunch of champions*

- *they listen and learn from it*'. Nevertheless, a letter to inform participants about their protection was handed out. In the same letter they have been asked to sign formally a statement, that they were willing to participate in the research. The participants were further assured that their rights were protected and that if they wished to, they could withdraw. To ensure confidentiality of information, identity, and data, participants and officials reviewed the final report before it was released.

4.5 DATA COLLECTION

During the initial awareness phase of the research, informal conversational interviews were conducted with colleagues inside and outside the institution to obtain information about their practices and to get their views on the intended research. I also had conversations with informants from the business world (see 5.6.2.1). Colleagues' and my own experiences of problems were taken into account to determine the focus area for the research. Anticipated problems were also discussed with students. The QA Committee held regular meetings regarding the concepts of quality, QA, action research, and the special needs for QA at Tshiya Centre. Minutes of these meetings were regularly shared with the Directorate of Tshiya Centre. Students' opinions were gathered through questions in class and through informal discussions with individuals and informal groups - usually students who loitered in class between periods or because they had a free period.

4.5.1 Cycles of data collection

4.5.1.1 Strategic planning

The QA Committee compiled a QA policy, including a QA framework-for-action for individual implementation. Three willing participants each compiled an improvement plan for themselves according to the framework-for-action. They created a job description for themselves (see Appendix C 1). It was self and peer assessed on a rating scale. Strengths and weaknesses were determined. A weakness (quality gap) was selected for improvement during the first semester of 2001. On the detailed improvement plan, each participant indicated a goal, outcomes and performance criteria for assessment. Plans to improve MT, Media, and English were compiled. These plans were discussed, adapted and approved by colleagues in the same department as well as the QA Committee.

4.5.1.2 *Implementation*

The above-mentioned improvement plans were implemented for one semester, February - June 2001, during normal classes at Tshiya Centre.

4.5.1.3 *Observation*

Each participant's plan reflected performance criteria. If these criteria were found to be matched, the plan was shaping well. Self-assessments were noted down in diaries. Peer-assessments were done by inviting colleagues for class visits. Observation forms were designed to be completed by visiting colleagues. Peer observations were discussed afterwards and suggestions were noted down on the observation forms. Students were continuously asked about their experiences of the plans and their comments were recorded in the diaries. The students' performance could be observed in the completion of assignments, according to the plans. After completion of the implementation phase, students assessed their entire experience of the improvement plans. Special evaluation forms were designed for the purpose.

4.5.1.4 *Reflection and Re-planning*

A special meeting was held for the purpose of reflection and validation. The purpose of the meeting was to present evidence of the research to a sympathetic but critical audience. The researchers, the QA Committee, colleagues from Tshiya Centre, invited students, the Directorate of Tshiya Centre, and invited external observers attended the meeting. The entire staff of Tshiya Centre was invited to join the reflection. Knowledgeable ex-Tshiya staff who had already been transferred to schools were also invited. Each researcher had 30 minutes to orally present his/her action research to the reflection-panel. Evidence to support findings was presented. Where possible, comparisons were drawn with previous work done. Strengths and weaknesses were identified and recorded to be taken into consideration for re-planning the next cycle. Suggestions for further improvement were made and recorded. A report of the findings was made public by sharing the results with colleagues inside and outside the institution.

4.5.2 Number of phases and time scales

The first phase of preliminary data collection took place over a period of two years, from August 1998 to November 2000. Observations, a literature study, workshops and

seminars, meetings and discussions with colleagues as well as informal conversational interviews contributed toward a body of knowledge regarding QA for teacher education. A theoretical background regarding QA in general and the South African national QA policies was built up. The information was captured in Chapters Two and Three. The possibility to do action research at Tshiya CE was investigated by determining the willingness of staff members to get involved in a 'personal QA project'. It was important that the staff should not feel threatened. The Rectorate of Tshiya CE was also probed regarding their attitude and support for action researching QA. After having received a positive response a research design was compiled, as reflected in this chapter.

From August to November 2000, the second phase of the research entailed deliberations to gain entry into the field. Letters were written to the Directorate of Tshiya Centre and the Dean of the Faculty of Education at UNIQWA. A QA awareness campaign was embarked on to motivate already established committees and staff members to participate in the QA venture. The QA Committee played a prominent role. In discussions and meetings such as Senate- and Heads of Department (HODs) meetings, all stakeholders were made aware of the need for action research regarding QA. Situation analyses were done during committee meetings and during informal discussions with staff members. Management made a public announcement to recruit participants for the QA research project.

During the third phase three volunteers each planned the improvement of a self-determined quality gap. The duration of the planning phase was from November 2000 to January 2001. The fourth phase consisted of the implementation and observation of these improvement plans. This took place from February to June 2001.

Apart from reflection-in-action (see 1.8 par 11) the fifth phase of reflection-on-action was comprehensive evaluation done during the reflection meeting held on 12 June 2001. During the meeting research findings were validated and recorded. The research findings were made public by sharing a report with colleagues at UNIQWA, the URHE at UFS, the Faculty of Education at UFS, and the University of Natal. The findings of the reflection meeting would be taken into account for re-planning of further improvement for the next semester. Chapter Five comprises a description of phases two to five.

During July to November 2001, the final and sixth phase was completed. It comprised the data analysis and interpretation of the research findings. Recommendations based on comments made at the reflection meeting, literature study, and logical deductions made from the research findings followed and were concluded with final perspectives. A description of this phase is covered in Chapters Six and Seven.

4.6 DATA ANALYSIS

The purpose of the research design can be seen as grounded theory which is a sophisticated analysis linking participants' perceptions to social science and suggests new concepts about humans in general rather than linking the findings to educational events. The concepts are grounded theory because these notions are built from observations rather than concluded from prior theories (McMillan & Schumacher 1993:376).

The data analysis in this research did not focus on findings but on describing the action research phases (see 1.7 bullet 4). Common features were determined as the action research phases were applied to the three themes that were selected for the research. The themes were MT, Media, and English. Existing action research categories were applied to each theme. The planning phase included job descriptions, rating of performance, determination of quality gaps, setting of goals, descriptions of outcomes, and descriptions of performance criteria. During the implementation phase, documents were prepared, classes presented, and students' responses, activities and assessments categorised. The observation phase provided categories for the following: number and types of observations, observation forms prepared, effective use of the forms, and follow-up discussions after observations done. During the reflection phase the panel used the following categories: the QA policy as strategic QA plan, determination of strengths and weaknesses of the individual improvement plans and of the action research in total, compilation of lessons learned from the research (findings), and clustering of findings toward final suggestions.

Strengths and weaknesses were identified at the reflection (validation) meeting. It was necessary to apply a double-barrel focus during analyses. The reflection panel focused firstly on the personal implementation of the QA framework-for-action which was directed

to a specific subject/learning area. Secondly, they also focused on the general QA system as guided by the QA policy. At the end of the validation meeting, clustering of findings was done toward recommendations to be made.

4.7 LIMITATIONS

The most important limitations of this research were the time frame of 1998 - 2001; motivation; the possibility of subjectivity; the lack of QA funding; the short period of one semester; and the use of 'untidy' action research as method (see 1.8 par 15).

During the time frame of this research, August 1998 - November 2001, CEs were rationalised and their programs were to be phase into HE. The rationalisation process dragged on for years. This impacted negatively on the motivation of staff members to participate in QA actions. Toward the end of the research in 2001, there was only one member from the original QA steering committee, myself, still at the College. Fortunately, two more members visited the College weekly to present classes on a temporary basis and were willing to participate to the end. I had contact with four more members, already transferred to schools, who retained their willingness to participate in the reflection phase. My drive and enthusiasm were often tested to the limit.

In general, practitioners should deem action research and improvement of their practices relevant and necessary in order to commit themselves to QA and to the research. It was found that, seeing that there were no incentives or external threats linked to QA, it was difficult to motivate practitioners - particularly during the turbulent times caused by the transformation of the South African education system and especially the rightsizing of the HE sector during 1998 - 2001 (see 4.3.1 par 7).

Action research is labour-intensive regarding observation and record keeping. It is a general concern that teaching time may be utilised for record keeping or discussions. The completion of records after an activity is described as problematic because this is subject to the researcher's memory. All staff members might not be willing to look self-critically at their own teaching. Peer-assessment might only be polite remarks instead of honest criticism. Results, emerging from the action research, should be implemented and that

calls for change - lifting people out of their comfort zones. All staff members might not be willing for suggested changes. Change is evolutionary and although some outcomes will be attained in short periods of time, others may take a long time, causing action researchers to lose interest. Furthermore, in collaborative actions there are always some more devoted as well as some less devoted participants.

The fact that the research was done at my own institution, might have resulted in subjectivity. Anticipated problems were discussed (see in 1.3). Strategies to neutralise biased information, were mentioned (see 1.5 par 2) and explained in detail (see 4.8 par 3-7).

Adequate funding is necessary for QA. The College did not have a QA budget in place. Therefore, this research was done in the normal class situation and the needed resources were obtained from the available resources on the campus. Fortunately, UNIQWA sponsored the two QA workshops. The numerous QA workshops and seminars that I as researcher attended, were sponsored by the ordinary College budget. External assessments were done by electronic mail and by utilising staff members from UNIQWA. If the findings of this research were positively accepted by the management of the institution and the QA policy had to be implemented by the entire staff, a proper budget for QA would be necessary.

Although a semester was seen as an academic unit, it was well comprehended that the period of one semester for action research was extremely short. A more comprehensive notion of the effectiveness of the improvement plan could be obtained if a second cycle of the action research could be realised. Because of the attrition of staff and the uncertainty of the continuation of the Tshiya programs, the best option was to complete the project in one semester and learn from it.

Since the cycles of action research do not necessarily follow a neat order, it has been described as a 'messy practice' and even as 'shoddy research' (McNiff *et al.* 1996:22). Action research is, at the same time, the most valid and the least valid research about

educational practice. It is most valid because it is done in the situation where its results will be used, and it is the least valid when its results are generalised beyond the classroom where it was done (McLean 1995:44).

4.8 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Reliability is difficult to researchers interested in a naturalistic event or a unique phenomenon. The qualitative process is personal. No investigator observes, interviews, or studies documents exactly like another. A range of techniques may be used in any single study to corroborate findings for reliability. Sufficient design specificity also creates reliability (McMillan & Schumacher 1993:386). Reliability is enhanced in the design of this research by the explicit description of the researcher role (see 4.4.1), participant/site selection and social context (see 4.3), data collection (see 4.5), and analytical strategies and premises (see 4.6).

A combination of data collection strategies used, reduce threats to reliability. Evidence of self- and colleagues' observations and discussions, students' inputs, and meetings held, as well as interview results were recorded. Low-inference descriptors were gained from field notes and observation discussions. The action research made provision for multiple researchers (three [later two] active and four [later five] silent participants) that represented a team approach. Member checking frequently took place to corroborate ideas and not to waste time and lose track in the improvement process. The QA Committee participated in the compilation of the action research design and reviewed the final written document. They modified all documents before they were used.

No matter how objective a researcher tries to be in action research, personal subjectivity might filter into the findings. Life experiences and values of the researcher influence the report (Hayward 1998:111). Four strategies were used to help minimise the researcher's subjectivity and bias.

The first strategy was to encourage the management of the institution and all staff members to be part of the action research. The 'troops were well fired up' and the majority of the staff participated well in discussions and self-evaluation during the awareness

phase. When the rationalisation of CEs became a reality, the enthusiasm declined. In order to gain insight into designing a QA policy, I also approached colleagues from other HEIs at regional, national and international workshops and seminars. The different contributions had to be ordered according to feasibility since some colleagues did not fully comprehend the situation at a HDI.

Triangulation was the second strategy used (see 1.5 par 2). I obtained a variety of angles and perspectives by gaining different perceptions from colleagues, students, other professionals, and participants from the business world during the planning, observation and reflection phases. Similarities and dissimilarities of perception were noted and taken into account during analyses.

The third strategy was used to neutralise my position within the college community. Seeing that I was an HOD, staff members could have felt that they were expected to participate in the action research to benefit my department or even my studies. Initially, the threat of the NDoE that CEs should revisit their standards and be ready for evaluation, helped to advance the importance of QA and the research started as a blended part of the natural QA awareness. My position as convenor of the previous curriculum development committee and the QA Committee opened opportunities for me to take the initiative. I deliberately tried to obviate the possibility of me being viewed as an authority figure by not having pre-determined written agendas for meetings. Inputs were encouraged and considered as valuable. All contributions were visibly noted down and taken into consideration. Criticism was accepted in good faith and was encouraged.

The fourth strategy to diminish the role of personal bias was to see my own role as that of a research facilitator or consultant who acts as a catalyst to help all stakeholders understand problems that confront them and to support them as they work toward effective solutions (Stringer 1996:22). As facilitator and resource person, I continually tried to provide the team with literature regarding QA and action research as a research method. Colleagues discussed crucial documents during the QA Committee meetings. I gave proper feedback to the whole staff after every workshop or seminar that I attended. I started a QA file where all documents regarding the work of the different QA Committees

were kept. The file was communal property and stayed in the staffroom. I provided the team with a working document to design the QA policy. It was shared with the Rectorate and discussed during a staff meeting. Although the participants addressed different focus areas, I set up a trial improvement plan to serve as an example. Throughout the project, I endeavoured to view my role as that of a facilitator rather than an HOD or an accountant of a QA Committee's work.

Regarding action research, McNiff and co-workers (1996:24) report:

Validation is an event that should be part of the ongoing, formative process of action research. This is obviously the case when it is part of the critical, self-reflective process. It operates when action researchers discuss their work with colleagues, critical friends and tutors. It can also be a more formal event and part of a summative process ... It can also be very formal as in the presentation of a paper to an audience ...

The same authors stated that in action research personal experience, that can be meaningfully shared by a number of people, is seen as a good basis for establishing validity.

In this research the validation group were set up formally and presentations were delivered to them. Following the advice of McNiff and co-workers (1996:26), assessors were invited who knew the context of the work; who were able to empathise with the context; who provided a management perspective; who came from outside to provide an outsider view; and who were familiar with the methodology of action research. The research was also made public. The findings were shared with colleagues at UNIQWA, the URHE at UFS, the Faculty of Education at UFS, and the QA officer at the University of Natal. Their comments were recorded in the strengths and weaknesses of the total action research plan (see 5.8.4.3 a & 5.8.4.3 b).

4.9 SUMMATION

This chapter outlined the research design. The thesis attempted to describe an action-based case study in a CE in the Eastern Free State which was incorporated into a HDU. The focus of the research was the establishment of a QA system for teacher education

programs at Tshiya CE which was later merged with UNIQWA. Action research was described as the most suitable method for this research. A QA Committee designed a QA policy. According to a suggested framework-for-action, three action researchers developed improvement plans for MT, Media and English. The MT- and Media-plans were exposed to action research for one semester.

I had a subjective involvement in the action research. Personal bias could permeate the research. In this research, I was an HOD at the College, lecturer, convenor of the previous curriculum development committee and, at the onset of the study, convenor of the QA committee for Programs. Strategies to neutralise biased information were described. Validity and reliability issues were addressed.

Chapter Five entails a description of the phase preceding the action research as well as the phases of the action research cycle (see 4.5.1 & 4.5.2) as they were implemented, according to the suggested QA framework-for-action, at Tshiya Centre during the semester: February - June 2001. Research findings are disclosed.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS OF ACTION RESEARCH

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The research problem under investigation was to critically describe the establishment of a QA system for teacher education (see 1.6). The research had three broad aims (see 1.7). The first aim was to describe notions of quality and QA. The results of the literature study were reported in Chapter Two. The second aim focused on policy developments regarding QA in SA and was dealt with in Chapter Three. The third aim was to conduct a case study at a former CE, Tshiya Centre in the Eastern Free State, in order to describe the establishment of a QA system for its teacher education programs. The establishment of a QA system called for a SWOT-analysis, the design of a QA policy, and action research of its implementation at Tshiya Centre for one semester. Data collected during the entire period of the action research, would lead to findings that would be interpreted and discussed in order for '*groups ... (to) ... learn progressively and publicly by doing and by making mistakes in a self-reflective spiral of planning, acting, observing, reflecting and re-planning*' (Hay & Buchner 1998:7).

Chapter Four entailed the research design (see 1.8). The following aspects were described: action research as the most appropriate research method (see 4.2); the selection and description of the site (see 4.3); ethical issues dealt with (see 4.4); data collection and analysis strategies (see 4.5 & 4.6); possible limitations (see 4.7); and the validity and reliability of the research (see 4.8).

Chapter Five describes the action research. Although some events overlapped regarding time, it is a chronologic report. A situation analysis was done (see 5.2). A QA Committee was established to steer the action research which started with an awareness campaign in the form of a first QA seminar (see 5.3 & 5.4). A QA policy was designed (see Appendix B). A second QA seminar was held (see 5.7). The QA policy's framework-for-action was

initially action researched by three, and later two volunteers. Improvement plans for MT, Media, and English were compiled and the first two plans were implemented at Tshiya Centre from February to July 2001. The QA policy and the MT-improvement plan as an example, are attached (see Appendices C & D).

5.2 A SITUATION ANALYSIS

Following the advice of De Jong and Prins (1995:40), a situation analysis of QA aspects at Tshiya Centre was done by means of a SWOT-analysis. It was conducted during August 2000. The QA committee for Programs searched for strengths to build on and weaknesses (quality gaps) to overcome. The following emerged from the committee's own discussions and their discussions with staff members:

5.2.1 Strengths

- a. The management teams of Tshiya Centre and the Faculty of Education at UNIQWA were positive about QA.
- b. Nine QA committees had already been established at Tshiya Centre in 1998.
- c. The committee system was well established at Tshiya Centre.
- d. The QA committee for Programs was convened by myself and motivated for QA.
- e. QA was needed to attend to the implementation problems of Tshiya Centre's newly re-curriculated OBE-programs.
- f. The staff at Tshiya Centre took ownership for their own compiled vision and mission for their institution.
- g. The research into QA would provide guidelines for establishing a QA system.
- h. In 1998, external pressure loomed when Government stated that CEs would have five years to prepare themselves for an external quality evaluation by a national committee (see 1.2 par 6).

5.2.2 Weaknesses

- a. CEs were being rationalised.
- b. QA initiatives were the activities of a few motivated individuals.
- c. QA initiatives were not driven and controlled by top-management and could

therefore not easily be applied to the whole institution.

- d. The Centre did not have a QA officer.
- e. Some staff members might have seen the QA initiatives as benefiting chiefly the researcher.

5.2.3 Opportunities

- a. I, as researcher, was motivated.
- b. For their own professional development, seven motivated individuals committed themselves voluntarily for QA activities. Three participants, busy with their own research, were interested to learn about action research.
- c. The management teams of UNIQWA and Tshiya Centre supported the research and were willing to sponsor QA seminars and workshops.
- d. Some staff members were seconded to Tshiya Centre until December 2001 to assist the students with the completion of their studies.
- e. There were many provincial, national, and international workshops and seminars on QA.
- f. There was collegial support from other HEIs, for example the University of Natal and UFS.

5.2.4 Threats

- a. Motivated individuals (including committee members) were transferred to schools.
- b. The organisational climate at Tshiya CE was unhealthy.
- c. The institution was unstable.
- d. Money was available for workshops but not for other QA activities. If exceptions were made, it could be interpreted as benefiting the researcher.
- e. There were no incentives for those who participated voluntarily.
- f. Limited time was available for the action research before Tshiya CE would be rationalised.
- g. There was no assurance that the results of the action research would be implemented at UNIQWA after the rationalisation of Tshiya CE.
- h. The QA initiatives were driven from middle management level and were therefore only attainable on a personal level.

5.2.5 Interpretation of the SWOT-analysis

The QA committee for Programs reflected on the SWOT-analysis. The following deductions were made and taken into consideration for designing a QA policy:

- a. Owing to the low morale of staff members, attrition occurred in the work of the nine established QA committees (see 5.2.2 c; 5.2.4 b, c & h). Therefore, it was concluded that the former QA committee for Programs would continue their work to become the official QA Committee to steer the action research (see 5.2.1 c & d; 5.2.3 a, b & d).
- b. To avoid staff members seeing the QA initiatives as benefiting only the researcher, it was decided that I would always act as a QA Committee member. This would emphasise the fact that action research should be viewed as teamwork (see 5.2.2 e; and 5.2.4 d).
- c. In the light of the unstable institution, the research should rather focus on personal improvement plans for volunteers instead of improving the quality of the whole institution's programs (see 5.2.2 a, b, c & e; 5.2.3 b & d; and 5.2.4 h).
- d. It was important to complete the action research as soon as possible while knowledgeable and motivated staff members were still at the Centre (see 5.2.2 a; 5.2.3 d; and 5.2.4 a, c, e & f).
- e. The vision and mission statements of Tshiya Centre would form the starting point for designing a QA policy (see 5.2.1 f).
- f. I, as researcher, could provide guidelines for designing a QA policy from the literature study done (see 5.2.1 g; 5.2.2 d; and 5.2.3 a).

5.3 THE STEERING COMMITTEE

5.3.1 A well-established Quality Assurance Committee at Tshiya Centre

It was realised that a group of interested staff members should form an action research group to adhere to the collaboration principle of action research (see 4.2.1 par 4). I as the researcher, was the convenor of one of the nine established QA committees at Tshiya Centre - the QA committee for Programs. Over a period of three years I established good rapport, trust and reciprocal relations with individuals and the group (McMillan &

Schumacher 1993:383). While I was doing a literature study during 1998 -1999 on quality, QA, the QA policies and action research as research method, I gave regular feedback to the mentioned committee and provided them with documents. Therefore, the committee members were informed and motivated for action research. When the Rector informed the staff at Tshiya CE about the action research and asked for volunteers to participate, seven staff members announced their willingness; five of them were members of the previously mentioned committee. It happened naturally that the mentioned QA committee for Programs, formed the QA Committee to steer the action research. This committee had a good track record for teamwork since they had also steered the staff of Tshiya CE toward the re-curriculation of College's programs. Two 'new' members joined the QA Committee in 2000 when the planning for the action research started.

5.3.2 A joint Quality Assurance Committee consisting of representatives from Tshiya Centre and University of the North: Qwaqwa Branch?

When the rationalisation of CEs became a reality and it was announced that Tshiya CE would be incorporated into UNIQWA, it was suggested that staff members from UNIQWA should join the QA Committee. Since an awareness campaign was part of the QA agenda, the Faculty of Education at UNIQWA was approached with a view to organising a QA seminar for the staff of both institutions. It was decided to raise the issue of a joint QA committee at a seminar that was taking place at UNIQWA. A call was made at the seminar for volunteers from UNIQWA to join the QA Committee. The following volunteers responded: The Dean of the Faculty of Education; a professor who visited UNIQWA on a regular basis to assist post-graduate students (nominated by the Dean); two MEd students; and two BEd students. A practitioner from UNIQWA, lecturing to students in a teacher education program, was still lacking. The steering committee would then consist of 13 members, which makes the committee somewhat less than 'lean and agile'.

5.3.3 A joint steering committee not viable

After careful consideration about the way forward, it was recognised that there were circumstances seriously hampering the smooth functioning of such a joint steering

committee. They were:

- The willing lecturers and students lived far from the two institutions (some as far as 109 km).
- Because these persons normally commuted in travel groups, it would not be easy to have meetings after hours.
- The two different HEIs had separate time tables which made it difficult to meet during working hours without interfering with their operational tasks. Furthermore, one BEd student was a deputy-principal in Bethlehem and one MEd student was a principal in Bergville. Other members represented schools, and this also had to be taken into consideration when meetings were planned. The visiting professor was at UNIQWA only on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday mornings.
- The Dean of the Faculty of Education was the contact person for the research at UNIQWA, but he was also the chairperson of the incorporation committee who facilitated the mammoth task of Tshiya CE's incorporation into UNIQWA. He was overburdened at the time when the planning phase of the action research had to start.

With all these problems facing the initially established QA Committee from Tshiya Centre, committee members reflected once more on the effectiveness of a joint QA committee, as well as the site where the case study would be done. Should it be Tshiya Centre where the committee was familiar with the situation; should it be UNIQWA into which the College was to be incorporated; or should it be done on both campuses?

Because of the rationalisation process, some of the steering committee members left Tshiya Centre at this stage. It became clear that I would have to play a more prominent role as researcher-leader. Since I, as researcher-facilitator, was not physically on the UNIQWA premises and had my own time table and other responsibilities to attend to at Tshiya Centre, it would have been very difficult to facilitate action research on another campus. I was unfamiliar with the structures and procedures at UNIQWA and realised that it would take time to build good relations - a prerequisite for establishing QA. Since I was lecturing at Tshiya CE for thirteen years, I was not only acquainted with structures and procedures, but had also had the opportunity to build relationships of trust. If study leave

had been possible, I could have spent most of the academic year on the UNIQWA premises to pave the way and facilitate action research only at UNIQWA; however, I had to complete the research without being granted study leave. According to the DoE (1998i:2), I was one of the *'educators who already had the necessary qualifications'*.

I was one of the staff members who were seconded by the DoE to Tshiya Centre to assist Tshiya Centre's 'pipeline' students. Therefore, my workplace was Tshiya Centre. The Department had cut the number of staff members allocated to the pipeline students to half the number requested. As a result, I carried a double load of responsibilities during 2001, which further hampered possible commuting between the two institutions. A decision was taken that the QA Committee established at Tshiya Centre would steer the action research, and that a joint committee was not viable. It was still not clear at which site the case study would be done, but indications were that it would be difficult to do it at UNIQWA.

5.4 THE FIRST QUALITY ASSURANCE SEMINAR

5.4.1 An awareness campaign

In preparation for the action research on the establishment of a QA system at Tshiya Centre, a first QA seminar was held on 13 September 2000 at UNIQWA. Although discussions about QA had been taking place among Tshiya staff members since 1998, the QA Committee decided on an official launch of the action research. In the seven phases of the internal QA process mentioned in NSE (DoE 1998d:180), it is suggested that Phase One should be *'Defining Purpose'*. Staff should *'come to terms with the very notion of QA and accept it as a process essential to improving quality'*. Navaratnam (1997:7-13) also advises to start with 'awareness sessions'. At the same time UNIQWA hosted a meeting with two representatives from the University of Georgia. Round table discussions were held regarding QA. An interest group for QA was established and it was decided to start the action research by involving this interest group. A seminar on quality, QA and action research was planned. The QA interest group, consisting of staff members of UNIQWA's Faculty of Education as well as lecturers from Tshiya Centre, would attend. A QA expert was invited to deliver papers and facilitate a workshop.

5.4.2 Topics addressed

In the event, the QA expert was unable to travel to UNIQWA, and the organisers decided that I should take her place. The following topics were presented: an overview of the research; the conceptualisation of quality; the establishment of a QA system; the quality of research; and the way forward. Because of the limited time for preparation (overnight), the topic 'action research' was left for another day.

5.4.3 Attendance

Six staff members from Tshiya Centre attended the seminar - all from the QA Committee. Three UNIQWA staff members attended. UNIQWA invited all their BEd-, MEd- and HED students - a total of twenty-three. The UNIQWA students were all practising teachers, and included a principal, a deputy-principal and an HOD. Their viewpoints, arising from their practical experience as teachers, were helpful.

5.4.4 An opinion poll for focus areas

The QA Committee regarded the presence of the thirty-two people at the seminar as a unique opportunity to conduct an opinion poll that might have been valuable to determine focus areas for the action research. Participants were asked to identify needs and strengths of their institutions. An analysis of the answers brought the following to the fore:

5.4.4.1 Needs

The following topics were mentioned (the number of votes is given in brackets):

- the curriculum (15x) - career orientation (3x), skills and technological development (2x), Science and Commerce (1x), Teaching Practice (2x), demands of the community (2x), sex education (1x), and educational management (1x)
- Staff development (6x) - OBE (2x), QA in general, and improvement of qualifications (2x)
- language competency of students (6x) - English (4x), reading and writing skills, and student support (transferable skills)
- resources (4x) - the internet and library
- ongoing mentoring of post graduates (4x)

- methodology - the teaching and learning process (4x)
- assessment (3x)
- a healthy organisational climate - teamwork (3x)
- management (3x) - the year plan, administration, teacher appraisal
- upgrading of admission requirements (2x)
- a holistic approach to QA

5.4.4.2 *Strengths*

The following remarks were recorded:

- staff development sessions were taking place at UNIQWA (see 5.7)
- OBE curricula existed for some programs
- Tshiya Centre had well equipped workshops for the Technical program
- experienced educators
- good infrastructure
- good geographical location
- some college lecturers were innovative
- research-conscious academics
- students were regularly acquainted with recent information
- study fees were fair
- students experienced an open door policy

5.4.4.3 *Implementation of opinion poll results*

When focus areas were finally decided upon, the rationalisation of CEs (see 5.5) and other difficulties (see 5.6.1) necessitated the change of the research focus from an institutional to a personal improvement plan. All the research questions listed in 1.6.3 as well as the above-mentioned needs that emerged from the opinion poll (see 5.4.4.1), could not be addressed by the small group of action researchers (initially three, and later only two). Both lists of quality gaps were taken into consideration when focus areas were determined.

Taking into account the above-mentioned needs, the teaching and learning process was addressed when improvement plans were compiled for MT and Media (see 5.4.4.1 f). Before the transfer of one of the action researchers to a school, an improvement plan for

language competency (English) was compiled (see 5.4.4.1 c). This focus area was in line with the UFS and RAU where speed reading and improving learners' competence in English, form part of a general transferable skills module that was implemented to assist students from HDIs (see 2.2.12). Referring to the management area, a holistic view to QA (see 5.4.4.1 k) was addressed when a QA policy was designed (see 5.6.3). In a stable institution, and given a normal time frame, all the needs mentioned in 5.4.4.1 could be accommodated in a three or five year rolling plan for QA. According to Nicholls (1999:50-51), quality promotion is best undertaken in multi-year cycles with different major aspects coming under review in each cycle (see 2.4.3.4).

5.4.5 Reflection on the seminar

The results of the opinion poll were discussed and filed to be used during the planning phase of the improvement plans. The seminar served its purpose partially. Those who were present gained much from information shared as well as networking with colleagues interested in QA. It was regrettable, however that only nine staff members from both institutions attended. The rest of the participants were students. Not one staff member from UNIQWA, lecturing in teacher education programs, attended.

5.5 TSHIYA CENTRE: SITE FOR THE RESEARCH

Although the QA seminar had been marketed well, the poor attendance of staff members was a first sign that it would be almost impossible to implement the action research in the whole institution. Because of reasons mentioned in 5.3.3 and 5.4.5, a decision was taken to record the problems relating to the previous plan to facilitate the action research at UNIQWA, and to change the research focus to Tshiya Centre only. The motivation was:

- Covey (1992:305) explains that one has a circle of concern and a circle of influence. One can only make a difference in one's circle of influence. The committee gave serious attention to the question: 'Where was our circle of influence regarding this research'? They concluded that it was at Tshiya Centre, where problems were observed that initiated the research, where they were known, where they knew the system, and where they would physically spend all their working hours during 2001.

- Tshiya CE became part of UNIQWA on 1 January 2001. Tshiya Centre then functioned as a satellite campus of UNIQWA. Teacher education programs were offered at Tshiya Centre. Therefore, the situation at Tshiya Centre satisfied the requirements for the research.
- As mentioned previously, I as researcher-facilitator of the action research and other members of the QA Committee would physically be only at Tshiya Centre and it would be difficult to facilitate action research simultaneously at two campuses.
- It was only later in 2001 that the QA Committee learned that they themselves would, one by one, be transferred to schools. Fortunately the planning phase was by that time completed. Before they left, the members of the QA Committee pledged their commitment to the research since they still wanted to learn about the action research method and were interested in the outcomes of the research. They read and commented on documents sent to them and attended special meetings at the institution for observation- and reflection purposes. It was unfortunate that one such transferred action researcher could no longer implement the improvement plan for English.

The shift of focus was discussed with the management teams of both UNIQWA and Tshiya Centre. Both agreed with the reasons given and approved that the action research could continue at Tshiya Centre only (see 4.3.1).

5.6 A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY FOR TEACHER EDUCATION AT TSHIYA CENTRE

5.6.1 A difficult assignment

The QA Committee had many discussions to design a QA policy for teacher education programs at Tshiya Centre. Approaching the reality of the action research, the QA Committee realised that there were many factors preventing the smooth running of the planned action research. A critique of QA were discussed (see 2.6). Since 1994, major transformation occurred in education in SA. The QA Committee took note of real and very serious obstacles to action research into QA for teacher education programs during the period 1998 - 2001.

5.6.1.1 *The transitional period caused instability*

At the Flemish-South African Quality Project workshop, Garré (2000), Hoornaert (2000), De Groof (2000) and Cielen (2000) stressed the fact that an institution should be stable in order to establish an effective QA system. Since the advent of a new government in 1994, the whole of SA was experiencing major transformation in many fields of human activity. From January 2001 CEs were rationalised and their teacher education programs were taken over by universities and technikons. In most cases HDIs were incorporated into HAIs. With the merging of UNIQWA and Tshiya CE, two HDIs were combined. Furthermore, in this case study of Tshiya Centre, the receiving institution was also unstable since UNIQWA was to be incorporated into the UFS.

The staff of both these institutions experienced job insecurity affecting their attitudes and their performance on the job. At the time of the research many lecturers were concerned about their survival and some were not sure whether they would remain in the teaching profession. They experienced changes among others in the fields of: management; the work environment; the programs offered; available resources; work loads; and administrative and collegial support. All these had a significant influence on their motivation for professional development and their involvement in QA issues. With the exception of myself, the initially formed QA Committee for the action research, lost all its members through the rationalisation process during 2001. As stated earlier, it was fortunate that the planning phase of the action research had been completed before the major transfer started.

The literature study (see 2.1.2 par 9) made it clear that commitment from all stakeholders is crucial for the successful implementation of a QA system. Kells (1993:10) and the DoE (1998c:16) state that the key success factor for any QA process is the fact that all stakeholders should 'own the process' in advance, not only for implementation but also for ongoing improvements after evaluation. Since the staff morale and involvement at Tshiya Centre were low, this would have a negative impact on action research planned for a whole institution, but it did not cancel the efforts of individuals who 'owned their own processes'. Reflecting on Kell's advice, one of the threats from the SWOT-analysis surfaced again. It was not certain that the results of the action research would be

implemented at UNIQWA after the rationalisation of Tshiya CE (see 5.2.4 g). This raised the question of whether the difficult QA efforts were worth the trouble.

5.6.1.2 *No external pressure/incentives*

Newton (1999) warns that it is extremely difficult to motivate people to implement QA if there is no external pressure. The *White Paper on HE Transformation* (RSA 1997e:22) states that an umbrella national authority for quality promotion and QA is necessary. The many QA policies, as outlined in Chapter Three, were, some of them, barely feasible, had not successfully been implemented, and were certainly not enforced by Government. With the termination in 1999 of the QPU's assessment of QA at universities (see 3.2 par 3), the pressure of an external assessment was removed. Although SAQA and its HEQC gave huge strides toward providing guidelines for QA at education and training institutions, there was still no external motivation/threat for institutions to put QA in place. Although it was explained in 2.2 why QA was needed in HEIs, QA initiatives were still voluntary. There were certainly no incentives for staff who were willing for major innovative inputs. Furthermore, the threat made by Government in 1998 that colleges would externally be evaluated, never materialised (see 1.2 par 7). Many staff members at Tshiya CE openly expressed their mistrust in Government to keep its word regarding general departmental circulars and announcements, including QA matters.

5.6.1.3 *Quality Assurance should be initiated from, and controlled by top management*

Navaratnam (1997:3,5,17) states categorically that '*most quality management strategies ... fail for lack of execution and management support. Isolated quality initiatives ... are not real indicators of progress in quality management*'. Since 1998, I initiated most of the QA initiatives at Tshiya CE from middle management level. Those initiatives lacked an umbrella of authority. The committee who steered the curriculum development at Tshiya CE toward an outcomes-based approach, later became the QA committee for Programs. I convened this committee. Later, eight more QA committees were established (see 1.6.3) but they did not make significant progress since they were unmotivated. Top management gave their support but did not significantly initiate or control planned actions. Navaratnam's (1997:7) description of quality as '*a management method*' makes sense (see

2.1.2 par 5). Coetzee (2000) stresses the same fact. Jacobs (1997:165) advocates that a strategic plan for QA should be drafted by the highest authority in the institution and that a commitment from top management, all staff members and students is crucial for success.

5.6.1.4 *A quality culture should be fostered*

In 1999, the rectorates of CEs were requested by the DoE to explain the poor results of the final-year college students. After the Tshiya CE results were analysed, the Rectorate of Tshiya CE requested the HODs to pay regular class visits. The aim was collegial support and development. These class visits could not materialise because many lecturers refused to be evaluated by an HOD. The teachers' union, SADTU, backed their members' decision. This experience at Tshiya CE proved Holtzhausen (1999) right when she says that *'professional reluctance may occur because of ... fears and anxieties'*; and Strydom (in Bagwandeem 1993:95) who says that *'suspicion and misconceptions bedevil the act of quality assurance'* (see 2.1.2 par 7). The climate for QA at Tshiya CE was evidently vitiated by the absence (among staff members) of a relationship based on trust and security that is necessary for voluntary exposure to evaluation by others. Bagwandeem (1993:95) emphasises that *'a psychological support system needs to be developed by means of a strong relationship built on honesty between evaluator and evaluatee'*. Du Plessis (2000) reports that ABSA Bank had to stop their entire QA program twice because the people were not ready to accept the system.

Navaratnam (1997:8) describes the starting point of the quality journey as a phase of 'awareness' that can take three to six months. Kistan (1998:11) comments on a QA program by saying it *'brought with it a drastic mind shift ... from a "protected" to an "exposed" system'*. Through forums and workshops, staff should be sensitised to the notions of quality, QA, quality procedures and criteria to involve them in decision making regarding quality issues. To synergise the efforts of the institution and because of the time and energy input expected of staff members, such forums should be compulsory and driven by top management.

Since the staff of Tshiya Centre were aware of the research being done regarding QA, some staff members might have interpreted the established QA committees as being to the

benefit chiefly of myself as researcher. Although staff members volunteered to serve on the QA committees, they never took ownership of these structures and did not realise that involvement in QA could further their professional development and the performance of the students, thereby benefiting themselves and the institution. During 1999 the rationalisation of CEs became a reality and that caused even less involvement in QA.

5.6.1.5 *The time factor*

Literature provides evidence that it takes years to plan and implement a QA system for any stable institution. Van der Westhuizen (1999:1) reports that HEIs in SA started QA programs eleven years ago and yet QA officers complained at workshops that they '*had only scratched the surface*' and asked for advice on how to '*fire up the troops for QA*' (Newton 1999). Webbstock (2000), QA officer at the university of Natal, reported that some departments were '*not interested*', and that they therefore focused on the '*willing people who want to make a difference*'.

It is conceded that the period of one semester for action research is extremely short. A semester is an academic unit, but more action research cycles would lead to better observable improvement. With that in mind, the researchers planned modest, achievable goals and did all they could to ensure that their goals were reached. Change is evolutionary and although some outcomes would be attained in short periods of time, others might take a long time, and this could cause researchers to lose interest.

5.6.1.6 *Action research as research method*

Practitioners need to consider action research as relevant and necessary, in order to commit themselves to the research. Without incentives or an external threat, it was difficult to motivate practitioners to reflect on their own practices - especially during the transformation period in SA. Action research is labour-intensive since it requires observation and record keeping. It is a general concern that teaching time may be utilised for record keeping or discussions. The completion of records after an activity is problematic because then it is dependent on (and may be distorted by) the researchers' memory. All staff members might not be willing to look self-critically at their own teaching, and peer-assessment might be only polite remarks instead of honest criticism. Results

emerging from action research should be implemented, and that calls for change - lifting people from their comfort zones. Would staff members be willing to accept such changes? In collaborative actions like action research, there are always the more and the less energetic participants.

5.6.1.7 *Budget*

According to Nicholls (1999:50) adequate funding is needed to support infrastructural development and recommendations for improvements. Owing to problems resulting from the rationalisation process, I did not even attempt thinking in terms of infrastructural improvements. I served in the *Consortium Trust for Higher and Further Education and Training Institutions in the Free State* who organised QA seminars that I could attend as a member of the Trust, representing Tshiya CE. Fortunately support from the Tshiya CE budget made it possible for me to attend these and other QA seminars and workshops.

A QA budget for 2000-2001 was submitted to UNIQWA who was willing to sponsor the QA seminars. Since action research was planned to take place during normal working hours at Tshiya Centre, no extra funds were necessary. Resources available at the institution for normal classes could be utilised for the action research, like paper, making photocopies and other materials for media needs. My own electronic mail services were used to communicate with other HEIs. Telephone calls were made from the institution and sometimes from home. Since external assessors were invited to the reflection meeting, UNIQWA sponsored the refreshments for the meeting. Most HAIs have research funds and other resources available to support HDIs. The delegate who represented UFS at the reflection meeting made use of such resources for transport. *Ex-Tshiya CE* colleagues who attended the reflection meeting were willing to meet their transport costs themselves.

Bearing in mind the difficulties referred to above, the QA Committee decided to turn to literature and to probe information-rich informants for guidance to facilitate the establishment of a QA system. I was requested to furnish the QA Committee with guidelines from Chapters Two and Three that could assist them in designing a QA policy that would overcome the above-mentioned impediments.

5.6.2 A search for guidelines

The QA Committee had three years experience of QA-initiatives at the College as well as continuous feedback from provincial, national, and international seminars and workshops. An in-depth study was made of Chapters Two and Three. Discussions and informal interviews with colleagues from other HEIs at workshops, as well as informants from the business world, were taken into consideration. Ideas were analysed and arranged under the following headings:

5.6.2.1 *Guidelines accumulated from informants*

QA models from the school of thought supporting the ISO 9000 concept, have TQM and an institutional audit in mind, while this research focused on programs. The South African Excellence Model and the model designed by Coetzee (2000) for the SA Peninsula Technikon, were examples of models for institutional auditing. Informal discussions directed the QA Committee to the grass roots of the QA systems of ABSA Bank (du Plessis 2000) as well as the Nissan SA Performance Management System. Informal discussions with an employee from Nissan SA furnished me with their QA policy and work documents (Smuts 2000). Taking note of Nicholls' (1999) advice that QA is not '*Big Brother telling you what to do*', the Nissan example was of great help in designing a QA policy with the characteristics of a bottom-up system.

5.6.2.2 *Guidelines that emerged from the literature study*

a. Particularisation

The committee took courage from literature (Navaratnam 1997:7; Gevers *et al.* 1999:29; Barasa & Mattson 1998:49; Nicholls 1999:17; Collins 1990:35-39) and the South African QA policies (NCHE 1996b:108; RSA 1997e:22; DoE 1998d:138) where responsibility for the development of a QA system is delegated to individual institutions. Nicholls (1999:50) says '*there are no universally valid guidelines - there are only better and worse quality processes for each institutional context*'.

b. Generalities

Demonstrating the existence of quality is complex (Collins, see 2.1.2 par 1; Modiba, see 3.12.3.2 f par 3). An institution's culture and hierarchical structures should be kept in

mind, with reference to the context (Nicholls, see 3.12.4 par 3). Bagwandeem (see 2.4.3.3 par 4) points out that the system should be time and cost effective, and Liston (see 2.3.4.5 par 3) warns that it should be kept simple. Webbstock (2000) says one should avoid overburdening staff with paperwork. The system should have a developmental nature (Nicholls, see 2.4.3.2 par 5; NDoE, see 3.12.1 par 2). For peer support, institutions are encouraged to become part of consortia (NDoE, see 3.12.1 par 2). To ensure ownership, the staff should be involved in designing the system. Transparency is a key success factor (Nicholls, see 3.12.4 par 3; Sander 1995;105). A QA policy is a documented set of aims for quality definition, QA and quality improvement together with a documented set of QA procedures (Jacobs, see 2.4.3.1 par 1).

c. Management

Management and all employees should publicly commit themselves to QA (Navaratnam, see 2.1.2 par 5). Quality management should meet its own criteria (Scanlan, see 2.3.4.4 par 2). A QA policy is needed, containing the institution's vision and mission; its notion of quality; principles; structures; procedures; and possible core areas that the institution deems important (Navaratnam, see 2.1.2 par 5,6; Nicholls, see 2.4.3.2 par 2,3; Jacobs, see 2.4.3.1 par 1). A strategic plan will reflect the focus area(s), time slots, communication flow and a budget (Morta see 2.2.14 ; Jacobs, see 2.4.3.1; Motala, see 3.12.3.2 e par 6; Collins, see 2.1.2 par 1,2; Liston, see 2.3.4.5 par 3; Nicholls, see 2.4.2.6). The plan should be cyclical, relevant and realistic (Navaratnam, see 2.1.2 par 5; Kells, see 2.4.2.5 par 2; Nicholls, see 2.4.3.4). A collaboratively designed plan will maximize ownership. To create a quality learning environment, pre-conditions for quality should be managed in advance and continually (Motala, see 3.12.3.2 e par 8; Modiba, see 3.12.3.2 f par 2). A QA committee can share responsibilities with top management, but the highest authority of the institution will ultimately be accountable (Clark, see 2.3.5.1; Jacobs, see 2.4.3.1 par 1).

d. Problem identification and remedial actions

A situation analysis should be done by means of a SWOT-analysis. Strengths to build on and quality gaps to attend to, will emerge (De Jong & Prins, see 2.4.3.5). Norwana (see 2.1.2 par 4) advises that information should be gained in order that errors may be

designed out. Opinions of different stakeholders are to be gathered systematically (Nicholls, see 3.12.4 par 3). Remedial actions regarding the process (provision), services (quality of the learning experience), and the product should be initiated (Navaratnam, see 2.1.2 par 5). Plans on how to monitor (observe) the improvement plan should be implemented. Evidence will be needed (Harvey, see 2.4.2.1 par 3).

e. Goals and outcomes

QA is about meeting expectations (DoE, see 2.1.2 par 3). Quality outcomes should be formulated (Nicholls, see 2.4.3.2 par 4; Gevers *et al.*, see 3.9 par 4) in accordance with the mission (Kells, see 2.4.2.5 par 2). Lategan and Clark (see 2.3.4.1) point out that the standard is set in the outcome. Staff members should develop their own goals and PIs to ensure a bottom-up, accepted QA plan (Nicholls, see 2.4.2.6 par 2). The objectives should clearly address the previously determined quality gaps (Collins, see 2.1.2 par 2).

f. Performance measures

The mission will reflect an institution's degree of excellence, and actions will be measured against it (Elliot, see 2.3.4.4 par 2). PIs serve as detailed criteria to measure input, through put, and output - meaning that standards refer not only to the end product, but to the whole process (Gevers *et al.*, see 3.9 par 4; Motala, see 3.12.3.2 e par 8). The standard to be achieved is reflected in the PIs.

g. An instrument for assessment

If the staff did not design the instrument for assessment themselves, it should be negotiated with them. Outcomes with its PIs may be evaluated by means of a questionnaire or checklist with a rating scale (Nicholls, see 2.4.3.3 par 2; NDoE, see 3.11.4 par 2). Interviews and meetings for feedback are effective since staff generally appear to be reluctant to do paperwork (Webbstock, see 2.4.3.3 par 2). Nicholls (see 2.4.3.2 par 4) suggests that staff share their experiences with each other by answering the question, '*What value have we added since our last meeting?*' By adhering to the advice, the staff learn from each other and an atmosphere of social and professional pressure is created for the staff to 'live up to the standard'.

h. Evaluation

A QA program should continuously be monitored, evaluated and reviewed (DoE, see 2.3.4.2; Liston, see 2.3.4.5 par 3). Internal- and external reviews should be done (Vroeijenstijn, see 2.4.2.1 par 2). Self-evaluation followed by a report and external evaluation are generally done (De Jong & Prins, see 2.4.2.1). Use should be made of the institution's existing hierarchical structures for monitoring and reporting during the internal assessment. The external review is done by available and knowledgeable experts in the field (Kells, see 2.4.2.5; Nicholls, see 2.4.3.4). In future, the HEQC will appoint assessors for the external evaluation of HEIs (HEQC, see 3.10 par 3).

i. Facts to remember

QA is about people (Nicholls, see 2.4.3.2 par 4). The ELRC expects every professional to have a professional growth plan (see 3.11.3 par 2). Staff development is a worthwhile investment to curb unwanted results (Clark, see 2.3.4.5 par 1). It is expected of staff to model the instructional skills, that they expect of students (Wise & Leibrand, see 2.3.5.3 par 2). Managers should make sure that their staff are able to carry out operations (Modiba, see 3.12.3.2 f par 3; DoE, see 5.4.1). Jacobs (see 2.4.2.6 par 1) emphasises that QA is not an add-on but a way of life. The cyclic plan suggested in NSTETD (see 3.11.1 par 6) provides a framework for QA that corresponds with action research. Effective communication is one of the top priorities (Liston, see 2.3.4.5 par 3). Andrew (see 2.3.5.7) refers to the importance of the quality of the candidates admitted. Different areas of focus should receive attention in multi-year cycles. It is advisable not to tackle too much at first (Strydom, see 2.6 par 12; Hallinan & Danaher, see 5.9.1.1). QA needs adequate funding (Kistan, see 2.6 par 12; Nicholls, see 2.4.3.4).

5.6.3 The Quality Assurance policy

The guidelines mentioned above were thoroughly studied over a period of time and discussed by groups of staff members and the QA Committee. Different committee members drafted outlines for a QA policy. The fact that Tshiya Centre had a vision and a mission facilitated the design. Using a consultative and consensus-building approach, several meetings were held to concord the different efforts. A first draft document of the QA policy was intended to be a discussion document and to serve as a baseline for further

improvement. It was a document by the institution for the needs of the institution. The framework-for-action was designed to be utilised by any employee at the Centre. Copies were handed to the management teams of Tshiya Centre and UNIQWA, as well as to all staff members. It was then discussed at a staff meeting at Tshiya Centre and approved for implementation. It was also workshopped at the second QA seminar held at UNIQWA. Copies were also e-mailed to UFS and the University of Natal for their inputs (see Appendix B for the complete policy).

5.6.3.1 *An overview of the Quality Assurance policy*

The sub-sections are:

- the vision and mission
- the institution's notion of quality
- principles to acknowledge
- a framework-for-action
- structures and procedures
- assessment strategies
- review mechanisms

5.6.3.2 *The framework-for-action*

For participants to apply the policy to their everyday practices, a focus area(s) should be determined for a specific period of time. All staff members involved in the focus area(s) decided upon, are requested to implement the following action steps:

- a. PLAN
 - i. Compile own job description.
 - ii. Discuss it with the HOD for approval (line managers).
 - iii. Determine strengths and weaknesses for executing the tasks (self-, peer- and student-assessment).
 - iv. Determine quality gaps from the 'weaknesses'. A focus area will emerge.
 - v. Set goals for a period of time (a semester) to narrow the quality gaps.
 - vi. Formulate outcomes for every goal.
 - vii. Draft PIs for every outcome to serve as performance criteria during assessment.

Attend to evidence requirements.

- viii. Discuss it once again with the HOD for approval (line managers).
 - ix. Plan for observation during implementation. For data gathering, prepare a diary, develop questionnaires, checklists or structured questions to use during discussions.
 - x. Submit the plan to the HOD and the head of the institution (Director).
- b. **IMPLEMENT AND OBSERVE**
- i. Implement the plan.
 - ii. Observe all planned actions. Initiate self-observation, a 'buddy-system' for class visits and peer-assessment, and discussions (only discussions if the area is not teaching).
 - iii. Make use of student-assessment; they are the clients.
 - iv. Compile a portfolio for the safe-keeping of gathered data. Keep a diary and file all evidence (PIs) of progress, achievement of outcomes and problems encountered; file short notes of all discussions.
 - v. Regular (initially every two weeks and later once a month) report-back sessions should take place for learning and support of all involved - current and past practices should be compared.
 - vi. Complete an interim self-evaluation report at the end of each term (a simple fill-in form, collaboratively designed by all staff members involved).
 - vii. Discuss it with colleagues and the HOD for learning and support.
 - viii. Complete a self-evaluation report at the end of the planned period/semester.
 - ix. Submit the report to the HOD and the Director.
- c. **REFLECT**
- i. If possible, invite knowledgeable external assessors.
 - ii. Prepare and present feedback of experiences to all involved in the focus area.
 - iii. Provide evidence of achievements.
 - iv. By evaluating the outcomes against the stated PIs, discuss and reflect upon the process and the degree of achievement of the planned goals.

- v. Determine strengths to celebrate and weaknesses to demarcate further quality gaps.
 - vi. Present one or more realistic options for solving real or potential problems.
- d. RE-PLAN
- i. Set goals, outcomes and PIs for the next period of time.
 - ii. Repeat the process.

5.6.4 Implementation of the framework-for-action at Tshiya Centre

For the action research at Tshiya Centre, the QA framework-for-action suggested that voluntary researchers plan, implement, observe and reflect upon their own designed improvement practices. To lead the way in an unfamiliar situation, broad guidelines were provided in the framework. To prevent a top-down policy, the framework was workshopped with all voluntary participants and their inputs were applied. For the research, the QA policy was implemented for one semester.

It was expected of every researcher to compile his/her own job description, to determine quality gaps according to the rating done. In order to plan modestly, every researcher selected only one quality gap to improve during the semester. A goal, outcomes, and PIs were set for every improvement plan. These steps assured a bottom-up policy as well as ownership of a QA plan 'for yourself - by yourself'. Before implementation, every individual's improvement plan was discussed with colleagues, the QA Committee and their HODs to ensure that it was in accordance with the mission of Tshiya Centre. To ensure a success experience that would facilitate the ongoing implementation of the QA plan, Strydom's advice (see 2.6 par 12) was followed: researchers heeded the warning not to plan for too much at first.

5.7 A SECOND QUALITY ASSURANCE SEMINAR

The second QA seminar formed part of the annual staff orientation workshop, organised by the Centre for Educational Development at UNIQWA (see 4.3.2 par 2). I was invited to present a paper on the QA policy and the developed improvement plans. For the

purpose of the research, the seminar informed the staff of UNIQWA, not involved at that stage, about the action research taking place at Tshiya Centre. Although some UNIQWA staff members asked for copies of the paper and were impressed with the possibilities of the QA policy, none of them joined the action research group.

Although the presentation of the paper could be seen as a success, the experience also proved that staff members should be sensitised toward a QA system, and it should be supported by the highest authority in the institution. Only then will all staff become involved.

5.8 ACTION RESEARCH OF IMPROVEMENT PLANS

5.8.1 Planning

5.8.1.1 Action researchers determined their own focus areas

Possible focus areas were discussed. Owing to the instability of the institution as well as the limited time for the action research, it was recognised that it would not be realistic for the few volunteers to try and address the focus areas mentioned in the opinion poll at the first QA seminar (see 5.4.2), or to attend to all the research questions formulated by the nine area-related QA committees in 1999 (see 1.6.3). In a stable institution with a dedicated staff, it would have been ideal to fit the mentioned areas into a three- or five year rolling plan for QA. For the purpose of the research, the QA Committee suggested that volunteers be requested to implement the designed QA policy for the first semester in 2001. The suggested QA framework-for-action made provision for researchers to decide for themselves which quality gap (focus area) to address regarding their own responsibilities. It corresponded with Nicholls (1999:17) saying that *'the persons responsible for the delivery of quality will develop their own goals, conceptions of meaning and standards related to quality concerns'*. The QA Committee stressed, however, that the vision of Tshiya Centre should be kept in mind.

5.8.1.2 Designing the improvement plans

a. A job description

The planning phase started when three willing staff members reflected on their current practices. Since none of them had an official job description, they compiled one for

themselves. For a classification of duties, the seven roles expected to be performed by every educator (DoE 2000:13,14) served as a guideline. The job description is further in line with the advice of Wise and Leibrand (1996:203) that educators should model instructional skills that learners should develop (see Appendix C 1). These job descriptions were discussed with colleagues and the QA Committee.

b. Quality gaps determined

By means of self- and peer-assessment done on a rating scale, strengths and weaknesses were identified. The weaknesses indicated quality gaps. Personal identification of one of the quality gaps to be improved, was important to ensure that the participants took ownership of their own compiled strategic plan for improvement.

c. Collaborative planning

Information that emerged from reflecting upon current practices collaboratively with colleagues in the same department, the QA Committee, and available HODs, assisted the three willing staff members to each determine a focus area, to set a goal and to formulate outcomes and PIs for their improvement plans. The following areas were covered: MT, Media, and English. The MT-improvement plan is attached and serves as an example since the other two plans followed the same pattern¹² (see Appendix C). Since the action research took place within the normal timetables of the researchers, it was important that the selected focus areas would form part of the lecturers' normal duties. Before the implementation phase started, the researcher who focused on English was transferred to a school and could no longer participate.

d. The focus on professional moulding

The new OBE-structure did not allow for separate Subject Didactics (Didactics) periods. Didactics was a matter for concern at the College for many years, even when separate periods were allocated to it in accordance with the old syllabus structure. Therefore, concern was raised that it would receive even less attention in the OBE-structure. It was

¹² The unedited documents of the planning of the English-improvement plan, and the completed Media-improvement plan are available in the researcher's files.

encouraging that the two remaining improvement plans both focused on the professional moulding of the students toward the vision of Tshiya Centre, that is being competent, confident, creative and reflective teachers. Both plans fell within the Didactics area and were directly involved with teaching. As is generally stated in the available literature, it is the emphasis on the professional moulding of students at CEs that differentiates the teacher education offered at former CEs from the more academic education offered at universities (Bengu 1998:19; Jansen 2001:9).

e. **More facilitating aspects**

Work schemes were compiled to ensure that every period would be fully utilised. These work schemes were made available to all stakeholders. It also served the principle of transparency to enable other staff members to attend sessions according to their interests. The students could take note of what was planned for every period. The researchers prepared documents for the presentations and observations as far as time allowed them before the implementation started. They also prepared files for the safe keeping of all documents.

5.8.2 Implementation

5.8.2.1 Action research during normal classes

All written preparation done for the improvement plans, was exhibited in the classes and discussed with the students. The approved plans for MT and Media were implemented from February to June 2001, in the normal class situation, according to the timetable of the two action researchers. Eleven academic weeks were utilised. Six of the seventeen weeks during the first semester were not available for research since they were utilised for Teaching Practice (TP) and mid-year examinations.

5.8.2.2 Target groups were second-year students

Both researchers did the action research with second-year students. The motivation for this was that three more action research cycles could be completed with the second-years during the following three semesters of their academic stay at the Centre. I, who was concerned with improving MT, lectured to five second-year classes, and this meant that

I repeated the same lesson five times. That gave ample opportunity to reflect-in-action and to polish presentations. The researcher who wished to improve Media, lectured to one class only and therefore had only once-off presentations.

5.8.3 Observation

5.8.3.1 Data selection strategies

Self-, student- and peer-observations were done during the entire period. Diaries, questionnaires, checklists and discussions with students, colleagues, QA Committee members, and managers enabled the researchers to monitor their progress. External opinions were obtained as far as possible. The inputs from colleagues at the University of Natal and UFS were obtained *via* electronic mail.

a. Self-assessment

The researchers kept a daily diary of all their experiences and observations. These were studied, clustered and summarised at the end of the semester (see Appendix D4). The MT-improvement plan resulted in three unplanned side spirals (McNiff *et al.* 1996:22). At three observation assessments it was noticed by the facilitator and peer observers that immediate improvements had to be effected before progressing with the planned action (see Appendix C:286 for a scheme of the MT-improvement plan). The Media-plan also resulted in three more side spirals (see 4.2.5 par 2) because the researcher discovered that the students had knowledge and skills gaps. These side spirals included the following: planning to address the problem; implementation of remedial actions; observation of the effectiveness of the remedial actions; reflection on the results; and return to the original plan.

b. Peer-assessment

Colleagues were invited to make class visits and observations as their timetables allowed. They were furnished with checklists, simple questionnaires, and coding forms (see Appendix C). Such visits were followed by discussions between the researcher and observers. The students were sometimes included in the discussions. Short reports of such discussions were noted down in the diaries. Written work was always discussed with one or two colleagues in the same department. On three occasions errors were detected

and they were immediately designed out before the next presentation (see 5.8.3.1 a for the implementation of unplanned side spirals). It corresponded with Schon's (in Zeichner & Liston 1996:14) description of reflection-in-action where practitioners reflect during the action.

c. Student-assessment

Student-assessment were regarded as very important. They assessed the facilitators and each other continually, as well as the global improvement plan (see Appendix D3.1; Appendix D3.2). A table was compiled to reflect the students' evaluation of the steps of the MT-improvement plan. A limited quantitative analysis was done from the available data (see Appendix D3.2). Values were assigned and calculated according to the number of votes brought out in favour of each rating on the scale. The total values were arranged in descending order to indicate the steps from which the students learned most.

Seeing that the facilitator's demonstration received the highest rating in the MT-improvement plan, it confirmed the importance of modelling (see 5.9.3.4). This was the first time that a demonstration lesson was included in MT. In the past, the briefing session was considered to be informative enough. Jointly with the demonstration, the feedback session received the highest rating in the Media-improvement plan and the second highest in the MT-improvement plan (see 5.9.3.10; 6.3.5). The three highest rated steps in the MT-improvement plan were those where the facilitator was highly involved in the teaching and learning process either by presentation or organisation. The completion of worksheets, which was done independently by the students, occupied the fourth highest position but it should be remembered that a remedial plan (side spiral) was necessitated by the poor quality of the worksheets. (See Appendix C:286 for a scheme of the side spirals of the MT-improvement plan). The five steps rated lowest, were those where critical reasoning was expected of students (see 5.9.3.8).

d. Preparations for the reflection meeting

In preparation for the reflection meeting, and in the absence of the QA Committee, the researchers reflected on their action in collaboration with four interested, newly appointed staff members at Tshiya Centre. Observations from the self-, peer-, and student-

assessments were compared and clustered. Corroborated statements were listed as possible findings. The mentioned preparation group for the reflection meeting listed such possible findings regarding the MT-improvement plan (see Appendix D4), the Media-improvement plan (see 5.9.2), and the research in general (see Appendix D5).

5.8.4 Reflection

5.8.4.1 Permission, invitations and attendance

Permission was obtained from the Directorate of Tshiya Centre to convene a formal reflection meeting (McNiff *et al.* 1996:24). Invitation letters were sent to UNIQWA, UFS, the University of Natal and eight secondary schools to request external assessors and former Tshiya CE staff members to attend the reflection meeting. Fifteen people attended the five-hour meeting. From the HEIs, only UFS attended and the others offered to comment *via* electronic mail. Documents were e-mailed to them. Other participants were the researchers, five members from the initial QA Committee, previous colleagues who had been transferred to schools, staff members of Tshiya Centre, invited students, the Directorate of Tshiya Centre, and invited external observers. UNIQWA sponsored the meeting's refreshments but the participants had to provide their own transport.

5.8.4.2 Documents distributed for pre-preparation

All participants received a file containing the relevant documents which were: an agenda; a document providing an overview of the research; the QA policy; the MT-improvement plan including the gathered data and possible findings; and the Media-improvement plan including the gathered data and possible findings. To allow them to prepare for the meeting in advance, the files were personally handed to participants with whom we had contact. To participants at UFS, UNIQWA, and the University of Natal, the documents were e-mailed.

5.8.4.3 Reflection-on-action

Documents used for planning, presentations and observations, as well as work done by students before and after the QA project, were exhibited at the reflection meeting. The agenda for the meeting comprised a background to the research; a discussion of the QA policy; a presentation of the MT-improvement plan; a presentation of the Media-

improvement plan; and reflection on the different actions. The presentations were delivered by means of slide shows. These could be seen as self-evaluation reports (see 2.4.3.5). It corresponds with Clark's (1997:43) advice that it might be more effective to ask providers for an accurate presentation of the academic programs rather than to expect them to criticise themselves (see 2.6 par 11). The meeting was concluded with final perspectives, identifying strengths and weaknesses of the individuals' improvement plans and the total QA plan. All discussions were minuted for further reference.

The analyses of data gathered during observation enabled the participants to reflect on progress made by the individual researchers and on the effectiveness of the QA framework in general. Reflection was done in a critical and self-critical way by means of reflection-in-action where practitioners reflect during the action, and reflection-on-action where reflection occurs before and after the action (see 1.8 par 11).

At the meeting the participants evaluated the extent to which the set goals were achieved. They measured the achieved outcomes against the set PIs. Since quality is a most elusive notion and both improvement plans focused on the professional moulding of student teachers, it was a difficult assignment. Nicholls (1999:48-49) advises, from lessons learned from international experience, not to fall '*foul of the "naturalistic fallacy" of moving from an identified factual premise to an evaluative conclusion as if it is a logical extension*' (see 2.4.3.3 par 3). Alderman (1996:5), too, points out that '*in a higher education system as richly diverse as ... (they) ... have in Britain ... there is no "gold standard"*'. To define the '*product*' of the education system is no easy task (Lynch 1996:73).

Strengths and weaknesses of the total action research plan were determined as follows and could serve as guidelines for re-planning the following improvement cycle:

- a. Strengths
 - i. Innovation sustained the research. Regarding researchers and students, critical thinkers were developed.
 - ii. By designing the QA policy, a baseline was set for QA at Tshiya Centre. In future further improvements could be measured against it.

- iii. Both improvement plans focused satisfactorily on the vision of the institution.
- iv. The institution's hierarchical structures were utilised for control.
- v. The improvement plans were successfully executed because they were developed by the researchers themselves.
- vi. A design (the framework-for-action) was developed for further improvement plans.
- vii. The institution's umbrella-notion of quality, that is fitness for purpose, transformation, and value for money, is in line with quality notions of other HEIs, QA policy documents (see CHE 1998:2; 2.1.1 par 12), and applicable to teacher education.
- viii. Except for simplicity, the other principles mentioned in the QA policy were adhered to.
- ix. Target dates were met according to the work schemes.
- x. The students gained two-fold by the action research:
 - they received well prepared and goal-oriented tuition
 - they observed and experienced action research, which they could apply later in their own professional careers
- xi. The management and staff members of Tshiya Centre (former and current) gained in knowledge and professional development by observing the research and being involved in discussions.
- xii. The research contributed toward good relations and teamwork between members of UNIQWA's Faculty of Education and members from Tshiya Centre who had merged with them. Both institutions gained.
- xiii. Action researchers experienced the value of collaborative work with colleagues, students and other stakeholders.
- xiv. All seven critical outcomes were achieved in this research:
 - *'Identifying and solving problems ...*
 - *Working effectively with others as a member of a team ...*
 - *... managing ... one's actions responsibly ...*
 - *Collecting, analysing ... information*
 - *Communicating effectively ...*
 - *Using science and technology effectively ...*
 - *... understanding ... the world as a set of related systems by recognising that*

problem-solving contexts do not exist in isolation' (DoE 1998d:40,41)

- xv. Inputs from external assessors during the course of the research added value.
- xvi. The listed and discussed findings provided valuable insight into the teaching and learning process pertaining to teacher education.

b. Weaknesses

It was suggested that the following weaknesses should be considered when planning the next cycle:

- i. The QA policy was not applied to the whole institution.
- ii. Owing to the rationalisation of CEs, staff development was not sufficiently addressed. The QA policy reads, '*Constantly monitor staff attitudes and facilitate remedial actions*' (see Appendix B 5.2.4 bullet 5).
- iii. Only one cycle of the action research could materialise. It represented only baseline research.
- iv. Not all interested participants could complete the research. Seeing that one researcher and six QA Committee members were transferred to schools, the planners and evaluators of the research were not exactly the same group.
- v. The students were not part of the planning phase.
- vi. There were no incentives for participants.
- vii. Not enough inputs were obtained from principals and teachers from schools.
- viii. The outcomes of the improvement plans were not linked to the critical outcomes.
- ix. More specific indicators should be formulated for measuring the degree to which an outcome was reached.
- x. It was difficult to compare the student-assessment of the ten action research steps of the MT-improvement plan (see Appendix D3.2) with the initially compiled plan which reflected four outcomes (see Appendix C 3.3). Every step of the MT-improvement plan should have its quality indicator to benchmark a satisfactory standard. First calculations, as in this case, are seen as baseline data and assessment during further cycles should be measured against the baseline.
- xi. The scheme of the MT-improvement plan did not reflect the three side spirals.
- xii. If this QA policy is to be applied to the whole institution, no budget is available.
- xiii. A QA system should, ideally, be 'lean and agile'; this research, it was felt, involved

too much paperwork. It was acknowledged that this is a characteristic of action research. The principle of simplicity should be pursued. Relevant in this context is Webbstock's (2000) advice that the assessment should not be too time-consuming or complex and that people should not be swamped in preparation and paperwork (see 2.4.3.3 par 2).

5.9 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Observing and recording as well as reflecting on activities are integral parts of action research. In preparation for, and at the reflection meeting, a group of seventeen staff members studied the self-, peer-, and student-assessments, and identified and discussed findings from the research. Individual improvement plans as well as the total QA plan were reflected upon. Participants looked for common traits to corroborate ideas. The same ideas that emerged from the different types of assessment were colour coded and clustered.

5.9.1 Findings from the Micro Teaching-improvement plan

The following findings emerged from the MT-improvement plan:

5.9.1.1 Do not attempt too much at first

Despite the fact that the researchers tried to plan modestly, it appeared that the work normally done in the allocated periods, was too much for proper coverage. Hallinan and Danaher (1994:79) also reported that they experienced the same problem of planning '*too much material for students to master in one semester*'. The MT-improvement plan should have covered only lower and middle order questions. Because of limited time, all three levels of questioning are usually covered as one MT-skill. According to self-assessment, students', and peers' feedback, higher order questioning was still lacking in quality. The higher order questioning is linked to critical reasoning (see 5.9.3.8). If this crucial element is neglected in MT because of limited time, it has a chain reaction on the students' ability to analyse, synthesise and evaluate in other areas of learning. Critical reasoning is a skill to be taught and learned. Huberty and Davis (1998:66) reports that it '*should be a matter of concern to teacher educators that so many teachers believe they were not trained to*

teach material so that students think critically about it'. The students reported that they had a problem to code the lessons of their class mates. Peers reported that the discussions were not always satisfactory (see 5.9.3.8; Appendix D3.2 - last 3 ratings). This finding corresponds with Hockly (2000:124) saying that *'pre-service teachers initially find it problematic to focus on elements in teaching beyond the level of content. It is a skill more likely to develop with experience'*. Regrettable, too, was the limited time; students did not have the opportunity to re-do their presentations.

5.9.1.2 *The facilitator : learner ratio*

A ratio of 1:67 was ineffective for individual moulding in the MT-class. Because only a few students were selected in the past to represent their groups for MT-presentations, the goal of this improvement plan was to let every student present a micro-lesson and be assessed. Because of the 1:67 ratio and the limited time allocated for MT, it could only materialise by means of parallel group presentations. Taking the students' limited ability to evaluate into consideration, parallel presentation in the absence of the facilitator had its limitations (see 5.9.1.5; 5.9.3.3 par 3).

Since teaching is an art which is not easily attained, all lecturers should jointly aspire to let the students achieve the vision of Tshiya Centre - being a competent, confident, creative and reflective teacher. To create more opportunities for the students to practise teaching, and have proper feedback on their efforts, MT should be better linked to Didactics and TP. Proper preparation of staff members before they evaluate TP lessons, could help to reach this goal. They should be informed about the covered MT-skills. The students could individually be assessed by their subject lecturers regarding the application of specific MT-skills when teaching their major subjects during TP. This can improve the 1:67 ratio.

5.9.1.3 *Involving students in the planning phase*

The QA policy principle of transparency would be better served if the students were involved in the planning; they could then take ownership of the improvement plan. The time frame in which the planning was done, however, concurred with the examinations of the students. It was only then that the QA Committee could find enough common free time for such a time-consuming activity as planning.

Some students seemed to have been overwhelmed by all the paperwork and lacked a global view of what we were trying to achieve. The QA plan was discussed during the first period of the semester but students who were absent missed out on the overview. This point may be linked to motivation (see 5.9.3.9 par 3). The motivated students studied the documents attached to the bulletin board in class, asked questions, were informed and well prepared. If the number of students that were frequently seen at the bulletin board are considered as falling in the category of motivated students, then there were approximately five motivated students per class - 25 out of a total of 67, or 26.8%.

5.9.1.4 Grouping students per subject for presentations

This was a recommendation by peers after assessment of students' group presentations. Not to waste time in class, grouping was done in advance according to the class lists. To ensure that every student could present a lesson within two periods, the groups were small, four or five, which meant that the normal class situation was reduced too much. Subject grouping would ensure larger, subject oriented groups. Seeing that the questioning skill was presented, the students could not always answer each other's questions - especially higher order questions. There are sometimes only one or two students per subject in a MT-class, but then the smaller numbers could be jointly grouped.

5.9.1.5 Group work needs a facilitator/leader

Group work in the absence of the facilitator might be ineffective. This comment was made by students as well as a peer-observer. It relates to the students' inability regarding critical reasoning (see 5.9.3.3; 5.9.3.8). Considering the time limit and the ratio of 1:67, group work was the only alternative to the achievement of the set goal. See 5.9.1.2 for an innovative link of the evaluation of MT-skills to TP.

5.9.1.6 The chalkboard is important

The chalkboard is the most used and available teaching medium in the class. Its proper use should receive more attention in the curriculum. Although it was not a focus area, the self-assessment and the students' feedback reported on the use of the chalkboard. It proved the importance of the medium. Except for one of the five classes that were involved in both the MT- and the Media-improvement plans, the other classes were not

aware that there was a second improvement plan focusing on Media. Nevertheless, they commented on the quality of the chalkboard work. While listening to a lesson, the learners face the chalkboard and what is written on it. Very few students applied the principles of chalkboard work as they were taught. The deduction was that students should have ample opportunities to apply theory and have feedback on their efforts (see 5.9.1.2 par 2; 5.9.3.5 par 2; 5.9.3.6 & 5.9.3.10 par 1). Lecturers should model good chalkboard-use to their students.

5.9.1.7 Feedback: a desired step in the learning process

This finding received jointly with the demonstration the highest rating on the students' evaluation for the Media-improvement plan and second highest for the MT-improvement plan. It proved that the closure or final remarks of a learning experience are of utmost importance to 'tie the knot'. It is important for any learner to receive information on progress made during a learning experience. Feedback provides the learner with information to improve. It has been a concern for many years at Tshiya Centre, that lecturers are not always willing to 'sacrifice' a period to discuss evaluations done by tests, assignments or even exams. Such feedback sessions are crucial to avoid repetition of mistakes. If the student numbers are small, individual feedback is the best option to ensure sound communication.

If integration between MT, TP and the major-subjects could be established, evaluation sessions during TP could be utilised to give the students proper feedback on their progress toward becoming a competent teacher (see 6.3.4.2 par 2; 6.3.5.4 par 2 bullet 3; DoE 2000:32).

5.9.2 Findings from the Media-improvement plan

5.9.2.1 Focus on the reality of the classroom

The Media-improvement plan linked closely with Didactics and the competency to convey subject knowledge effectively (see 2.3.5.5). Although the focus was on the effective use of media, it formed part of the total Didactics field of study. During the action research an assessment revealed that 67% of the students did not have a full comprehension of what Didactics signifies, although they were already in their second year of study. The

discovered quality gap resulted in a side spiral of the intended plan. The researcher set notes on Didactics and presented them to the students. It was argued that the students would not be able to use media effectively if they did not know the basics about the teaching-and-learning of their major subjects (see 5.8.1.2 d).

According to NSTETD (DoE 1997a:49) no separate periods should be allocated to Didactics. It advocates an integration of knowledge with skills and values which is applied in practice in a specialised context (DoE 1998d:25)(see 2.3.5.5). It has a holistic view of the educator as someone with a range of competences which includes practical competence - skills (DoE 1998d:25). Competences are not the same as the 'old' subjects or 'content knowledge'. Achieving competence, that is acting competently, requires the integration of knowledge with skills and values. SAQA requires that assessment of competence be integrated and applied (see 3.11.1 par 3). The complexity of teaching as a process is further affirmed by the expectation of the teacher to perform six major roles competently (DoE 1998d:53,54).

The proposed integrated model is theoretically excellent but unachievable in the circumstances that the researchers and evaluators experienced for thirteen years and more. There was an accompanying time-problem. The compilers of NSTETD argue in notional hours and therefore allow very few contact hours in comparison with the old structure (DoE 1998d:27,31). To work on one's own and make use of the allocated notional hours, calls for diligence and motivation (see 5.9.3.9), sound background knowledge, and critical reasoning skills (see 5.9.3.8). At the reflection meeting it was argued that only a small percentage of Tshiya Centre students have these outstanding characteristics (see 26.8% in 5.9.1.3). It was decided that if Didactics was not restored as a very important aspect of the curriculum of a teacher education program, students would enter into the teaching profession incompetently because they were not given sufficient opportunities to 'learn to teach' and have proper feedback on their efforts. A proper link between Didactics and TP was suggested as a next focus area for an improvement plan.

5.9.2.2 *Interrelatedness to other fields of study*

Although it was unplanned, the importance of the use of media during an effective learning experience was proved during the MT-improvement plan (see 5.9.3.6). During the

discussions at the reflection meeting a link was made to modelling (see 5.9.3.4). The view was expressed that students do not know how to make use of media because they do not see good media use modelled by their lecturers. According to the institution's policy, major subject lecturers have to give one demonstration lesson per semester to their students. If these lessons were of high quality and effectively presented with the use of a variety of media, the students would have had an example to emulate. Discussions with the students revealed that this was not the case. Another link was made to the interrelatedness of different fields of study (see 5.9.3.5). The effective use of media could enhance every learning experience. In connection with the previously mentioned fields of study, reference was made to vision-oriented tuition, where a competent professional conveys knowledge effectively by means of the clever use of media. By doing so, the educator changes the sensory focus, and the learners comprehend better and retain the information longer (see 5.9.3.7 par 2).

5.9.2.3 *A policy requirement*

Those who facilitate learning in teacher education programs should take note that NSE (DoE 1998d:71) expects educators to have attained the following practical skills as interpreters and designers of learning programs and materials:

Designing original learning resources including charts, models, worksheets and more sustained learning texts. These resources should be appropriate for subject; ... age, language competence, gender, and culture of learners; cognisant of barriers to learning.

As learning mediator (DoE 1998d:69) the educator should be:

Using media and everyday resources ... including text-books, chalkboards, and charts; other useful media like OHPs, computers, video and audio (etc); and popular media ... like newspapers and magazines as well as other artefacts from everyday life.

These quotations illustrate clearly the intent of policy makers to include the proper use of media in their requirements for a competent educator.

Reflection on the individual improvement plans had a narrow focus on the specific fields of study. The reflection was also widened to a more integrated look on the total action plan to determine whether it led 'to practical quality improvement' (Hay & Buchner 1998:7).

5.9.3 Findings of the total action research

All the findings of the individual improvement plans described in 5.9.1 and 5.9.2 are linked to the findings of the total action research plan. All the findings of the total plan are interrelated and should be comprehended as a cluster of concepts leading toward the vision of Tshiya Centre.

5.9.3.1 *Planning*

The design of the QA policy could be seen as the strategic QA plan of Tshiya Centre. Jacobs (1997:163) says '*The strategic plan is a ... set of aims for ... quality assurance ... also known as a Quality Policy*' (see 2.4.3.1). All action plans were guided by the QA policy. The QA Committee worked from July to November 2000 to condense and interpret the literature study, to make contact with other HEIs, and to design the QA policy. During November 2000, while the students were writing examinations, the Committee had daily meetings to complete their work. The policy was workshopped at UNIQWA and discussed at a staff meeting at Tshiya Centre. It was submitted to the Directorate at Tshiya Centre and to the Dean of the Faculty of Education at UNIQWA. It was approved to be exposed to action research. The action researchers voluntarily planned their improvement plans from November 2000 to January 2001.

At the reflection meeting the evaluators contributed the completion of the action research cycle in one semester, to the planning that was done. Both researchers had a double workload because of the rationalisation process. While attending to a hectic timetable pre-prepared notes, demonstration lessons, documents for observation and feedback, as well as media could be obtained from the planning file to be implemented without any extra stress. Strictly speaking, the benefits mentioned were actually preparations but the researchers prepared documents as completely as possible during the planning stage to ensure that the QA Committee knew and could approve exactly what would be implemented.

A substantial amount of planning is necessary to provide a set of action plans resulting in concrete strategies to achieve the set goals (Nicholls 1999:29; Navaratnam 1997:16)(see 2.2.14; see 4.5.1.1; 5.8.1). In the case of the MT-improvement plan, good planning

provided for each of 67 students to present a lesson in a time frame of two weeks and to receive feedback for the necessary improvements. Planning contributed toward achieving the goal of the MT-improvement plan. In the case of the Media-improvement plan, good planning ensured that the action research could be completed although the researcher was transferred to a school before the implementation was completed. Because the planning was exhibited in class, the students knew what was expected of them for every period. The diligent students could even complete work ahead of schedule.

From the self-assessments it was deduced that good planning provided for the facilitators to have more time available for good class preparation and presentations. Both facilitators reported that they prepared more media than ever before. The facilitators', peers', and students' assessments certified that the students had thorough written preparations which led to confidence and better presentations. The students also used more media during their presentations than before, and the application thereof was more appropriate than before. It was believed that the demonstration lessons made it clear to the students that the planning (written preparation) of a lesson contributed largely to a good presentation. Written preparations done by the students during the two previous years were compared with what was done during the action research. The evaluators agreed that there was a noticeable improvement since preparation was done according to the demonstration lesson.

Weaknesses regarding planning that were identified at the reflection meeting were the following: the students were not part of the planning phase of the total action research plan, since it was done during their examination time; the action researchers were advised to plan more specific quality indicators for a next cycle to measure the degree to which an outcome was reached (see 5.8.4.3 b ix & x); more inputs should be obtained from principals and teachers from schools; and the outcomes of the improvement plans should be linked to the critical outcomes.

5.9.3.2 *Transparency*

According to Nicholls (1999:50-51) quality promotion will only occur if the QA system is rooted in the culture of the institution, is developmental in nature and is based on honesty,

reality and transparency (see 2.4.3.4). The QA policy was collaboratively designed by the QA Committee. Their meetings took place in the staffroom. These meetings were publicly announced in the mornings during the official time for announcements. These announcements included a regular invitation for other interested staff members to join the group. Since these meetings were held in the staffroom which was an easy accessible, public place, some colleagues often joined the meetings during their tea breaks, either by invitation or their own choice. Minutes and other prepared documents were pinned onto the bulletin board in the staffroom and comments were invited. All reports and documents were regularly submitted to the Directorate of Tshiya Centre and faxed/e-mailed to the Faculty of Education at UNIQWA. The transparency measures taken, as well as placing QA issues on the agendas of staff meetings and workshops, ensured that information was well communicated. An article was also written about the action research at Tshiya CE and it was sent for publication in *The Lekoomo* - an annual magazine of the Free State DoE. From the start, plans were also regularly shared with colleagues at workshops, and with colleagues at UFS and the university of Natal *via* electronic mail.

The written preparation of each improvement plan was shared with all involved, and even uninvolved stakeholders. These plans were exhibited in the classes for the students to gain insight into the plan, from the outset and continuously as the plan progressed. The facilitators and the students knew from the start what was expected from them. Valuable inputs and support were received from colleagues because they were informed observers.

5.9.3.3 *Teamwork*

Action research necessitates teamwork. Nicholls (1999:20) advises that colleges need '*to develop guidelines of professional quality collaboratively*' (see 2.4.2.6). Kemmis and McTaggart (Zuber-Skerritt 1996b:147) state that '*the approach is only action research when it is collaborative*'. '*Collaborative involvement ... (is) a hallmark of action research*' (Zuber-Skerritt 1996b:5). Zuber-Skerritt (1992:15) refers to action research as critical (and self-critical) collaborative enquiry by reflective practitioners. McNiff and co-workers (1996:30) warn that '*you will need to cultivate ways of working with other people*' when attempting action research.

Evaluators identified teamwork as a strength of the action research (see 5.8.4.3 a xii & xiii). All phases of this research were collaboratively done. The QA Committee formed the most important work group. Colleagues in the different departments also grouped for assessments and discussions. During the two seminars, two unique groups concerted their efforts toward this research. Although the improvement plans were compiled by individual researchers, they were discussed and approved by colleagues in the same and other departments, and the QA Committee. Teamwork had many advantages like synergy between the different perspectives of the participants - whether they were for the planning, assessment or reflection. For myself, the group's moral support and the shared accountability for the quality of the research, was a comfort. When the initial QA Committee dissolved during 2001, new, and interested staff members were called upon to join the researchers. Four staff members joined.

Co-operative learning refers to a concerted effort of the group toward achieving knowledge and skills. The third outcome of the MT-improvement plan was achieved by means of co-operative learning. It read: *'In parallel group sessions, every student presented the questioning skill and were coded by his/her peers'* (see Appendix C 3.3). Co-operative learning has many advantages but it was realised that student groups must be well prepared for independent functioning and learning in the absence of the facilitator. During the feedback, some spokespersons reported that the groups were sometimes difficult to handle and that they missed the guidance of the facilitator for coding and discussions. Fortunately only two malfunctioning groups out of a total of sixteen were reported. In both cases a few diligent students were innovative and joined other groups to ensure good learning experiences for themselves. The malfunctioning of these two groups was detrimental to the learning experience of the group members.

5.9.3.4 Modelling

Andrew (1997:168) explains that *'a person sets the standard (when) ... this person is a model and can be used to establish goals for others to aspire to'* (see 2.3.2 par 2). Discussing the standards of the NCATE, Wise and Leibrand (1996:203) state that they expect managers of CEs to monitor whether their staff model instructional skills that candidates should develop (see 2.3.5.3 par 2). NSTETD (DoE 1997a:56) also encourages educators to *'be adequate role models for their students'*.

When the researchers compiled their improvement plans, they designed their job descriptions according to the roles expected to be performed by every educator (DoE 2000:13, 14). Lecturers should live and demonstrate what they expect of their learners. Timely planning, good preparation and continuous assessment were modelled during the action research. When the facilitators presented demonstration lessons as part of their improvement plans, they modelled one of the outcomes expected of every student. The students rated the facilitators' demonstrations the highest in the total learning process for the MT- and the Media-improvement plans. If the students did not perform well, the facilitators could refer them to the demonstrations given. The regular class visits by colleagues, the peer-assessments and discussions that took place between colleagues after the lessons, modelled teamwork to the students. One of the findings of the Media-improvement plan regarding the use of media was that students need role models whose examples they can follow.

5.9.3.5 *Interrelatedness*

All programs presented at Tshiya Centre were supposed to aim toward the vision and mission of the Centre. Reality proved that lecturers need constant reminders of vision-oriented tuition since discussions with staff members proved that academic subjects are often not related to professional moulding (lacking Didactics), to other academic subjects, or to the vision of the institution. Theme work is done in the Pre-Primary and Junior Primary programs. All classes focus for a period of time on one theme like 'my body'. In that way interrelatedness between different subjects is obtained. That is excellent for those programs but it is not viable for a Secondary Teacher's Diploma where students can choose between fourteen major subjects. Vision-oriented tuition will be a step in the right direction for all programs offered at Tshiya Centre. Furthermore, all tuition in a teacher education program can be expected to include professional development - focusing on the vision. In NSE (DoE 1998d:58) the compilers conceptualise *'professional development of teachers as being ... regulated by three distinct kinds of requirements: occupational requirements; professional requirements; academic requirements. An 'integrated, holistic approach to learning' is further required (DoE 1998d:61), which would mean a change in modes of tuition currently practised at Tshiya Centre. The same policy document states that 'traditional discipline boundaries' should be phased out (DoE 1998d:95).*

Colleague-involvement during the action research included a natural and positive interrelatedness of different fields of study. The different perspectives that many colleagues added to the planning, observations, discussions and reflection, opened the eyes of the researchers to the interrelatedness of MT, Media, TP, General Teaching Methods, Story Telling and Theme Work in the Pre-Primary and Junior Primary program, and Didactics.

At an international conference, Gnanam (1999) focused on core competencies needed by graduates in the changing context of the global market. He referred to subject knowledge and skills, cognitive skills (subject neutral), and general skills (subject neutral). He suggested two models to present these key skills: a parallel model - add on modules covering core competencies, or an integrated model (see Appendix A 4 - for the subject neutral competencies which are easily neglected because they are not included in South African teacher education programs)(see 2.3.5.6). An integrated model would imply the integration of these competencies. NSE (DoE 1998d:69 -78) describe 120 competences expected of an educator. These expectations are unrealistic and beyond implementation. Without redesigning all existing programs, students will benefit if the core competences that they are expected to obtain, are integrated in some way by the lecturers on the same campus. In order to do that, the management should organise regular team discussions among staff members. This will contribute toward quality enhancement. Navaratnam (1997:7) supports the suggestion by saying that the phases in the quality journey are designed to be complementary to each other and to involve every process, every employee and every measurement which impacts on all the details of a quality program.

5.9.3.6 *Media*

The competent use of media enhances the learning process because the sensory focus is regularly changed. Both facilitators prepared more media than ever before - for the briefing sessions as well as for demonstration lessons. The students offered positive comments about the media and even referred to them in the students' feedback. The different types of assessment showed that most students used media competently during their own presentations. It proved that the students emulated the model that had been presented to them (see 2.3.5.3; 5.9.3.4).

The proper use of media was deemed so important in a teacher education program that an improvement plan for Media was decided upon as a focus area for this action research. It was argued that the subject 'Media' forms part of the Didactics learning program which was an area of concern for many years (see 5.9.2.1; 5.9.2 for the findings that emerged from the Media-improvement plan). Evaluated lessons during TP revealed that students used media sparsely and that the quality of their prepared media was poor.

5.9.3.7 *Vision-oriented tuition*

According to Nicholls (1999:29) and Navaratnam (1997:16), all processes at an institution should be planned toward its quality vision. Modiba (1999a:20) discusses the 5th priority of the Minister's call for action during 1999, which is to develop teacher quality, and states that the new vision is articulated around notions of professional development (see 3.12.3.2 f). The institution's vision should be responsive to the national vision and every component of the curriculum of a teacher education program, including MT and Media, should be responsive to the institution's vision. Professional development forms an important part of all these visions. The principle 'do the right things' reiterates that all inputs at the institution should have a vision focus since the 'right things are vision focused things'.

The vision of Tshiya Centre is the development of: '*competent, confident, reflective and creative educators and facilitators of learning ...*' (see Appendix B 1.1). The ultimate goal for a Tshiya Centre student is therefore to teach. The last outcome of the TP learning program corresponds with the vision of Tshiya Centre. Time allocation to different fields of study contained in the curriculum, should be revisited to ensure that students are prepared for the reality of the classroom and to achieve the vision. Didactics, where students are taught the 'know-how' of teaching, was a major concern at the College for many years.

Another major concern was the fact that no mention is made of MT in the suggested structure for teacher education programs in NSTETD (DoE 1997a:103-106). If it is accepted that MT is a part of TP, it means that the contact hours should be shared - as it is currently implemented at Tshiya Centre. Throughout the action research a time

constraint was experienced by the facilitator and students. Except for three major subjects, the professional development of a student at Tshiya Centre entails five fields of study. The number of contact hours allocated to each field in the structure, are tabulated in Table 5.1 below. In practice only eleven academic weeks are available per semester.

TABLE 5.1 CONTACT HOURS ALLOCATED FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

FIELD OF STUDY	CONTACT HOURS
Education	132
Religious Education	132
Language Endorsements:	
English	198
Afrikaans or Sesotho	66
Teaching Practice	18 (+ 15 weeks at schools)
Micro Teaching	48
Professional Studies:	
12 Fields of study: each receiving 22 hours of which Teaching Media is one	22

The students confirmed the concern of the facilitators and colleagues in the Professional Studies Department that neither MT nor Media, because of their practical nature, receive sufficient time for students to practise these skills. Individual students could not be assessed and remedial work could not be applied. Both these fields focus on the professional development of the student-teacher. The hours allocated to these fields, and the fact that they were identified as quality gaps, confirmed the concern that the structure should be revised. It should be re-designed with a focus on the vision. For improvement there should not be time limits and '*anti-Robin Hood*' attitudes (Kells 1993:10,11)(see 2.4.2.5). The Tshiya CE staff re-curriculated their programs in 1997, and the latest edition of NSE (DoE 1998d:97) makes provision for Teaching Studies which the provider may offer in whatever way it considers to be the best. This calls for revising the structure to ensure that Tshiya Centre students would be prepared for '*competent practice*' (DoE 1998d:96).

With the exception of Education, the fields of study related to professional development are often not regarded as being as important as the major subjects. Lecturers have made disparaging remarks about these fields of study in the past. A change of focus toward the vision will re-instate professional development where it belongs. Modiba (1999a:20) is of the opinion that the improvement of the quality of teachers needs a realistic approach (see 3.12.3.2 f par 2). In his view teacher quality is related to the ability to create learning environments that are productive, and the art of teaching is something complex, subtle and sensitive that is hard to pin down with simple rules or to transmit merely through advice on strategies. To learn about the complex art of teaching, sufficient time is needed.

5.9.3.8 *Critical reasoning*

Gnanam (1999) identified cognitive skills that a learner at tertiary education level should pursue (see Appendix A). They are to:

- demonstrate the skills necessary to plan, conduct and report a project
- synthesise information/data from a variety of sources
- analyse, evaluate/interpret human performance
- apply various principles and methodologies to the solution of problems
- formulate and test concepts and hypotheses

These are all higher order cognitive skills. An average Tshiya Centre student might find all five these skills difficult to master within the time limit of 140 contact hours per credit for the 9-credit teacher's diploma (DoE 1997a:103). From all three types of assessment done during the action research, it was deduced that the average Tshiya Centre student struggled to demonstrate the following process competences: assessing information, sifting of evidence, data analysis, developing arguments, and giving attention to detail (Gnanam 1999)(see Appendix A).

Wise and Leibrand (1996:203) state that tertiary education candidates should be able to use strategies for developing critical thinking, problem solving, and abstract reasoning, and also to use formal and informal evaluation strategies (see 2.3.5.3; 2.3.5.5). NSE (DoE 1998d:48) states that there is a major shift from the previous view of an educator, as a technician whose major role was to implement already-designed syllabi without much reflection on actions taken. Now it is required of an educator to be a self-directed

professional who can reflect on actions with a view to adaptation. It is further expected of educators to create '*a learning environment in which critical and creative thinking is encouraged (and) learners challenge stereotypes*' (DoE 1998d:69). NSE (DoE 2000:33) expects assignments to be '*designed to encourage problem-solving with authentic contexts*'. Piro and Iorio (1990:5) outline goals for a critical reasoning curriculum and state that even '*teacher organisations and unions have been enthusiastic about the salubrious effects of such programs*'.

During the action research, continuous observations and assessment done by various participants ensured early detection of problems. Reflection-in-action led to action research side spirals regarding the MT-plan: to improve on the worksheet done after the first briefing, the checklist controlling the written preparations, and uncertainty at the first group presentations. It proved that errors detected early could be rectified to a great extent. It was in line with Nicholls's (1999) general idea that an institution should '*develop a vibrant culture of reflection*'. A spirit of observance with the aim to improve, ensured learning from mistakes and improving continuously. Since I repeated the same MT-presentation to five classes, I learned from observing mistakes made during the first presentations and could rectify them for the following periods. The facilitator's role and presentations, the learning material, and the students' learning process were constantly observed for effectiveness.

A specific improvement plan will be needed at Tshiya Centre to address the problem of critical reasoning. The average Tshiya Centre student comes from a poor schooling system and therefore has serious knowledge- and skills backlogs. Many students were not sufficiently exposed to critical thinking during their schooling career and some not even during the years of their tertiary education. Staff development at Tshiya Centre would ensure that all lecturers were regularly stimulated to present these key, higher order, cognitive skills. Management should see to it that their staff are competent to deliver the quality work that they expect. The assessment of critical reasoning should be reflected in all formative and summative assessments done. During 1998 the QA committee for Programs developed evaluation schemes for the internal moderation of Tshiya CE's OBE-assessments. These evaluation schemes controlled *inter alia* the ratio of the cognitive

levels on which assessments were done: 50% on knowledge level, 30% on comprehension and application level, and 20% on analysis, synthesis and evaluation level. In the event, the internal moderation did not materialise. These evaluation schemes are, however, still available for implementation.

5.9.3.9 *Motivation*

During this research the well-known phenomenon became clear - motivation is the driving force toward success (see 6.3.1). It was applicable to me as researcher, who had to survive the turbulent times of transformation; the colleagues who supported the research and continued to do so despite the fact that they were transferred to schools; and the students who had their own personal problems to overcome in order to be in class and to learn. Since there were no external forms of motivation like incentives or threats, the motivational forces were intrinsic, like commitment to the institution or one's studies, personality traits pursuing quality, professional growth and self-actualisation. A spirit of exploration was an asset (Covey 1992:66). The few staff members who persevered, were motivated by the same notion: *'If it's going to be, it's up to me'* (Covey 1992:252).

According to Navaratnam (1997:7) education managers need to be motivated themselves in order to motivate their staff to get involved in the quality journey. Persig believes quality is *'the inverse side of caring ... a feeling of identification with what one is doing'* (DoE 1999:3). If educators at HEIs where teachers are educated would endorse this notion and be motivated by it, they would produce quality teachers who would be competently prepared for the profession.

Students should be motivated toward achieving their goals. Good planning and an inspiring role model are good motivators (see 5.9.3.1;5.9.3.4). During the research, unmotivated students were either absent or came late to class; came late to group presentations; misbehaved during group presentations; did not have their written preparations and coding forms in class; did not perform the duties assigned to them for group presentations; and delivered lessons of poor quality. On the other hand, motivated students acted creatively when needed, to ensure their own learning process. They came to the facilitator for help; submitted work more often than was requested; studied the exhibited improvement plan regularly and asked questions about it; volunteered to help;

performed their duties in the groups excellently; changed groups when things went wrong; participated well during group discussions; organised on their own to complete presentations during their tea break; and presented lessons of high quality.

5.9.3.10 *Feedback*

The value of feedback was an important finding of both improvement plans (see 5.9.1.7). Since in the MT-improvement plan presentations of lessons were done in parallel groups, the feedback aimed to inform the whole class about the learning that took place in the various groups. Therefore, spokespersons were identified in advance to observe attentively in order to give feedback. Forms were designed to structure the feedback which made it possible to detect a pattern of strengths and weaknesses (see Appendix C 5.7). The predetermined structure simplified the learning process. The facilitator recorded strengths and weaknesses on charts while the spokespersons gave feedback. The use of the charts enhanced the learning since the summarised, visual image reinforced the spoken word (see 5.9.3.6). The facilitator analysed, clustered and tabulated the feedback information after the period. A document was prepared and discussed with the students (see Appendix D3.1). The feedback results were used to indicate to the students that the outcomes and ultimate goal were reached. The students enjoyed the feedback and took delight in one another's feedback. A happy learner learns easily and contributes toward co-operative learning. This corresponds with Covey's (1992:233) statement that people tend to use information when they get it, and when you get enough people with information you raise consciousness and unleash energies. That is what QA is all about.

All stakeholders are in need of constant feedback on their journey toward quality. Covey (1992:253) says *'Feedback is the vital lunch of champions - they listen and learn from it'*. He further warns managers to be sensitive when providing feedback since it exposes people and then they are vulnerable. Only *'those with internal security can afford it'* (Covey 1992:233). Nicholls (1999:20-22) advises that *'Quality assurance cannot be established via the watchdog syndrome'*. What is needed is *'a system of voluntary peer review in the nature of formative professional feedback which could inform self-evaluation and professional development'*. The same author suggests that an institution should have formal feedback mechanisms, for example assessment and staff development, guiding them toward quality work; performance on the job is what is assessed, and that necessitates feedback.

The literature study concerning QA policies suggested that *'evaluation and reporting requirements for accredited bodies ... provide a direct and dynamic feedback mechanism to standards setting, ensuring the continual improvement of the standards'* (RSA 1998a:8). Clearly, then, an institution should have its own feedback system to ensure control and improvement of the qualifications for which it is registered. CEs need to develop to the stage where they *'consist of self-critical communities'* (Nicholls 1999:20) serving each other with formative, professional feedback. When the DoE (1998b:4) sent a checklist to CEs to assist them in developing their own internal quality criteria, one of the directives under the heading 'Teaching and Learning Processes' was to *'determine the extent to which ... provision is made for appropriate and comprehensive feedback to the learner'*.

5.10 SUMMATION

In this chapter a description was given of the action research at Tshiya Centre. Action research was described and motivated as the most appropriate research method to establish and continuously improve a QA system. Problems encountered to continue the research were outlined and the search for a way forward was described. A SWOT-analysis was done. A Steering committee was established. Reports on two QA seminars were drafted. Lessons learned from literature, regarding QA, were summarised. A QA policy for teacher education programs offered at Tshiya Centre was designed.

The proposed framework-for-action was action researched by two volunteers who compiled improvement plans for MT and Media to upgrade their own teaching. These plans were implemented during February to June 2001. The duration of the first cycle of the action research was an academic unit which was one semester. It was self-, peer-, and student-observed and reflected upon. An analysis of the gathered data led to findings which were corroborated at a reflection meeting. Findings from the individual plans and the total QA plan were listed, discussed and clustered toward five final findings for recommendation.

Chapter Six entails a synthesis of the five final findings and recommendations to establish a QA system for teacher education programs. Motivation, leadership/management (planning), implementation, team work, and modelling are discussed.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The establishment of a QA system for teacher education at a merged HDU/CE started with the establishment of a QA Committee to steer the process. Two QA seminars were held and a QA policy was compiled. As part of the policy, a framework-for-action was developed in an action research mode to comply with suggestions put forward in policy documents for teacher education. Structures and procedures had to be decided upon as well as assessment strategies and review mechanisms. Volunteer staff members action researched the framework-for-action for an academic unit, which was one semester. Since the research was done during the rightsizing of the HE sector in SA, a host of dilemmas had to be faced and the goal posts had to be shifted from time to time. The action research was completed with a reflection meeting (see 5.8.4.3) where the research was discussed and validated.

6.2 CLUSTERING OF THE ACTION RESEARCH FINDINGS

The participants at the reflection meeting agreed to the clustering of the action research findings as reflected in Table 6.1. Column A contains the findings from the improvement plans; Column B reflects the findings generated and clustered during the reflection meeting; and Column C comments on the clustering of findings for final suggestions.

TABLE 6.1 CLUSTERING OF THE ACTION RESEARCH FINDINGS

Column A Improvement plans	Column B Reflection	Column C Clustered findings
Improvement plans were completed in spite of difficult circumstances	Motivation: voluntary QA took place in the absence of external threats or incentives. Success motivated continuation with QA cycle	M o t i v a t i o n : intrinsic/extrinsic; a healthy organisational climate; staff development; a culture of 'performativity'
Students experienced success , which motivated them		
Don't attempt too much at first	Planning should be realistic and vision oriented. Consider local context	Leadership/Management (Planning): public commitment and drive; corporate planning; vision realisation - the QA policy; a balance between 'light and direct steerage'; a balance between internal and external evaluations
Ratio of teacher/learners should be realistic		
Tuition should focus on the reality of the classroom		
Good planning is a first step toward success		
National and institutional policy requirements should be adhered to - they should be implemented	National and institutional policy should be realistic and implemented; Tshiya staff had a top-down experience of policy design (NSTETD 1997a)	Implementation: test viability of plan; handle problems; the current SA national QA policies are not implemented; realistic plans needed; monitor implementation and adjust; ownership - balance bottom-up and top-down strategy - the Tshiya experience with NSTETD

Column A Improvement plans	Column B Reflection	Column C Clustered findings
Group a subject-diverse group of learners for MT according to a common major subject	Transparent teamwork enables the utilisation of different perspectives, skills and expertise.	Teamwork , communication and transparent actions enhance interrelatedness between subjects; focus on
Teamwork is necessary for quality improvement: for realistic planning and peer-assessment	Interrelatedness of subjects/fields of study is advanced	Didactics and TP; co-operation; sharing of skills; support, and peer review
Interrelatedness of fields of study enhances collaboration of lecturers toward the vision		

Feedback is essential for quality improvement	The lecturer should model what is expected of students, which are:	Modelling: as a mentor and a living example, the lecturer should model the
The use of media enhances teaching and learning	proper feedback ; use of media ; and stimulation of critical reasoning	vision: competence, confidence, reflectiveness and creativity

6.3 SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS

6.3.1 Motivation

6.3.1.1 *Lessons learned from previous research*

a. Theoretical framework of motivation

Research done by Serow (1994:65) and Sander (1995:105) indicates that highly motivated teachers believe that their teaching is not merely a job but a calling. Casey (1999:18) reiterates that acting in the public interest is what makes teaching more than just a job. Such an inner conviction results in significant commitment, enthusiasm, and a readiness

for sacrifices that the teaching career might entail. Mintz (cited in Serow 1994:66) describes such a thrust as ‘*“intellectual passion” which accompanies the work*’. The sense of personal identity and commitment to one’s work is the hallmark of a true calling and it exercises a far-reaching influence on the students in class. A key question is what teacher education institutions might do to foster a sense of calling and commitment among their staff - flowing through to student teachers. Seeing teaching as a calling, results in the desired professional passion that will lead to taking charge of the continuous QA of one’s own work. It corresponds with Persig’s description of quality as ‘*the inverse side of caring ... a feeling of identification with what one is doing*’ (cited by DoE 1999:3).

The successful implementation of a QA system depends on the motivation and commitment of those who have to apply it. To be able to tap from extensive research done on motivation and to apply the principles emerging to the establishment of a QA system, a brief overview of some research done on teachers’ efforts regarding their learners’ motivation, is given.

Motivation theories cover a broad area of research. The particular area most relevant for this research appears to be motivation for academic learning. Pearson and Carey (1995:221-226) report on an instrument, The Academic Motivation Profile, and its use to evaluate the effects of instruction and college students’ attitudes toward their course. Principles from the above mentioned instrument and the academic motivation theory are: attention (also autonomy)(A), relevance (R), confidence (also competence)(C), and satisfaction (S) (ARCS). According to the above-mentioned authors, attracting students’ attention is challenging and can be accomplished through appealing to their sensation-seeking needs. Attention should be sustained by posing problems to solve and by activities that trigger knowledge-seeking behaviours. Attention is probably a precursor to relevance, confidence and satisfaction. Relevance of learning tasks affects personal aspirations, performance expectations, and effort allocations. Confidence is affected by causal attributions for prior successes and failures, emotional reactions to these experiences, and confidence in future performances. Students who perceive learning tasks as a reasonable, accomplishable challenge maintain high levels of attention and confidence. Goudas and co-workers (1995:90) add that perceived competence is

positively associated with intrinsic motivation and it is also a positive predictor of intention and performance. Satisfaction has three foci: self-satisfaction, satisfaction with the instructor, and satisfaction with various aspects of the course. Intrinsically or extrinsically satisfied students are more attentive to instruction than those who do not feel that the outcomes justify the efforts (Pearson & Carey 1995:221-223).

b. Extrinsic and intrinsic motivators

Whether from external sources (lecturer or peer approval, recognition, grades, money) or internal sources (self-actualisation), motivation appears critical to the expression of intelligence and gaining success (Pearson & Carey 1995:220). In general, teachers make use of both extrinsic and intrinsic motivators, although Bohlin (1998:46) reports that most teachers '*do not understand the vast difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. They believe that any kind of motivation is good*'. Lashaway-Bokina (2000:226) warns that external rewards diminish the quality of the work and create disinterest in topics that might otherwise be enjoyed and enthusiastically pursued. Lepper and co-workers (as cited in Lashaway-Bokina 2000:226) found that:

for children who have intrinsic motivation, an external reward system can be devastating. The child will no longer work for the joy or notice the satisfaction of accomplishment, but will focus on the learning task as a means to a different goal, the reward. Once the reward stops being offered, the task ceases to be worthwhile.

Nolen and Nicholls (1994:58) refer to seven other researchers when they say '*a large body of research indicates that such rewards tend to undermine intrinsic involvement*'. The same authors (Nolen & Nicholls 1994:66) report that extrinsic rewards increase unproductive egoistic concerns by emphasizing social comparison through ability attributions, public comparisons of achievement, and special privileges for high achievers. Extrinsic motivators have limited use and focus on the reward and not on the outcome. If the findings of the above cited research are correct, teachers should carefully weigh the benefits and problems associated with external rewards and focus more on how to nurture intrinsic motivation.

In the context of institutionalised QA and motivating staff to become involved in QA activities, external rewards might be merit awards, promotion, bursaries or money. None of these were available at the time of this research. Andrew (1997:175) is of the opinion that *'institutions willing to improve their programs must receive substantial long-term grants and rewards of recognition'*. Staff members should take note of the mentioned research findings when they quality-assure their teaching and learning practices in class.

c. Intrinsic motivation as the better option

The more plausible intrinsic motivation is described by Edwards (1997:59) as a characteristic of people who *'pursue optimal challenges, display greater innovativeness, and tend to perform better under challenging conditions'*. Lashaway-Bokina (2000:225) cites Amabile and Gottfried & Gottfried, who state that *'intrinsically motivated learners accept challenges willingly, show persistence in difficult tasks, exhibit curiosity, remain task committed, and reflect satisfaction with their efforts regardless of the views of others'*. NSE (DoE 1998d:147) mentions *'internal motivation'* as an important indicator for evaluating an institution's self-evaluation report. Goudas and co-workers (1995:90) state that intrinsic motivation refers to *'behaviours performed in the absence of external rewards'*. Raffini (1996:3) adds that intrinsic motivation is:

fuelled by students' psychoacademic needs to control their own decisions (autonomy); to do things that can help them feel successful (competence); to feel part of something larger than themselves (belonging and relatedness); to feel good about who they are (self-esteem); and to find pleasure in what they do (involvement and stimulation).

According to Goudas and co-workers (1995:90), intrinsic motivation stems from two basic human needs: the need for competence and the need for autonomy. In the quote above, both these needs are addressed. Competence refers to one's own perceived ability to successfully complete the task and autonomy refers to acting without any form of pressure.

d. Ways to promote intrinsic motivation

Teachers use many ways to nurture and promote intrinsic motivation. Some of them are to: offer stimulating tasks; give learners a choice; show interest; attribute thought and improvement; give learners responsibilities; promote co-operation; formulate goals co-

operatively; and minimize pressure (Nolen & Nicholls 1994:59,61-65; Goudas *et al.* 1995:95). Hallinan and Danaher (1994:76,80-81) confirm a positive link among perceived control over criterion-referenced assessment, self-efficacy and motivation when students are allowed to contract ('enroll' themselves) for particular grades. Once again students' needs for both autonomy and competence are addressed when they are allowed to contract themselves by choosing on which level they judge themselves to be able to perform. The authors also add that a teacher's positive reinforcement of a learner's efforts promotes intrinsic motivation. Lashaway-Bokina (2000:226) adds to the list of suggestions: allow for flexible deadlines; eliminate the need for overt supervision by promoting independence; maintain a safe and stimulating environment where students feel free to ask questions and to take risks; and keep competitive behaviours at a minimum. Pearson and Carey (1995:221) confirm the positive effect of a stimulating environment on students' motivation. Puth (1994:19) describes the philosophy of human resource management by saying that people are *'interested in meaningful and challenging jobs, and that the quality of life at the workplace (is) a major motivational force'*. Kapp (1993:18) reiterates that staff should experience opportunities for professional growth and job satisfaction; and managers should show interest in and support staff's personal aspirations. During the action research it was found that good planning and an inspiring role model were good motivators (see 5.9.3.1; 5.9.3.4).

Midkiff (1991:60-65) describes how a variety of teaching and learning techniques motivated learners toward success. The traditional 'pencil and paper techniques' were enhanced by well prepared chalkboard use, transparencies, books, posters, pictures, realia, and carefully planned learner activities. 'Significant other methods' were the use of videos followed by reaction papers and purposeful assignments; case studies and guest speakers applying theory to daily practice; questionnaires serving as introductions; fun and interesting reviews (the compilation of a *rap*¹³); co-operative learning linked to educational games (e.g. to derive from textbooks the answers to Who am I? or What am I?); instead of ordinary questions, answers were given and learners had to formulate the questions; and computer assisted instruction. All these methods were followed by feedback regarding

¹³ Talking in measured tones, with or without the rhythm of music.

the learning process. Students repeatedly expressed their enjoyment of these classes (Midkiff 1991:66). All these suggestions could well be used to motivate learners toward quality learning.

6.3.1.2 *Suggestions for motivation toward Quality Assurance*

a. Voluntarism guaranteed motivation during this research

At the reflection meeting, the successful completion of the action research under difficult circumstances (see 5.2.2; 5.2.4), was contributed to the voluntary involvement of staff who were interested in the topic QA, who were concerned about the quality of the teaching and learning at Tshiya Centre, who wanted to learn about the topic action research, and wanted to improve their own professional practice (see 5.9.3.9). Informal discussions with members of the QA Committee confirmed that a meaningful and challenging task motivated them to stay involved to the end. An analysis of their motivation shows that the principles of the academic motivation theory, ARCS, were all addressed. Lecturers voluntarily decided to be part of the research team; they deemed the research relevant and interesting; they felt competent to improve their own work according to an improvement plan developed by themselves; and they even returned to Tshiya Centre, after their placement at schools, to complete the research because their involvement resulted in self-satisfaction; satisfaction with the way in which the research was facilitated; and the outcomes that they achieved.

The compiled QA policy for Tshiya Centre provides for every practitioner to compile his/her own QA plan. To choose one's own focus area for improvement, from one's own assessment, serves the principles of autonomy, relevance, and competence. It was proved during the action research that if these mentioned principles are successfully addressed, the practitioner will be motivated toward a worthy effort for the input and through-put of his/her own plan, resulting in satisfaction which is the fourth principle of the academic motivation theory. The work of the nine QA committees established during 1998, faded as the tension of the rationalisation process increased. Although these staff members had also voluntarily joined the different QA committees, their reasons for doing so did not motivate them to continue.

Motivation should be a permanent item on the agenda of the management team of an institution which establishes QA. An employee of a recruitment agency, The Communicate Personnel Group, reports that this agency organises regular motivation sessions of thirty minutes every morning to start the workday. Guest speakers are sometimes invited but otherwise staff members do presentations themselves on a rotation basis (Smuts 2001). The same agency also makes use of external rewards based on performance. Since money is involved, the staff experience it as a huge motivational force. NSE (DoE 1998d:141) suggests that an effective QA system should use *'incentives and sanctions (suited) to the purpose of the system'*.

b. Value of Total Quality Management

The success of a QA system depends to a great extent on the motivation and collaboration of all parties involved, including management, academic and support staff, and students. To motivate all parties at an institution to get involved in QA is difficult but the only option. *'The QA chain is as strong as its weakest link'* is applicable here (Nicholls 1999). It became clear during the action research that all aspects of the teacher education program are linked and dependent on each other. Minimising one aspect weakens the others (Morta 1999:7). The fact that the areas of management, resources and student support services were not focus areas for improvement when the action research was done, was experienced as a weakness and proved that improvement in one area is dependent on improvement in other areas. If practitioners experience quality gaps in areas that are beyond their control, it leads to frustration and demotivation. Valuable lessons can be learned from TQM where every single aspect on the premises of an institution is taken care of and all support each other (see 2.3.4.5). Motivation of the entire staff is therefore of utmost importance.

c. Staff development

Since QA is about people performing certain tasks, a continuous staff development program forms an integral part of QA (Kapp 1993:19; DoE 1998d:159; Nicholls 1999:32). Such a program contributes to motivation, planning, organisation, sharing, integration, and reflection. Teachers need to have a deeper understanding of the theoretical

underpinnings of affective variables. Research has proved that motivation is the most important of these. *'Institutions of teacher preparation need to better design their programs so that graduates have deeper understanding of motivation, anxiety, attitudes, and values ... (Schools) need to consider ways to provide in-service sessions for their teachers'* (Bohlin 1998:46).

Staff development was deemed so important during 1998, that a QA committee was established to focus on the professional development of the Tshiya CE staff. In accordance with policy guidelines (DoE 1998d:155) it was decided that such a committee should play a central role in equipping staff for improving their professional tasks. A first priority on the agenda of this committee was to invite motivational speakers. Unfortunately the rationalisation of CEs at that time took its toll and the committee never became active. UNIQWA has a Centre for Educational Advancement (see 4.3.2 par 2). The Centre operates in an integrated and cost-effective way to deliver academic support. The activities of the Centre complement the work of other related committees. Staff are annually trained by means of workshops. Regular lunch hour seminars are held to provide for further staff development and support programs. To be amongst academic peers, learning more about one's subject, provides a motivational force, since competence levels are increased. The University of Natal report that they regularly have university-wide workshops (Webbstock 2000)(see 2.1.1 par 13); if this is not done, it will be difficult to motivate staff for QA and more difficult to keep them motivated.

Whether attendance of such staff development sessions should be compulsory and whether they should take place on the campus, is debatable. To present them on campus, however, would have advantages such as fitting in lunch-hour sessions, and the fact that they would be less expensive as far as facilities and transport are concerned. Olivier (1995), Staff Development and Training Manager of Standard Bank of SA, believes that adults do not effectively learn *'boxed in between four walls'*; he suggests an 'island situation' for three to four days where participants actively workshop new information. It is a costly exercise. Perhaps an annual, away-from-campus session could be budgeted for, complemented by short, regular on-campus sessions.

d. Topics for educational advancement

Topics to address during staff development sessions should be collaboratively decided

upon to ensure interest and attendance. To be informed and motivated regarding QA, staff members might be facilitated to work through the available QA policies and other available documents. Many of these documents (see 3.11.1 - 3.11.4; 3.12.1; 3.12.2; 3.12.4) have preambles and introductions of a motivational nature. Focusing on motivation, motivational speakers might play an important role to regularly address the affective domain of all stakeholders.

There are many books, videos and courses available to awaken 'silent partners' in the workplace. Kehoe's bestseller *Money, Success and You* (1993), covers various motivational topics like: it all starts with you; find your passion; goals are crucial; enthusiasm makes the difference; plan your work and work your plan; self-image; creating and maintaining a 'success vibration'; be someone who makes a difference; and many more. Covey's classic contribution, *Seven Habits For Highly Effective People* (1989), contains inspiring information. Courses are also presented in SA to master the Covey-principles. Lester's book, *Fifty Ways To Improve Teacher Morale* (1990), is a must. There are various development courses available like *The Dynamics of Personal Motivation* (distributed by Waco: Success Motivation International). Leo Buscalia, the American educationist, produced the evergreen video, *Only You Can Make The Difference* (available from Knowledge Resources in Randburg). This video touched the lives of many people significantly. Revising the institution's QA policy and procedures annually, will be informative to everybody, will serve as motivation, and will promote ownership of the policy. In the spirit of President Thabo Mbeki's call in 1999 for an education system prepared for the 21st century, the managers should be intrinsically motivated to optimally manage; the support staff to support; the teachers to teach; and the students to learn (3.12.3.1).

e. Target group

Staff development sessions could be varied to accommodate the whole staff at certain times, while departments can be motivated to have their own regular quality circles. To be informed about the latest research findings regarding major subjects, is a given item on

the agenda of departmental meetings. Nicholls (1999) suggests that staff should regularly reflect together and answer the question: *'What value have we added since we were together last?'*. Managers should regularly gather for *'grooming sessions'* (Olivier 1995). Support staff and students should be motivated as well according to the *'big picture'*.

f. Policy regarding developmental appraisal

If the ELRC, as the legal employer of all CS educators, implements its designed policy to appraise the competence of teachers' personal and professional development in order to improve the quality of teaching practice and education management, every educator will be expected to keep a file in which his/her ongoing development is recorded (see 3.11.3 par 2). Such practice can be seen as an external threat and it does not serve intrinsic motivation, but it will hopefully motivate practitioners toward life-long learning and development.

6.3.1.3 *Motivation: a precursor to the other findings*

Motivation is the first of five clustered findings of the action research toward quality improvement (see 6.2). It is the most important aspect of a QA plan and a precursor to intention and performance (see 6.3.1.1 a par 3). The other findings to be discussed are: leadership/management (planning), implementation, teamwork, and modelling. Trying to pursue the other findings in the absence of motivation, will be of no avail. The action research proved that intrinsically motivated staff will manage their own quality improvement, even in the absence of institutional QA management; they will implement information and plans that will aid the quality of their teaching and learning; they will involve themselves in teamwork; and they will be worthy role models. If the above-mentioned other findings are managed, it will be a bonus to intrinsically motivated staff.

6.3.2 Leadership/Management (Planning)

6.3.2.1 *Leadership/Management: an additional finding*

When clustering the action research findings at the reflection meeting, the participants agreed that the first phase of the action research, which was planning, contributed toward achieving the planned goals. It was mentioned that leadership and management in general should be seen as a finding and described as a recommendation because *'a team*

needs a coach', and planning is one of the managerial tasks. It was mentioned that the initial SWOT-analysis identified the absence of institutional management of the QA activities as a weakness. Since QA initiatives were not driven and controlled by management, they could therefore not easily be applied to the whole institution (see 5.2.2). Unless the leader/manager of an institution has a thrust for QA and is motivated to drive it, it has only a limited chance to succeed (Nicholls 1999:15).

In any educational system, a majority of things that can go wrong can be ... attributable to how the organisation's systems and processes are set up. It can be said then that workers are less to blame for failure than is the system. Therefore, it is the system and management that deserve greatest attention in implementing quality management in education (Navaratnam 1997:5).

6.3.2.2 Quality management

Quality management is seen as a systems approach to management that aims to continuously improve its systems and processes in order to increase value both for the institution and the students (Morta 1999:5; DoE 1998c:9). Fourie (2000:52) views it as a feedback loop of quality policies, procedures and evaluation. Several existing and emerging publications, debates among academics and non-academics, as well as researchers' reports agree that the success of a QA system depends on enlightened and informed leadership and effective management (Navaratnam 1997:4; Shanker 1996:222; Andrew 1997:74). It does not mean bureaucracy (Cameron 1996:226; Bagwandeem 1993:95; Rosen 1991:8). Nicholls (1999:50) explains that quality control is a bureaucratic and top-down concept while QA is empowerment at the grassroots level.

Lessons were learned from the establishment of a QA system at The University of the Western Cape. Morta (1999:5-6) and Kapp (1993:23) report that the purpose of quality management is to collaboratively and democratically establish an institution-wide, continuous quality improvement strategy, and to deploy infrastructure which encourages all employees to focus on quality and movement in a common direction. The University of the Western Cape aimed toward a quality management structure that would be both monitoring and facilitative. It is advisable to establish protocol and a QA management system that harmonises with the institution's distinguishing characteristics and its unique forms of governance and accountability (Morta 1999:6; Nicholls 1999:21,22).

6.3.2.3 Leadership/Management

Both leadership and managerial skills complement each other for the establishment and maintenance of a QA system. Squelch and Lemmer (1994:10) describe leadership as a process of inspiring and influencing people to collaboratively achieve goals, while Van der Westhuizen (1990:40) quotes Morgan saying that management is seen as the device of 'getting things done through and with people'. Leadership has to do with unique characteristics of the leader as person (Matsei 1990:2) and management with the maintenance of an effective system. Covey (1992:246, 255-256) and Cuban (in Rosen 1991:8) tabulate differences between leadership and management as reflected in Table 6.2.

TABLE 6.2 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT	LEADERSHIP
Focus on speed	Focus on direction
Establish structures and systems	Provide vision and motivation
Focus on the minimum line	Focus on the maximum line
Increase driving forces	Decrease resistance
Look through the 'glasses' of the institution whether all systems work well	See if the 'lenses' of the 'glasses of the institution' are correctly focused
Work in the system	Work on the system
Focus on control, logistics and effectivity	Focus on principles; building culture, people and a team
Re-actively oriented	Pro-actively oriented
Pursue goals set by others	Set and evaluate goals
Avoid or decrease conflict	Welcome conflict as an opportunity to change
Work mechanically through problems	Seek for alternatives to solve problems creatively
Control or avoid risks	Accept challenges gladly

The different management and leadership styles will not be described in detail. Although Puth (1994:v) says that *'management is about people'*: the ideal and versatile manager, competent and effective, is strongly people- and task-oriented. He will concentrate on the establishment of circumstances which will facilitate successful task completion. A democratic leader creates opportunities for staff members to creatively share in decision making and the execution thereof. *'An environment is created that requires an organisation's members to become psychologically involved and ... concerned with the consequences of their actions'* (Denison in Mampuru & Calitz 1993:57).

De Pree's (1989:42-43) words are a comfort to QA officers who read the above mentioned table and feel that they do not measure up to the standard. He says: *'No one person is the "expert" at everything ... Roving leadership ... demands that we be enablers of each other ... By ourselves we suffer serious limitations. Together we can be something wonderful'*. This quote also highlights the importance of teamwork (see 5.9.3.3; 6.3.4).

6.3.2.4 Planning

Every successful operation starts at the drawing board since the plan directs all activities toward what ultimately has to be achieved. It also certifies the roles, tasks and levels of performance of 'team players' in the 'quality game'. Jacobs (1997:163) says: *'The strategic plan is a ... set of aims for ... quality assurance ... This is also known as a Quality Policy'* (see 2.4.3.1). Guidelines given by the DoE (1998c:15) state that quality improvement will be plan-driven and not event-driven. The following functions manifested in the strategic plan for QA at The University of the Western Cape: defining a quality policy; providing leadership for quality; developing an organisational vision for quality improvement that inspires everyone to seek quality in all aspects of their work¹⁴; generating a culture that encourages quality improvement efforts at all levels; and establishing overarching goals consistent with the principles of quality management and continuous improvement. Quality planning should comply with HE policies like those determined by SAQA, the NQF, and the HEQC requirements. It also needs accurate information from a well managed Management Information System (Morta 1999:5). For Teacher Education, guidelines for

¹⁴ The vision for quality improvement of The University of the Western Cape is: *Quality rewards itself.*

an effective QA system are suggested in NSE (DoE 1998d:141). It should display cyclical reviews, corresponding with the action research cycles.

Strategic planning for QA was previously described (see 2.2.14; 2.4.3.1). A description and discussion of strategic planning as the first phase of the action research was given (see 4.5.1.1; 5.8.1). The framework-for-action (see 5.6.3.2) serves as an example for an individual's improvement plan. Navaratnam's (1997:8-13) detailed quality journey plan (see Appendix E) served *inter alia* as a valuable example when the QA policy of Tshiya Centre was designed. *'The plan is total in the sense that it must involve every process, every employee and every measurement which impacts on the details of implementing quality management in an organisation'* (Navaratnam 1997:14). Besides the advantages of planning, *'your schedule should be your servant and not your master'* (Covey 1992:73). From the literature study and discussions at the reflection meeting, suggestions regarding leadership/management (planning) emerged.

Regarding management and leadership, our study and experience have led us to believe that:

- The institution should be stable to establish a QA system (see 5.6.1.1)(Kistan 1998:13).
- A quality culture should be established, which takes many years (see 5.6.1.5). *'There is no quick, easy, free and fun approach that works'* (Covey 1992:17). The 'law of the farm' is applicable, where you prepare the soil, plant, water, feed, eradicate weeds, prune, and then harvest.
- QA processes should be integrated with planning and management at all levels (Strydom 2000:8).
- Start on a small scale, with willing staff, and allow quality activities to escalate. The described action research was done by volunteers. Voluntarism has the advantage that QA plans are immediately operational (Husén 1997:33).
- Mutual trust and collaboration are key concepts for QA (see 5.6.1.4).
- QA should be initiated and driven by the highest authority within the institution (see 2.4.3.1 par 1; DoE 1998d:147) *'who should design an environment where the creative juices flow, thus unleashing human potential'* (Charlton 1993:72).

- *'Managers ... must start with themselves. Once they achieve clarity about their personal vision and commitment, they can move on ... to engage others in the task'* (Thomas 1991:34). This statement enhances the finding of motivation (see 6.3.1).
- *'Hands-on leadership ... need(s) to be balanced with preparedness to delegate to others ...'* (Dinham *et al.* 1995:52). This quote refers to empowerment.
- Management should pursue a balance between *'light'* and more *'direct steerage'* (Subotskzy 1999:28).
- QA should not be seen as an add-on but the continuous improvement of every activity as *'a way of life and not a system that is suddenly imposed on the institution'* (Jacobs 1997a:151).
- A healthy climate for the QA process should be established (see 2.4.3.3 par 4).
- Special attention should be given to introduce new staff members to QA procedures.

Regarding planning *per se*, the following suggestions were put forward:

- A committee should lead the process (DoE 1998d:147).
- To ensure a high degree of ownership and acceptance, there should be involvement by all stakeholders in designing a QA policy (strategic plan) for the institution (see 5.6.2.2 c; Van Damme 1999:11; Dippenaar 1994:56; Appendix B).
- The QA policy should be in accordance with the available national QA policies.
- The SA Government, *'steering through policy priorities'*, requires improved institutional planning and the development of three-year institutional rolling plans (Badat in Strydom 2000:8).
- Planning should be realistic and vision oriented (see 5.8.4.3 b xiii; 5.9.1.1; 5.9.3.7).
- The vision should be inspiring and commitment to it is vital (Simons *et al.* 1993:197).
- All action plans should be guided by the QA policy (Jacobs 1997a:163).
- Consider the local context (see 5.6.2.2).
- Clear and simple procedures should be described (DoE 1998d:147). Make each process as simple as possible (Navaratnam 1997:17; DoE 1998d:141)(see 2.3.4.5 par 3).
- Plans should reflect specific quality indicators since benchmarking provides

important management information (see 2.3.1 par 2; 5.8.4.3 b ix & x; Minnaar 1993:69; Collins 1990:39; and DoE 1998d:147).

- The plan should indicate observations, assessments and managerial involvement (Buchel 1995:48; De Jong & Prins 1995:44).
- Consider Steyn's (1999:88) advice that one can '*concentrate too much on what is easily measured instead of what is important*'.

6.3.3 Implementation

6.3.3.1 *The concept: 'implementation'*

'Developing recommendations is easy. Implementing them is hard work ... and carrying (them) to completion will demand the best of us all' (Darling-Hammond 1996:198,199). NSE (DoE 1998d:147) describes implementation as '*taking action*' and '*monitoring action*': two of the eight phases of an internal quality review or self-evaluation cycle, similar to that of action research. The same document refers to implementation as maintaining your strengths and applying improvement plans to fill quality gaps. The White Paper 6: Special Needs Education (RSA 2001:4) describes implementation as '*the complex interface of policy and practice*'. While 'working' your plan during implementation, its viability is tested. During implementation '*performance problems need to be handled*' (Buchel 1995:44). Navaratnam (1997:11) outlines the implementation process in detail as the fourth phase of his quality journey (see Appendix E). Bakken and co-workers (1998:156) quotes a team member's remark after successful implementation, saying: '*We moved from nouns to verbs*'.

6.3.3.2 *The implementation of national quality assurance policies*

Seeing that politicians described the quality of teacher education as the biggest challenge confronting education in SA (see 1.1 par 3), participants at the reflection meeting were concerned about the absence of government inputs in the QA of teacher education two years after the above-mentioned public statement. It was reported in Chapter Two that the Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation supports the development of QA systems inside institutions (see 2.3.4.4). It was mentioned in Chapter Three that SA has a set of policies and laws in education and training that are at least equal to the best in the world (see 3.13 par 1). Unfortunately, South African educationists and educators of student teachers are, two years later, still waiting for the implementation of the QA policies. Perhaps the wait is worthwhile since OBE was implemented without thorough preparation,

resulting in limited success so far. Castle (1999:12) mentions *inter alia* that cascade training did not realise, leaving many practitioners uncertain, demotivated and passive. Huberty and Davis (1998:67) report that it takes '*some extra effort*' to implement your plan (see 2.3.5.8 par 1).

6.3.3.3 *A realistic plan: a precursor to implementation*

'It is apparent that one of the most critical elements of quality implementation ... is the plan. It provides the rationale for the implementation and guides activities' (Navaratnam 1997:15). Chapter Three reflects a critique by ten educationists on Minister Kadar Asmal's nine priorities for improving the current education and training system for SA (see 3.12.3.2 a-j). It was evident that the ways in which the Minister intended to address the priorities were idealistic and aimed to solve serious problems in a short time. Important was the oversight of: reality; valuable, available research findings and recommendations; a well-considered strategic plan; a focused strategy; management and organisational implications; lucid budgeting; sufficiently trained staff for implementation; SA's contextual differences; the tension between the principle of redress and the human capital theory; and a pragmatic plan to confront the AIDS pandemic. Overall, the ten educationists doubted whether the government would 'deliver'. Many reasons were discussed why South African educators at schools and those previously at CEs, do not trust the government to keep its promises (see 1.4 par 6; 3.13 par 3; 5.6.1.2). The ultimate need was for education leaders to turn to a realistic approach, and to spend time and energy and money only on a plan that could be implemented.

6.3.3.4 *Implementation calls for ownership of the action plan*

'Any QA system must make sure that change is met with commitment. It must use a participatory approach to the implementation of QA' (Morta 1999:7). Staff need to take ownership of policies for effective implementation. In 1996, the staff of Tshiya CE did not experience a bottom-up policy making process when they contributed suggestions toward the discussion document for NSTETD. The staff did not take ownership of the final document and the added educator's roles, described in the 1998 and 2000 editions, were neither designed into the Tshiya curricula nor ever implemented. The fact that policy makers changed their views more than once and expected practitioners to redesign their

already redesigned programs again, vastly demotivated staff. The staff were, after two-years input, *'fatigued ... and (tired of being) bogged down with paper work'* (Blake 1994:28). A government official responded to queries by saying: *'nothing is cast in stone'* and *'the transformation is a process'*.

6.3.3.5 *Lessons learned from Tshiya's curriculum re-design*

Two important lessons were learned from the Tshiya exercise to respond promptly to the government's instructions to re-curriculate its programs to an outcomes based approach. It was reported that Tshiya was one of three CEs in the country who responded and submitted re-curriculated programs to COTEP and HEDCOM. The first lesson was not to be so quick to respond to Government's instructions during a transformation period, even if they were given at national and provincial workshops and meetings, but rather to wait for official documents, spelling out the detail. The second lesson derived from the government's *'policy-orthodoxy turns taken in the unfolding of Curriculum 2005'* (Mahomed 1999:22) was not to facilitate any implementation until a realistic and cost effective strategic plan had been developed and approved by all stakeholders, and enough motivated and skilled staff were available and ready.

6.3.3.6 *Suggestions for taking action*

The fact that the government is dragging its feet to implement the designed QA policies for teacher education, for valid or invalid reasons, does not mean that QA for teacher education cannot be established by a motivated core group at institutional level. From literature, and on the basis of the action research done, the following suggestions for implementation are offered:

- Self-designed improvement plans guarantee ownership, a realistic workload, and commitment to the implementation thereof.
- Observation during implementation (reflection-in-action) ensures early detection of problems (see 1.8 par 11; *'Identification of problems and their causes are the beginning point for improvement'* (Navaratnam 1997:17).
- Evaluation and feedback are required to skilfully implement changes if necessary. *'People need to know how they are performing'* (Buchel 1995:50).
- Through observation, evidence should be gathered for reflection-on-action, enabling participants to respond to further quality gaps. *'Processes cannot be*

improved without data' (Navaratnam 1997:17).

- Monitor and adjust human and non-human resources allocation as the plan unfolds in reality.
- Implementation calls for co-ordination of all stakeholders involved.
- Good communication between participants and observers ensures ongoing ownership and participatory management of the plan (Sander 1995:104)(see 2.3.4.5 par 3).
- Collegial and managerial support ameliorate implementation. Success experiences will motivate participants to continue with subsequent improvement cycles.

Navaratnam (1997:17) sums it up as follows: *'implementing quality management in education requires a supportive [quality] environment such as leadership, management commitment, training, teamwork, empowerment, and persistence'*.

6.3.4 Teamwork

6.3.4.1 An answer to international education problems

At the beginning of the third millennium, Witt (in Gerlach 1999:372) is concerned about the USA's *'education challenge of emerging-crises proportions'*. He identifies collaboration as a less recognised part of the answer to the problem (see 2.3.5.4). He says: *'Shared awareness, shared responsibility, shared efforts will be required to meet the education challenge'*. In the same spirit Johnson (in Gerlach 1999:381) says the goal of collaboration is *'to establish an emotional bond through trust that develops documentation that appropriate success and learning have occurred for all participants'*. Taubman (2000:10) responds to the Learning and Skills Bill of the UK and declares that there is a new emphasis on co-operation and collaboration. Noonan and Hanson (1999:30) report from Canada that teamwork is encouraged among teachers and administrators. They stress the importance of finding meaningful ways to facilitate team organisation.

6.3.4.2 Implementing policy guidelines

Locally, NSE (DoE 1998d:144) mentions a *'team approach'* and *'collegiality'* as key features of an institution's internal review process. SAQA described critical cross-field outcomes which must be integrated into all qualifications. One of them is *'working effectively with others as a member of a team ...'* (DoE 1998d:40). OBE and Curriculum

2005 brought a new dimension of teamwork to the teaching and learning process as Wise and Leibrand (1996:204) put it: *'teacher practice is moving toward teaching as collegial, that is, characterized by sharing, working in teams, observing peers, and studying with colleagues'*. Seeing that an educator of student teachers should model to their students what is expected of them (see 6.3.5), they should be involved in teamwork themselves. Not only should teachers be involved in teamwork in executing their tasks as educators, but learning content should also be presented in an integrated mode. NSE (DoE 1998d:50) describes the five contextual roles of educators and mentions that *'the roles also "integrate" different disciplines or subject areas'*. In the exit level outcomes of a qualification, and in the curriculum of a learning program, the roles and competences must be integrated (DoE 1998d:53). NSE prescribes the integration of the critical outcomes into the exit-level outcomes of a qualification; and the integration of the five contextual roles and their applied competences into a sixth specialised role that is described in the exit level outcomes (DoE 1998d:60).

The action research revealed that there was no significant integration of different learning areas, or of content and Didactics (see 5.8.1.2 d; 5.9.1.2 par 2; 5.9.2.1 par 2). Canellos and co-workers (2000:91) say that there is *'a demand for ... professional education instructors who possess both the requisite knowledge base and the teaching skills to convey that information to other(s) ... This goal is challenging on a number of fronts'*. Collaboration is possible in any discipline and integration among knowledge bases is essential (Bakken *et al.* 1998:156; Sander 1995:104-5; Checkley & Kelly 1999:60). The same authors emphasise that students should be helped to transfer theory into practice (see 5.9.2.1 par 1).

The HEQC's QA-initiatives for CEs are stated in the *Founding Document: QA in CEs* (see 3.12.4). According to Nicholls (1999:43) who prepared the latter document, *'quality is best realised as a co-operative endeavour with an emphasis on collective wisdom'*. Quality is engendered in regular and facilitative interaction and professional dialogue within formal and informal contact opportunities like: staff meetings reviewing programs and teaching and learning activities; departmental and subject meetings; curriculum committee meetings; professional induction and development meetings; inter-institutional meetings; buddy-system interaction; examiner/moderator liaison; and TP meetings between schools

and the College. By means of all these consultative structures and interaction opportunities, standards can be established collaboratively.

Nicholls (1999:32) sees teamwork as part of a staff development program, which forms part of the validation process for an institution's programs. He mentions the importance of interaction between all stakeholders; that QA is about partnerships and sharing; that it is everybody's business; that something has to happen to the people at an institution; and that capacity-building goes hand in hand with QA (see 2.4.3.2 par 4; 6.3.2.3 par 3). Sifting through the wealth of ideas put forward in the national QA policies discussed in Chapter Three, one repeatedly comes across the recommendation for the establishment of a multitude of committees - all of them expected to work collaboratively in teams.

6.3.4.3 *A key requirement for action research*

Action research is a form of collective self-reflective enquiry, also described as participative problem-solving (Zuber-Skerritt 1992:15). Collaborative involvement is a hallmark of action research (see 4.2.1 par 4). NSE (1998d:145) expects providers of teacher education to put in place an internal review system with the characteristics of action research cycles. *'To ensure maximum benefit ... (it is expected to) ... involve all staff in some way or another'*, and it is stated again that, *'staff members should not do this in isolation'* (DoE 1998d:146).

In a cyclic action research mode, quality improvement means collaborative reflection to determine quality gaps; cooperative planning to improve focus areas, class visits during implementation for observation and peer-assessment in terms of a supportive buddy system; and reflection, as a team, for ongoing improvement cycles. Such practice will lead to transparency and accountability (Morta 1999:2). Teamwork also refers to interaction beyond collegial co-operation. It refers to collaborative actions between all stakeholders. Of special interest is co-operative learning by learners, which was one of the outcomes of the MT-improvement plan (see 5.9.3.3 par 3). The best way to learn about collaboration is to learn collaboratively (Wilson & Ball 1996:132; Lashaway-Bokina 2000:227).

6.3.4.4 *Team building*

Dippenaar (1994:57) mentions team building as an important aspect of creating an

environment conducive for effective teaching and learning. Kapp (1993:18-19) says an effective team has: reached consensus about clear goals; clearly spelled out responsibilities; effective leadership; effective decision making procedures; open relations and loyalty toward each other and the task; learned to handle conflict constructively; developed methods to evaluate their progress continuously. The same author further suggests that team building is managed by: showing personal interest in the personal and professional activities of staff; creating opportunities for development; delegating responsibilities to and empowering staff; acknowledging achievements; creating a healthy organisational climate in which staff feel free to be innovative and experience job satisfaction.

Darling-Hammond (1997:8) promotes the creation of learning organisations which form *'teams of adults who work with and help one another in structures that enable them to share responsibility for student learning'*. Such a learning organisation will: embrace diversity; expose problems and have problem-solving structures; regularly participate in critical review and reflection; nurture a culture that encourages trust and teamwork; and believe in ongoing renewal. According to Pritchett (in Bakken *et al.* 1998:156), there are several steps in building a high performance team. First, successful teams are not developed by chance, it takes time and communication is crucial. Second, each member needs to know and understand what is happening. Third, all members of the team must know their responsibilities - *'members support their teams best by playing their positions to perfection'*. Lastly, effective team members support each other and do not narrowly focus on their own speciality, but also have knowledge of the others' strengths. A successful team cannot function well unless the members individually work well, and the performance of each person affects the others (Bakken *et al.* 1998:157).

6.3.4.5 *Teamwork: a mutual exploration*

Nicholls (1999:38) quotes Alexander who referred to a process of quality enhancement as a move from paternalism to a partnership - a mutual exploration - the need to share concerns rather than putting up a good front. In the absence of *'honesty, reality and transparency'*, quality promotion cannot occur (Nicholls 1999:50). Among others,

teamwork has the advantage of synergising the different perspectives of the participants (Shanker 1996:224; Sander 1995:105). The fact that the outcome of a group's contribution is more than the sum total of the individuals' contributions, should serve as a motivational force to engage in teamwork toward quality improvement. Success ultimately depends upon what each team member brings to the environment. Witt (in Gerlach 1999:372) quotes Henry Ford saying: *'Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success'*.

6.3.5 Modelling

6.3.5.1 *Lead by example*

This research was *inter alia* motivated by lecturers not being good role models (see 1.2 par 1). The term 'modelling', as used in this thesis, refers to the example that lecturers set for their teacher students to follow in order to apply knowledge, skills and values expected of them for effective teaching (see 2.3.5.3 par 2; 5.9.3.4). Koeppen (1998:402) believes that modelling is a powerful, albeit at times informal, influence on student teachers. Teachers often remark: *'The example of my own teachers inspired me'* (Serow 1994:68). Teacher educators spend a great deal of time telling future teachers how to follow various models of instruction without showing them - they don't practice what they preach (Midkiff 1991:60; Wilson & Ball 1996:132).

Watching their own teachers, prospective teachers have built up ideas about what teachers do, what is worth learning, and how to assess students. They often have personal qualities that incline them toward their image of the role of a teacher ... Their experience is largely unexamined; the "apprenticeship of observation" (Wilson & Ball 1996:124).

The above quote reflects the taxing responsibility of educators toward prospective teachers. At the reflection meeting, role modelling was identified as a major concern to be addressed toward quality improvement of teacher education offered at Tshiya Centre (see 5.9.3.4 par 2). Serow (1994:71) shares this concern: he expresses regret that *'teacher education has been relatively slow to capitalize on role modeling by experienced classroom practitioners'*, since teachers' views are shaped by their own teachers. Andrew (1997:173) lists a combination of qualities required from teachers in the profession which should be modelled to students (see 2.3.5.7).

6.3.5.2 *The state of the art at Tshiya Centre*

The vision of Tshiya Centre is competent, confident, creative, and reflective teachers. Although this is an important topic, space does not allow a discussion of students' acquisition of subject knowledge. The focus of the action research was the professional development of student teachers. It was for many years policy at Tshiya Centre that students should receive one demonstration lesson per semester for every major subject. Facilitator-led discussions should follow the demonstration lessons so that students can learn from collaboratively identified strengths and weaknesses. During these discussions the facilitator models critical analysis. The students also enroll for a one year General Teaching Methods course which is unfortunately not integrated with Didactics or their demonstration lessons. Didactics widens the scope of teaching a specific major subject. These three aspects are far from sufficient for moulding students' perceptions and experiences of good teaching. TP allows for practical application of what was modelled to students.

Prospective teachers assume that they know how to lead discussions and how to lecture. After all, they've seen it at least a thousand times (Wilson & Ball 1996:132). The question is, what have they seen? In order to realise the vision referred to at the beginning of this section, it is imperative that pre-service teachers be exposed to good teaching (Checkley & Kelly 1999:59). In view of the fact that students are '*watching their own teachers*' (Wilson & Ball 1996:124), lecturers are charged with the responsibility to be role models of integrity, quality, merit and dedication with regard to all aspects of their person and profession. Warren (1998:93) reminds us that, purposely or not, all instructors are role models.

6.3.5.3 *Tapping from previous research regarding demonstration lessons*

Hockly (2000:118-125) describes a cyclic, model-based syllabus for teacher education called '*cognitive apprenticeship*'. Students are exposed to a cyclic, holistic approach of effective teaching, starting with a whole lesson and working down to an atomistic, item approach. To counter the possible fragmented view of a linear syllabus, experienced practitioners initially demonstrate a range of whole model lessons, using different techniques for a listening-speaking lesson; a reading-writing lesson; a vocabulary lesson,

etcetera. The lesson techniques are cyclically repeated for reinforcement and to enable students to compare the suitability of techniques to achieve certain outcomes. Students are not told which techniques are modelled to them. They note down every day the two most important things that they have learned. Their notes are later in the course discussed and linked to specific techniques and their benefits. Hockly's view is that students first need a confident grasp of classroom routines before critical analysis can be attempted. Demonstration lessons are immediately followed by tutor-observed TP sessions where students have to apply the technique modelled to them. The rationale is that students need to apply the techniques immediately after the model lesson (Huberty & Davis 1998:60).

Collins and co-workers (in Hockly 2000:122) mention three main steps involved in cognitive apprenticeship. The first step is '*modelling*', that is repetitive demonstration of complex activities (demonstrations); the second step is '*coaching*', referring to teachers' or experienced peers' active mentoring of students teaching (assessment and feedback during TP); and the third step is '*fading*', which concerns the gradual discontinuation of expert guidance (self- and peer-assessment of increasingly independent students in determining their own needs). Checkley and Kelly (1999:58) recount the same idea of cycles of demonstrations by a team of master teachers; imitation by students; and critique. They say '*the clinical exposure and practice in a power teaching environment works*'.

Hockly (2000:123) transmits some comments made by students about their experiences of the modelled lessons. Some are: '*I liked that we were not told, but shown how to do it; ... it was good that there was repetition of a basic method, like the blackboard was used often and not just one input session, like "OK, now everyone should have that perfect"*'; and '*I wouldn't have had a clue really, because I'd not taught before*'. The above comments show how inexperienced students keenly feel the need for a model. One further comment urges toward a sensitive approach. The student said: '*When you see it done perfectly, the gap between what you see and your own abilities can be a bit too wide, and that can be very demotivating for some people because they can never see they can bridge that gap*'. To curb the above mentioned feeling of inability, educators need to transparently model their planning as a reflective, recursive process. '*We must make our own planning explicit*

to our students; share our decision-making as we plan for their instruction ... grappling with ideas is an example of teaching at its best' (Koeppen 1998:409).

6.3.5.4 Recommendations for modelling

- Regarding the first finding of this research, that is motivation, appoint staff members who are intrinsically motivated and who see their teaching as a calling (see 6.3.1.1 par 1). A great deal of good role modelling is embedded in the inherent characteristics of a person.
- Regarding the second finding of this research, that is leadership/management (planning), a good role model is an effective manager of himself and his work (Buchel 1995:5); is not just interested in '*staying afloat ... (but) ... swimming ahead*' (Rosen 1991:9); and admits that planning is a macro component of good teaching.
- Continuous and quality-focused staff development will enable staff to be/stay informed and worthy role models (see 6.3.1.2 c, d, & e).
- Regarding the third finding of this research, that is implementation, a good role model is a person who changes theory into practice (see 6.3.3.1 par 1).
- Regarding the fourth finding of this research, that is teamwork, a good role model's actions are characterized by sharing, working in teams, observing peers, and studying with colleagues (see 6.3.4.2 par 1).
- Educators have to model the six contextual roles that educators have to play, and their applied competences (DoE 1998d:47-54). These are the academic requirements of the profession.
- Educators have to promote and model the ethics and values of professionalism as required by SACE, as well as the occupational requirements of the NDoE and the ELRC (see 3.11.2; 3.11.3 par 4).

In accordance with NSE (DoE 2000:32), this research focused on the professional development of student teachers. The following recommendations are directed toward modelling the facilitation of learning:

- School teachers act as complementary role models and mentors to student teachers during TP. Therefore, schools should carefully be selected for this purpose and an ongoing relationship between the HEI and these schools should be nurtured.

- Professional development schools are utilised in the USA for internship (Serow 1994:71). If a student is 'personally' linked with a school where an experienced teacher teaches his/her major subject(s), such a role model can hugely contribute as a mentor toward a student's professional development. Although internship does not normally take place at present in SA, students can be placed at such schools for TP; they can visit the schools as often as possible; and make contact with the teachers for completing assignments of a practical nature *etcetera*. Opportunities should be created where the student can 'shadow the teacher'.
- All lecturers presenting classes to student teachers should unite their efforts to prepare students for TP sessions. A team approach is required so that students may observe different lecturers modelling the teaching of different subjects to them, each according to his/her own flair and talents (see 6.3.4.2 par 2, 3). Such modelling should also include the integration of learning areas/subjects.
- Being role models, lecturers should ensure that every lesson is actually a model lesson - observed by their students.
- According to NSTETD (DoE 1997a:49) and Warren (1998:93), the presentation of Didactics should be integrated with subject content. Lecturers will model this requirement if they present their content lessons, according to a variety of different teaching techniques, suitable for specific topics - just as they expect their students to do. Extra time will not be needed for the presentation of the model lesson but an extra period will be needed to discuss it. In such a way students are continually prepared to apply different lesson techniques during TP. A cyclic approach is recommended (see 6.3.5.3).
- Thorough feedback and discussions of students' lessons during TP will expand the value thereof to a beneficial learning experience (see Collins's second step of coaching in 6.3.5.3 par 2). Performance during TP can be seen as the hub of the students' accumulated knowledge and skills. The expectation of NSE (DoE 2000:31) that students' competence should be assessed in an applied and integrated way, can be adhered to during TP assessments. Feedback is an important part of learner support (Nicholls 1999:31; Fourie 2000:52). Furthermore, if lecturers expect their students to give feedback to their learners, lecturers should model the skill.

- Immediately after TP, when all the students are back in class, students should be allowed to share their experiences and views with each other and the tutor for a follow-up session, called '*fine tuning*' by Hockly (2000:122) (see 5.9.1.7).

Follow-up is as important as learning the strategy. Feedback and support will keep the process going. Debriefing helps participants share ideas, what worked, what didn't. It's reinforcing ... and helps to motivate continued use of strategies. It helps trainers understand concerns and develop ideas for future training (Huberty & Davis 1998:59).

6.4 CONCLUSION

In light of the transformation of teacher education and since the complexities surrounding the development of QA at the national and institutional level cannot be overestimated, the focus of this research was on the micro, operational level where volunteers improved their own professional activities until further guidelines are put forward by the HEQC. According to Singh (2000:7), QA is getting '*everyone involved in thinking about what they are doing*'. The described findings of this research emerged from personal improvement plans that were action researched by staff who '*got involved in what they were doing*'. The five findings described in this chapter are all interrelated and in the absence of any one of them, increased levels of quality will hardly be possible. It was stated that intrinsic motivation is a precursor leading toward proficient leadership/management (planning), high-performance implementation, effective teamwork toward a common end, and meritorious modelling. These findings all focus on the input of management, staff and students for the sake of improvement.

In an effort not to underestimate the complexity of quality activities or to approach them in an unco-ordinated manner, these findings should be promoted and implemented institution-wide. A QA system cannot be established in a vacuum, but must be the culmination of a process of symbiotic '*mutual crafting*' with the existing organisational culture, strategy, structures and processes, in particular with strategic planning of the institution. An organic, evolutionary approach to QA is desired. It includes the forging of

a strong organisational alloy of shared understanding and commitment across institution and faculty levels. One of the features of a supple approach to QA is its evolutionary nature: incremental and continuing progress is allowed *'from whatever base'* (Fourie 2000:54) - as in the case of this action research being done by volunteers, at micro level. It was their intention to do base-line research from where the institution could progress to achieve institutionalised quality objectives.

In order to focus on the 'big picture' again, a summation of the research and final perspectives are presented in Chapter Seven.

FINAL PERSPECTIVES

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to summarise the course of this study. Final perspectives are given and recommendations are made.

7.2 AWARENESS OF THE NEED FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE

The report on the National Teacher Education Audit (DoE 1995:52-79) commented on the poor quality of teacher education at CEs. Literature and research reports reiterated the concern, like that of Sekete (1998:26):

If education is to deliver the well-educated human resources needed for South Africa ... those who educate the teachers will have to be equipped to send teachers into the world who are professionally and in every respect well-prepared for their daunting task. However, there are serious questions about the capacity of those institutions where our teachers are being educated ... especially at our colleges of education.

During a Free State provincial workshop on the revision of NSTETD (DoE 1997a), the concept of QA was for the first time introduced to delegates from CEs, which included myself as delegate from Tshiya CE. An ultimatum was delivered to CEs. It was stated that CEs would have five years to prepare themselves for an external quality evaluation, determining their future. Nine QA committees were established at Tshiya CE to oversee quality improvement in preparation for the external evaluation. The seriousness of the matter motivated me to start researching QA to lead one of the committees of which I was the convenor.

The NCHE Report (1996b:8,9) recommended the establishment of a single coherent national HE system and the incorporation of CEs into universities and technikons. During

1999, the rightsizing of the HE sector in SA started and it was decided that CEs would be rationalised. In the *Sowetan* of 15 June 2000, Minister Kadar Asmal declared Tshiya CE a sub-division of UNIQWA, with effect from 1 January 2001. This announcement put an end to any expectations that Government would still implement an external quality evaluation of CEs, as promised. Many staff members at Tshiya CE displayed low morale and were no longer interested in the QA campaign. Since QA was not motivated only by an external threat but by a real concern for the quality of the prospective teachers entering the profession, the QA efforts of volunteers continued at Tshiya Centre.

7.3 A LITERATURE STUDY REGARDING QUALITY AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

Since quality is a highly contested concept, different notions thereof were viewed to address the question *What?* we were dealing with. The different views expressed in policy documents on quality were perused as well. The concept QA was studied, as well as *Why?* it is needed. Notions of standards were examined to comprehend their place in the QA cycle. Scrutinizing *How?* and *By Whom?* quality assessment should be done, followed. The issue of QA at CEs was reviewed and a critique of QA was recorded.

7.4 A STUDY OF THE NATIONAL QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICIES ON TEACHER EDUCATION

An extended literature study regarding the South African national QA policies was done. It included the NCHE report; HE Policy Papers, including *The Green Paper on Higher Education*, *The White Paper on Higher Education Transformation*, and *The Higher Education Act*. The NQF as linchpin of the government's plan for systemic transformation of the education system was reviewed. The establishment and activities of SAQA were attended to, including the two sets of bodies under its authority: the SGBs and the NSBs, responsible for the standard setting and registration of unit standards and qualifications on the NQF; and the different ETQAs of which the CHE, with its established HEQC, is involved with QA of HE. Subsequently a study was made of policy development for QA in teacher education, of which NSE was most substantial. Three more policy documents regulating the teaching profession were studied, which are: the *SACE Code of Conduct*, the *ELRC Manual for Developmental Appraisal*, and the *NDoE Duties and Responsibilities*

of Educators. An overview of two more documents from the NDoE regarding QA of teacher education followed. They are: *Guidelines on Quality Assurance in Teacher Education*, and *A Policy Framework for QA in the Education and Training System in South Africa*. Minister Kadar Asmal's nine priorities to improve education in SA were viewed and a critique from the EPU at WITS, was reported. Finally, the HEQC's QA initiatives for CEs in the document: *Quality Assurance in Colleges of Education: A Founding Document* were reviewed.

7.5 THE ACTION RESEARCH: A CASE STUDY

The research was designed to obtain reliable and valid information to critically describe the establishment of a QA system for teacher education programs at Tshiya Centre, which was purposefully sampled for the case study. Action research was utilised as the most appropriate method. The action research started with the establishment of a QA Committee to steer the action. As part of an awareness campaign, two QA seminars were held. Lessons learned from the literature study were considered to design a QA policy. The QA policy's framework-for-action was action researched by volunteers who compiled and implemented improvement plans for their own teaching and learning at Tshiya Centre from January - July 2001.

Data was collected by means of descriptions of the action research phases. Preliminary data collection was done through observations, literature study, workshops, seminars, meetings and initial, informal, conversational interviews. A SWOT-analysis, strategic planning, implementation, observation, and reflection provided data on the action. Data analysis was done by reflection-in-action as well as comprehensive evaluation done during reflection-on-action. During a formal reflection meeting, the researchers presented their research to evaluators for validation. Strengths and weaknesses of the individuals' improvement plans and the total QA plan were noted.

7.6 FINDINGS OF ACTION RESEARCH

Documents used for planning, presentations and observations, as well as work done by students before and after the QA project, were used to identify, corroborate and cluster

findings from two improvement plans in order to portray findings of the total action research. At a day-long reflection meeting the research was discussed and validated. Further clustering led toward five final findings for recommendation.

7.7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

The described findings of the research emerged from personal improvement plans that were action researched by staff who 'got involved in what they were doing'. The five findings described in Chapter Six are all interrelated and in the absence of any one of them, increased levels of quality will hardly be possible. Intrinsic motivation was described as a precursor leading toward leadership/management (planning), implementation, teamwork, and modelling. It was recommended that the findings of the base-line research done by volunteers be utilised by the institution for the establishment of an institutionalised QA system.

7.8 PROBLEMS AND ADJUSTMENTS

During the course of this research, a number of problems had to be overcome.

- It was a mammoth task to work through the vast, available literature on quality and QA (see 1.5 par 4).
- It was not easy to facilitate action research at my own institution since some staff members might have reasoned that the effort requested from the staff, was to the benefit merely of myself as researcher.
- The guest speaker for the first QA seminar fell ill the day before the presentation, and I had to take her place with overnight-time to prepare.
- The second QA seminar had to be postponed for three months since the Dean of the Faculty of Education at UNIQWA, and my contact person at UNIQWA for the research, had been in a motor accident. Once again the same guest speaker could not come and I was invited, on very short notice, to take her place.
- The research was done during the rightsizing of the HE sector. When the research started in 1998, Tshiya CE was earmarked to phase into a HEI. Two years later it was announced that Tshiya CE would be rationalised. The announcement demotivated everybody involved, myself included. The literature study as well as

the research design were already completed at that stage. At that point in time I considered changing the research topic to a qualitative study of the numerous problems encountered at the various CEs during the transformation period. In the end it was decided that QA for teacher education was so important that research was seriously needed. I discussed these problems with the QA Committee and it was decided to continue, despite the problems, and to adapt plans where necessary.

- At the onset of the research, Tshiya CE was the selected site for the case study. With the rationalisation it was announced that Tshiya CE would be phased into UNIQWA. It then seemed more appropriate that the institution for the action research should be UNIQWA where the 'results' of the research could subsequently be utilised. Because of reasons discussed (see 5.5), action research was not viable at UNIQWA, who were phasing into UFS, and the site for the research once again became Tshiya Centre.
- With regard to the establishment of the steering committee, there was uncertainty as to whether it should continue as a Tshiya Centre committee or whether staff members from UNIQWA should be included. An attempt was made to establish a joint committee, but the reality, as described, pointed us back to the staff of Tshiya Centre.
- The design of the QA policy was not an easy task since there was no example to follow. Use was made of the literature study to reach consensus on many issues.
- Because of the rationalisation process, the QA Committee realised that the action research could not continue at an institutionalised level as initially planned. It was decided to ask for volunteers and to change the focus to personal improvement plans.
- The transfer of staff members from the College to schools during 2000 and 2001, was a serious problem. One of the three volunteers, who developed an improvement plan for English, was transferred early in 2001 and did not implement his plan. Some of the members of the QA Committee were transferred to schools as far as 80 km from the College and had to travel to the College for meetings. Later in the year, staff members who joined Tshiya Centre temporarily were invited to join meetings in the absence of transferred members.

- In April 2001, my computer was stolen with the research report on the hard disc. Information captured during the previous two months was lost, of which I did not have a back-up file or a printed copy. Some information could never be retrieved.
- Although I made an honest effort, it can be assumed that it was not always possible for me to be totally objective since I was heavily involved in QA activities at Tshiya before and during the research.

7.9 FINAL PERSPECTIVES

When this research started in 1998, Government gave CEs an ultimatum to get ready for an external quality evaluation. QA activities were initiated at Tshiya CE and I was involved as staff member. Literature, news bulletins, newspapers, various conferences and meetings confirmed the need for QA in teacher education. Literature study and international conferences confirmed QA to be a world-wide issue. Action research was initiated and five final findings emerged.

The following perspectives were obtained from this study:

- The South African QA policies delegate the responsibility for the development of a QA system to individual institutions.
- The HEQC is the statutory body to provide guidelines for QA in HEIs. HEIs are accountable to the ETQA (HEQC) for management, development and delivery of learning programs, as well as for ensuring the quality of the learning experience according to the requirements of the registered qualifications. Until other or more requirements than those of NSE (DoE 1998d & 2000) are provided for teacher education, the present conditions are observed. The internal assessment at HEIs should be guided by the external assessment requirements, which is still to be developed.
- NSE (DoE 1998d:144) expect an internal quality review cycle, similar to that of action research, to operate at institutions offering teacher education.
- The QA system should be rooted in the culture of the institution.
- QA needs to be initiated and driven by the highest authority in the institution.
- An institution's QA policy serves as its strategic plan for QA and guides action plans. It should annually be revised.

- All stakeholders should draft the policy collaboratively to ensure ownership.
- An institution should determine and describe its notion of quality since it guides the procedures and assessment.
- QA should not be an add-on but a reflection upon and an improvement of one's everyday activities.
- Different areas of focus should receive attention in multi-year cycles.
- The plan should be cyclical, relevant and realistic. It should be kept simple and staff should not be overburdened with paperwork.
- Since QA is about meeting expectations, detailed quality criteria should be formulated to measure input, through put, and output.
- Staff members should develop their own improvement plans to ensure a bottom-up, realistic and accepted QA plan.
- It is advisable not to tackle too much at first.
- QA needs adequate funding.
- QA is about people. The authorities should invest in staff development.
- Transparency and effective communication are top priorities.
- Continuous improvement of quality calls for openness, honesty, internal self-evaluation and a transformative approach, collaboratively applied by all staff members.
- Motivation is the precursor toward proficient leadership/management (planning), high-performance implementation, effective teamwork, and meritorious modelling.
- For peer support, institutions are encouraged to become part of consortia.

7.10 RECOMMENDATIONS

To ensure that the serious concern regarding teacher education in SA is realistically addressed, QA measures must become operational. The following are recommended:

- Without external threats and incentives from the DoE, the cliché will prevail: 'How do we motivate staff for QA' (institutional auditing)? If not, the situation will remain unchanged, being that only volunteers will quality-assure their work while others are allowed to continue 'as usual' without being held to account.
- Holistic plans drawn up by Government should be realistic and meticulously implemented.

- The government should remedy relationships of trust with staff involved in teacher education.
- Departments of education should motivate and equip leaders/managers for their task as leaders/managers of quality.
- Further research is suggested regarding:
 - in-service training for leaders/managers regarding their task as leaders/managers of quality (Chapter Six)
 - the development of in-service training for educators to comply with requirements of national policies for educators (see 3.11)
 - the implementation of an appraisal system in teacher education for extraordinary achievements (see 3.11.3)
 - the recovering of motivated, professional, and knowledgeable former CE-staff, now scattered throughout the school system, to use their expertise in teacher education
 - the formulated research questions that could not be attended to during the time of this research (see 1.6.3)

7.11 IN CONCLUSION

Effective institutions are those where the process of self-evaluation is absolutely integral to the daily functioning of the institution. In particular, these processes should be designed in a way that ... the difference between where we are and where we want to be ... are continually identified and then followed by the development of measures to narrow or close these gaps (DoE 1998d:144).

Regarding quality promotion in teacher education, the aim of the research was to urge leaders/managers and facilitators of learning to regularly answer a few fundamental questions during their everyday activities. These are:

What are you trying to do?

Does it work?

How can you improve it?

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CORE COMPETENCY AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Prof A Gnanam

Chairman of the National Assessment and Accreditation Council, Bangalore
(Leading Biologist and educational administrator)

Key concepts from transparencies used during presentation of paper at International Conference: Excellence through self-evaluation - towards a quality culture in higher/ further education. Bloemfontein: UFS. 31 Aug - 2 Sept 1999

Focus on Core Competency due to (a) changing trend in the job market; (b) premium on higher levels of academic knowledge and core skills; and (c) maturity that develops with the additional years spent in the system.

1. WHAT A GRADUATE SHOULD KNOW AND BE ABLE TO DO ON COMPLETION OF HIS DEGREE PROGRAM

- subject knowledge and understanding
- subject-specific skills
- cognitive skills (subject neutral)
- general skills (subject neutral)

1.1 Cognitive skills (subject neutral)

Demonstrate the skills necessary to plan, conduct and report a project; synthesise information/data from a variety of sources; analyse, evaluate/interpret human performance; apply various principles and methodologies to the solution of problems; and formulate and test concepts and hypotheses.

1.2 General skills (subject neutral)

They refer to the capacity to learn (in familiar/unfamiliar situations); communicate effectively (written, verbal, graphical); numerical skills appropriate to subject of study specialisation; competent use of information technology; be able to work as part of a team; and to work independently.

2. QUALITIES, SKILLS AND CAPABILITIES

- intellectual
- practical
- personal and social

2.1 Intellectual

They are critical reasoning; problem solving; understanding/applying concepts; analysis and interpretation; flexibility/adaptability; and integration of knowledge.

2.2 Practical

They are practical skills in laboratory, field, community or employment situations; information processing skills; and professional skills.

2.3 Personal and social

They are independence/self-reliance; enterprise and resourcefulness; self-motivation; teamwork; planning and organisation skills; communication; and good learning skills.

Graduates are preferred in the labour market because of their (a) practical application of knowledge; (b) greater confidence; (c) willingness to learn; (d) the amount of information they are exposed to; (e) their urge to excel in the job; (f) ability to lead; (g) ability to accept individual responsibilities and (h) ability to learn new tasks with fewer instructions.

3. CORE COMPETENCIES IN THE CHANGING CONTEXT

3.1 Key skills of Dearing report

- communication
- numeracy
- practical use of information technology
- learning how to learn

3.2 Presentation of these key skills:

- A parallel model refers to add-on modules on 'competency development'.
- An integrated model means redesigning the existing programs to include the key skills. The integrated model is preferred which includes project work; surprise tests; individual assignments; field visits; student seminars; internships; and educational and cultural activities.

4. SUBJECT NEUTRAL COMPETENCIES TO BE PROMOTED

- process competencies
- management related competencies
- presentational competencies
- personal competencies

4.1 Process competencies

They refer to problem formulation; attention to detail; numeracy; assessing information; literacy; sifting of evidence; computing; use of literature; laboratory competencies; data analysis; safety; and developing arguments.

4.2 Presentational competencies

These are language; data presentation; oral communication; report writing; and word processing.

4.3 Management related competencies

These are project planning; setting objectives; project management; personal management; time management; working to deadlines; working with others; and coping with crises.

4.4 Personal competencies

They are independence; self confidence; self reliance; self discipline; and self enquiry.

QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

TSHIYA CENTRE

FEBRUARY 2001

*'Quality rewards itself'*¹

1. THE VISION AND THE MISSION

1.1 The Vision

competent, confident, creative and reflective educators and facilitators of learning for the Free State, as part of the South African environment

1.2 The Mission

- to educate and develop teachers to teach effectively and creatively in order to facilitate learning
- to instil in student teachers a sense of responsibility and integrity, by providing them with appropriate knowledge, skills, values and attitudes which take cognisance of the political, economic, environmental and social context in which the teaching and learning are to occur
- to develop competent teachers with a sense of vision which reflects values aimed at enabling to develop as persons who are well informed, rational, creative, reflective and critical discerners, and yet are tolerant and compassionate human beings, who have the courage to take risks, fortitude to handle failure and a belief in the value of life
- to sensitise students to take cognisance of the inequities in society, of the transition to a democratic, non-racial, non-sexist, equitable society and to create an awareness of the freedoms and responsibilities of human beings
- to facilitate adaptation to a modern society, and to be empowered to establish and maintain a culture of teaching and learning
- the discipline of the Centre is based on the rules and regulations that are controlled by the various governing bodies of the Centre
- interaction between the Centre and parents, as well as continuous contact with parents, is essential
- staff members always act in *loco parentis*

2. THE INSTITUTION'S NOTION OF QUALITY

An institution's definition of quality will in part determine the strategies it will employ to assure or improve it (Sallis 1994:231).

2.1 Five classic notions

Harvey and Green's (1993:11-27) classic description of five discreet but inter-related ways of thinking about quality in HE are:

- the exceptional view - excellence

¹The quality slogan of the University of the Western Cape.

- a consistent or flawless outcome - measured against outcomes reached
- fitness for purpose - an institution fulfils its mission
- value for money - Government requires accountability from HEIs
- transformation - the student as a person is being transformed; value is added
- fitness of purpose - consider in the turbulence of the changes in South African HE

2.2 Policy guidelines

Views expressed in policy documents are:

- *Norms and Standards for Educators*: fitness for purpose - a workable definition in the CE framework; the ability of the institution to fulfill its mission, programs, aims and objectives, determined on the basis of clients' needs and with reference to desired outcomes
- *Guidelines on QA in Teacher Education*: fitness for purpose
- *A Founding Document: Quality in the College of Education Sector*. '... the inverse side of caring... a feeling of identification with what one is doing' - a good descriptor of a professional educator and a worthy goal of quality professional teacher education
- *Green Paper on HE*: accountability and value for money
- *The White Paper on Higher Education Transformation*: to meet the mission in the sense of ideals and excellence
- *The Higher Education Quality Committee*: The Task Team proposed a three fold approach to quality which is: fitness for purpose (to be established through a consideration of the system and stakeholder needs - the goals indicated in the White Paper on HE provide the framework for debate); value for money; and potential for transformation
- *The HEQC Founding Document*: excellence; accountability and consistency

2.3 Tshiya Centre's notion

From the above mentioned notions of quality, Tshiya Centre chose to pursue the overarching notion of fitness for purpose, transformation and value for money.

3. PRINCIPLES TO ACKNOWLEDGE IN THE QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

3.1 General principles

Principles generally applied in QA systems are:

- accountability
- development (formative nature - reflect professional growth)
- reflection (quality is not an add-on but a fresh perspective on your everyday life - the ELRC Manual advocates reflective practice)
- simplicity
- innovation
- transparency

3.2 Principles from Total Quality Management

TQM has five worthwhile principles which are widely applied by technikons. They are to:

- concentrate on the customer
- do the right things and do things right
- communicate and educate

- measure, record and reflect
- do it together - mutual trust - *Tirisano*

3.3 Tshiya Centre's principles

Tshiya Centre opted for all the general principles (see 3.1), plus the spirit of *Tirisano*.

4. A FRAMEWORK-FOR-ACTION

QA is a journey. It is a long-term organisational commitment to quality. '*Quality is never achieved but always something to be striven for*' (Strydom 1997b:2).

4.1 Focus area

A focus area should be determined for a specific period of time. (For the research, the implementation of the QA policy was suggested for one semester).

4.2 Framework-for-action

All staff members (for the purpose of the research, only voluntary participants), involved in the focus area decided upon, are requested to:

4.2.1 Plan

- Compile own job description.
- Discuss it with the HOD for approval (line managers).
- Determine strengths and weaknesses for task execution (self-, peer- and student assessment).
- Determine quality gaps emerging from the 'weaknesses'. Determine a focus area.
- Set goals for a period of time (a semester) to narrow the quality gaps.
- Formulate outcomes for every goal.
- Draft PIs for every outcome to serve as performance criteria during assessment. Attend to evidence requirements.
- Discuss it once again with the HOD for approval (line managers).
- Plan for observation during implementation. For data gathering, prepare a diary, develop questionnaires, checklists or structured questions to use during discussions.
- Submit the plan to the HOD and the head of the institution (Director).

4.2.2 Implement and observe

- Implement the plan.
- Observe all planned actions. Initiate self-observation, a 'buddy-system' for class visits and peer-assessment, and discussions (only discussions if the area is not teaching).
- Make use of student assessment - they are the clients.
- Compile a portfolio for the safe-keeping of gathered data. Keep a diary and file all evidence (PIs) of progress, achievement of outcomes and problems encountered; file short notes of all discussions.
- Regular (initially every two weeks and later once a month) report-back sessions should take place for learning and support of all involved - current and past practices should be compared.
- Complete an interim self-evaluation report at the end of each term (a simple fill-in form, collaboratively designed by all staff members involved).

- g. Discuss it with colleagues and the HOD for learning and support.
- h. Complete a self-evaluation report at the end of the planned period/semester.
- i. Submit the report to the HOD and the Director.

4.2.3 *Reflect*

- a. If possible, invite knowledgeable external assessors.
- b. Prepare and present feedback of experiences to all involved in the focus area.
- c. Provide evidence of achievements.
- d. By evaluating the outcomes against the stated PIs, discuss and reflect upon the process and the degree of achievement of the planned goals.
- e. Determine strengths to celebrate and weaknesses to demarcate further quality gaps.
- f. Present one or more realistic options for solving real or potential problems.

4.2.4 *Re-plan*

- a. Set goals, outcomes and PIs for the next period of time.
- b. Repeat the process.

5. STRUCTURES AND PROCEDURES

5.1 Structures

- leadership: the Directorate
- a 'lean and agile' QA steering committee - in the absence of a QA officer
- QA committees: according to focus areas
- the existing hierarchical structures are utilised

The committee approach is well established at Tshiya Centre. Committees (interest groups) are formed for the QA focus area(s) decided upon for a semester/year. QA will be steered and managed by the highest authority in the institution, which is the Directorate at Tshiya Centre. The Directorate serves as the quality council.

5.2 Procedures

According to Navaratnam (1997:7-13), the following six interrelated and interdependent core procedures need to be established over a period of three years. Navaratnam's (1997:14) quality journey plan '*considers the core values and strategies of the major national quality awards such as the Australian Quality Award and the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award*'. Tshiya Centre wishes to follow suit. The detail of each phase do not claim to be complete, neither are they necessarily arranged to be implemented in the mentioned sequence (see Appendix E).

5.2.1 *Phase 1: Awareness and self-assessment*

- management makes a public commitment to quality
- conduct regular 'awareness' sessions
- organise self-assessment
- establish QA committees
- revisit the vision and mission (regarding client needs)
- do a situation analysis
- determine focus areas (see 4.1)

5.2.2 *Phase 2: Training, team-building and communication*

- compile a staff development plan
- organise regular motivation and team-building sessions
- establish functional and cross-functional teams
- develop communication strategies
- become a learning organisation

5.2.3 *Phase 3: Quality planning*

- develop long and short-term quality plans for the institution
- implement the framework-for-action (see 4.2)
- establish the practice of a QA portfolio for every staff member - a requirement laid down by the HEQC
- share the management's planning
- measure and report on progress
- identify implementation issues and refine plans

5.2.4 *Phase 4: Implementation and observation process*

- allocate resources
- confirm responsibilities
- confirm target dates
- find alternatives to emerging problems
- constantly monitor staff attitudes and facilitate remedial actions
- initiate regular feedback sessions
- constantly communicate the 'big picture'

5.2.5 *Phase 5: Comprehensive evaluation*

- organise feedback-presentations per focus area
- invite knowledgeable, external assessors
- compare achieved outcomes with previously set goals
- identify strengths and weaknesses
- take note of best practices
- celebrate successes and find solutions to 'weaknesses'

5.2.6 *Phase 6: Continuous improvement*

- revisit client needs, vision and mission
- revisit management commitment
- revisit the QA policy
- revisit staff attitudes
- revisit allocation of resources
- explore new ideas
- nurture a quality culture
- use available data to re-plan for the next period of time

6. **ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES**

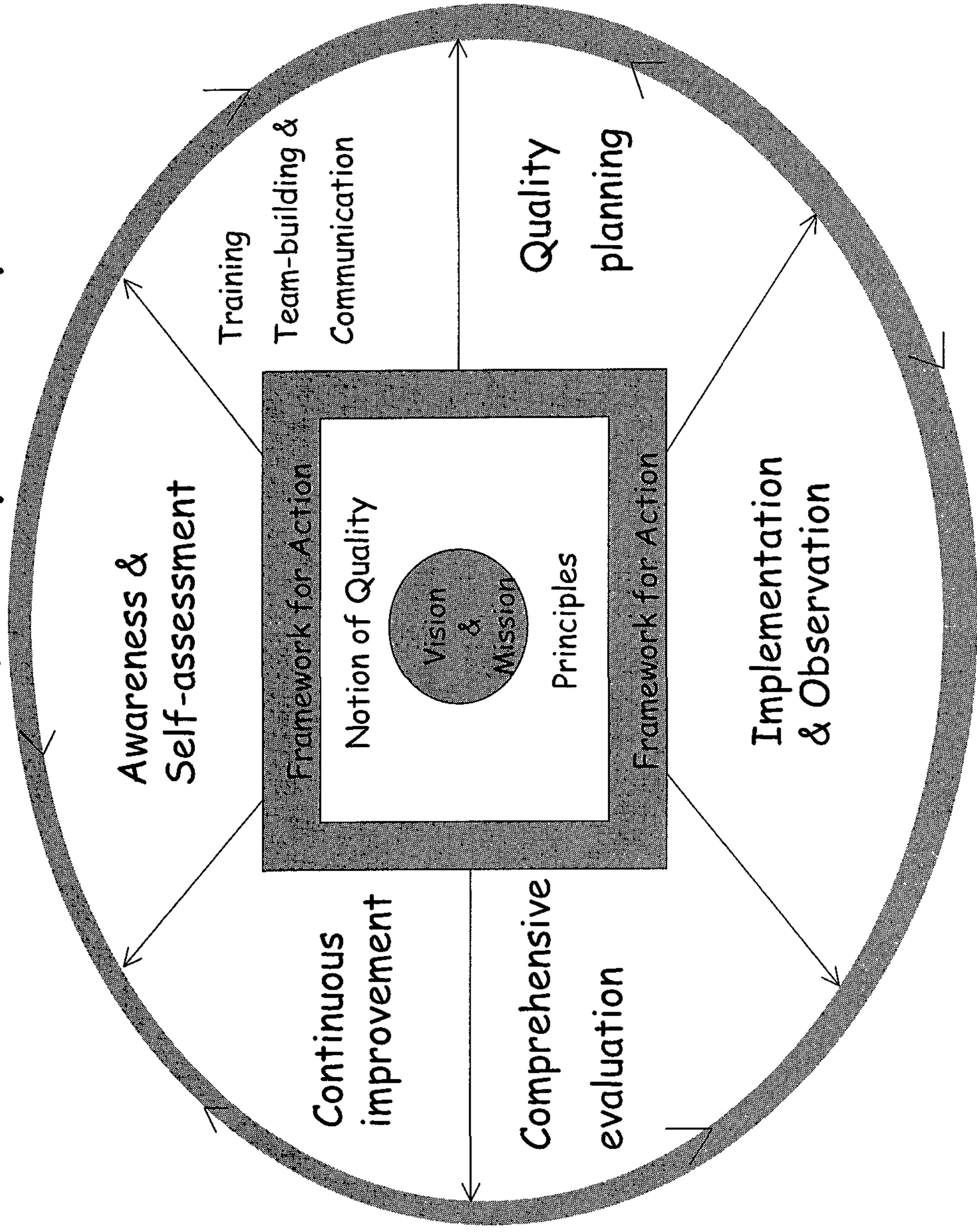
- In line with the principle of transparency, all assessment strategies are developed in advance, in consultation with all stakeholders.
- In line with the principle of simplicity, paperwork is kept to a minimum.

- All assessment is done in a generic and formative mode.
- According to the framework-for-action (see 4.2), all staff members develop their own performance criteria. They are collaboratively accepted by the focus area committee and the line managers.
- A combination of self- and external, independent assessment leads to improvement.
- External peer-assessment is seen as assistance and support.
- Cognisance is taken of the fact that the HEQC *'will focus its attention on teaching and learning systems, processes and outcomes of higher education provision'* (HEQC Founding Document 2000:15).

7. REVIEW MECHANISMS

All stakeholders annually review their QA policy, structures and procedures in a comparative way with those of other HEIs. External input is requested. A quality driven HE system; alignment with national QA policy documents; relevant teacher education programs registered on the NQF, and continuous quality enhancement with the needs of the clients and the community in mind, serve as motivation for regular review and upgrading of the QA system. According to their involvement, all stakeholders will be called upon to provide evidence of reviews done and improvement planned.

271: Scheme of QA Policy for Tshiya Centre



MICRO TEACHING-IMPROVEMENT PLAN**EM SMUTS - FEBRUARY - JUNE 2001****DEPARTMENT OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES AND TEACHING PRACTICE****1. JOB DESCRIPTION**

For a classification of duties, the roles expected to be performed by every educator and described in NSE (DoE 2000:13,14), served as a guideline. It is further in line with the advice of Wise and Leibrand (1996:203) that educators should model instructional skills expected of learners.

Rating: U = underachieved T = threshold C = credit M = merit

1.1 Learning mediator

U T C M

	U	T	C	M
1.1.1 TP: prepare students for TP school sessions			X	
1.1.2 MT: Facilitate skill development in MT classes and lead		X		
1.1.3 Prof Studies: Facilitate theoretical and practical classes for			X	

1.2 Interpreter and designer of learning programs and materials

U T C M

	U	T	C	M
1.2.1 TP documents for school sessions			X	
1.2.2 TP documents for TP portfolio			X	
1.2.3 TP documents for external moderation			X	
1.2.4 SYSTEM-internship documents			X	
1.2.5 MT learning material and coding forms		X		
1.2.6 Teaching Media learning material			X	

1.3 Assessor

U T C M

	U	T	C	M
1.3.1 TP portfolios		X		
1.3.2 MT preparations and presentations		X		
1.3.3 SYSTEM internship portfolios		X		
1.3.4 Teaching Media: formative and summative			X	
1.3.5 Moderator: Prof Studies fields and TP			X	

1.4 Liaison Officer	U	T	C	M
1.4.1 Organise TP with schools and educational managers			X	
1.4.2 Organise and liaise with schools for SYSTEM-internship			X	
1.4.3 Organise with UNIQWA for external TP moderation			X	
1.4.4 Liaise with DoE regarding external assessment and marks		X		
1.4.5 Member of the <i>Consortium Trust for Higher and Further Education and Training Institutions in the Free State.</i>			X	

1.5 Leader/Manager/Administrator (for my department as HOD)	U	T	C	M
1.5.1 Leadership during HOD- and departmental meetings			X	
1.5.2 Manage TP and Prof Studies fields: co-ordinate and support staff and students			X	
1.5.3 Organise communication flow: - departmental meetings - circulars		X		
1.5.4 Administrator of my Dept: - work division - formative and summative marks - internal and external marks - finance				X

1.6 Scholar, researcher and lifelong learner	U	T	C	M
1.6.1 Convene QA Committee for Programs, Teaching and Learning, and Assessment			X	
1.6.2 Self-reflection on own teaching			X	
1.6.3 Attend meetings/workshops/seminars/conferences			X	

1.7 Community, citizenship and pastoral role	U	T	C	M
1.7.1 Respect and be responsible to others			X	
1.7.2 Promote democratic values and practices			X	
1.7.3 Develop a supportive and empowering environment for learners and fellow educators			X	
1.7.4 Develop supportive relations			X	
1.7.5 Support HIV/AIDS education	X			

1.8 Learning area specialist	U	T	C	M
1.8.1 Reflective study in Prof Studies' fields, TP, MT, and other related fields		X		

2. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES FROM THE RATING DONE

2.1 Strengths

The job performance was self- and peer-assessed by two colleagues. Since I argued that quality is never achieved, but something to be striven for, I did not rate any area as a merit during the self-assessment. A colleague convinced me that a merit does not mean you have 'arrived' and we agreed that 1.5.4 should be rated as a merit. Nineteen of the twenty-nine areas were satisfactorily rated on credit level and above.

2.2 Weaknesses

2.2.1 An analysis

The areas rated on threshold were all in need of improvement. The task of liaising with the DoE was rated under-achieved by myself because of numerous problems which I could not address since they do not fall within my 'circle of influence'. Therefore it was not the best option for an improvement plan. The support of HIV/AIDS education was the other area rated as under-achieved. HIV/AIDS education forms part of one of the Professional Studies' fields, Life and Social Skills, which falls under my management. As HOD, I could support the lecturer, but as an individual lecturer I decided rather to consider another area for my own improvement plan, where I could have a greater influence. I selected the area of MT because it had been an area of concern at Tshiya Centre for many years. It received three threshold ratings. MT further focussed on the vision of any teacher education program, which is to teach effectively. MT further represented the largest number of periods on my time table.

2.2.2 Description of MT problems

2.2.2.1 Large numbers

One of the main problems regarding MT, centred around the difficult task of one lecturer facilitating learning to a large number - 175 - students. There were eight classes for MT, four second-year and four third-year classes. I decided to focus on the second-years to enable me to complete more action research cycles with the same group over a period of two years.

2.2.2.2 Limited time

The time table allowed only one 50-min period per week per class. During these periods, students should also be prepared for TP at the schools. There were eight academic weeks in the first term. In the second term, only three weeks were available for academic work since three weeks were used for TP, and three more weeks were utilised for the mid-year exams. That meant that there were eleven weeks available for the action research of the improvement plan. The first period of the year is usually used for administrative arrangements and to brief the students about the work to be covered. With a few clever moves, preparation for TP could be done in two weeks. That left eight academic weeks to implement the improvement plan. Since the classes consisted of large numbers of students, time is usually lost at the beginning of a period because of late-coming.

2.2.2.3 Insufficient facilities

Tshiya Centre does not have good facilities for MT. A television set and video recorder were stolen from the MT classroom during 1997 and were not replaced. MT had to be done in ordinary classrooms and evaluated by means of the fish bowl method where

students stand in a circle and observe while one student 'teaches' a 'small class' consisting of 8 - 10 of their class mates. The presentation is afterwards discussed by the observers. It was a disadvantage that students could not see themselves perform on a video tape but could only rely on their class mates' feedback.

2.2.2.4 Assessment of large groups

Because of the limitation of periods and time, in the past, students prepared for a MT presentation in groups. Only a few students, one per group of six students (10 - 12%), had the opportunity to present a MT skill and to be peer- and facilitator-assessed. The work of the whole group was assessed by means of the presentation of one individual - which was not fair. Students could not be evaluated individually and did not receive marks but were assessed on class attendance. It was argued that they were exposed to learning through group participation, an individually written preparation, and the coding of a class mate's MT presentation.

3. THE MICRO TEACHING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

3.1 Goal for one semester

It was important to set a realistic goal. A first-time success experience would foster the continuation of implementing cyclical improvement plans every semester. The goal was to enable every student to present the *Questioning MT Skill*, and to effectively improve his/her teaching by means of self-, peer-, and facilitator assessment.

3.2 Outcomes

In discussions with colleagues it became clear that, since there was not enough time in class for every student to present the MT skill, outcomes had to be reached through parallel group work and effective feedback in class. The role of group leaders would be important; hence the necessity to compile a duty list for group leaders (see 5.4) and a framework for the feedback that would be given by the spokespersons (see 5.7). To avoid passive 'passengers' in the groups, a maximum of five members formed a group. The groups could not be smaller since proper discussions had to take place during coding. To be able to manage the action research effectively within the available eight periods, a time schedule was compiled and exhibited at the entrance of all classrooms (see 4).

The following outcomes were formulated to achieve the set goal:

- 3.2.1 Every student prepared the questioning skill satisfactorily in writing.
- 3.2.2 According to a checklist, the written preparation of every student was assessed by peers and a sample was discussed by the facilitator.
- 3.2.3 In parallel group sessions, every student presented the questioning skill and all students were coded by their peers.
- 3.2.4 To create opportunities for learning through self- and peer-assessment, thorough feedback was given in class.

3.3 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (PI)

The following performance indicators served as criteria to 'measure' whether outcomes were reached. All planned evidence are indicated in italics.

3.3.1 Outcome 1

Every student prepared the questioning skill satisfactorily in writing.

3.3.1.1 Pls

- By referring to the students' written notes, the facilitator explained the skill and the coding thereof in class. *Diary.*
- Every student received a *written example* of an ideal preparation.
- The facilitator demonstrated the skill in 10 min. *Diary.*
- Students *coded* the facilitator's demonstration in groups.
- At home, students *prepared, in writing* and according to the example given, a 10-min presentation of the questioning skill.

3.3.2 Outcome 2

According to a checklist, the written preparation of every student was assessed by peers and a sample of written preparations was discussed by the facilitator.

3.3.2.1 Pls:

- A *checklist* was developed for peer-assessment of the written preparations.
- The facilitator explained and demonstrated the use of the checklist. *Diary.*
- Peer-assessment took place in pairs. *Checklist.*
- *The facilitator assessed five completed checklists* and discussed them in class.
- Where necessary, re-assessment and re-preparation were done. *Diary.*

3.3.3 Outcome 3

In parallel group sessions, every student presented the questioning skill and all students were coded by their peers.

3.3.3.1 Pls:

- Groups consisting of five members were formed according to the students' major subjects. *List of groups.*
- Group leaders and spokespersons for each group were elected and briefed regarding their task. *Duty list for group leaders* and a *framework for the feedback* by the spokespersons were handed out to students.
- Every member of each group presented the skill to the rest of their group. Group leaders' compiled *timetables.*
- Discussions and coding of each presentation took place. *Coding forms* were completed in detail, indicating the trend of the discussions.

3.3.4 Outcome 4

To create opportunities for improvement through self- and peer-assessment, thorough feedback was done in class.

3.3.4.1 Pls:

- According to a *prescribed framework*, a spokesperson from each group gave feedback of their presentations.
- During the feedback the facilitator compiled a *list of mentioned strengths and*

- *weaknesses* on a chart.
- Each student did self-assessment during the feedback and *suggestions* were made to improve weaknesses. *Chart*.
- Students received a *handout* reflecting the strengths and weaknesses as well as the suggestions for improvements.
- Groups indicated which members had to re-prepare for a re-presentation. *Diary*.
- Re-presentations and *re-coding* were done.

4. TIME SCHEDULE

To ensure the smooth running of the improvement plan, the following time schedule was prepared and exhibited in the classes:

PERIOD AND ACTION	HOMEWORK
1. Attendance and overview	Study MT skill No 3: questioning
2. Discuss questioning skill	Set up six questions on the six levels
3. Discuss questions. Demonstrate and code	Prepare a 10-min presentation in writing
4. Peer-assessment and discussions	Re-prepare and let it be re-assessed by peer
5. Group presentations and coding (3)	
6. Group presentations and coding (3)	
7. Feedback, list strengths and weaknesses. Self-assessment. Groups indicate who should re-do.	Re-do written preparation to improve
8. Re-presentations and re-coding	

5. LIST OF DOCUMENTS DESIGNED FOR IMPROVING THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE AND FOR GATHERING DATA

- 5.1 worksheet
- 5.2 demonstration lesson
- 5.3 checklist for written preparations
- 5.4 instructions for group leaders, managers-of-facilities, time keepers, spokespersons
- 5.5 time tables for group presentations
- 5.6 coding form for presentations
- 5.7 peer-assessment of presentations (students) - preparation for feedback
- 5.8 students' assessment of the total action research plan

5.1 WORKSHEET

MICRO TEACHING: SKILL NO 3: QUESTIONING

NAME:.....

CLASS: S 2

Select a topic from the content of one of your major subjects and **compile 6 questions** on the following 6 cognitive levels:

1. Lower order:

1.1 **Knowledge:**.....

.....

2. Middle order:

2.1 **Comprehension:**.....

.....

2.2 **Application:**.....

.....

.....

3. Higher order:

3.1 **Analysis:**.....

.....

.....

3.2 **Synthesis:**.....

.....

.....

3.3 **Evaluation:**.....

.....

.....

5.2 DEMONSTRATION LESSON

MICRO TEACHING: SKILL NO 3: QUESTIONING - 10 Min presentation

Program organiser: Clothing

Sub-program organiser: Distribution of clothes

Specific outcome: Learners will demonstrate an understanding of the clothing distribution world.

Assessment criteria: List all distributors known to you; their characteristics, the types and prices of clothes they sell. Apply information to make informed decisions about the attainment of clothes.

Introduction: State problem

People exchange money for clothes that will suit their lifestyle. They also look for comfort, appearance and affordability. Where will they buy best?

1. **Name the clothes stores that you know.** (PEP, JET, Smart Centre, Edgars, Mr Price, Ackermans, Foschini, Woolworths, etc).
2. **In pairs, explain to your partner why you shop at a specific clothes store.**
(Suits my taste, purse, atmosphere, exhibitions, service, financial arrangements, etc).

New content:

List the following stores on the chalkboard. Explain their characteristics, types of clothes they stock, for which market segment they cater, and prices:

- Boutiques (few; high class; one article/client; designer clothes; adult ladies; expensive)
- Chain Stores (many; medium quality; a few articles/line; children & adults [whole range]; moderate prices)
- Speciality shops (few; moderate quality - very good; specialise in one line; whole range; prices moderate - expensive)
- Mail order houses (few; can't fit or inspect article; moderate to low quality; nothing unique; whole range; moderate - low prices)
- Flee market stalls (many; can't always fit; moderate - low quality; sometimes unique; whole range; prices moderate - low)

3. **Taking into consideration what you have learned, where will you advise Sarah, your student friend, to purchase an outfit for a farewell function.**
(Boutique or chain store, depending on finance)

4. **Motivate why those stores should provide best in Sarah's needs.**
(Boutiques have special clothes for special occasions, but they are expensive. Chain stores have moderate quality clothes for moderate prices, although your style and line of clothes might not be unique)

5. **Regarding the purchasing of clothes, compile a list of services needed in your immediate environment.**
(Casual, sports, shoes, jewellery, head ware, winter coats, smart ware, etc).

6. **Woolworths and Buy-Denim (a speciality shop) are both applying at your local municipality to open a branch at Setsing. Which one of the two do you think will be the best choice? Why?**
(Woolworths, since they provide a wide range of clothes for the whole family - including denim. Buy-Denim will provide high fashion at low prices for the large student population. Since the students do not make up the largest part of the community Woolworths will be the better choice)

5.3 CHECKLIST FOR WRITTEN PREPARATIONS

MICRO TEACHING: SKILL NO 3: QUESTIONING

Name of presenter:.....

Class: S 2.....

Name of assessor:.....

		correct	re-do
1.	Heading: Program organiser		
	Sub program organiser		
	Specific Outcome		
	Assessment Criteria		
2.	Introduction: Arouse interest		
	State problem		
3.	Content: To the point		
	Understandably complete		
4.	Questions correctly set on levels: Knowledge		
	Comprehension		
	Application		
	Analysis		
	Synthesis		
	Evaluation		
5.	Questions progress sequentially in difficulty		
6.	Questions numbered and underlined		
7.	Questions have sensible answers		
8.	Correct lay out		
9.	Identification		

Comments:

5.4 INSTRUCTIONS FOR GROUP LEADERS, MANAGERS-OF-FACILITIES, TIME KEEPERS, SPOKESPERSONS

MICRO TEACHING: SKILL NO 3: QUESTIONING

Duties of Group Leaders

1. Facilitate **election** of manager-of-facilities, time keeper and spokesperson.
2. Organise a **venue** for group presentations:
 - control activities of manager-of-facilities
 - notify group and facilitator about venue
3. Compile **time table** for group presentations. Submit after presentations.
4. During group presentations:
 - mark **attendance** register
 - manage **time** - assisted by time keeper
 - **organise** presentations in an orderly way
 - after presentations, facilitate **discussions** according to the 8 points on the coding form; identify strengths to learn from and weaknesses to improve; and facilitate suggestions for improvements
 - control proper completion of **coding** forms as well as detailed comments
 - **control** activities of spokesperson

Duties of Manager-of-Facilities

Assist group leader by:

- **arranging** desks and chairs for a 'small' class
- cleaning **chalkboard** before, during and after presentations
- collecting **chalk and duster** before period and submit afterwards

Duties of Time Keeper

Assist the group leader by managing perfect timing:

- **10 Min** sessions for presentations and **5 min** for discussions
- prepare **3 flash charts**: '2min'; '1min'; 'Time up'
- from the back of the class, **flash** these charts to the presenter

Duties of spokesperson

Assist the group leader by:

- listening attentively to the discussions and **writing down** the gist of the discussions on the peer assessment forms
- giving short, to the point, well prepared **feedback** in class afterwards
- **submitting** the completed peer assessment forms

5.5 TIME TABLES FOR GROUP PRESENTATIONS

MICRO TEACHING: SKILL NO 3: QUESTIONING

Group Leader:.....

Class: S2.....

Venue:.....

Period 1

Date	Presenter	Time (10 min periods)	Discussion (5 min)

Period 2

Date	Presenter	Time (10 min periods)	Discussion (5 min)

5.6 CODING FORM - FOR PRESENTATIONS

MICRO TEACHING: SKILL NO 3: QUESTIONING

CLASS:.....

STUDENT PRESENTING: DATE:

Instructions: Tick (✓) your observation in the appropriate column

U = Under achieved (less than 45%)

T = Threshold (45% - 49%)

C = Credit (50% - 74%)

M = Merit (75% +)

COMPONENTS OF THE SKILL

		U	T	C	M
1.	Clear communication (how well did you understand the Qs).....				
2.	Emphasizing key concepts (Qs correctly placed in lesson).....				
3.	Variation: individual /group questioning.....				
4.	Progression in difficulty (from low to higher order).....				
5.	Lower order questions (knowledge).....				
6.	Middle order questions (comprehension & application).....				
7.	Higher order questions (analysis, synthesis, evaluation).....				
8.	Written preparation.....				

GENERAL COMMENTS:

STUDENT ASSESSOR: _____

5.7 PEER-ASSESSMENT OF PRESENTATIONS (STUDENTS) - PREPARATION FOR FEEDBACK

MICRO TEACHING: SKILL NO 3: QUESTIONING

Name of presenter:.....

Class: S 2.....

1. General comments according to the coding form:

2. Strengths:

3. Weaknesses

Solutions for improvements

.....
---	---

Name of spokesperson:.....

Date:.....

5.8 STUDENTS' ASSESSMENT OF THE TOTAL ACTION RESEARCH PLAN

MICRO TEACHING: SKILL NO 3: QUESTIONING

1. **Rate** the following steps of your learning process regarding the Questioning-Skill. Mark each step with (✓) according to the U T C M rating scale.

- U = under achieved (learner did not comprehend at all)
- T = threshold (fair learning occurred)
- C = credit (complete learning occurred)
- M = merit (excellent learning occurred)

STEPS		U	T	C	M
1.1	The initial briefing				
1.2	Completion of the work sheet				
1.3	The facilitator's demonstration				
1.4	Your own written preparation				
1.5	Peer assessment by checklist				
1.6	Preparation for group presentations				
1.7	Group presentations				
1.8	Coding				
1.9	Discussions after presentations				
1.10	Feedback session				

2. **Strengths** that helped me most in this learning process were:

.....

.....

.....

.....

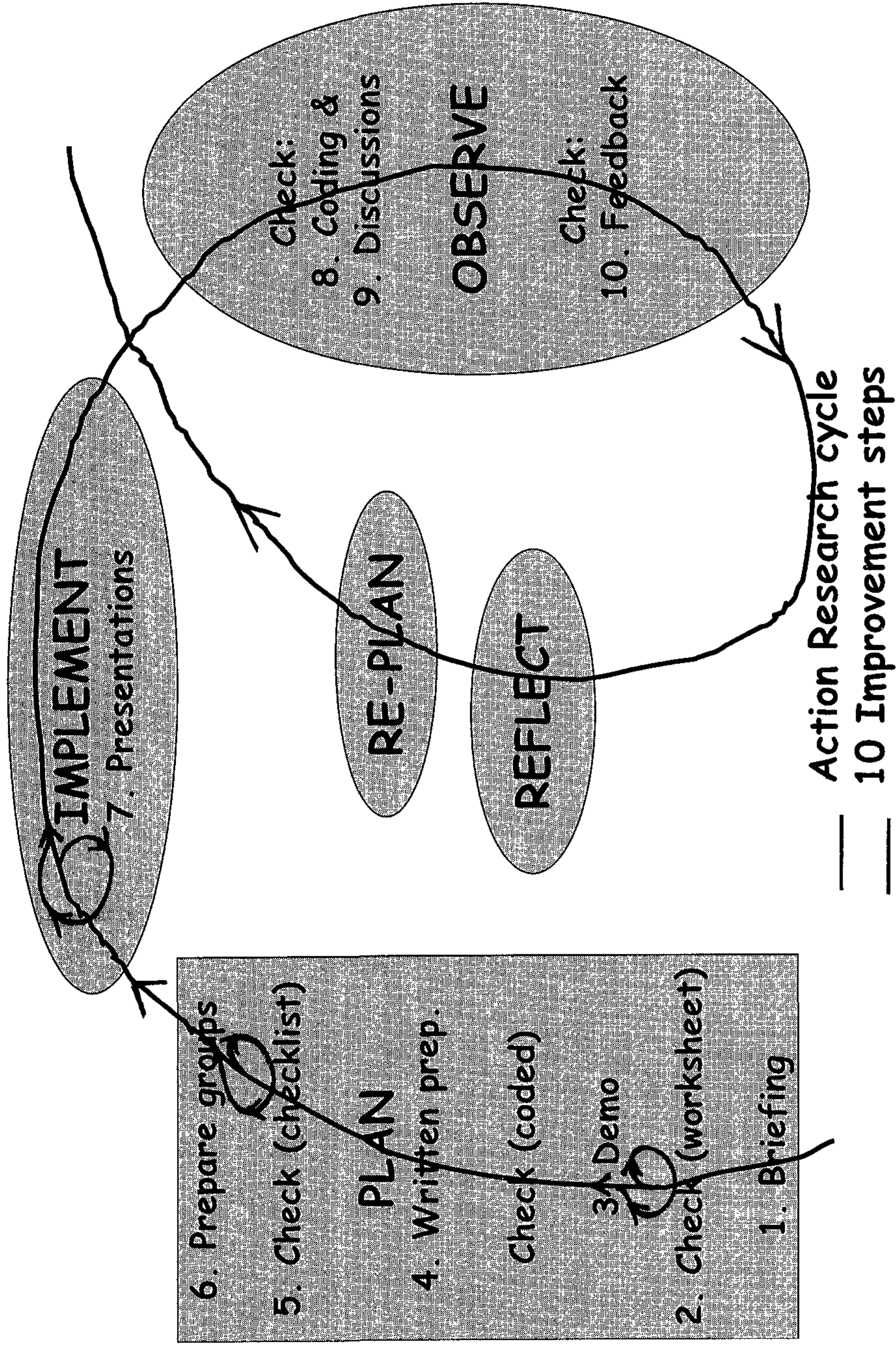
3. **Weaknesses:** developmental areas are:

.....

.....

.....

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OBSERVATIONS: SELF-ASSESSMENT OF ACTION RESEARCH

A SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCHER'S DIARY

The action research fitted into my natural work division. I lectured to five second-year classes. That meant that I repeated every step five times. I had the opportunity to learn from mistakes made with one class, and improved immediately for a second and further classes.

1. STEP 1: OVERVIEW OF THE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The QA Committee approved my plan. It was hard work to have all the documents, to be utilised during the improvement plan, ready and exhibited in class. I linked the first two MT-skills with the third one, questioning, that was about to be improved. I felt encouraged and confident with all the planning and paperwork done for the whole semester. It would allow me time and energy to prepare really good presentations and to observe the learning process in and after classes. The planning facilitated the implementation. Students were enthusiastic. Students liked the ultimate goal of the improvement plan. One commented, *'I think we are going to have fun this time... and learn a lot'*, and another one, *'it's fine that everybody will be presenting'*. Not all students were present. It was encouraging to see students studying the exhibited plan. Some asked questions and were discussing with one another. They seemed well motivated.

2. STEP 2: BRIEFING

It was hard work to be well prepared. I presented the content from the MT notes. I studied different documents about Bloom's taxonomy regarding the six levels of cognitive learning and discussed them with colleagues. I wanted to be well prepared. I felt motivated to facilitate the achievement of the outcomes. I searched for many examples of different-levelled questions, copied them and put them on the bulletin board in class. I prepared more media than ever before - posters, notes, and I upgraded the coding form. The students were on time for the period - that was a bonus. All students did not have their MT notes with them. I encouraged the students to take notes; most of them did. I usually lock the class, but this time I left it open for students to study the examples and other information on the bulletin boards. A colleague paid a class visit and observed. Notes were taken and the observer discussed the presentation with me. I realised the content was too much for one period. The observer confirmed my notion. He recommended the use of co-operative learning. The use of media was complimented. I was impressed with the collegial support. Some of the students observed our discussion. The students seemed to understand the worksheet. One said, *'I am going to complete this right now'*. During the week, some motivated students came to me for individual help.

3. STEP 3: DISCUSS WORKSHEETS AND DEMONSTRATE SKILL

Worksheets were marked and commented on in detail. The ratio of 1:67 is not effective. I marked until the early morning hours to evaluate all the worksheets properly. I spotted an opportunity to give the worksheets back during an extra period when the students were in their register classes. They had to respond to the comments made, and to improve their questions before the next period. Time was not on my side. The worksheets were

discussed. Students were invited to my office for further assistance. Their lower- and middle order questions were good but their higher order questions were poor. Some followed the given examples by only changing words here and there. They lacked insight. Some worksheets were discussed with a colleague. It was agreed that students lacked critical reasoning and were in need of feedback. Nine out of the 67 students came to me for individual help.

I was well prepared for the demonstration lesson. I made use of the chalkboard, posters and flash cards. I discussed my preparation with the students and asked them to follow suit. Students were once more on time. They enjoyed the demonstration lesson and were very responsive. My demonstration lesson was too long - I had to cut some of the content. It would be better if I could attend to lower- and middle order questions in one period and to higher order questions during a separate period. The students coded my demonstration but it resulted only in credits and merits. I had to help them to assess realistically.

The advantages of a 'model lesson' were discussed with a colleague. We agreed upon the necessity to integrate different subjects and Didactics into all presentations. By listening to the demonstration lesson, the students once more learned about the MT-content (setting questions on the different levels). This was the fourth time; they have already learned from the MT notes, the worksheet, the discussion of the worksheet, and now from the demonstration lesson. A colleague's class visit did not materialise; I did, however, discuss the written preparation and a report of the presentation with her for advice. We both observed that covering all three levels of questioning was too much for one period. The demonstration lesson was discussed with the students in class and informally after the period. They appreciated the 'model' and said they *'know exactly what to do now'*.

4. STEP 4: PEER ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS' WRITTEN PREPARATIONS

Six students did not prepare themselves. They had poor excuses. The students struggled to assess their partners' preparations. They understood the checklist but struggled to evaluate the level of questioning. All students could not evaluate satisfactorily. One period was not enough for the assessment. I felt restricted by the limited time available. The students were requested to complete the assessment during free periods and to approach me for assistance, if needed. Five student-pairs did approach me. The lower- and middle order questions were satisfactory, but not the higher order questions. I discussed my concern about limited time and the students' lack of critical reasoning with a colleague. Lecturing General Teaching Methods, he seemed to experience similar problems. During the same period I prepared the students for the group work to follow during the following two weeks. I appointed groups from the class lists. Each group had to vote a group leader, a spokesperson, and a manager-of-facilities. I explained their tasks. (They received a written document explaining these tasks during the first period). The preparation for the group activities was not satisfactory. I was limited by time and it was a first of its kind experience for the students. On the positive side, students were very enthusiastic; they were proud of their portfolios and a few students even came to me to 'make sure about their duties'. Too much paperwork was already involved in the process. I got the impression that some students felt lost among all their 'papers'.

5. STEP 5: PARALLEL GROUP PRESENTATIONS

Students were late and some groups were confused about the venue. The fact that they were working independently, was new to them. Some groups even waited for me to join them. Their time-management was not good at first but this improved during the later sessions. During four sessions, key persons, like the spokesperson, were absent and the groups had to improvise - which they did. I noticed that some students joined other groups - they said things do not go according to plan in their own groups. I moved between four venues to facilitate and observe the groups. Fortunately two colleague-observers assisted me. The team effort was a positive experience. During a two-week period, I observed twenty 10-min presentations. Two colleagues jointly observed six lessons. A special form was designed for the observations. The groups' different portfolios performed well, although some spokespersons asked for guidance.

5.1 Strengths observed were:

- well prepared presenters
- interesting **media**
- good use of **flash cards** to indicate levels of questions
- independent **group work** improved significantly
- four groups, who could not finish, organised on their own to **complete** the work during their tea break
- later groups **learned from the mistakes** made by the earlier classes
- students **attended the presentations of their friends** in classes other than their own
- the **Technical class's discussions** were above standard: they were exposed to two improvement programs (MT and Media)
- The students were laughing and discussing the groups' performance between presentations. They seemed to have **had fun** during the learning process and reported that they enjoyed the team work

5.2 Concerns were:

- the group work **varied** from poor to excellent
- since critical reasoning was expected, the students struggled with the **coding**
- students from **different subjects** were combined in one group and could not always answer each other's questions satisfactorily
- the success of the **discussions** depended on the quality of the group leader
- some spokespersons had a problem completing a coding form for their own file as well as a form for the feedback - **too much paperwork**

6. STEP 6 FEEDBACK SESSION

Feedback was well structured according to the designed form. In general, the spokespersons of the groups were well prepared. It was encouraging to notice that the students observed and commented on the first two MT skills as well. It was their own decision and showed integration, from the students, within the MT field. Students enjoyed each other's feedback. They laughed, danced and made remarks. Although the feedback was done without identifying students' names, I had to discipline a few individuals who tried to backchat the spokespersons. A few groups tried to disagree when weaknesses were identified. I guided the students to assess themselves and to take notes while

listening to the feedback. I stressed the importance of feedback and that the students should see it as another learning experience. I talked to a few students after the class. They reported that the class was noisy but that they have learned a lot. To save time, I took notes of the feedback; the students submitted the forms on which they had prepared their feedback as well. I clustered the feedback in columns and prepared a document for the students (see Appendix D 3.1). The students completed the questionnaire to evaluate the total MT plan (see Appendix D 3.2).

7. GENERAL COMMENTS

Both improvement plans focused on the vision of Tshiya. To ensure good implementation, a plan needs to be well managed. A well prepared plan serves as motivator. Action research is hard work and calls for dedication. Other classes might easily be neglected. I read widely about Bloom's taxonomy, was well prepared for presentations, and spent much time on media. Many colleagues were involved through observations and discussions. It opened my eyes for advantages of teamwork and the interrelatedness of different fields of study - Media, General Teaching Methods, story telling in the Junior Primary program, and Didactics. The advantages of teamwork came to the fore. Many assessment sessions ensured good observation and the possibility for immediate improvement. The students often referred to the demonstration lesson which proved the importance of modelling.

OBSERVATIONS: PEER-OBSERVATIONS OF GROUP PRESENTATIONS

CONCEPTS	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	RECOMMENDATIONS
PREPARATION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Good (3x) 2. Venues well prepared 3. Media enough and relevant 4. Students learned to prepare expected answers to questions (Qs) - to compile a memo 5. Example of demo lesson was followed 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One student left preparation at home! 2. Chalkboard work was not prepared on paper 	
PRESENTATIONS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Confident and brief 2. Good use of voice 3. Enthusiastic 4. Good tempo 5. Good media-use 6. Good written preparations 7. g u a r a n t e e d good presentations The structure of the demo lesson were followed 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Did not meet all requirements of good presentations 2. Asked Qs before content was taught (2x) 3. All students not knowledgeable about the content 4. Too fast because of limited time 5. Students from different subjects were combined in groups - could not answer all Qs. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students need more exposure to and p r a c t i c e in presentations 2. Group students offering the same subject together

CONTENT: QUESTIONING	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Good low- & middle order Qs 2. Good progression in difficulty. 3. Qs fairly well placed in lesson 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All Qs not on correct level 2. Higher order Qs not all correct 3. Some presenters were more concerned about subject content than Qs 4. A few used same Qs as in facilitator's examples 	
MEDIA	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Good efforts were appreciated 2. Loose labels made for posters - interesting 3. Good chalkboard work 4. Case studies written on board prior to lesson 5. Flashcards good 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chalkboard not well used - wrote too much and for too long; not straight; some students' handwriting illegible 2. All level indicators were put up from the start 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students need to practise more on chalkboard
TIME MANAGEMENT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Effectiveness varied 2. Time managers overall good 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Some groups stressed time charts too much - made presenters nervous 	
CODING	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Generally effective 2. The student who coded led the discussion - good 3. Students learned to evaluate immediately and to assign a value 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Groups needed training to complete all the forms 2. Forms must be very simple - spokespersons' form not well comprehended 3. Assessment not always realistic - lacking in insight 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regular exposure to critical reasoning necessary

DISCUSSIONS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Some very good - depended on leader: could see who prepared at home 2. Made valid comments 3. Technical group evaluated better - more insight and better critical inquiry - exposed to two action research projects 4. Observer commented toward end of discussion to make group aware of flaws 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Slow to start 2. Some defended themselves against critique 3. Too little time for proper discussions 4. Unaware of flaws like unrealistic high coding 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Critical reasoning should be practised
PORTFOLIOS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Good acceptance of responsibilities 2. Helped each other 3. Presentations occurred orderly 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A special preparation session is needed 2. Too much paperwork 3. Spokespersons struggled - need help to record outcome discussions 4. Absenteeism & late-coming a problem in small groups 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. From the second day, facilitator met the group leaders for a few minutes before the period started 2. Spokespersons lacked skill of critical reasoning

PARALLEL GROUPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The second week -good 2. Many showed responsibility and started on time 3. Own initiative - four groups organised on their own to finish presentations during breaks because their second day for presentations fell on a holiday 4. All students presented a lesson - all were exposed to practice 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A small group consisting of four only was a little odd 2. Four groups did not function well: diligent students moved to other groups 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Group students according to subjects 2. Students need to be motivated to create their own learning experience 3. The importance of group work should be stressed
GENERAL COMMENTS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students learned about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Different levels of Qs * Evaluation & coding * Independent group work * Creative thinking/innovation - regarding venues selection, absenteeism of class mates, media position <i>etcetera</i> 2. Students had fun 3. Written preparations good 4. A link: students whose presentations were good also had good written preparations 4. Students sensed the seriousness of the project 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tried to cover too much 2. Absenteeism in small groups 3. Difficult for facilitator to move between 4/5 groups 4. Two other observers attended as their timetables allowed 5. Did not check all the results of the worksheets & peers' checklists before presentations - therefore still Q-level errors 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cover only 2 levels of Qs 2. Seek help with large numbers - approach Didactics lecturers; utilise Teaching Practice sessions for evaluation of MT skills 3. More time is needed for MT: skills needed for competent teaching in all subjects

OBSERVATIONS: STUDENT-OBSERVATIONS OF GROUP PRESENTATIONS: SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

CONCEPTS	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	SOLUTIONS
PREPARATION	1. Well done (14x)	1. Poor (1x)	1. Ask for peer-and facilitators' advice 2. Refer to peer-assessment on checklist 3. Check facilitator's demo
PRESENTATION	1. C o n t e n t well communicated (18x) 2. Presenters confident and brief (7x) 3. Skill 2: variation , well applied (7x) 4. Good use of language (3x) 5. Good eye contact (3x) 6. Skill 1: introduction well applied (2x)	1. Skill 2: Variation , poor (10x) 2. Use of voice not good (9x) 3. Lack of confidence (6x) 4. Presentation not up to standard: (5x) lacking enthusiasm and eye contact ; level of questions not identified 5. Poor communication (4x) 6. Key concepts not emphasized (3x) 7. Poor use of language	1. Consider and apply previous MT skills 2. Consider and apply principles of GTM , for example, move from known to unknown 3. Be enthusiastic 4. Practise on peers and ask for their advice 5. Emphasize key concepts - consider levels of questioning and flashcards will not be forgotten 6. Good preparation results in confidence

CONTENT (QUESTIONS)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Logical sequence in questioning (5x) 2. Good low- & middle order questions (2x) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poor higher order questions (11x) 2. Questions - no progress in difficulty (2x) 3. New content not taught before questioning (2x) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Study examples of higher order questions and apply 2. Progress in difficulty (see facilitator's demo) 3. First teach, then ask questions
MEDIA	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Well used 2. Flashcards effective (5x) 3. Pre-written chalkboard work effective (2x) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poor Chalkboard work (7x) 2. Use more and different types of media (3x) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Don't face chalkboard too long, while writing 2. Attend to spelling and handwriting 3. Make use of different types of media
TIME MANAGEMENT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Effectively managed (4x) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poor time management (11x) 2. Some group leaders and other key persons came late 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Practise prepared lesson and adjust

STUDENTS' RATING OF TOTAL ACTION RESEARCH PLAN: AN ANALYSIS

Rate the following steps of your learning process regarding the Questioning-Skill.
Mark each step according to the U T C M rating scale.

U (40% and less) = under achieved (learner did not comprehend at all)
T (45% - 49%: average 47%) = threshold (fair learning occurred)
C (50% - 74%: average 62%) = credit (complete learning occurred)
M (75% and more) = merit (excellent learning occurred)

SUMMARY OF RATING

ACTION STEPS	U (40%)		T (47%)		C (62%)		M (75%)		TOTAL VALUES
	No	Tot x 40	No	Tot x 47	No	Tot x 62	No	Tot x 75	
1 The initial briefing	0	0	6	282	19	1178	23	1725	3185
2 Completion of the work sheet	1	40	2	94	23	1426	22	1650	3210
3 The facilitator's demonstration	0	0	1	47	23	1426	24	1800	3273
4 Your own written preparation	0	0	6	282	25	1550	17	1275	3107
5 Peer assessment by check list	0	0	11	517	25	1550	12	900	2967
6 Preparation for group presentations	0	0	1	47	25	1550	22	1650	3247
7 Group presentations	0	0	4	188	25	1550	19	1425	3163
8 Coding	0	0	5	235	28	1736	15	1125	3096
9 Discussions	0	0	5	235	30	1860	13	975	3070
10 Feedback session	0	0	2	94	21	1302	25	1875	3271

ARRANGED IN DESCENDING ORDER ACCORDING TO TOTAL VALUES

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Comments

- * 56 Out of a total of 67 students submitted the evaluation form : 83,5%
- * 8 Copies were not taken into consideration because some steps were not rated.
- * A total of 48 checklists were used for calculations.
- * The students were familiar with the U T C M rating scale.
- * Average values were taken for T and C.
- * The total value of each individual step was horizontally calculated: the number in each column was multiplied with its value and then the totals of the columns were added.

FINDINGS FROM MICRO TEACHING-IMPROVEMENT PLAN

1. **Don't attempt to improve too much in the normal class situation**

I should have covered only lower and middle order questions. Because of the limited time, all three levels of questions are usually covered as one MT skill. According to self-assessment, students', and peers' feedback, higher order questioning is still a quality gap.

2. **A ratio of 1:67 is ineffective for individual moulding of prospective teachers' teaching skills**

Because only some students were selected in the past for MT presentations, the goal of this improvement plan was to allow for every student to present a MT lesson and to be assessed. It could only materialise by means of parallel group presentations - but that seemed to have its weaknesses because of the absence of the facilitator.

3. **Involve students in the planning phase - to ensure ownership**

Some students seemed to have been lost between the paperwork and they lacked a global view of what we were trying to achieve. The motivated students studied the documents pinned onto the bulletin board in class, asked questions, were informed, and well prepared.

4. **Group students per subject for presentations**

This recommendation was made by peers after assessment of students' group presentations. The groups were small (four/five) which meant that the normal class situation was reduced too much. Subject grouping would ensure larger, subject-oriented groups. Seeing that the questioning skill was presented, the students could not always answer each others' questions.

5. **Group work without the presence of the facilitator might not be effective**

This comment was made by students as well as a peer observer (see Appendix D5:7).

6. **The skill of assessment/evaluation should be taught and learned - critical reasoning**

The students reported that they had a problem with coding. Peers reported that the discussions were not always well done (see Appendix D5:6; Appendix D3.2: last 3 ratings).

7. **The proper use of the chalkboard should receive more attention in the curriculum**

The chalkboard is the most used and available medium in the class. Self-assessment and the students' feedback reported on the use of the chalkboard - although it was not a focus area. It proved the importance of the medium.

8. **MT should be linked to Didactics**

To teach is an art. All lecturers should be jointly involved in aspiring to let the students achieve the vision - being a competent, confident, creative and reflective teacher. To create more opportunities for the students to practise teaching and have proper feedback on their efforts, MT should be linked to Didactics and evaluation during Teaching Practice

sessions. It was experienced that the limited time was a drawback. The students did not have the opportunity to re-do their presentations.

9. Feedback after a learning session is very important

This finding received the highest rating on the students' evaluation of the total improvement plan. It proved that the 'final remarks' of a learning experience are of utmost importance to 'tie the knot' and to let students know how they are doing.

FINDINGS FROM TOTAL ACTION RESEARCH PLAN

1. Planning

Good planning is the start of any success plan. The facilitator had more time available for good class presentations and the students presented better MT lessons after thorough and checked, written preparations.

2. Transparency

It ensures that all stakeholders are informed and involved. The facilitator and students knew from the start what was expected from them. Students' preparations for classes improved. Valuable inputs and support were received from colleagues - especially toward the demonstration lesson and problems encountered during group presentations.

3. Modelling

Lecturers should model and demonstrate what they expect from their learners - they should lead by example. The students rated the facilitator's demonstration second highest in the learning process. The facilitator could often refer the students back to the demonstration if they did not perform well. A colleague said, *'Don't tell students how to improve, show them'*.

4. Observations

An attitude and spirit of observance ensure learning from mistakes and improving continuously. Since I have lectured to five classes, I learned from observing mistakes made during the first presentation and could rectify them for the following periods. The facilitator's role and presentations, the learning material, the students' learning process and their comments, and peers' observations were constantly observed for effectiveness.

5. Assessment

Continuous assessments ensure early detection of problems. The worksheet (see Appendix C: 5.1) and the checklist (see Appendix C: 5.3) proved that early detected errors could be rectified to a great extent in the written preparations.

6. Critical reasoning

Students struggle with critical reasoning and evaluation - they need more exposure. The completion of the worksheet, their own written preparations, the checklist, the coding, the discussions and the feedback session relied upon evaluation. The students themselves, the facilitator, and peers reported that they, the students, experienced difficulties with critical reasoning.

7. Group work

Teamwork regarding collegial support between lecturers, were a positive experience. Co-operative learning has many advantages, but groups must be well prepared for independent functioning. Students reported that the groups were sometimes difficult to handle in the absence of the facilitator, and that the coding and discussions needed the guidance of the facilitator. If a group did not function effectively, the whole period was lost.

8. Media

It enhances the learning process with the change of sensory focus. The facilitator prepared more media than ever before for the briefing session as well as the demonstration lesson. The students made positive remarks about the media and even referred to them in the students' feedback. The students followed the facilitator's example and used media well during their own presentations.

9. Interrelatedness

Colleague-involvement includes the positive interrelatedness of different fields of study. The involvement of many colleagues through planning, observations and discussions opened my eyes to the interrelatedness of MT and Media, General Teaching Methods, Story Telling in the Junior Primary program, Didactics, and Teaching Practice.

10. Time allocation

Considering the principle 'do the right things' means that all activities at an institution should focus on the vision. For teacher education at Tshiya Centre it is - to teach. Time allocation to different fields of study entailed in the curriculum should be revisited. The students confirm the facilitator's statement that MT does not receive enough time for proper individual attention to students.

11. Motivation

The motivation and enthusiasm of the lecturer transfer to the students. Motivation 'carried' the action researchers through the difficult times of the rationalisation of the institution. Students should be motivated toward achieving their goals. Unmotivated students came late to group presentations, did not have their written preparations and coding forms in class, and delivered lessons of poor quality. On the contrary, motivated students achieved their goals - no matter what: some even joined other groups.

A GENERIC QUALITY MANAGEMENT MODEL: A QUALITY JOURNEY

APPENDIX E

Phase 1: Awareness and self-assessment

(Navaratnam 1997:8-13)

Client focus

Identify client needs and wants
Focus on quality
Make an initial management commitment

Interim working party

Identify responsible officer
Select members
Establish meaning of quality

Awareness sessions

Introduce quality
Introduce quality standards
Introduce quality award criteria
Conduct forums and workshops

Self-assessment

Develop terms of reference
Form self-assessment team
Use quality award criteria
Report on self-assessment

Areas for improvement

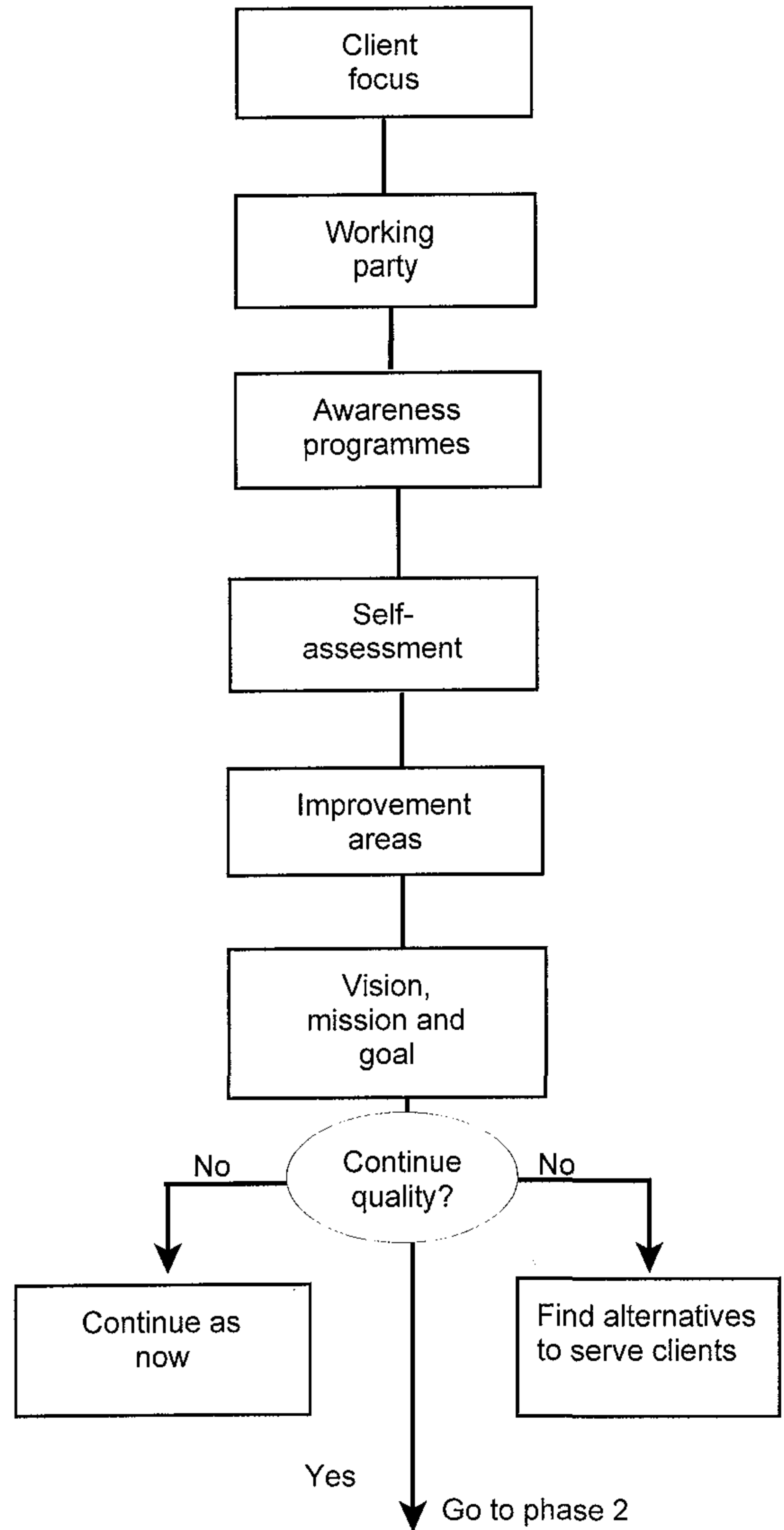
Identify strengths and weaknesses
Identify areas for improvement
Rank improvement areas

Interim vision and mission

Develop quality vision and mission
Develop quality policy
Integrate existing policies

Decisions

Decide on client focus
Decide to continue quality
Find alternatives
Make management commitment



Outputs: Client needs committees, current status, vision and mission, management commitment, quality issues, self-assessment data.

Approximate time: 3 to 6 months.

Phase 2: Training, team-building and communication

Training plan

- Assess training needs
- Organize management training
- Organize staff training
- Organize training and trainers
- Integrate existing training strategies

Team-building

- Establish functional and cross-functional teams
- Establish management teams
- Establish quality council
- Integrate existing teams

Tools and techniques

- Identify problems
- Solve problems
- Make improvement
- Establish process improvement
- Use quality award criteria

Communication process

- Develop theme and strategies
- Establish strategies
- Encourage communication
- Become learning organization

Strategic vision for quality

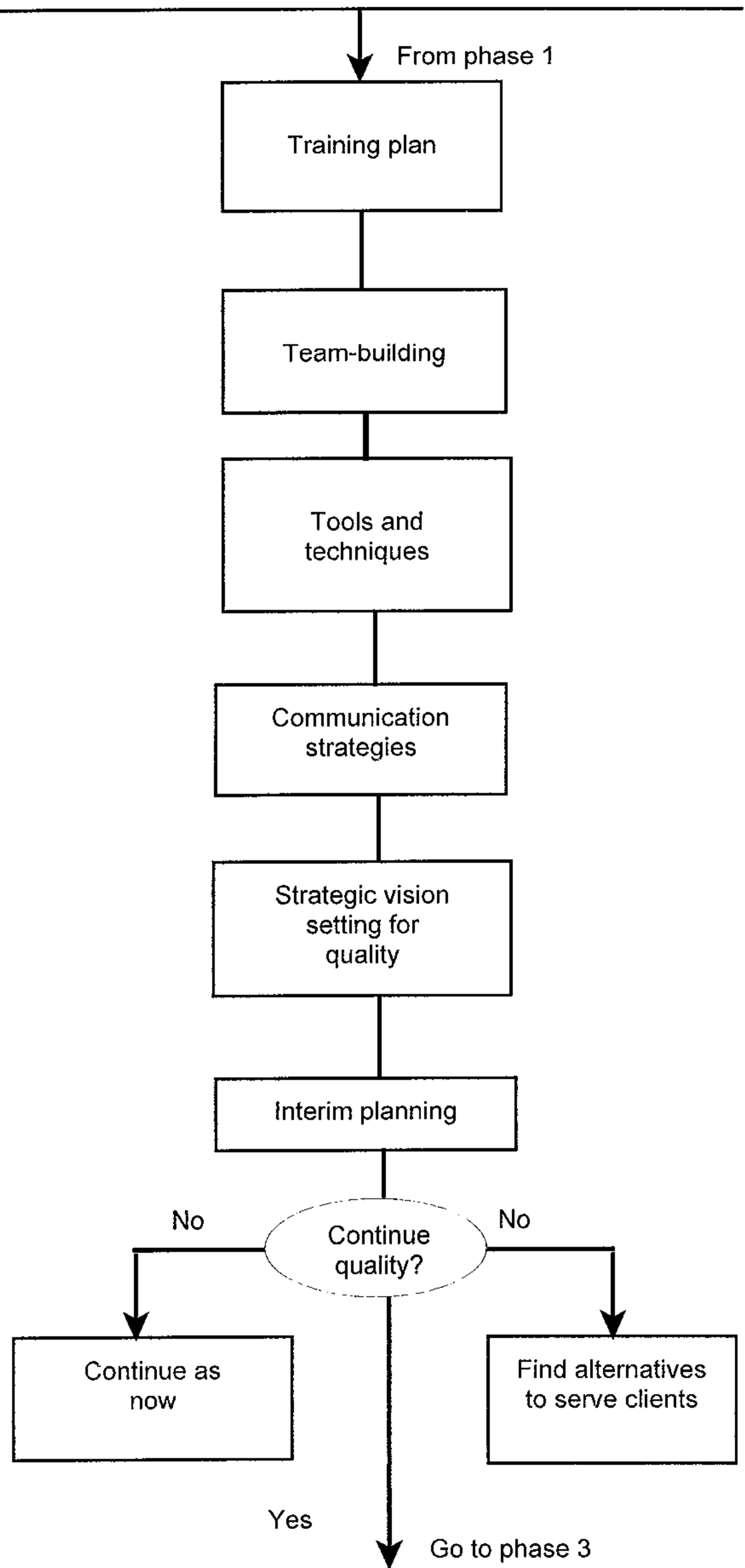
- Establish vision and mission statement
- Develop quality policy
- Prioritize quality issues
- Integrate existing policies
- Involve management

Interim planning

- Develop first year quality plan
- Develop short-term plan
- Integrate existing plans
- Integrate existing policy
- Involve management

Decisions

- Internalize quality process
- Decide to continue quality
- Decide to continue training
- Continue to next phase or find alternatives
- Make management commitment



Outputs: Knowledge, skills, motivations, teams, vision for quality, quality plan and policy, key processes, themes for quality.

Approximate time: 6 months to one year

Phase 3: Quality planning

- Management commitment**
 - Establish planning committee
 - Allocate resources
 - Identify staff responsibilities
 - Set target time
 - Involve unions and stakeholders

- Process analysis**
 - Identify business plan
 - Identify and analyse processes
 - Establish benchmark for planning

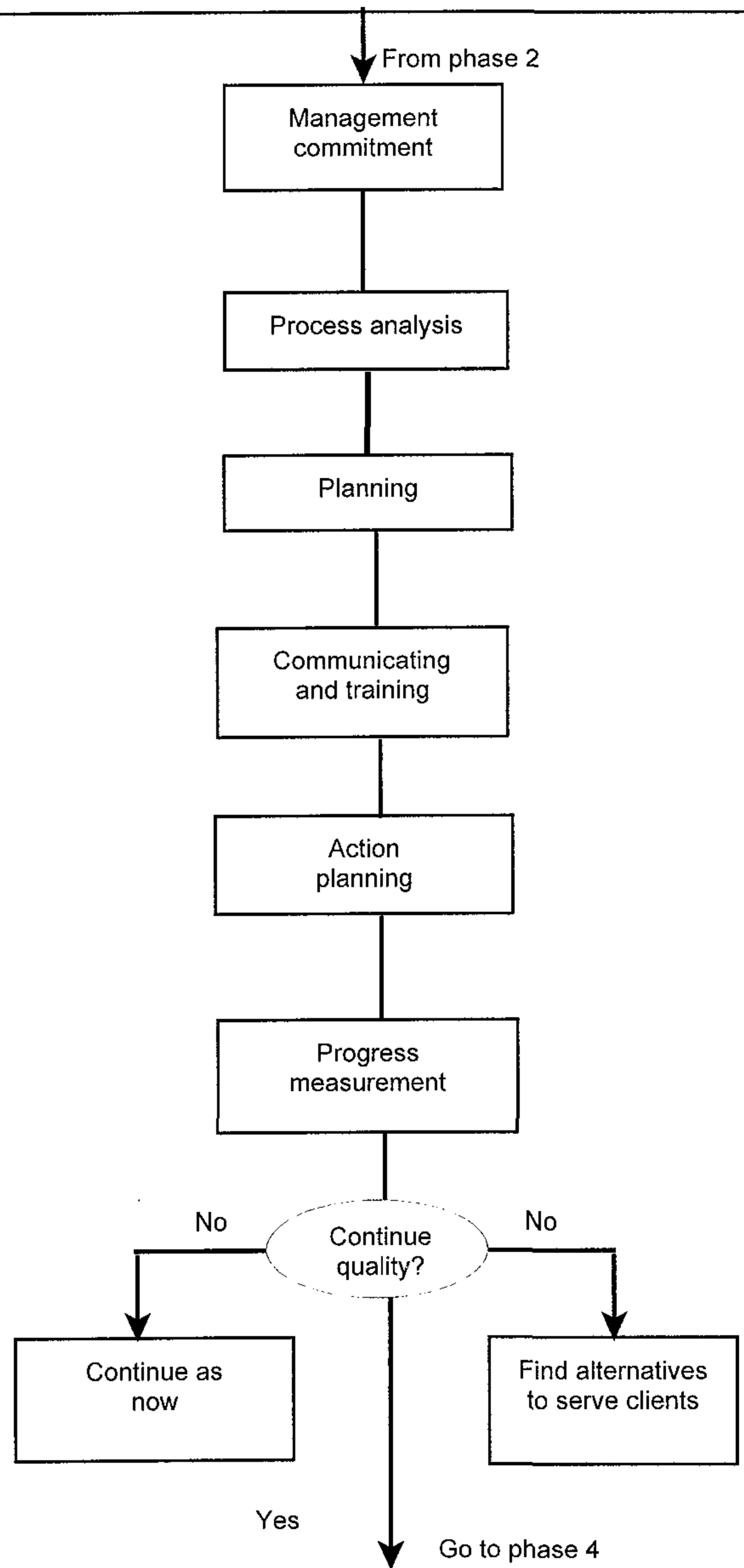
- Planning**
 - Establish direction for quality
 - Refine vision and mission
 - Develop long- and short term quality plans
 - Integrate quality and business plans

- Communication and training**
 - Develop themes and strategies
 - Involve all staff and stakeholders
 - Plan continuous training and training of trainers
 - Become a learning organization

- Action planning**
 - Establish transitional strategies
 - Develop interim implementation plan
 - Develop management commitment plan
 - Integrate existing plans
 - Integrate existing policies

- Progress measurement**
 - Use measurement tools and techniques
 - Assess current status
 - Establish database
 - Establish success factors
 - Model progress

- Decisions**
 - Decide on plans
 - Decide to continue quality
 - Decide to progress review
 - Find alternatives
 - Make management commitment



Outputs: Redefine vision and mission, plans and strategies, success factors, roles of staff, management commitment, problems and benefits.

Approximate time: 3 to 6 months.

Phase 4: Implementation process

Roles and responsibilities

- Establish implementation teams
- Allocate resources
- Assign responsibilities
- Set targets
- Establish facilitation and coaching

Implement short-term plans

- Revisit strategies and plans
- Prioritize plans
- Set target time

Assessment and accountability

- Develop outputs by plans
- Plan resources utilization
- Identify implementation issues
- Revise and refine the plans

Implement long-term plans

- Revisit strategies and plans
- Prioritize plans
- Set target time
- Integrate with short-term plans

Communication and training

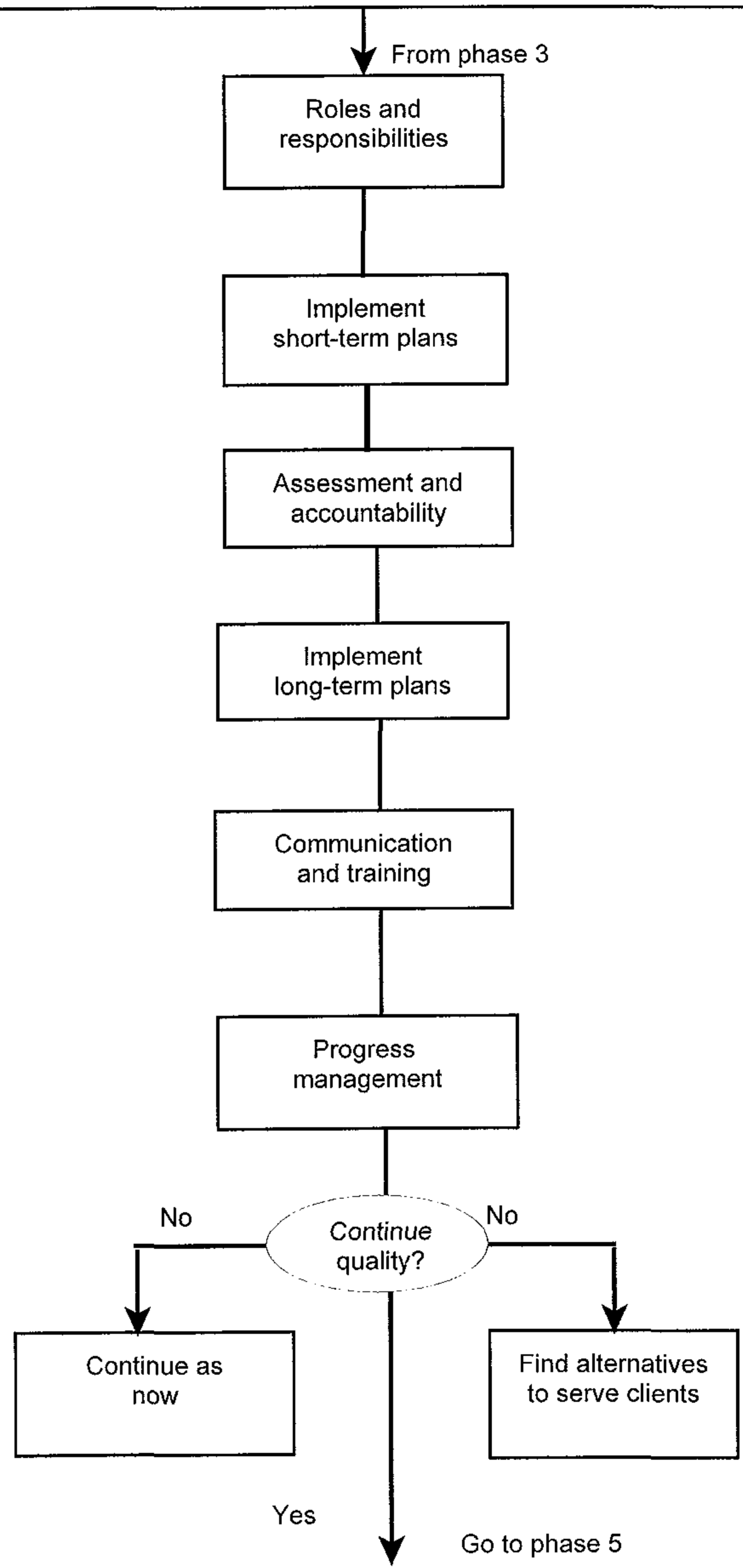
- Organize regular scheduled meetings
- Identify skills and training needs
- Use media
- Share new ideas
- Integrate existing strategies

Progress management

- Use measurement tools and techniques
- Use quality award criteria
- Conduct quality audit
- Identify strengths and weaknesses
- Use success factors
- Model progress

Decisions

- Decide on implementation
- Decide to continue quality
- Decide feedback study
- Find alternatives
- Management commitment



Outputs: Teams, plans and strategies, issues, ideas, accountability, strengths, weaknesses, benchmarks, staff attitudes.

Approximate time: 12 to 18 months.

Phase 5: Comprehensive evaluation

Preparation and identification

- Establish evaluation criteria (quality award)
- Allocate resources
- Establish self-assessment team
- Set target time
- Revisit critical success factors

Conduct evaluation

- Establish purpose and strategies
- Collect data and analyse
- Evaluate customer requirements/satisfaction
- Evaluate effectiveness and efficiency

Summarize findings

- Identify outputs by plans
- Determine number of goals achieved
- Make changes in organization and processes
- Make recommendations and improvement

Improvement strategies

- Prioritize improvement areas
- Revisit strategies and plans
- Implement improvement strategies
- Integrate existing best practices

Communication and training

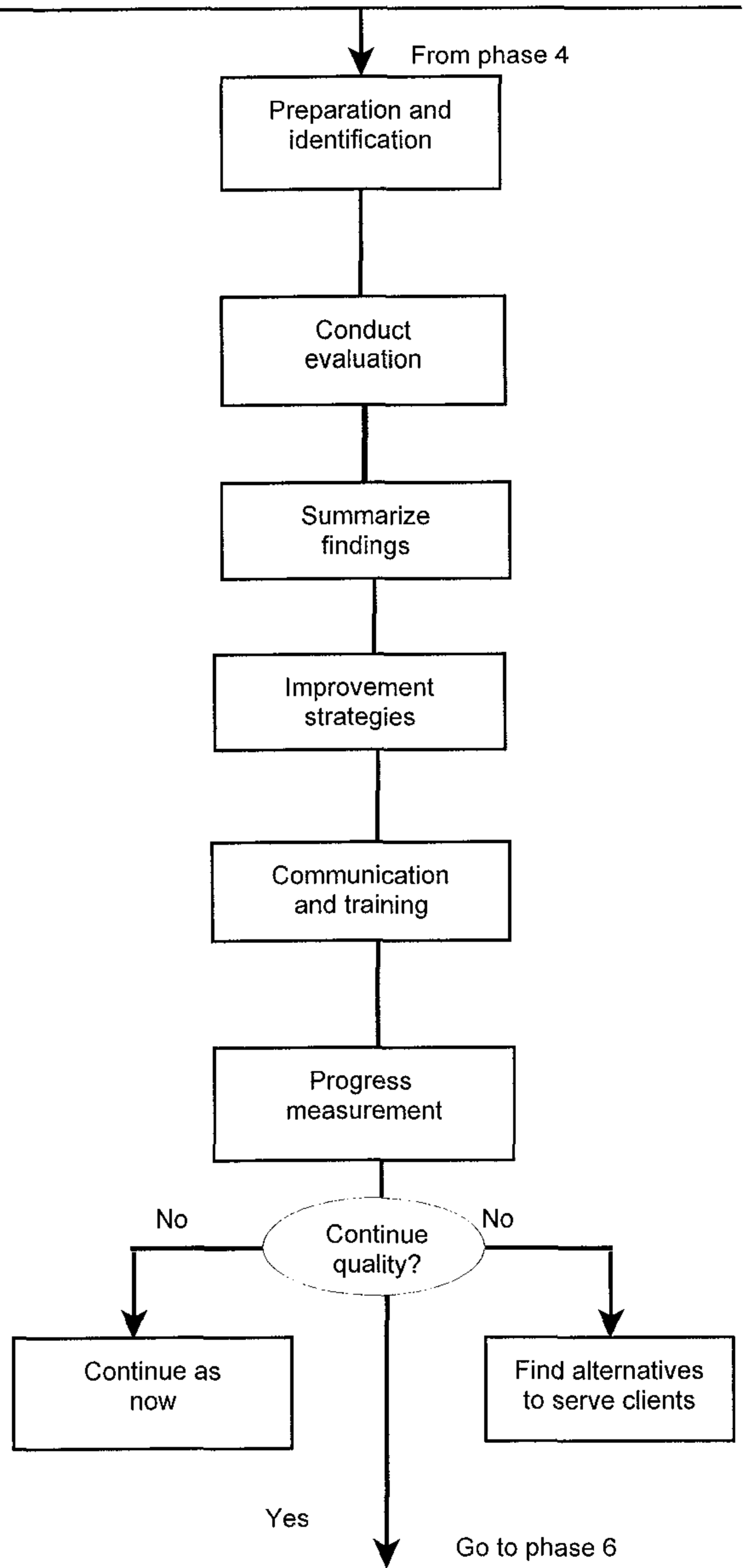
- Share evaluation outcomes
- Identify new training needs
- Disseminate information
- Share new ideas
- Integrate existing strategies

Progress measurement

- Use measurement tools and techniques
- Assess quality achievement
- Reassess goals
- Revisit success factors
- Model progress

Decisions

- Decide on level of implementation
- Decide to continue quality
- Upgrade quality plan
- Revisit implementation process
- Find alternatives
- Make management commitment



Outputs: Strengths, weaknesses, improvement areas and ideas, issues, new strategies, best practices, benchmarks, staff attitudes.

Approximate time: 3 to 6 months.

Phase 6: Continuous improvement

Revisit client needs

- Identify needs and level of success
- Establish strategies
- Identify staff attitudes
- Prioritize clients service

Revisit management commitment

- Establish vision and mission
- Allocate resources
- Pursue quality as a way of life
- Nurture quality culture

Improvement plan

- Revisit all plans
- Empower employees
- Assign responsibilities
- Explore new ideas
- Involve all stakeholders

Improvement strategies

- Use P-D-C-A cycle/process improvement
- Conduct system and process analysis
- Use data
- Continue planning, implementing and evaluating

Communication and training

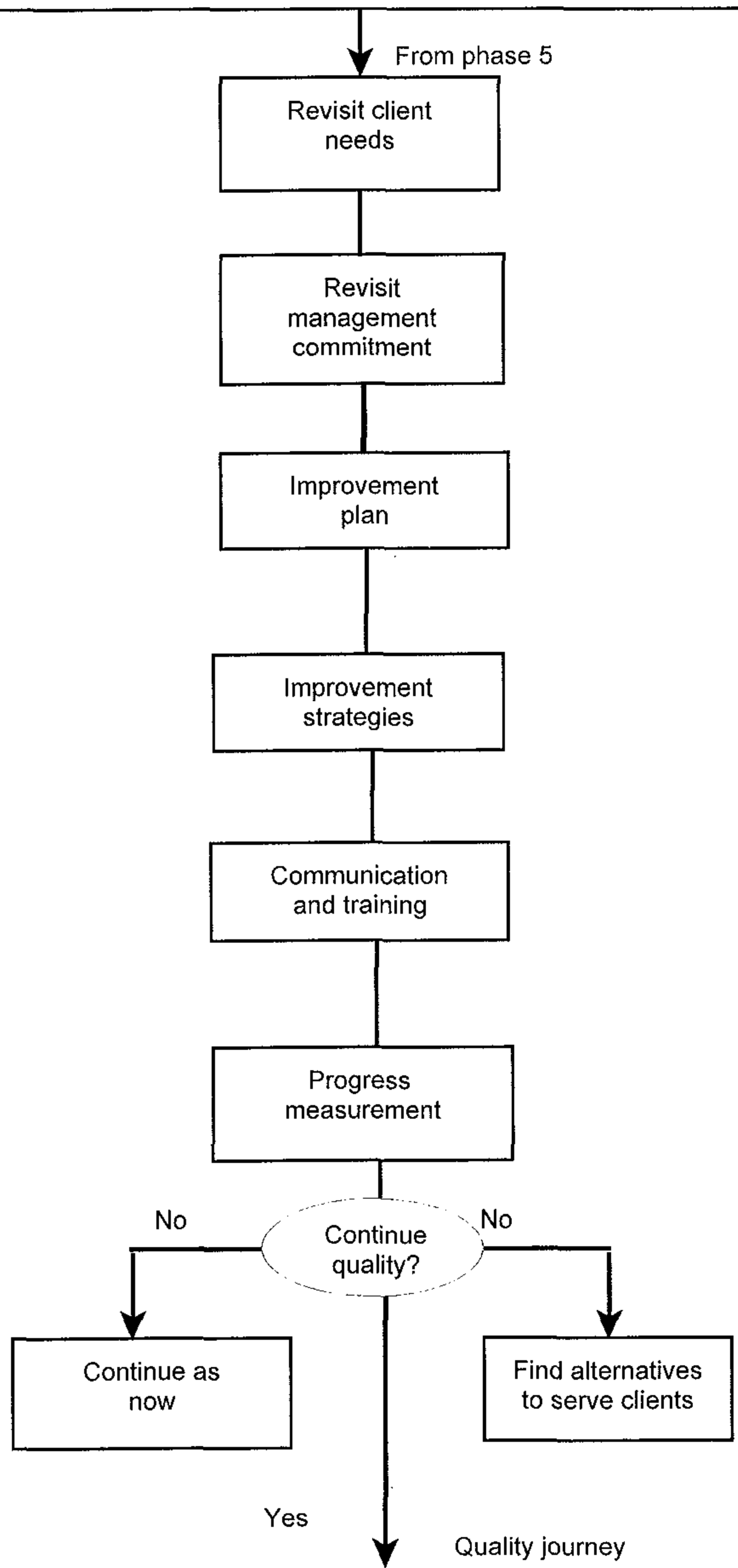
- Share quality vision
- Identify new training needs
- Disseminate information
- Share new ideas
- Integrate existing strategies

Progress measurement

- Use measurement tools and techniques
- Conduct external evaluation
- Continue self-assessment
- Revisit success factors
- Model progress

Decisions

- Pursue continuous improvement
- Decide to continue quality
- Upgrade quality plan
- Revisit implementation process
- Pursue quality as a journey
- Make management commitment



Outputs: Sustained improvement, effectiveness and efficient productivity, increased profit, improved customer satisfaction.

Approximate time: Not bounded in time, it is an ongoing journey.