

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MODEL FOR TRANSFORMATION  
IN THE FACULTY OF COMMERCE AT A TECHNIKON: WITH  
SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CURRICULUM, STUDENT  
SERVICES AND GENDER.

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in the Department of Education, Technikon Natal.

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Durban, January 2000.

## DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I declare that this dissertation is my own work and that all sources I have used have been acknowledged by means of complete references.

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January 2000

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## ABSTRACT

South Africa's apartheid policy under the previous Government entrenched a system of education that favoured the White minority at the expense of the other race groups, particularly Africans. African education was based on the ideology that Africans must be trained to serve their own community. Gross underfunding of African education resulted in underqualified educators, high learner-educator ratios, low pass rates and lack of facilities.

When the present Government came into power in 1994, it abolished apartheid education. At a tertiary level there began an influx of African students to the former White, Coloured and Indian institutions. These students, however, are inadequately prepared to register for and successfully complete a course of study. At M L Sultan Technikon, management, in keeping with the Government's policy to transform tertiary institutions, has issued broad guidelines to all departments to introduce transformation. The mechanisms to implement transformation at grass root levels, however, are not prescribed and are left to the discretion of each department.

As the Faculty of Commerce is the largest faculty at the institution, the researcher is of the opinion that much can be done to transform the Faculty. The researcher has explored various ways in which African students may be empowered, so that on completion of their studies they will be able to do the job as well as any other graduate. The researcher has identified five areas critical for transformation in the Faculty of Commerce, namely, language and communication skills, curriculum development and teaching, gender issues, student services and access. Questionnaires, containing items for each of the areas identified, were sent to respondents and the replies that were positive, have been translated as policy for implementing transformation in a faculty of commerce at a technikon. The recommended policy would supplement the broad institutional policy.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

M L Sultan Technikon, in terms of the former Government's racial policy, operated as a tertiary institution, providing technical and vocational education for Indians. Access to students from other race groups was permitted only if the programme, in which a student wanted to study, was not offered at an institution catering for that race group. Thus the students that studied at this institution were predominantly Indian from former Indian schools. Many of the staff that taught here were also Indian.

Prior to 1985 all examinations were set by the Department of National Education (DNE) and marked by staff from technikons appointed by the DNE. This ensured uniformity of standards. After the new Government came into power in 1994 it repealed the apartheid laws and granted access to all races to all tertiary institutions. This resulted in a flood of African students to M L Sultan Technikon. However, as a consequence of the poor learning associated with unequal allocation of financial resources to African schools, resulting in "bad or absent facilities, under-prepared teachers, lack of learning resources and a serious lack of purpose and discipline in many schools" (Asmal 1999:8), African students are not adequately prepared to register for, and successfully complete, a programme of study at this institution.

As the Faculty of Commerce at M L Sultan has the largest number of students, the majority of whom are Africans (67.8 % in 1998, as discussed in Chapter 3), the researcher is of the opinion that much has to be done in order to transform students, who are inadequately prepared academically for tertiary studies, to persons who can study successfully just as well as any other graduate.

## 1.2 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

At the heart of the South African education system of the former Government was the racist political philosophy of apartheid, resulting in racial segregation and inequality. In 1954 Dr H F Verwoerd, the Minister of Native Affairs, when introducing the Bantu Education Act of 1953, summed up the economic and vocational aspects of this philosophy in a notorious speech. He said: "The Bantu must be guided to serve his own community in all respects. There is no place for him in the European community above the levels of certain forms of labour.... For that reason it is of no avail for him to receive a training which has as its aim absorption in the European community, where he cannot be absorbed" (Mugomba and Nyaggah 1980:69). Verwoerd's emphasis on the group's needs rather than the individual's needs was the general belief of the National Party at that time. He emphasised further that the African teacher must be integrated as an active agent in the process of development of the Bantu community: "He must learn not to feel above the community, with a consequent desire to become integrated into the life of the European community" (Dreijmanis 1998:32). In essence this view clearly stressed two important aspects of the policy of the Government: that the Bantu (Africans) at school were to obtain knowledge, skills and attitudes which would be useful and advantageous to them and at the same time, be of benefit to their community. It was Whites who determined the type of education Africans should receive. Unterhalter et al. maintained that this policy "had been accepted as setting a programme that had continued to be implemented with very little change over three-and-a-half-decades" (1991:35).

As the Government of South Africa was Afrikaner and Christian Nationalist during the period 1948-1994, it espoused a Christian National Education (CNE) policy. The National component inculcated the aspirations of the White population to guard its identity. The aim of the Christian component was that ultimately the education of the child should be such that he would acknowledge the authority of God. The aim of the

educational component was that South Africans would be satisfied with nothing less than that their children were moulded as future citizens (Harber 1989:184).

Christian National Education provided that the education for Africans should be in their mother tongue; should not be funded at the expense of White education; should not prepare them for equal participation in any society but their own; should preserve their cultural identity, and whilst persuading them to accept Christian National principles, their education was to be organised and administered by Whites (Enslin 1984:140). According to Mugomba and Nyaggah, for every R100 spent annually on the education of White pupils, roughly R28 was spent on Indian pupils, R26 on Coloured pupils and only R6 on Africans (1980:75).

The segregated and unequal system of education continued and was extended by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1983. It was differentiated by a “first world” component and a “third world” component. The “first world” component consisted of the three education departments, for Whites, Indians and Coloureds. “First world” components were well-resourced as far as educators, administrative staff and facilities were concerned. Educators were suitably qualified, whilst most parents could contribute, by means of school fees, to further enhance the quality of their children’s teaching. The “third world” component consisted of 11 education departments for African learners, 10 of which operated in the “homelands” and 1 which provided education outside these homelands. Homelands’ education departments lacked sufficient resources as far as educators, administrative staff and facilities were concerned. Underqualified educators and high learner-educator ratios led to low pass rates and high drop-out rates (Steyn 1998:182).

A year after the Government of National Unity came into power in 1994, the New Labour Relations Act was promulgated. This Act gave teachers the right (which was previously denied to them) to become members of professional associations and trade unions. As a

result teachers became highly politicised. The new Government had made a commitment to provide free education for pupils up to matric. However, financial constraints precluded the Government from funding many schools as planned. This problem was compounded by the disruption of schools by teachers who went on strikes to demand higher wages; the loss of highly qualified and experienced non-African staff who were offered voluntary retirement by the Department of Education to make place for African teachers, in terms of the Government's Affirmative Action Policy; the introduction of Curriculum 2005 without proper consultation and infrastructure being put in place and the movement of African pupils from township schools to the former Indian and White schools, resulting in low enrolments in township schools

Prior to 1994 the apartheid approach to education was characterised by a system that was teacher-centred: the teacher was a dominant figure and the pupils played a relatively passive role. The curriculum was examination driven and a rigid syllabus was followed. On completing the senior certificate examination students were inadequately prepared to study for a career at a tertiary institution. Consequently, for the purpose of this study, African students may be referred to as educationally disadvantaged, particularly as prospective technikon students.

### 1.3 THE NEED FOR EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

A change in education, given the situation described in 1.2, became imperative. In addition "the attitudes and values of most of the adult South Africans of this decade were formed in the apartheid era" (Horst and McDonald 1997:5) and as a result of the divisions that existed during this time, learners were not always taught to appreciate the different aspirations and perspectives of people with whom they shared a country. The new democratic Government of national unity that came into power in 1994 has set in motion a process to redress the discriminatory laws of the past and afford everyone an equal opportunity to obtain education and employment. Educational change is now required to provide equity in terms of educational provision and to promote a more balanced view,

by developing learners' critical thinking powers and their problem solving abilities. A further reason why educational change is required, is that a number of learners (now adults) did not receive adequate educational and training opportunities during the previous era. The new curriculum, that is, Curriculum 2005, promotes the concept of lifelong learning. This means that all people who need to learn can now be given a chance to learn.

Central to change is the concept of transformation and this concept is fully explained in relation to what the Faculty of Commerce (hereafter referred to as the Faculty) at M.L. Sultan Technikon (hereafter referred to as the Technikon) can do to introduce transformation.

#### 1.4 TRANSFORMATION IN THE FACULTY OF COMMERCE

“South Africa's transition from apartheid and minority rule to democracy requires that all existing practices, institutions and values are viewed afresh and rethought in terms of their fitness for the new era.....In South Africa today, the challenge is to address past inequalities and to transform the higher education system to serve a new social order, to meet the pressing national needs, and to respond to new realities and opportunities” (Department of Education 1997:3). To meet the challenges the Faculty needs to implement transformation.

Many dictionaries explain transformation as the alteration of the character, nature, or the like, of something into another form. Fox and Meyer define transformation as “the process of a system that changes inputs into outputs; the movement from one position to another” (1995:130). Given the condition of education in the previous era where Africans were greatly disadvantaged in terms of “inequity in learner-educator ratios that were sustained by unequal budget allocations based on racial and ethnic discriminations... racially defined qualification structure, linked to racially-defined opportunities for training...., which ensured that African teachers, taken as a whole, are less well qualified

than other teachers ....and teach predominantly in schools with poor facilities, inadequate learning resources, greater isolation from urban centres, and frequent or no professional support services” (Asmal 1999: 8), a situation has been created where African students, seeking access to the Faculty, are inadequately prepared, as opposed to students of other race groups. African students, however, have the capacity to realise their full potential and had they been given equal opportunity for growth and development, they would have performed as well as students from other race groups. To make up for the discrepancy, disadvantaged African students should be empowered through special attention to their learning needs. Blanchard et al. (1996:13) argue that empowerment does not imply giving people power. They already possess power, untapped energy to pursue and successfully complete a course at a tertiary level. What the Faculty should do is to “release all the untapped creative energy of the students”. To realise this objective the Faculty should remove obstacles that have historically restricted access to a large number of students into its programmes, create an environment conducive to releasing untapped energy, re-examine curricula for relevance to industry, improve student services, give students of both sexes equal opportunity in the choice of programmes, and improve language and communication skills. A change in staff attitude is also required. Staff in the Faculty must identify with the needs of the students and drive the whole process of transformation forward. Obstacles in the Faculty such as gender discrimination and unfair treatment of all staff must also be addressed. It followed that, in keeping with the need to address the issues mentioned above, and in line with the recommendations contained in the Education White Paper 3, the researcher explored transformation implementation in five main areas in the Faculty, namely language and communication skills, access, curriculum development and teaching, student services and gender.

Transformation may be described as the process whereby under-prepared students, on being admitted to programmes in the Faculty, are provided with opportunities to improve their learning by releasing their untapped energies and being guided to use their abilities to realise their full potential and thereby successfully complete their studies in a reasonable period of time. It also includes the removal of obstacles for female students



to pursue courses of their choice and being treated fairly and so prohibiting unfair discrimination and thus providing equal opportunities.

### 1.5 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The Department of Education's White Paper 3 (1997) expresses the Government's commitment to implement transformation in higher education. It highlights the challenges, the vision and the principles governing transformation. The Technikon, in keeping with the guidelines contained in White Paper 3, compiled a strategic plan which it sent to the Ministry of Education (M.L. Sultan Technikon 1997). One of the important aspects of this plan relates to the mission of the institution and a plan of action to bring about change. Subsequently, the management of the Technikon appointed committees to drive the whole process of transformation forward. These committees, after consultation with all interested parties, formulated guidelines on transformation in the institution.

These guidelines, however, merely provide the framework for transformation. Finer details relating to implementation are left to the discretion of each faculty. The researcher is of the opinion that, as the Faculty of Commerce is the largest faculty on the campus, in terms of student enrolment, staff employed and programmes offered, much needs to be done in order to implement transformation in the Faculty. The objective of this study is to develop a policy that could serve as a basis for implementing transformation in the Faculty of Commerce, M.L. Sultan Technikon.

### 1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A formally-structured self-administered questionnaire, developed after an exhaustive literature search, was used to collect data. This questionnaire was divided into five sections relating to language and communication skills, curriculum development and teaching, gender issues, student services and access. The sections comprised single-

concept statements, describing overt measurable characteristics dealing with issues of transformation.

The sample consisted of 53 senior staff (staff from the level of senior lecturer upwards to the Dean of the Faculty) from the Faculty of Commerce at Technikons M.L. Sultan, Natal, and Mangosuthu and 10 third-year students from the Faculty of Commerce, M.L. Sultan Technikon. The sample thus comprised 63 individuals.

The questions were of a dichotomous type, that is, those in which circumstances are clearly defined and clear answers are expected. The questions allowed for one of five response options, namely, either the respondent strongly agreed, agreed, strongly disagreed, disagreed, or was non-committal, that is, neither agreed nor disagreed.

A pilot test involving eight academic staff, not included in the sample, in the Faculty was undertaken.

A covering letter was attached to the questionnaire, explaining the purpose, rationale, confidentiality and benefits of completing the questionnaire. Clear instructions were given, together with a message, stressing the importance of completing all the questions.

On receipt of the completed questionnaires the data were processed and analysed in the form of tables and charts. The results were interpreted and translated as a policy, recommended for implementation in the Faculty.

## **1.7 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY**

### **1.7.1 CHAPTER 2: HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNICAL COLLEGES AND TECHNIKONS**

In this Chapter the development of higher education in Britain, United States of America and South Africa will be examined. In Britain the role of the polytechnics, the programmes offered and the current problems relating to transformation will also be explored. A similar approach will be adopted in the study of higher education in a variety of institutions in the USA. In South Africa the different stages of development of technical education over the years will be examined.

### **1.7.2 CHAPTER 3: M L SULTAN TECHNIKON**

M. L Sultan Technical College, built primarily from funds contributed by Indians who had arrived in the country as indentured labourers, was the only institution providing technical and vocational education to Indians in the country. This Chapter will trace the development of the College since the 1930's and examine the progress that was made over the years before it was upgraded to a technikon in 1979. Matters relating to transformation, such as student enrolment, staffing, and gender issues in the institution as a whole, and in the Faculty in particular, will also be considered.

### **1.7.3 CHAPTER 4: EVALUATION OF RESEARCH RESULTS**

In this Chapter evaluation of the field research will be presented and discussed. An analysis of the findings will be accompanied by numerical tabulation and graphical representation.

### **1.7.4 CHAPTER 5: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

Arising from the findings of the research in Chapter 4, recommendations for implementing transformation will be made. The researcher will conclude by referring to the need for staff in the Faculty to be committed to the process of transformation to ensure its success.

## 1.8 SUMMARY

In this Chapter a background study was made of the former Government's apartheid policies that stifled the economic and educational growth and development of the Africans. It was pointed out that the apartheid policy entrenched a system of education that provided only basic literacy and limited skills, restricted allocation of resources, and enforced a Christian National Education ideology. When the new democratic Government came into power, it set in motion a process to redress past inequities, by introducing transformation. It was observed that the students who sought access to the Faculty were inadequately prepared and measures had to be introduced to bring them up to an acceptable standard. The concept of transformation was examined and a working definition formulated. Broad areas of transformation that the researcher deemed critical were singled out for implementation in the Faculty. Finally, a questionnaire designed to solicit responses regarding particular issues of concern, was sent to respondents, and feedback invited.

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## CHAPTER 2

### OVERVIEW OF TECHNIKONS

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Before analysing the development and present status of technikons in South Africa, an examination of similar educational systems that have evolved and are operating in Britain and United States of America, will be made. Information from such systems may contribute to a better understanding of the position of technikon education in South Africa. The institutions that have some resemblance to the technikon concept in South Africa are the polytechnics in Britain and a number of institutions in the United States of America.

#### 2.2 DEVELOPMENT OF THE POLYTECHNICS IN BRITAIN

The early development of technical colleges can be traced back to 1864 when evening classes were first held in London to provide skills training for artisans. These colleges were run by private individuals, such as craftsmen and traders. Although progress was slow and standards generally low, by 1871 there were 45 institutions providing technical and scientific training. In 1902 the government passed the Education Act, creating Local Education Authorities (LEAs), which enabled control and funding of all education to become the function of the State. This effectively set the scene for the development of technical colleges. The colleges prepared their own courses and syllabuses and set their own examinations (Pittendrigh 1988:17-18).

By 1905 technical education was provided in part-time classes mainly for artisans, technicians and office workers. From 1905, until the next period of expansion in the post-war period after 1945, enrolments reached a peak and there were some 467 technical colleges or major institutions in buildings used specifically for day-time further technical

education, while 9138 evening institutions provided evening classes in any accommodation available.

After 1945 sandwich courses (periods of full-time attendance at a technical college alternating with periods of in-service training with an employer), and a limited number of degree-level technological courses were introduced (Pittendrigh, 1988:21). In 1956 a number of local, area and regional colleges, the most superior being Colleges of Advanced Technology (CATS), were introduced. The CATS, which formed the apex of the new structure, conducted under-graduate and post-graduate courses and research work in close co-operation with industry. These CATS eventually became universities.

Thus polytechnics were established as an alternative to universities. Between 1969 and 1973 thirty polytechnics in England and Wales were formed by the amalgamation of major colleges of technology, commerce, art and design. Many of these colleges had long histories of experience in degree and degree-level teaching. With a great inheritance of educational development from the past, polytechnics therefore had a sound basis on which to provide higher education, attuned to the needs of students and to the needs of employers. Over the past two decades, polytechnics have established a distinguished reputation for relevance, diversity and high quality (Committee of Directors of Polytechnics:1989).

Polytechnics provide many types of courses, ranging from those at non-degree level to higher degrees by research. Almost all courses at, and above, first degree level are validated by the Council for National Academic Awards. In the two decades since the Council was established, polytechnics have been able to initiate, develop and organise their own courses, whilst setting and maintaining high academic standards. Staff at polytechnics concentrate much of their efforts on teaching, but they also conduct research, usually of an applied nature and often sponsored by industrial and research organisations.

Many staff have industrial or professional backgrounds which have given them an awareness of the needs of the outside world so that the way in which they design and teach their courses is based on their work experience.

Scott (1995) maintains that polytechnics have two main characteristics. Firstly, they are vocational institutions with deep roots in technical education and their primary role is economic, i.e. to supply skilled labour. Secondly, they are municipal institutions, not simply in terms of governance and administration but, more significantly, in their values and orientation.

The Committee of Technikon Principals states that the overriding need in Britain today is for "an increased intake into higher education". The Committee states further that:

"This goal can only be partially reached by making more places available for entrance to the traditional A-level route; it will also need the facilitation of access to higher education for other groups. One of these groups is students from the vocational side of secondary and further education whose studies are not deemed to be a sufficiently theoretical preparation for higher education courses. Secondly, mature students, especially those from disadvantaged sections of the community, who do not have the educational opportunities available to others, or those returning to education after a period of earning their living or bringing up families" (1996:5).

This report highlights current problems in Britain regarding access, namely lack of sufficient accommodation that precludes many candidates wishing to do the traditional A-level courses from being admitted into higher education; training received at the secondary and further education levels which does not sufficiently prepare students for higher education courses, even in vocational areas; no provision made for mature students, from the disadvantaged sections of the community, to register at an institution



of higher learning. These are some of the problems common to students in South Africa as well. It is noted further that:

"Selective entries to higher education, particularly to the universities, has been a major barrier to widening access. This practice is a feature of higher education in Great Britain and it has been maintained largely for financial reasons as one way of keeping the cost of students, support at a level acceptable to the treasury. It also has the effect of ensuring that entry to higher education is competitive, not only for the applicants but also for the institutions" (Committee of Technikon Principals 1996:6).

This implies that standards are an issue because of the belief that the quality of an institution is reflected in the quality of its students at entry.

## **2.3 HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

Higher education in the United States of America is served by a variety of institutions and, although many of them defy classification because of their multiple nature, the more common types will be explored briefly.

### **2.3.1 Community Colleges also known as Junior Colleges**

These colleges are distinctly an American creation. They offer large numbers of American youth an opportunity to extend their education at a minimum cost. They can live at home whilst studying. According to Wynn and Wynn, community colleges serve four primary purposes:

"They provide (1) parallel programs for freshmen and sophomores planning to transfer to four-year institutions; (2) terminal programs of general education to students not planning to go on to four-year colleges; (3) technical and subprofessional studies, largely vocational in nature; and (4) continuing education studies in general, cultural and vocational education for adults" (1988:186).

Bowles and Gintis (1976:209) maintain that the community colleges primarily cater for the previously disadvantaged groups who, through poverty and on grounds of racial discrimination, are denied access to tertiary institutions.

A Report by the Committee of Technikon Principals states that:

"even the community colleges were unable to fulfill the aspirations of the students who had been bypassed by the massive growth of higher education. Even with the increased opportunities of recent years for women, adults and minorities, there are still fifty million households in the United States where no family member holds a Bachelors degree, and the number increases annually" (1996:5).

The problem in South Africa, however, is somewhat different from that experienced in the United States. The largest minority group in the United States constitutes the African Americans and they account for 12 % of the general population and 16 % of the school population (Wynn and Wynn 1988:27). In South Africa, according to the National Commission on Higher Education Discussion Document, "The student composition of universities and technikons, reflecting the apartheid legacy, is still severely skewed towards whites. In 1988, for example, of the total student enrolment at technikons only 11,37 % were African compared to 71 % which were white.....Many of the debates and struggles in higher education, especially in the 1980s, were focused on issues of access by black students to higher education institutions" (1996:11). The most recent national statistics in South Africa indicate that Africans account for 76.6 % of the total population (Census in Brief 1996:9). Transformation has therefore, to address the problem of accommodating the masses in a limited number of institutions with scarce resources "whilst maintaining and applying academic and educational standards (Department of Education 1996:6).

### **2.3.2 Other Educational Institutions**

With reference to American vocational and technical schools which are somewhat similar to technical colleges in South Africa, they were developed to meet the nation's need for a technically trained labour force and to provide appropriate educational opportunities for students, uninterested in academic programmes, for employment in trade and technical vocations.

In South Africa students intending to pursue a career in the technical field may enrol at a trade school. Alternatively, they may register for a full-time or part-time course at a technical college. Under the previous government, however, there were very few such vocational institutions, serving the needs of the Africans.

American public colleges and universities originated as normal schools for the preparation of teachers and were later extended into teacher training colleges. There are also a number of private colleges and universities providing a diversity of higher education.

### **2.3.3 Colleges and Universities for Minority Groups**

In the United States of America, according to Wynn and Wynn (1988), there are approximately 104 colleges and universities, most of them in the South, whose student bodies are predominantly Black. Some of these, notably Howard, Fisk, Lincoln, Morehouse and Tuskegee, rank amongst the best institutions of higher education in the country.

In the early 1980's many of these institutions were handicapped by lack of funding, segregation and competition for outstanding black students, who were recruited by other colleges. In South Africa a similar problem also existed as far as segregation was concerned. Black colleges and universities were, however, well served financially.

In the United States of America, by the early 1990's, there were indications of a new upsurge in the more prestigious Black colleges. Applications for admissions rose, together with academic standards. Howard University in Washington, became the leading university for Blacks because of its reputation for excellence, its low tuition fees and its image as a multi-ethnic and multiracial community of scholars.

#### 2.3.4 The Civil Rights Movement

Multicultural education in the United States grew out of the ferment of the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's. During this decade African Americans embarked on a quest for their rights that was unprecedented in the United States. A major goal of the Civil Rights Movement was to eliminate discrimination in public accommodation, housing, employment and education. The consequences of the Civil Rights Movement had a significant influence on educational institutions as ethnic groups, first African Americans and then other groups, demanded that schools and other institutions reform their curricula so that they would reflect their own experiences, histories, cultures and perspectives. Ethnic groups also demanded that schools hire more Black and Brown teachers and administrators so that their children would have successful role models. Ethnic groups pushed for more community control of schools in their neighbourhoods and for the revision of textbooks to make them reflect the diversity of people in the United States (Banks and Banks 1997:5).

The evolution of legal protection against discrimination in hiring practices began with the passing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In 1965 President Johnson signed an executive order prohibiting discrimination against any employee because of race, religion, colour or national origin. The apparent success of the Civil Rights Movement stimulated other victimised groups to take action to eliminate discrimination against them and to demand that the educational system respond to their needs, aspirations, cultures and histories.

The Women's Rights Movement emerged as one of the most significant social reform movements. This Movement exposed how discrimination and institutionalised sexism had limited the opportunities of women and adversely affected the nation. The leaders of this movement demanded that political, social, economic and educational institutions act to eliminate sex discrimination and to provide opportunities for women to actualise their talents and realise their ambitions (Wynn and Wynn 1988:49).

According to Banks and Banks, when "*feminists* looked at educational institutions, they noted problems similar to those identified by ethnic groups of colour. Textbooks and curricula were dominated by men; women were largely invisible" (1997:6). Feminists pushed for the revision of textbooks to include more history about the important roles of women in the development of the nation and the world.

Other marginalised groups, stimulated by the social ferment and the quest for human rights during the 1970's, articulated their grievances and demanded that institutions be reformed so that they would face less discrimination and acquire more human rights.

Similar trends emerged in South Africa, after the new democratic government came into power in 1994. A new Constitution was adopted in May 1996. This Constitution lays down the broad framework for democracy. The democratically elected government requires that "all existing practices, institutions and values are viewed anew and rethought in terms of their fitness for their new era (Department of Education 1997:7). As a consequence of this new approach various new acts have been introduced, such as the Employment Equity Act and the Skills Development Act. All these Acts are directed towards the promotion of transformation.

## 2.4 TECHNIKONS IN SOUTH AFRICA

### 2.4.1 Historical Development

The historical development of technikons can be divided into three stages. Firstly, the early beginnings and growth of technical and vocational education in South Africa from around the turn of the century to the Schumann Commission in 1964, which emphasised the greater need for the training of technicians; secondly, the development and growth since the promulgation of the Advanced Technical Education Act 40 of 1967 and thirdly, the adoption of a single Act for all technikons, the Technikon Act 125 of 1993 (Department of National Education 1996:7).

Although elements of apartheid date back to almost 1652, this ideology was not fully developed until the middle 1950s (Dreijmanis 1988:31). Prior to the discovery of diamonds at Kimberley in 1867 and the development of gold mining at the Witwatersrand in 1886, little industrial development had taken place in South Africa. Consequently no need for technical education was experienced. The development of mining, however, led to the establishment of railway systems and this created the demand for some form of technical education. As the railway systems developed they required artisan labour, which was unavailable, and in order to train artisans the railway's management instituted an apprenticeship system. State-aided technical education arose when assistance was given to technical railway institutes in the late 19th Century in 1896 when the S.A. School of Mines was established in Kimberley. This School subsequently moved to Johannesburg after the Anglo-Boer War and became the nucleus of the University of the Witwatersrand (Pittendrigh 1988:108-109).

During the early 1900s interest in technical education was aroused and as the classes became better organised, centres for technical education and training were set up which finally gave rise to the establishment of technical institutes and colleges. Apart from the railway and mining classes, the Pretoria Polytechnic and the Durban Technical

Institute opened in 1906 and 1907 respectively. Part-time technical classes were also held in Cape Town. From 1907 to the early 1920s full-time and evening classes were held at many of the main centres throughout the country.

There was a lack of co-ordination at national level in technical training and education. Consequently, in 1922, the Union Government passed the Apprenticeship Act of 1922, instructing technical colleges to offer the theoretical component of apprenticeship training throughout the country. There was much debate on the question of financing expanding vocational education and the meaning of "higher education". This debate was brought to a head in 1923 with the passing of the Higher Education Act, 30 of 1923. Certain technical colleges in Cape Town, Durban, East London, Pietermaritzburg, Port Elizabeth, Pretoria and Johannesburg were declared institutions of higher education. (Committee of Technikon Principals 1996:7). These institutions were brought under the control of the Minister of Education and became semi-autonomous state-subsidised institutions, internally controlled by councils. In 1926 college councils and principals formed the Association for Technical Colleges which aimed to promote cooperation and coordination in administrative and academic matters. Close contact was also maintained with the Department of Higher Education, which examined and certified candidates at the colleges. The Association of Technical Colleges later became the Association of Colleges for Advanced Technical Education in 1968 and, in 1979, the Association of Technikons in the Republic of South Africa. The present statutory body, the Committee of Technikon Principals (CTP) was established in 1984 (Pittendrigh 1988:111).

Under the Vocational Educational Act 70 of 1955 all technical colleges (with the exception of four large colleges located in Pretoria, Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town) lost most of their autonomy and became state institutions. Those four large colleges introduced a new tertiary education phase in 1957 - "sandwich" or co-operative courses - which led to the National Diploma for technicians, a move which proved most popular.

The Advanced Technical Education Act passed in 1967 set the stage for the establishment of colleges of advanced technical education: institutions which undertook only advanced post-school work in full-time classes (Department of National Education 1988:6). The four large colleges situated in Pretoria, Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town, together with the one in Port Elizabeth and the Vaal Triangle, became known as Colleges for Advanced Technical Education (CATEs). The Minister of National Education of the time stated that "Colleges of Advanced Technical Education should not be seen as inferior or subservient to universities but as higher educational institutions with a unique character and function that is complementary to that of the university" (Department of National Education 1996:8).

During the 1970s the development of advanced technical education for Coloureds, Indians and Africans gained momentum. The Advanced Education Act 12 of 1968 for Indians, as amended by Act 40 of 1979, led to the establishment of the M.L. Sultan Technikon in Durban. In 1972 the Peninsula Technical College was declared a technikon and has, since 1979, been known as the Peninsula Technikon. It was established mainly for the training of Coloureds. Technikons for Africans were established in Pretoria and Durban in accordance with Act 27 of 1981, the Technikon Act (Education and Training) (Pittendrigh: 1988/Department of National Education: 1996).

During the 1970s the development of CATEs was influenced by two important reports: the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Universities, 1974 (The Van Wyk de Vries Report) which described the unique character of advanced technical education and acknowledged the CATEs status in tertiary education, and the Report of the Committee of Enquiry into the Training of Engineering Technicians, 1978 (The Goode Committee Report). These Reports proposed an institutional name change and the recognition that the CATEs also had a research function, which must be addressed. As a result of the Goode Committee Report in May 1979, CATEs became known as technikons (Committee of Technikon Principals 1996:8).



Autonomy was granted by the Technikon Act (National Education) Act 84 of 1983, which enabled technikons to take new initiatives and structure their institutions so that they were more in line with the requirements of institutions of higher learning. Following the establishment of the Advisory Council for Universities and Technikons (Act 99 of 1983) the official status of technikons was further enhanced. This Council was set up to advise the Minister of National Education on matters common to technikons and universities. Technikons were now seen as institutions in their own right and equal to universities and they gained greater autonomy when the Certification Council for Technikon Education was established by Act 88 of 1986. Technikons could now offer their own examinations. Their final status as "degree-awarding" institutions was achieved in October 1993 under the Technikon Act 125 of 1993.

#### 2.4.2 Contemporary Technikon Education

In terms of the new Constitution and specific challenges facing South Africa today, the Committee of Technikon Principals (CTP), in accordance with its new vision formulated a vision statement for technikon education in South Africa. The vision statement reads: "Technikons will be the leading higher educational institutions in providing high-level career and technologically orientated human resources" while the mission statement is as follows: "the technikon movement will provide and promote affordable and cost-effective quality career education and research for the dynamic needs of the developing South Africa, while at the same time redressing the imbalances existing in the South African workforce and community" (Committee of Technikon Principals 1996:1).

As was explained in Chapter 1, under apartheid, education was divided along racial/ethnic lines, excluding Africans from quality academic education and technical training. A major mechanism to attain equity in the technikon education system is redress, which constitutes one of the most significant components of the transformation agenda. The inherited system of higher education is characterised by injustices, inequalities and

imbalances, and opportunities and privileges are currently skewed as a result of racial and gender-biased policies, structures and practices. Applying the principle of equity to the new vision implies, on the one hand, a critical identification of existing inequalities, and on the other a programme of transformation with a view to redress. With this objective in mind the researcher, through a literature search, the news media and in conversation with academics and students, has identified five areas in the Faculty which will be explored for transformation, namely, language and communication skills, curriculum development and teaching, gender issues, student services and access.

In keeping with the vision and mission mentioned above, the following are the main aims of contemporary technikon education. Implicit in the aims are the measures that should be adopted by the technikon in general and the Faculty in particular, to promote transformation.

#### 2.4.2.1 *Formative education*

Formative education implies that, through curricular and extra-curricular activities, students are assisted to achieve optimum development of their normative, affective, cognitive and social potential. Development implies that conditions must be created in the Faculty for students to realise their full potential. Given the mismatch between the standards in the traditionally African schools and those in the schools of other races, measures should be implemented to ensure that African students perform at a reasonable level in pursuance of the principle of quality.

Affective objectives that deal with the feelings, emotions, attitudes and values of students should be taken cognisance of as they bear a direct relation to their performance in class. Incentives should be created to improve African students' cognitive processes such as knowing, perceiving, recognising, thinking, conceiving and judging (Maltby, et al. 1995:38). Courses aimed at both insight into subject matter and relevancy should be structured and exclude, wherever possible, rote learning or mere memorising of facts.

This approach must tie in with the Outcomes-Based Education which focuses attention on two things: firstly, that learners need to demonstrate that they have attained the desired end result known as outcomes; and secondly, that lecturers must use the learning outcomes as a focus when they make instructional decisions and plan their lessons (Horst and McDonald 1997:7). Other needs of students, including the social, recreational, competitive, and aesthetic, should also be catered for either in the curriculum and/or in the extra-curricular programme.

#### *2.4.2.2 Focusing on a Career*

Technikon education focuses very strongly on the preparation of students for successful entry into a career. Accordingly, curricula are designed in such a way that the particular career, for which the student is being prepared, is never ignored. This necessitates close collaboration with employers, professional bodies and career organisations in commerce, industry and the public sector. This is made possible through the system of co-operative education, which enables the technikon to initiate new, and revise existing, curricula in line with the needs of the workplace (Committee of Technikon Principals 1996:10).

Co-operative education should seek to develop sustainable working relationships between the technikon and the private and public sectors, in terms of which employers undertake to provide students with integrated workplace learning experiences. It also includes exposure to presentations and talks by leading figures from commerce and industry on topics directly related to work done in class (Ori 1999:2). Although integrated workplace experience is not compulsory for all programmes at technikons, the researcher is of the view that where possible, all students should be exposed to practical training in the workplace to marry theory with practice and enhance the chances of employment. This policy would contribute to the empowerment of the student.

#### 2.4.2.3 Promotion and Transfer of Technology

Technikons have accepted, as one of their aims, the promotion of technology by means of instruction, research, development and the rendering of technological services. Accordingly, relevant instructional programmes should include not only a theoretical knowledge of a specific technology, but also the skills to apply such knowledge within a suitable job environment. Therefore, the graduate technologist should have a specific way of approach, thinking and a system of values. In the technikon's research component the emphasis is, to a great extent, placed on problem solving and innovation. In other areas technikons need to inculcate in their students critical thinking skills, problem solving abilities, abilities to translate ideas into new contexts and self-guiding and self-monitoring strategies (Maltby, et al. 1995:41). The researcher will explore how these cognitive abilities can contribute to transformation in the Faculty.

As regards the values and principles of technikons, the Committee of Technikon Principles states that "Technikons subscribe to, and foster, through programmes, respect for the individual's right to equality, freedom of choice, justice and fairness. They affirm respect for people's diverse religious, cultural and political beliefs" (Committee of Technikon Principals 1996:9). These core values, the adoption of which would produce caring and responsible citizens, are frequently emphasised by academics in their lectures.

## 2.5 SUMMARY

In this Chapter a study was made of the historical development of technical education at tertiary level in Britain, the United States of America and South Africa, indicating the growth that led to the present education systems. The study of the system in Britain reveals that polytechnics have been established as an alternative to universities offering technical, vocational and academic courses ranging from those at non-degree levels to higher degrees by research. Britain has a well developed system of adult education run

by LEA's. The major problem facing polytechnics today is access. Not enough places are available to accommodate students to the traditional A-level courses.

In the United States of America community colleges and trade, vocational and business schools offer general education and vocational and technical courses for adults. This results in restricted access. (As) "The effort towards equality of education opportunity advances, and the campaign for excellence in education broadens.....high quality education must be accessible to all" (United States Information Agency 1986:5). However, many of the institutions that offer courses at higher levels, are beyond the reach of the poor as they are unable to afford the high fees charged by these institutions.

The existing education system in South Africa is profoundly shaped by its past. Technikons were also developed within the apartheid framework. African students were underrepresented at technikons and technical colleges as a direct result of the apartheid policies that reserved certain occupations and skills for Whites. The challenge facing the Technikon is therefore to overcome the fragmentation, inequality and inefficiency which are the legacy of the past and create a learning society which releases the creative intellectual energies of African students towards meeting the goals of reconstruction and development.

In the next Chapter a historical survey will be made of M L Sultan Technikon from its inception as a technical college for Indians in the early 1940s. An examination will be made of the academic departments, student enrolment, and staffing. Attention will be focused on the Faculty of Commerce.

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## CHAPTER 3

### M. L. SULTAN TECHNIKON

#### 3.1 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The growth of technical education for Indians in South Africa is synonymous with the growth and development of the M.L. Sultan Technical College. The history of technical education reflects the vision of the early pioneers, their struggles and perseverance. During the early 1920's repeated requests by the Indian community to the Union Government for the provision of facilities for technical education led to enquiries by the Secretary of Education for the establishment of technical education for Indians at the then white Natal Technical College. The College management indicated its willingness to implement any approved scheme, provided that adequate financial assistance was made available from the Union Government (Singh 1995:1).

The Natal Indian Workers' Congress organised the first trade union congress in December 1928. The Congress called upon the Union Government to provide technical education classes for Indian apprentices. The request was also forwarded to other technical colleges in the country. The Natal Technical College indicated that it could not undertake the work as the Government's response to funding was negative. Undaunted, the Indian community formed a committee, under the chairmanship of Advocate A. Christopher, and on 13 August 1929, this committee commenced afternoon classes at the Mitchell Crescent Government Indian School and evening classes at the Hindu Tamil Institute in Cross Street in Durban. Five months later part-time evening classes in commercial and technical subjects began on premises at Sastri College, under the auspices of the Indian Technical Education Committee (M L Sultan Technikon 1997:1). These initiatives laid the foundation for the establishment of M L Sultan Technical College in 1946.



The Union Government began to provide funds for technical education in 1931. Subsequently, satellite campuses were established at Depot Road, Durban in 1933; Clairwood in 1936; Pietermaritzburg in 1939 and Mount Edgecombe in 1942.

In 1942, Hajee Mulukmohammed Lappa Sultan, a philanthropist, provided £2 500, towards half the costs of a technical college building, and £5 000 for a science block to be used by prospective college and pre-medical Indian students of the Natal University College. The Durban City Council agreed to donate the building site. The terms of the donation made it clear that the institution would be named after M.L. Sultan (Penceliah 1997:16).

In August 1942 the Hugo Commission was established to investigate higher education for Indians. Its Report, issued in October 1942, commended the work of the Indian Technical Education Committee, recognised its needs and fully supported the demand for a technical college for Indians. Among the Hugo Commission's most important recommendations were: the Government make a "pound-for-pound" grant to be added to the donation of M.L. Sultan; the offer by the Durban City Council of a site for the erection of a technical college be accepted; the control and management of the technical college be vested in an independent council (Singh 1995:2).

The Minister of Education accepted the Hugo Commission Report and in terms of the Higher Education Act No. 30 of 1923, established the M.L. Sultan Technical College as a place for higher education on 1 January 1946. This led to the inauguration of the first Indian technical college in South Africa with full statutory rights, powers and duties and with an independent council.

The M.L. Sultan Technical College initially operated from Sastri College, a high school for Indians. In 1953, the Durban City Council donated six acres of land to the College.

In January 1956, the present main buildings were opened and the College began full-time secondary classes. Until April 1963 the College continued to operate under the Department of Education and subsequently was transferred to the Department of Indian Affairs (Penceliah 1997:17). Following the 1946 recognition of M.L. Sultan Technical College as an approved institution of higher learning, further progress occurred when, on 1 March 1969 (under the Indian Advanced Technical Education Act 12 of 1968), it became a college for advanced technical education (CATE). This Act put M.L. Sultan Technical College on a par with the four large technical colleges for Whites in Durban, Pretoria, Cape Town and Johannesburg (Singh 1995:4).

The findings of the Goode Commission in 1978 had recommended that in future the mission of colleges for advanced technical education should be to provide technical education at tertiary level only. The Indian Advanced Technical Education Act 12 of 1968 was amended in May 1979 and on 9 May 1979 M.L. Sultan Technical College was renamed M.L. Sultan Technikon. Some of the traditional secondary courses remained at the Technikon until 1983 but from 1984 the Technikon became a fully fledged tertiary institution, consisting of nine separate schools, namely, applied sciences; art and design; building and civil engineering; electrical engineering; health sciences; hotel and catering administration; management administration and computer science; mechanical engineering; secretarial studies and communication and languages.

Prior to 1995 the Technikon had offered courses (programmes) in various disciplines. The duration of the programmes ranged from the one-year National Certificate courses to the Laureatus in Technology, for those who intended to pursue research at a higher level. Three-years' full-time study programmes, leading to the completion of a diploma, proved popular. An advanced qualification could be obtained by students who, on completion of the diploma, registered for a National Higher Diploma, followed by the Master's Diploma in Technology.

### 3.2 FACULTIES AND ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS AT M.I. SULTAN TECHNIKON

An academic department offers programmes associated with a particular area of study. Each academic department is part of a faculty. At present there are four faculties: the Faculties of Commerce, Arts, Science and Engineering, each responsible for programmes in a particular discipline. The Faculty of Science, for instance, is responsible for the Departments of Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Health Care Services and Medical Science. An academic department is administered by, and receives its academic leadership from a head of department. Each academic department has the responsibility for the teaching of specific programmes at the diplomate, graduate and post-graduate levels. In the Technikon Act 125 of 1993, technikon education is described in Para 1 (xx) as education provided “.....with a view to advancement, application, development and transfer of technology, and to undertake research...” In keeping with this policy, departments are now offering, in addition to diplomas, post-diploma B.Tech (Baccalaureas Technologiae), M.Tech (Magister Technologiae) and D.Tech (Doctor Technologiae) degrees. These degree programmes have replaced the post-diploma programmes mentioned in 2.2.

Each faculty functions through its own academic board, which is chaired by the dean of that faculty. A faculty board is responsible for the allocation of funds to the departments. It is also responsible for making recommendations with respect to promotions and appointments of staff. All curricula and course matters, examination matters and course credits are submitted by departments to the faculty board for its recommendation to Senate for approval.

The dean of a faculty has overall responsibility for faculty academic matters. He ensures that the policies of the Technikon are implemented, oversees the monitoring of

staff performance in the faculty, promotes participatory management, and is responsible for all faculty planning (M.L. Sultan Technikon 1999:2-12).

Each faculty has a faculty board comprising the dean, vice-dean, heads of each department, staff representatives, a student representative from the student representative council, and representatives from academic support services of the library, student development, staff development and co-operative education. Faculty board meetings are held once per term (M.L. Sultan Technikon 1999:2-10).

The programmes offered in the Faculties of Commerce and Arts are annual programmes, that is, the final examinations are written at the end of each year, whereas in the Faculties of Science and Engineering they are semesterised, that is, examinations are written at the end of each semester. In all disciplines students have to obtain a year mark based on tests/assignments/projects undertaken throughout the year. At present 50 % of the year mark accounts for the final mark.

### 3.3 STUDENT ENROLMENT AT THE TECHNIKON

Table 3.1 reflects the full-time student enrolment, as per gender, in the Four Faculties from 1994 to 1998.

TABLE 3.1

#### STUDENT ENROLMENT BY FACULTY

FACULTY	1994		1995		1996		1997		1998	
GENDER	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
ARTS	524	751	527	813	503	816	539	1016	550	1120
COMMERCE	931	1140	1070	1223	1336	1568	1568	1996	1564	2006
ENGINEERING	1971	164	2246	212	2495	283	3198	529	1616	360
SCIENCE	395	474	419	604	452	725	343	794	210	588
TOTAL	3821	2529	4262	2852	4786	3392	5648	4335	3940	4074
TOTAL (M + F)	6350		7114		8178		9983		8014	

SOURCE: M.L. SULTAN TECHNIKON STUDENT STATISTICS: 1998

In 1994 the total number of students registered for various programmes was 6 350. This increased to 8 014 in 1998, representing an increase of 26.2 %. During the same period the number of female students registering in each faculty also increased significantly. The total number of females registered in 1994 was 2 529. This number increased to 4074 in 1998, representing an increase of 61 %.

From 1994 the number of African students registering for different programmes also increased after the discriminatory laws were repealed. Table 3.2 reflects the student population, as per race group, over the past five years.

*TABLE 3.2*

*STUDENT ENROLMENT ACCORDING TO RACE GROUP CLASSIFICATION*

YEAR	INDIANS	WHITES	AFRICANS	COLOURED	TOTAL
1994	3784	458	1979	129	6350
1995	3962	394	2624	134	7114
1996	3840	301	3918	119	8178
1997	4019	219	5614	131	9983
1998	2859	132	4930	93	8014

SOURCE: M.L. SULTAN TECHNIKON STUDENT STATISTICS: 1998

Prior to 1994 Indians comprised the majority of the students enrolled at the Technikon. From 1994, when the restrictions on admission of African students were lifted, there has been a gradual decline in the number of Indian, White and Coloured students registering. During the same period the number of African students increased from 1 979 in 1994 to 4 930 in 1998. This represents an increase of 149.1 % . Indian students totalled 3 784 in 1994. This decreased to 2 859 in 1998, representing a decline of 24.4 % in comparison to the increase of African students by 149.1 %. During the same period the number of White and Coloured students declined by 71.1 % and 27.9 % respectively. It is expected that in the next few years the student population at the Technikon will reflect the demography of the Province. According to the latest statistics, Africans account for 81.7% of the total population in Kwazulu-Natal (Census in Brief 1996:9).

The demography for the Province is shown in Table 3.3 below.

TABLE 3.3

POPULATION DISTRIBUTION IN KWAZULU-NATAL: 1996

RACE	%
African/Black	81.7
Coloured	1.4
Indian/Asian	9.4
White	6.6
Unspecified/other	0.8
Total	100.0

SOURCE: CENSUS IN BRIEF: 1996

3.4 STAFF

In keeping with the history of the Technikon, Indians comprised the majority of the staff as reflected in Table 3.4.

TABLE 3.4

HUMAN RESOURCES STATISTICS

YEAR	INDIANS	WHITES	COLOURED	AFRICANS	CHINESE	M	F	TOTAL
1996	379	61	7	33	0	327	153	480
1997	412	68	5	54	1	352	188	540
1998	422	64	5	61	1	353	200	553

SOURCE: M.L.SULTAN TECHNIKON: STATISTICS: 1998

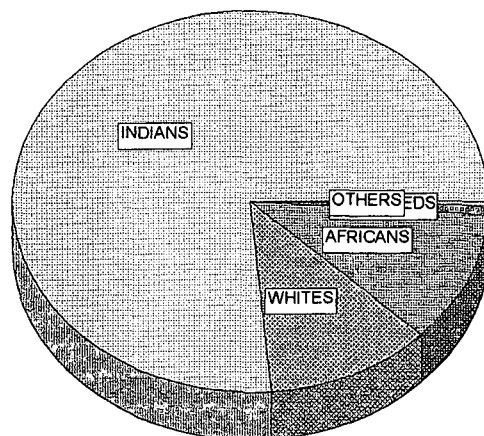
In 1996 there were 379 professional and non-professional Indian staff on the payroll of the Technikon. This represented 78.9 % of the total staff number. In 1998 this decreased to 76.2 %. This is in line with the Government's affirmative action policy contained in the Employment Equity Act. The Act states that every designated employer (a person who employs 50 or more employees) must implement affirmative action measures for suitably qualified people from designated groups (Africans, Coloureds, Indians, women and the disabled). This means that employers must establish, through an analysis of their organisation, whether people from designated groups are fairly represented at all levels and in all job categories. On completion of this exercise employers must develop an affirmative action plan to: address under-representation discovered through the organisational analysis; eliminate obstacles that block the employment or advancement of people from designated groups within the organisation; accommodate employees from designated groups and retrain, train and develop people from designated groups. As the Africans are largely under-represented at this institution, all future vacancies, wherever possible, will be filled by Africans. As a result of the provisions of the affirmative action policy, the number of Africans in employment increased from 33 in 1996 to 61 in 1998, representing an increase of 84.8 %. Table 3.4 also reveals that the number of females in employment increased by 30.7 % since 1996. This complies with the duty of the employer to eliminate unfair discrimination in employment on grounds of gender, as contained in the Act.



Figure 3.1 reflects the composition of staff as per race group in 1998.

FIGURE 3.1

### STAFF PER RACE GROUP: 1998



In 1998 the breakdown of staff in terms of race was as follows: Indians 76.3 %; Whites 11.5 %; Africans 11 %; Coloureds 0.9 % and Chinese .18 % (others).

### 3.5 THE FACULTY OF COMMERCE

The Faculty of Commerce is the largest faculty in the Technikon. It comprises six departments, viz. Accounting and Auditing, Computer Studies, Economics and Quantitative Methods, Law and Administration, Marketing and Management, and Commercial Administration. The Dean of the Faculty is the chief executive officer of the Faculty. Each department receives its academic leadership from a head of department. Students initially register for national diplomas, that extend over three-years full-time study. On completion they may register for a B.Tech (Baccalaureus Technologiae) programme, followed by the M.Tech. (Magister Technologiae). M.Tech programmes are currently offered in the Departments of Computer Studies and Marketing and Management, on a part-time basis.

According to the rules contained in the M.L. Sultan Technikon Faculty of Commerce Handbook (1999:1) "the minimum entrance requirement is possession of a Senior Certificate or its equivalent with passes in each of at least two official languages at standard grade". As English is the medium of instruction at the Technikon, a pass in English is a pre-requisite for admission. Other criteria for admission to a programme are also laid down by each department in keeping with specific needs of a programme. In the Department of Accounting and Auditing, for instance, a student must have passed Accountancy at the senior certificate level to register for any programme. A student may also be required to write an aptitude test and be subjected to an interview. The researcher will explore other criteria for admission of a larger number of African students to the Faculty and how this could hasten the transformation process.

The student enrolment in the Faculty over the past five years has increased steadily. In 1994 the total enrolment in the Faculty was 2 071. This increased to 3 570 in 1998. The number of Indian students has declined marginally from 1 180 in 1994 to 1 124 in 1998. During the same period the number of African students increased from 841 to 2 424, representing an increase of 195 %. Amongst the Africans, females outnumber the males by 46 %. Table 3.5 illustrates the full-time student enrolment in the Faculty from 1994 to 1998. The marginal drop in the number of students registered in 1998, in comparison to 1997, was attributable to two factors, namely, that some students were unable to afford the tuition fees, and secondly, the policy of the Technikon not to re-admit students whose academic performance has been consistently poor over the years. Conversations with students, whose academic performance has been poor, and examination of their academic records, have revealed that they have very poor communication and written skills. Their symbols in the matric examination were very low and in some cases their results were "condoned" to effect a pass. This problem will be re-examined in Chapter 4.

TABLE 3.5

*STUDENT ENROLMENT STATISTICS ACCORDING TO RACE GROUP CLASSIFICATION IN THE FACULTY OF COMMERCE*

YEAR	INDIANS		WHITES		AFRICANS		COLOURED		TOTAL		TOTAL (M+F)
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
1994	521	659	3	1	383	458	24	22	931	1140	2071
1995	558	604	2	1	490	597	20	21	1070	1223	2293
1996	547	568	2	0	773	988	14	12	1336	1568	2904
1997	557	621	2	0	993	1359	16	16	1568	1996	3564
1998	564	558	1	1	982	1442	17	05	1564	2006	3570

SOURCE: M.L. SULTAN TECHNIKON: STATISTICS: 1998

The number of students in each class in the Faculty ranges from small groups of approximately 35 to groups of over 300, particularly in the First Year. In the large groups close interaction between the lecturer and the students is not possible. However, the large groups are divided into smaller groups of 35 students per group for tutorials, where attention is given to students' problems and queries. For the slow learners additional exercises are given. The lectures to large groups of students are, to a great extent, lecturer dominated and although students are encouraged to participate in discussions, they play a relatively passive role. In a practical subject such as Computer Operating, the lecturer guides and instructs and the student plays a dominant role. The researcher is of the opinion that much needs to be done in this area of teaching to develop students' full potential and this will be explored in the next Chapter.

In December 1998 the Faculty consisted of 87 academic and 10 administrative staff members. Of the total number, 78 were Indians, 15 were Africans and 4 were Whites. Female staff accounted for 36 % of the total staff number. Much has to be done in the

Faculty to ensure that a greater number of Africans are employed, following the demography of the Province, as outlined in 2.4. Female representation on the staff also needs to be addressed.

### **3.6 SUMMARY**

In this Chapter the development of technical education for Indians was traced back to the 1920's when Indian pioneers made education their top priority. The inauguration of the Indian Technical Education Committee was instrumental in getting part-time classes started at Sastri College in 1930 and it subsequently expanded to other areas. Recognition was given to the philanthropist, Hajee M.L. Sultan, whose generous contribution in 1954 saw the start of the construction of the main campus of the Technikon at its present site. The success of the Technikon is reflected in the progress that it has made since it was first declared an institution of higher education in 1946, a College for Advanced Technical Education in 1969 and ten years later, the M L Sultan Technikon.

A study was made of the growth and racial composition of students and staff, as well as the programmes offered in the Faculty of Commerce. The latter's status was also examined.

In the next Chapter field research is presented and discussed and the findings are analysed.

### 3.7 REFERENCES

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## CHAPTER 4

### EVALUATION OF RESEARCH RESULTS

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of this study a historical survey of the development of tertiary education in the United States of America, Britain and South Africa, indicating how disadvantaged groups were accommodated in the mainstream of academic programmes, was presented. The development of the technikon system of education in South Africa was also examined and attention focused particularly on M.L. Sultan Technikon, including the current status of the programmes it offers, admission requirements and staffing in its Faculty of Commerce. All this information was seen as a necessary preliminary to transformation.

In this Chapter the field research is presented and discussed. An analysis of findings is accompanied by both numerical tabulation and graphical representation.

#### 4.2 SAMPLE AND DATA COLLECTION

Information on the current state of transformation at the Technikon generally and, in particular, on the Faculty of Commerce, was collected by interviewing staff, by consulting policy documents and literature. The study also involved a self-administered questionnaire for senior staff from the Faculties of Commerce of the three technikons researched, as well as ten final-year Commerce students at M L Sultan Technikon. Senior staff subjects were drawn from deans, heads of department, directors, senior lecturers and lecturers with at least 5 years experience. Altogether 63 questionnaires were distributed.

### 4.3 QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

The questionnaire was compiled with the help of relevant literature and academic researchers. The questionnaire was pretested in a pilot study. The questionnaire (Annexure 4B) consisted of 64 structured questions divided into the following five sections:

Section A: Language and Communication Skills (10 questions)

Section B: Curriculum Development and Teaching (14 questions)

Section C: Gender Issues (11 questions)

Section D: Student Services (12 questions)

Section E: Access (7 questions)

Questions were designed to gauge the views of respondents in areas crucial for transformation of the Faculty. Questions were kept (as far as possible) simple and unambiguous. Respondents had to choose one from five alternatives: "strongly agree", "agree", "neither agree nor disagree", "disagree" and "strongly disagree". Each response carried the same weight. Ten minutes on average was considered reasonable for completion of the questionnaire. In some cases the researcher called personally on respondents to clarify problems that they encountered in the completion of the questionnaire.

### 4.4 COVERING LETTER

The covering letter (Annexure 4A) informed respondents about the scope of the research and appealed for their collaboration. This was encouraged by:

- \* assuring the respondents of absolute confidentiality;
- \* informing them that the researcher would call on them personally to clarify any problems that might arise;
- \* offering them, if they wished, a summary of the results of the study.

4.5 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESPONSES

Details of the number of questionnaires distributed and the responses returned are indicated in Table 4.1. In all sixty responses were received. This constituted a response rate of 95.2 %.

TABLE 4.1

QUESTIONNAIRE DISTRIBUTION AND RESPONSE

INSTITUTION	NO. DISTRIBUTED	NO. RETURNED	RESPONSE (%)
M L Sultan (Staff)	25	25	100
(Students)	10	10	100
Natal	18	16	88.8
Mangosuthu	10	9	90
TOTAL	63	60	95.2

4.6 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Where a minimum of 50 % of the respondents concurred with a statement, that statement was considered for formulation as a policy for transformation in Chapter 5.

4.6.1 Section A: Language and Communication Skills

Questions in this Section dealt with those Language and Communication Skills, necessary for learning and how their acquisition could expedite transformation. The results are presented in Table 4.2. (Page 47)



TABLE 4.2

*CROSS-TABULATION: POSITION OF RESPONDENTS: LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS (%)*

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. Language should be simplified.	20	48.3	10	13.3	8.3
2. Basic writing skills should be taught.	47.4	35.3	5	6.7	5
3. Oral communication in English should be encouraged.	77.9	18.6	3.3	0	0
4. Reading skills should be taught.	40.6	42.3	10.1	3.3	3.3
5. Critical thinking should be developed.	73.3	23.3	3.3	0	0
6. Peer group learning should be encouraged.	44	50.1	3.3	1.6	0
7. Students should be encouraged to assist others by explaining concepts in their mother tongue.	25	40	15	11.6	8.3
8. Faculty documents should be available in English and Zulu.	8.3	18	23.3	33.3	16.6
9. Where possible questions in examination papers should be in both English and Zulu.	13.3	16.6	11.6	41.6	16.6
10. Basic conversational Zulu should be acquired by all staff.	20	36.6	21.6	13.3	8.3

68.3 % of the respondents were in agreement that language should be simplified. This indicated that the majority of the respondents were aware of the difficulties that African students experienced as a result of their having studied English in school as a second language. A small minority, that is 8.3 %, strongly disagreed on the need to simplify

language. Furthermore a large number of the respondents, namely 82.7 %, were in favour of teaching basic writing skills in English. Disadvantaged students should be encouraged to communicate in English and not in their mother tongue, both inside and outside the classroom. 77.9 % of the respondents strongly agreed with this. Strong support was also indicated for teaching reading skills (82.9 %). Experience has shown that many disadvantaged students are unable to read simple sentences, understand basic words or phrase short sentences correctly.

Critical to Outcomes-Based Education is the need for students to think critically and be able to apply skills learned in the classroom to practical work situations. For this reason the need to develop critical thinking was also highly rated as 73.3 % of the respondents "strongly agreed" while 23.3 % "agreed".

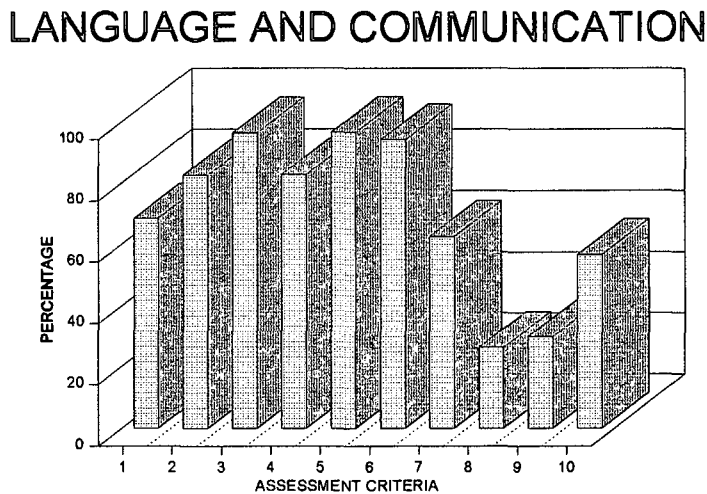
It was revealed that there was strong support for peer group learning. Students tend to relate to each other better in a group, as in the classroom they are confronted with the same issues. 94.1 % of the respondents believed that peer group learning could assist in the improvement of language and communication skills.

Although English is the official medium of instruction at the Technikon, the majority of African students converse with each other in mother tongue. Perhaps those students, who have a good command and understanding of English, should be encouraged to assist others by explaining concepts to them in mother tongue. This is particularly significant when a student has limited exposure to life outside his home environment and consequently is unable to perceive objects unrelated to his experiences. 65 % of the respondents indicated their support for students assisting one another using mother tongue. While only 26.3 % supported the need for Faculty documents to be available in both English and Zulu, 33.3 % disagreed and 16.6 % strongly disagreed with this. There was little support (29.9 %) for questions in examination papers to be in both English and Zulu.

The general view seems to be that as the official medium of instruction and communication at the Technikon is English, it was not necessary to set questions in English and Zulu as this could be detrimental to the student who thinks in Zulu but writes in English. In learning a language one is advised to think and write in that language. Subsequent informal conversation with some of the respondents confirmed this view. The need for all staff to acquire a knowledge of basic conversational Zulu was supported by 56.6 %. By learning Zulu a lecturer learns about the cultures and traditions of the Zulus and this helps in acquiring a better understanding of the African student.

The bar chart in Figure 4.1 indicates the degree of support received for the different aspects of Language and Communication Skills. The numbers on the horizontal scale from 1 to 10 (assessment criteria) correspond to the numbers of each of the statements given in Table 4.2.

FIGURE 4.1



The researcher has drawn the conclusion that widespread agreement in the following areas, namely, simplification of the language; communication skills; thinking and problems solving skills; study skills; listening skills and the acquisition of basic

conversational Zulu by staff, may open the way for policies of transformation. These areas are discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

#### **4.6.2 Section B: Curriculum Development and Teaching**

The statements in this Section were designed to measure the support for change in aspects of curriculum and teaching and how this could facilitate successful learning. The results are presented in Table 4.3. ( Page 51)

TABLE 4.3

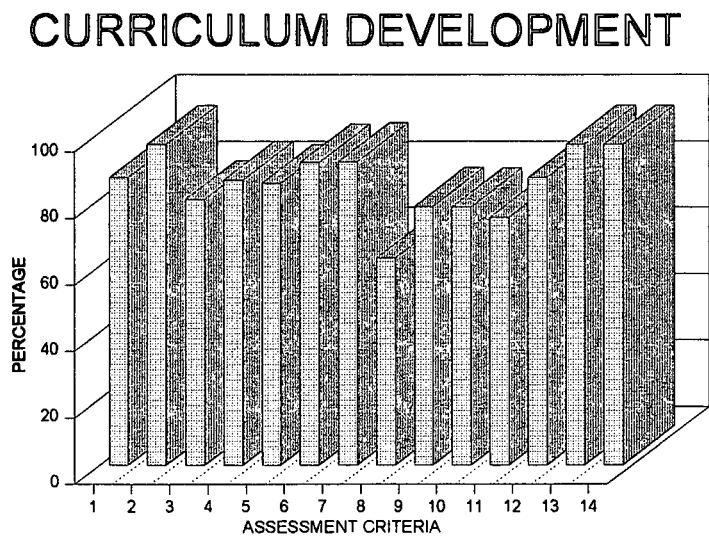
CROSS-TABULATION: POSITION OF RESPONDENTS: CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND TEACHING

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. The curriculum should focus on careers for which there are job opportunities.	50	36.6	6.6	3.3	3.3
2. Outcomes for each subject should be clearly identified and evident in the evaluation process.	48.3	48.3	3.3	0	0
3. Review and revision of each curriculum should ensure responsiveness to social, economic, and environmental needs.	30	50	13.3	3.3	1
4. Wherever possible, subjects should be modularised.	25.8	60	10.3	1.7	1.7
5. Subjects should be examined on completion of each module.	32.3	52.5	11.8	1.6	1.6
6. Meetings with industry representatives should be held on a regular basis.	52.5	40.6	6.7	0	0
7. Every curriculum should include a course in basic computer operating.	50	41.3	5	3.4	0
8. Every curriculum should include a course in multicultural issues, race relations and morality.	23.3	45	21.6	5	5
9. Entrepreneurship should be included in every curriculum.	30.5	47.4	16.9	5	0
10. Every curriculum should include more optional subjects to enhance employment opportunities.	28.8	49	15.2	6.7	0
11. The role of the lecturer should be that of the facilitator rather than the transmitter of knowledge.	44	30.5	20.3	5	0
12. Peer tutors should be appointed in each discipline to assist students.	40	46.6	10	3.3	0
13. Learners should become more self-directed.	48.3	48.3	1.6	1.6	0
14. Lecturers should use a variety of learning strategies.	53.3	43.3	1.6	0	1.6

Every statement in this Section received a favourable response, the lowest being a score of 62.3 % in support of the need for every curriculum to include a course in multi-cultural issues, race relations and morality, to a rating of 96.6 % for the outcomes of each subject to be clearly defined, learners to become more self-directed, and lecturers to use a variety of teaching strategies. Transformation of the following areas, namely, focusing on careers for which there are job opportunities; identification of outcomes for each subject; modularisation of subjects; inclusion of a basic course in computer training and management of diversity, would enhance curriculum development and teaching and form the basis of the policy discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

The bar chart in Figure 4.2 reflects the levels of support for transformation in each of the 14 statements relating to curriculum development and teaching.

FIGURE 4.2



### 4.6.3 Section C: Gender Issues

In this Section the statements were designed to determine the extent of agreement for changing attitudes towards the advancement of women in the workplace in order to promote gender equity. The results presented in Table 4.4 cross-tabulates the views of respondents.

TABLE 4.4

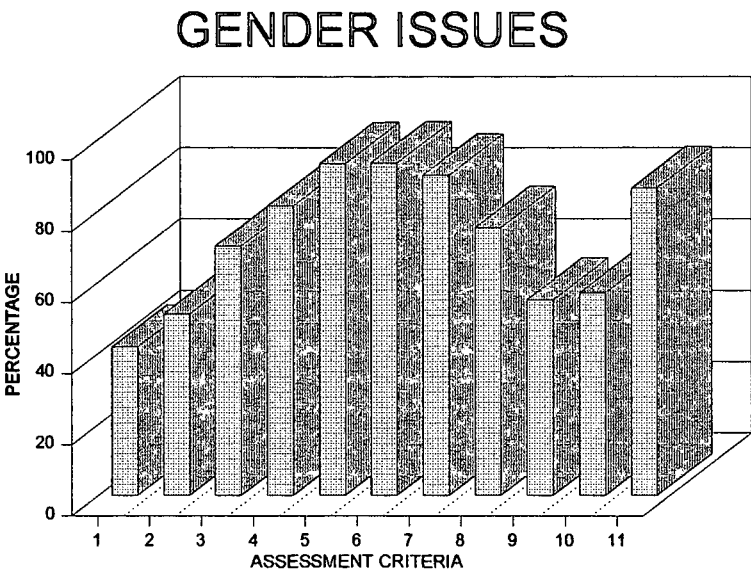
## CROSS-TABULATION: POSITION OF RESPONDENTS: GENDER ISSUES

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. Preference should be given to women for employment and promotion.	13.3	28.3	20	18.3	20
2. Women selected in terms of 1 above should be provided with opportunities for growth and development.	18.6	42.3	30.5	3.3	5
3. Women should be promoted to positions of leadership.	21.6	48.3	23.3	1.6	5
4. Women should be encouraged to acquire managerial skills.	16.9	64.4	16.9	1.6	0
5. The anti-sexual harassment policy should be strictly enforced.	45.7	47.4	6.7	0	0
6. The anti-sexual harassment policy should provide support for victims of harassment and abuse.	45	48.3	6.6	0	0
7. The anti-sexual harassment policy should be reviewed and updated periodically.	23.3	66.6	10	0	0
8. Awareness campaigns, specifically highlighting women issues, should be held on a regular basis.	15.2	61	22	0	1.6
9. Included in the Students' Registration form should be a sentence dealing with courteous treatment of female students.	18.3	36.6	28.3	13.3	3.3
10. All staff should be given gender awareness training.	12	44.8	31	6.8	5
11. All departmental duties should be shared by both male and female staff.	50.8	35.5	11.8	0	1.6

With the exception of the first statement which maintained that women should be given preference in employment and promotion, for which there was only 41.6 % support, there was a rating of over 50 % for each of the remaining 10 statements. Sexual harassment is on the increase worldwide and it is particularly noteworthy that there was significant endorsement for a strictly enforced anti-sexual harassment policy (93.1 %), support services for victims of harassment and abuse (93.3 %) and periodic reviewal and updating of the anti-sexual harassment policy (89.9 %).

The bar chart in Figure 4.3 reflects responses received on matters relating to gender issues.

FIGURE 4.3



Although there was 69.9 % support for women to be promoted to positions of leadership, 23.3 % of the respondents were non-committal. Subsequent informal conversation with some of the male respondents revealed that there was apprehension amongst them as they felt that their chances of being promoted to leadership positions would be threatened by women. 31 % of the respondents were indifferent to the need for all staff to be given



gender awareness training. This was attributed to the argument that they would learn nothing new from the training and the prevailing attitude of male chauvinism. Non-committal response (28.3 %) to the courteous treatment of female students by their male counterparts was also evident. Respondents were of the view that the point was adequately covered in the rules and regulations governing students on the campus and was therefore unnecessary to include it in a registration form.

From the response received in this Section the researcher is of the opinion that much can be done to promote transformation on matters relating to gender issues and recommendations are accordingly made in the next Chapter.

#### **4.6.4 Section D: Student Services**

The statements in this Section were designed to rate the perception of those students' services which the researcher believes are linked to the development of potential. Table 4.5 cross-tabulates these replies. (Page 56)

TABLE 4.5

CROSS-TABULATION: POSITION OF RESPONDENTS: STUDENT SERVICES (%)

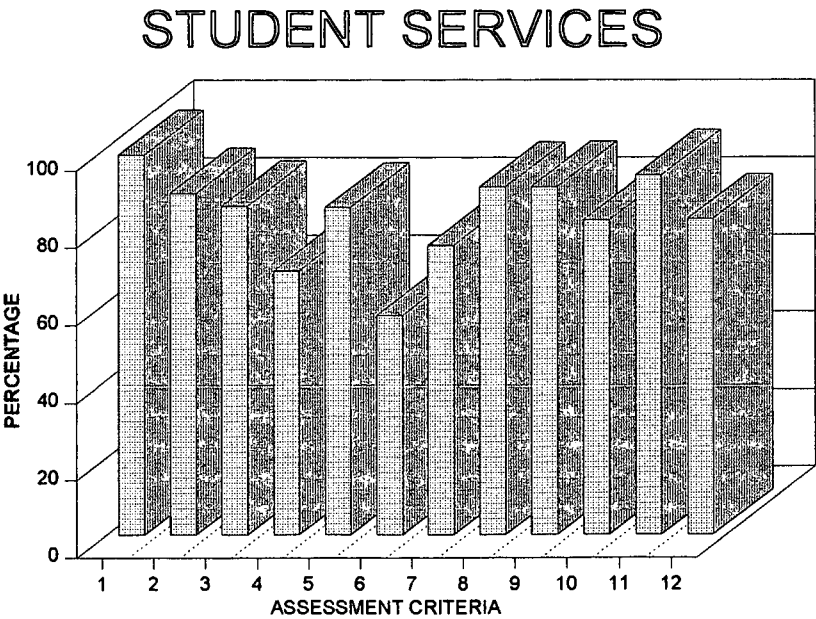
	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. Potential students should be provided full information on programmes offered.	52.5	45.7	0	0	1.6
2. The Faculty should provide students with information concerning academic and administrative matters.	40	48.3	10	1.6	0
3. Departmental heads should be easily accessible to students.	35	50	10	5	0
4. Opportunities should be created for students and staff to meet socially at least once a year.	15	53.3	26.6	3.3	1.6
5. Students should be given the opportunity to deal with issues concerning democracy, multi-culturalism, leadership and morality.	16.9	67.7	15.2	0	0
6. The Faculty should regularly inform parents of students' progress.	20	36.6	26.6	13.3	3.3
7. The Faculty should encourage students to make use of the institution's sporting and recreation facilities.	26.6	48.3	23.3	1.6	0
8. The Faculty should encourage successful alumni to address students from time to time.	23.3	66.6	8.3	1.6	0
9. Students should be given the opportunity to meet local leading figures from commerce and industry.	35	55	10	0	0
10. The Faculty should encourage African entrepreneurs to share their experiences with the students.	28.8	52.5	18.6	0	0
11. Students in all programmes should be encouraged to obtain experiential training.	45	48	6.6	0	0
12. The Faculty should assist diplomates, wherever possible, to find employment	31.6	50	11.6	3.3	3.3

There was positive support (agree and strongly agree) for each of the 12 statements concerning student services. 52.5 % strongly agreed and 45.7 % agreed that full information on Faculty programmes should be available for interested students. This would enable informed career choices to be made. 90 % recommended that students should be given the opportunity to meet local leading figures in commerce and industry. This would provide the opportunity of finding suitable role models and so could serve to encourage the students to work with dedication.

Requiring the Faculty to inform parents regularly of students' progress received the lowest rating - 56.6 %. Perhaps it was felt that students were mature enough to take responsibility for studies and so regular communication with parents was unnecessary.

The bar chart in Figure 4.4 reflects the support for aspects of student services.

FIGURE 4.4



The response received for different aspects of student services will be consolidated into two areas (provision of information for potential and registered students and co-operative education) for the formulation of a policy for transformation discussed in Chapter 5.

#### **4.6.5 Section E: Access**

Positive responses were received in respect of questions designed to discover how the Faculty could play an increased role in assisting students to gain access to the various programmes offered. The results are presented in Table 4.6. (Page 59)

TABLE 4.6

CROSS-TABULATION: POSITION OF RESPONDENTS: ACCESS (%)

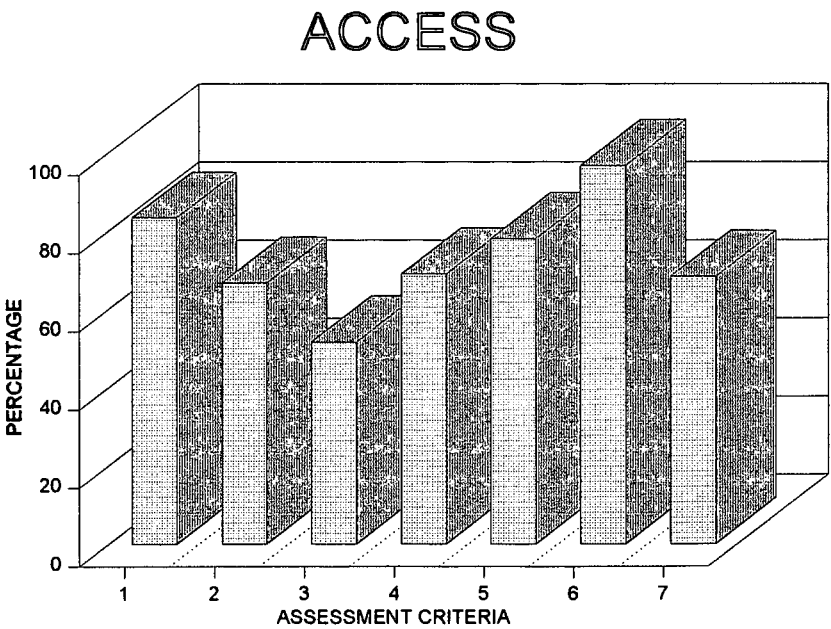
	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. Criteria for admission of new students should include potentiality to succeed.	26.6	56.6	10	6.6	0
2. Students who do not meet the minimum requirements for admission but have relevant practical experience should be considered.	15	51.6	28.3	5	0
3. Part-time classes should be offered to students who fail to gain admission to full-time classes.	13.3	38.3	13.3	26.6	8.3
4. The Faculty should be encouraged to offer distant learning.	10.3	58.6	15.5	15.5	0
5. Preparatory or bridging courses should be available to all under-prepared students.	20.3	57.6	13.5	5	3.3
6. The Faculty should inform high school pupils of admission requirements for different programmes.	45	51.6	3.3	0	0
7. Students should be permitted to register for single subjects if they do not intend to complete a programme.	21.6	46.6	18.3	13.3	0

A study of the Table reflects that 51.6 % were in agreement on the question of offering part-time classes to students who did not succeed in gaining admission on a full-time basis; 66.6 % indicated that students, who did not meet the minimum requirements for admission but had relevant practical experience, should be given access; 96.6 % strongly supported the need for the Faculty to inform high school pupils of the admission requirements for different programmes. A considerable number (28.3 %) were non-committal regarding admission of students who do not meet minimum requirements, but have practical experience. The respondents did not consider the need for technikons to

allow access to students of this category and this is contrary to the point emphasised in the Department of Education’s White Paper 3 (1997) which states that recognition should be given to students for prior learning. On the question of admitting students who did not gain admission to full-time classes to register for part-time study, 26.6 % disagreed. The general view seems to be that these students may have been placed low on the ranking scale for admission to full-time classes as they do not have the potential to succeed. This view is also contrary to the Government’s policy that students should be admitted to programmes if they have the potential to succeed.

The bar chart in Figure 4.5 reflects the responses received on matters relating to access to programmes in the Faculty.

FIGURE 4.5



A study of the bar chart reveals that all the statements in this Section elicited a positive response. This is an indication that respondents believe that changes have to be made in order to accommodate the larger number of students who wish to register for programmes in the Faculty.

#### 4.7 CONCLUSION

In the First Section, consisting of statements pertaining to Language and Communication Skills, 8 out of the 10 statements received a favourable response (more than 50 %), indicating that an effort should be made to improve the language and communication skills of the disadvantaged students. As the support for the other two statements was relatively low they will not be considered as areas for transformation.

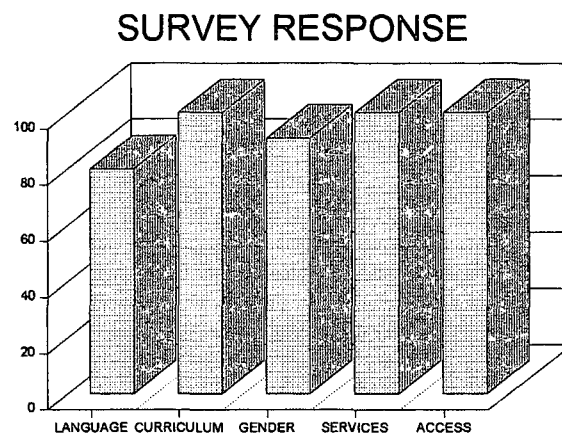
The responses to all the 14 statements dealing with Curriculum Development and Teaching were positive. This indicates that the respondents agree that curriculum development and teaching should be transformed.

On Gender Issues 1 out of the 11 statements received a rating of less than 50 %, indicating a support for transformation in the areas covered in the other 10 statements. Each of the statements relating to Student Services and Access also received a rating of more than 50 %. This indicates that transformation is desirable in all those areas

## 4.8 SUMMARY

In this Chapter the responses to the questionnaires were analysed and discussed. A summary of the response for each of the sections is represented in the bar chart in Figure 4.6.

FIGURE 4.6



In the next Chapter, statements that received a favourable response in each of the five main areas will be combined (where there is some degree of commonality) to form the basis of a policy that may serve to transform teaching and learning in the Faculty of Commerce.



## CHAPTER 5

### RECOMMENDED POLICY FOR TRANSFORMATION

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous Chapter the findings of the field research were analysed and discussed. In this Chapter each of the main areas recommended for transformation, i.e. language and communication skills, curriculum development and teaching, gender issues, student services and access are revisited and where more than 50 % of the respondents were in agreement with aspects relating to each of the main areas, those aspects will be expounded and recommended as policy guidelines. The recommended guidelines will supplement existing general institutional policies.

#### 5.2 LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS POLICY

##### 5.2.1 Preamble

Although the racial composition of students in the Faculty has changed from predominantly Indian to predominantly African, very little has been done by the Faculty to retrain its academic staff to manage classes of African students, whose command of English as the official medium of communication, is not at an acceptable level, mainly owing to inadequate educational opportunities, as explained in Chapter 1. In all programmes in the Faculty, Communication is a compulsory subject taken as an ancillary in the First Year and, in some cases, extending into the Second Year of study. It is recommended by the researcher that basic language and communication skills be taught in the First Year to all African students before they register for Communication 1 in the Second Year. This fundamental course would equip them with basic skills in oral and written communication, which they lack at present. The progress of the students will not be impeded by registering for the basic language and communication skills course as they will still be able to complete the diploma in three years of full-time study. The so-called “language across the curriculum” should be given increased emphasis in the future.

This means that, although a lecturer is regarded as a specialist in his own field, lecturers teaching students at all levels, should also be involved, as part of their duties, in teaching the basic principles of English and Communication. This should be done during the presentation of lectures and in marking students' written work. This would complement the work covered by lecturers in the basic language and communication skills course. In addition, the following guidelines are recommended to enhance the language and communication skills of African students.

### **5.2.2 Guideline Policy on Language and Communication Skills**

Every effort should be made by all academic staff in the Faculty to simplify the language used when teaching their subjects. This will entail using shorter sentences, using simpler words or synonyms, with which the student is familiar, and by focusing on concepts. Teaching concepts involves extensive and skilful use of examples. According to Slavin (1997:251) concepts are generally learned in two ways, namely, by observation and by definition. Of importance to the staff in the Faculty is the latter. It makes sense for a lecturer to state a definition, present several instances thereof, restate the definition and show how the instances typify the definition. A lecturer in Economics, for instance, could explain the concept "inflation", by first defining it, giving several instances of it from everyday life, observations or occurrences, restating the definition and showing how the examples cited are indicative of the definition. Slavin adds further that "teaching concepts involves extensive and skilful use of examples". Lecturers in the Faculty should follow three rules when presenting examples of concepts, namely, arrange the examples from easy to difficult; select examples that differ from one another; and compare and contrast examples and non-examples.

An area of particular concern to lecturers in the Faculty is the need to develop thinking skills in students, as the previous education system "allowed little or no room for the development of critical capacity or the power of independent thought and enquiry"(Asmal 1999:3). One of the ways in which lecturers could develop thinking skills in students is

to use the plan-write-revise strategy when explaining to students how to write a short essay (McCormick and Pressley 1997:12). The lecturer explains alternative ways of planning. These include searching one's own knowledge for information to include in the essay, brainstorming with others, and seeking information from library and other resources. The lecturer may also demonstrate ways of organising the ideas generated. During the writing phase the lecturer explains how to turn the rough outlines into phrases and sentences. Once a good first draft is achieved via planning and writing, then it is time for revision. The lecturer explains that revision may require more planning and the search for additional information to put into the essay, followed by development of new phrases and sentences that mesh with what is already in the draft. The lecturer conveys much of this information with examples of good writing, which are accompanied by demonstrations of how these examples were constructed using planning, writing and revising. In nearly every subject, for each of the programmes in the Faculty, students will be required to write essays. Thus the development of thinking skills and guidance on writing essays complement one another.

Lecturers, with years of experience, have observed that the majority of the disadvantaged students are unable to think critically, or solve simple problems posed during lectures or in tests and examinations. Rote learning has, in many cases, been the order of the day. It is imperative for lecturers in the Faculty to get students to move away from this method and learn the techniques of problem solving. After all, the goal of problem solving is to prepare the students to transfer what they learn in the classroom to real-life situations. Soden (1994:4) points out that "modern industry requires workers who are capable of applying their knowledge in a flexible, adaptable way and that there is a need to embed the teaching of thinking skills in vocational education and training. It is through thinking more efficiently that we become better problem solvers at work and in our own personal lives".

One simple model of problem solving identifies five critical cognitive processes: identification, definition, exploration, action and looking and learning (Gage and Berliner 1992:304-306). First, the students must recognise that a problem exists. For instance, students doing Accountancy are unable to calculate the profit made by a business for a certain period of time. This is because they fail to identify the problem. Inadequately prepared or less able learners often simply fail to see that a problem exists. Once a problem is identified it must be defined. The students need to build a representation of the problem in their minds or on paper. In our example of the Accountancy problem, the students may not recognise that certain items of expenditure or losses have also to be taken into consideration in determining the profit.

Next comes the exploration of strategies for a solution, such as breaking the problem into parts or starting at the goal and working backwards. In our example students need to carefully examine and separate the items of profits, losses and expenses and eliminate those that do not fall into any of those categories. After exploring the strategies the students will begin to solve the problem, that is, they act, then look at the effects of their action and learn from their mistakes. This simple model can be applied in any situation or subject in the Faculty.

Problem solving will help the students to realise their potential, that is, to empower them, as explained in Chapter 1, and prepare them for life outside the lecture room. Learning to solve one problem gives them the ability to solve others.

Another area of concern in the Faculty is the lack of study skills. From our interaction with students we have been given to understand that they were given little guidance, if any, on study techniques in school. As a result, they find it extremely difficult to utilise the masses of information presented to them for study purposes. The following guide is recommended to improve their study skills and all lecturing staff in the Faculty should encourage students to use it.

A common strategy that is used both in reading and learning from lectures is note-taking. This requires mental processing of the main ideas and decisions about what to write. Positive effects are most likely when note-taking is used in learning complex conceptual material in which the critical task is to identify the main ideas. To increase the students' note-taking skills the lecturer should provide skeleton notes before a lecture, giving students categories to direct their own note-taking.

Another common technique is underlining or highlighting. Students should be encouraged to underline only the most critical words or points or the sentence in each paragraph that they regard as most important.

Students should be taught to make summaries of the information that they have read. Summarisation involves writing brief statements that represent the main idea of the information being read. One effective way is to get students to write one-sentence summaries after reading each paragraph. Summarising is especially critical when reading a text or assimilating material for an assignment from a variety of sources.

Outlining and mapping are also helpful study aids. Outlining presents the main points of the study material in a hierarchical format with each detail organised under a higher-level category. In mapping, students identify main ideas and then diagram connections between them. For instance, a student is able to network the connection between the closure of a business undertaking and the consequences thereof to all parties concerned. (Slavin 1997:216, 217). As lecturers we “can help students learn on their own by suggesting better study skills” (Gage and Berliner 1992:453).

As was discussed in Chapter 1, English was taken as a second language in African schools. The pupils were taught by African teachers, many of whom were not adequately qualified and had a poor command of English. Consequently, African students at the

Technikon are placed at a great disadvantage in their communication skills. To address this state of affairs and in keeping with transformation, the researcher recommends that lecturers in the Faculty pay attention to the following three aspects of verbal communication, namely, listening skills, speaking skills and intercultural communication.

According to Slavin (1996:60), active listening is a skill which we need to develop. To inculcate this skill in our students they should sit where they can see and hear the lecturer clearly, ready to take down notes. They need to watch and listen carefully to the mix of body language and sequence of words as they unfold by the speaker. The two together often indicate those aspects which the speaker considers most important. The students should note down key points as they are delivered. This helps them to keep their concentration. Students should not be afraid to ask questions or interrupt with a request for further details or for a point to be repeated. They should avoid the temptation to doodle or start to talk to a neighbour. Once they have lost part of the delivery, the rest of what is said is likely to become difficult to follow. Finally, they should use their notes to refresh their minds and be encouraged to ask questions to clarify points.

It is imperative that lecturers use clear, precise and forceful language. Because of differences in culture, language and ethnic background, and inadequate exposure to correct English pronunciation, African students have poor oral and written English skills. It is therefore incumbent on staff in the Faculty to help students to improve. This can be done by informing students that to be good speakers they need to be able to express their ideas clearly. Their language should be simple and they should avoid trying to impress by using long complicated words. As well as thinking clearly, speaking clearly also means pronouncing words distinctly so that they are easily recognisable. Students should also ensure that the words they use say exactly what they mean. For this they need a wide vocabulary so that they can choose words with precise meanings, which will convey their ideas accurately.

In group discussions or when addressing a lecturer there is a need for students to be courteous and friendly and practise empathy. Facial expression and tone of voice are important here, especially in group discussions. Students should strive to be natural in all situations. This implies being confident and relaxed. They should try to relax. When their muscles are tense, they have difficulty in expressing themselves naturally.

When speaking eye contact is important: a speaker who does not look at his listeners may be conveying messages like “I am not very interested in you”, or “I don’t like you”. How a speaker looks can affect how well others understand him. His appearance reflects his self-image. In most speaking situations, people see the speaker and form judgements about him even before he speaks. Consequently, attractive dress and good grooming are obviously important in formal situations.

Good posture is also important. Someone who props himself up against the wall or slouches in his chair as he speaks conveys a negative message. His attitude is showing. He is either tired, bored or careless, or all three. His listeners are not likely to be impressed. Such undesirable posture also affects a person’s breathing and vocal chords.

Some thought should also be given to the speaker’s vocal qualities. To ensure that the sounds he produces are clear, his throat muscles must be relaxed, his jaws must not be taut or rigid and his lips must be flexible and capable of assuming a variety of positions. High pitch may sound thin or squeaky and low pitch will sound deep or throaty. He needs to relax his throat muscles. Finally, proper breathing is essential for volume control and good speaking (Stanton 1990:12-16).

As was indicated in Chapter 1, Zulu is the official language of instruction in some schools in KwaZulu-Natal and English is taken as the second language. This applies particularly in African rural schools. English is the medium of instruction at the Technikon and the researcher's experience is that African students in the Faculty experience difficulty in understanding English. It is for this reason that the researcher recommends that basic conversational Zulu should be learned by all staff. Discussions held with African students and staff lecturing in Zulu indicate that when a lecturer has a basic knowledge of Zulu, he learns about the lives of Zulus, in particular, and Africans in general and so is able to relate more sympathetically to the needs of his students, understand their problems and fears and treat their fears sympathetically. The writer also discovered in conversation with African students that they were reluctant to respond to questions in class and preferred to be passive listeners because of the influence of their culture. As the lecturer is regarded as an older person to be treated with respect, direct eye contact should not be made. Moreover a student may not respond to a question unless specifically requested to do so by the lecturer. But, by using words and phrases in their own language, a lecturer is able to gain their confidence, encourage them to become more assertive and self-confident. A student who has confidence in a lecturer, because he identifies with his (the student's) problems, needs and fears, will be able to perform better and realise his potential. This will contribute to the empowerment of the student.

It follows that by developing the critical thinking skills of disadvantaged students, guiding them to utilise proven study skills, inculcating in them listening skills and applying the techniques of oral and written communication in English, much can be achieved in the Faculty to transform students. Staff can also greatly contribute to the transformation process by simplifying the language they use in the teaching of their subjects and by acquiring a working knowledge of Zulu as a medium of communication.



## 5.3 CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND TEACHING

### 5.3.1 Preamble

The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) is the national body that defines requirements for all qualifications to be registered in the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). The registration of all existing programmes is presently under way and programme co-ordinators in each department at the Technikon are closely scrutinising their programmes to ensure they conform to the NQF requirements. Against this background the following policy is recommended for curriculum development and teaching in the Faculty to facilitate the process of transformation.

### 5.3.2 Guideline Policy on Curriculum Development and Teaching

Curricula for each programme in the Faculty should focus on careers for which there are job opportunities. At present programmes are being offered in every department that have become unsuitable for the marketplace. For this reason meetings with industry representatives should be held on a regular basis. Some programmes may have to be discontinued or amended to comply with the needs of industry. Employment opportunities in the public sector, for instance, have been considerably reduced because state departments, formerly segregated racially, have been merged and unified. As duplication of services has been abandoned, jobs have been lost and there are fewer opportunities for the employment of new recruits. Consequently, serious consideration should be given to continuing to offer a programme such as the National Diploma: Public Management. In consultation with all stakeholders, namely, representatives from industry, professional bodies, other technikons and staff from the Department of Public Administration, the curricula of the National Diploma: Public Management should be re-examined to incorporate relevant subjects, for example, in the light of financial mismanagement and fraud in government departments. Subjects such as Internal Auditing, and Financial Administration and Control should be included in the course. Senior staff in the public and private sectors have revealed to the writer that the inclusion

of these subjects would be advantageous as they would enlighten prospective employees about the necessity for stringent controls, integrity and discipline when employed in the public sector. The private sector would also benefit from this curriculum reform.

To make the programmes in the Faculty responsive to the needs of new technologies and the marketplace, a curriculum development process should be instituted. In keeping with the guidelines contained in the Technikon Qualifications in the NQF (1999) the researcher recommends that a workshop should be held with key stakeholders to obtain consensus on the necessity to meet the demand for a qualification; the purpose of each qualification, that is, what benefit the qualification will be to the individuals; the overall competence reflected in the qualification, and the learning outcomes that will be achieved by each individual. The next step is to identify the roles for which the qualification will prepare the learner. We must bear in mind that a technikon qualification should prepare persons for occupational areas and not for single jobs. Consensus must then be obtained on how the outcomes will be achieved and what the learner will need to do in order to demonstrate that he has achieved a particular learning outcome.

Outcomes for each subject, that is, what learners should know and be able to do, should be clearly identified and evident in the evaluation process. SAQA has identified 7 critical cross-field outcomes that state the essential abilities to which all aspects of learning should lead. It is imperative that staff in the Faculty take note of these outcomes and incorporate them in their academic programmes. These outcomes include learners being able to:

- \* identify and solve problems by using critical and creative thinking skills.
- \* work effectively with others as a member of a team, group, organisation, or community.
- \* manage themselves and their activities responsibly and effectively.
- \* collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information.

- \* communicate effectively using visual, mathematical and/or language skills in modes of oral and/or written presentation.
- \* use science and technology effectively and critically, showing responsibility towards the environment and health of others.
- \* demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by recognising that problem solving contexts do not exist in isolation (SAQA Bulletin 1997:6).

In addition to the critical cross-field outcomes, specific outcomes that describe the competence which learners must demonstrate in particular areas of learning should be clearly identified. An integral part of the transformation of the curriculum process in the Faculty should involve a re-evaluation of the outcomes by staff in each of their own areas of expertise. Staff will have to ensure that, by integrating the outcomes in their disciplines, learners participate in appropriate learning experiences that will enable them to achieve the critical cross-field outcomes and specific outcomes. In keeping with this objective, Horst and McDonald (1997:6) state that the “new outcomes-based curriculum in South Africa is aimed at developing a thinking, problem-solving citizen who will be empowered to participate in the development of the country in an active and productive way”.

To offer students greater chances of success, subjects should be modularised and examined on a semester basis, wherever possible. Tight (1996:134) maintains that “There is nothing particularly new,.....about the idea of modularisation. It has been common practice for many years in American colleges and universities, was adopted by the British Open University from its inception in 1969...”. He adds further that the “curricular choice for well-designed modular programmes is also well-rehearsed - student choice, learner autonomy, adaptability to new modes of learning and assessment..... and openness to new kinds of knowledge”. This view is also supported by SAQA. In keeping with the views expressed by Tight, students in the Faculty would benefit by choosing a module which they would enjoy doing, learning at their own pace, and writing the final examination - if it is not continuously assessed - at the end of a semester. Thus students do not have to

wait until the end of the academic year - as is currently the position - to write the examination, and then register in the following year for the next level of the subject.

Every curriculum should include a subject/module in basic computer operating. This will enable the student not only to become computer literate, but also to access information and provide the grounding for advanced training in information systems at a later stage. The researcher, in conversation with management staff in industry during students' in-service training visits, discovered that computers are used in all sectors of an organisation's operations, and nearly every position requires staff who are computer literate. It was also observed that even small operators, such as sole proprietors in retail, medical, legal and service industries, need staff who are computer literate. Consequently, the Faculty can greatly enhance employment opportunities of the students by ensuring that a basic course in computer operating is included in every curriculum.

An important aspect of transformation, relating to curriculum development and teaching, is the need to break down racial stereotyping and racism, stemming from the years of living under the apartheid ideology, as was explained in Chapter 1. The Faculty should develop innovative strategies, such as the introduction of modules that handle management of diversity and race relations. Kemp states that "the most important skill needed to treat others in the way they want to be treated is empathy or understanding. It implies understanding their needs, understanding what motivates them, how they 'tick', understanding important aspects of their culture and their feelings" (1994:26). He goes on further and states that underlying empathy are listening skills, being non-judgemental of others and mixing and communicating with people who differ. It is imperative that staff in the Faculty take cognisance of these points and get to know their students well, understand their needs and problems, what motivates them, behaviour patterns that are acceptable and not acceptable in their culture, their customs and feelings. Lemmer and Squelch states that "teachers ought to maintain equally positive expectations of all their pupils, irrespective of race and culture.....and to be able to do this they need to

understand the cultural differences that often exist in a multicultural class” (1993:5).

In its goals the Committee of Technikon Principals states that “Technikon education ensures that men and women who complete our programmes possess the essential depth of knowledge, skills and values and immediate productive expertise in their fields. Furthermore, they possess a range of competencies that will enable them to play a responsible and caring role in the community, the private and public sectors and other professional environments”(1999:3). To meet this goal, the Faculty needs to assist African students who, at the entry level to a programme, are academically underprepared. Therefore staff in the Faculty should re-examine their curricula for relevance, pay attention to the competence which a student is expected to achieve at the end of his study period, facilitate the learning process by modularising subjects, promote race relations by breaking down racial stereotyping and understand cultural differences. Non-African staff have to undergo development to deal with a new breed of students. African students have not been exposed to teachers from other race groups and they find it difficult to adapt to new approaches to learning. Furthermore, many African students do not have any background knowledge of the subjects they are doing and they find it difficult to grasp basic concepts. Staff development would greatly assist non-African staff to cope with the changing demands of African students.

## **5.4 GENDER ISSUES**

### **5.4.1 Preamble**

Historically, traditions and practices in our country have largely worked within a patriarchal system, which favoured men for employment opportunities. According to Samson this discrimination in access to the workplace and education was “because women are women, rather than as a consequence of their individual merits and faults. This is a form of structural discrimination based on gender” (1999:6). At the Technikon the number of men employed and those holding senior positions in the academic and administrative fields, far exceed women. This point was highlighted in Chapter 3. This

practice prevented the equal participation of women at the Technikon in the formulation of policies, procedures, working conditions, promotion and other related matters.

This discrimination was also prevalent in the Faculty which employed the largest number of staff and had the most number of registered students, as was evident in the discussion in Chapter 3. To correct this discrimination, transformation, involving gender equality, should be implemented in the Faculty. 5.4.2 outlines a policy which the Faculty could introduce to combat gender inequality.

#### **5.4.2 Guideline Policy on Gender Issues**

Despite selection being based on merit, preference should nevertheless be given to women in both employment and promotion. Even though a woman may not be the best candidate for the job, she should still be considered, on condition that she complies with additional requirements, such as acquiring specific skills, or becoming proficient in certain areas, within a prescribed time period. This requirement ties in with The Skills Development Act of 1998. One of the Act's objectives is: "To improve the employment prospects of persons previously disadvantaged by unfair discrimination and to redress those disadvantages through training and education" (Samson 1999:15).

The Employment Equity Act of 1998 addresses the problem of past and current discrimination in the workplace. It aims to eliminate unfair discrimination based on, amongst other things, gender, disabilities, race and promote equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment. In its recruitment drive for new staff the Faculty should ensure that more women are employed to narrow the gap between the male and female staff complement. Women, employed in the Faculty, should be encouraged to organise themselves into groups to promote matters of common interest, and improve their qualifications and skills by attending and participating in staff development and enrichment programmes. Each department in the Faculty should ensure that it has female representatives on all its committees. Women should also be encouraged to increase their

participation at management level by skills, management and leadership training.

Awareness campaigns, highlighting female issues such as health, parenthood and family life, should be promoted by organising events such as a “health week”, when primary health care providers, such as the City Health Department, the Heart Foundation and the Cancer Association of South Africa, are invited to address staff on health matters, hold demonstrations, and render free primary health care services such as testing for cholesterol, high blood pressure and blood sugar and also family planning. For instance, to promote healthy and responsible lifestyles among the African students, an event such as *Usuku loku zalwa kabusha* (born again), highlighting the need to be health conscious, to abstain from sex before marriage, to combat the spread of aids and other sexually transmitted diseases and to avoid unwanted pregnancy, could be arranged by female staff.

It is the responsibility of M.L. Sultan Technikon and ultimately of the Faculty to create an environment where employees respect each other’s integrity, dignity, privacy and right to equality in the workplace. This may be achieved by ensuring that all staff have their own offices or cubicles where they can work in privacy, compiling a document that clearly spells out a code of ethics and inviting speakers to address staff on provisions of the New Labour Relations Act (as it relates to women in the workplace and with reference to contracts governing the employment of domestic help). Addressing issues concerning women can also be done informally at social gatherings in the Faculty when the Dean, with the assistance of senior female staff, may discuss matters of concern to all female staff.

The Employment Equity Act states that harassment of an employee is a form of discrimination and is prohibited. This includes harassment based on sex, religion, race, and sexual orientation. In the absence of a clear institutional policy in this regard, the Faculty should, in consultation with all staff, formulate an anti-sexual harassment policy.

Such a policy should state that sexual harassment in the workplace will not be permitted or condoned. The policy should provide an opportunity for persons subjected to sexual harassment to have the right to complain and to be assured that appropriate action would be taken by the employer. Allegations of sexual harassment should be dealt with seriously, expeditiously, sensitively and confidentially. Furthermore, employees should be protected against victimisation, retaliation for lodging grievances and from false accusations.

It must be recognised that victims of sexual assault have the right to press separate criminal/civil charges against an alleged perpetrator. Attention must also be given to the psychological damage that may be caused by sexual harassment. The researcher recommends that when an employee's sick leave entitlement has been exhausted, the employer should give consideration to the granting of additional sick leave if the employee, on medical advice, needs trauma counselling.

Gender issues, as relating to students in the Faculty, are also an important consideration. The researcher recommends that the Faculty create a gender equitable academic environment to minimise gender bias in the lecture rooms and on the campus, by adopting the following guidelines. Heads of department in the Faculty have access to data regarding enrolment statistics for each programme. They can use this data to generate information about the status of gender equity in their departments. The data may reveal for instance, that certain courses attract more students of a particular gender. They should find an explanation for the existence of this enrolment pattern. It might be that some students are channeled into or away from these courses for reasons such as not meeting the minimum requirement for entry, not having sought proper guidance on curricula choices or choosing a course because they may have been led to believe by their friends that it was easier to pass. It is important that heads of department ensure that all staff are informed about the implications for students of various curricula choices.



The Faculty has a responsibility to establish a campus climate in which all staff, students, parents and community members know that equity is a high priority. One way of involving all staff members is to encourage them to assess the visual campus climate by taking a walk around the campus and examining the bulletin boards and hallway displays. Do they reflect all students, that is, both males and females, enrolled in the Faculty? Students should be able to identify with the people they see represented on bulletin boards and displays. In particular staff should look for stereotypical representation of males and females and the use of sexist languages. They should examine publications that are generated in the Faculty or by the institution. Photos and stories should be representative of students and their activities.

Instructional materials are also a potential source of gender bias. The Faculty should consider books, magazines, laboratory materials, computer programmes and the multimedia materials that are available. Examine them for evidence of gender bias such as sexist language or photos or depiction of males and females in stereotypical roles. Ideally, materials that are biased should be replaced because using biased materials reinforces the idea that women are not valuable contributors to a particular field of study. However, in some cases it may be necessary to use biased materials because the content of the material is particularly good or the material is from a prescribed text. In such cases a lecturer should explain to students that he recognises the materials are biased and explain why he is using them. He should, however, find means of compensating for the bias in the materials.

Events such as career days provide an opportunity to break down gender stereotyping. The Faculty should ensure that men and women are represented in a variety of careers so that prospective students see the wide variety of options open to them. Be sure that the professionals, who participate in career days, are sensitive to the need for all prospective students to pursue fields that are of interest to them, regardless of gender.

The place where lecturers have the most influence on students is in the lecture room. All students should be given an opportunity to participate in class discussions but it is important to establish norms about how students are to indicate that they wish to contribute to the discussion. According to McCormick, male students are more likely to contribute spontaneously by shouting out answers than females who tend to raise their hands. The result is limited participation by female students and domination of the discussion by male students (1994:54).

Even in classes where students are expected to raise their hands to speak, it is easy for some students to dominate. For example, when a lecturer calls for volunteers, some students will monopolise the discussion while others are too shy to speak. Women are more likely to sit quietly and not volunteer answers and ideas. One strategy is to distribute a certain number of chits or slips of paper to students at the beginning of a lecture. Students must turn in the chits when they wish to speak and the goal is to use all the chits by the end of the lecture.

A lecturer's response to students' contributions also sets the tone in the lecture room. Students take cues about whether they are valued from the lecturer's actions and non-verbal communication. For example, if a lecturer tends to socialise with certain students before and after classes, other students get the message that they are of less importance. If a lecturer makes eye contact with students who sit in a particular part of the room, students in other parts feel neglected. Therefore, it is important for lecturers to create an environment in which everyone feels part of a community of learners.

Lecturers have reported that they found it difficult to monitor their actions while lecturing. Many of them were unaware of how they interacted with students or the types of response they gave to students' questions. For this reason lecturers in the Faculty should be encouraged to audio- or video-tape their teaching or to invite a colleague or a senior lecturer to observe and record interactions. By listening to the recording or

viewing the video and getting feedback from the observer, the lecturer can reflect on the number of responses he received from male and female students and decide on whether his lecture room is gender-free (Mewborn 1999:103-114).

Making gender equity an issue in the Faculty can contribute greatly to the empowerment of female staff and students and thereby contribute to transformation. African female students should be encouraged to explore areas of study that were traditionally dominated by males and the Faculty should urge female students to play active roles on various committees on the campus. Regular meetings with the Dean of the Faculty should be held to discuss matters of concern to female students.

## **5.5 STUDENT SERVICES**

### **5.5.1 Preamble**

Presently the Technikon is engaged in establishing “an environment for students on campus which is conducive to receiving quality education” and creating the “structures necessary to realise their talents” through measures such as psychological and counselling services, provision of adequate and suitable living accommodation for students whose homes are out of Durban and providing recreational facilities ( M L Sultan Technikon. 1997:12). To complement these efforts, much can be done in the Faculty to improve the knowledge and skills of students. As was mentioned in Chapter 1, student services can play an important part in this.

### **5.5.2 Guideline Policy on Student Services**

Potential students should be provided with full information on programmes being offered in all departments in the Faculty. The information should include entrance requirements, the vocational objectives of each programme, curriculum, optional subjects, duration of the course, post-diploma courses, experiential training, employment opportunities, fees and financial assistance and other related matters. This information should be

disseminated by personal visits to schools by academic staff and, where this is not possible, by distributing information leaflets via mail and by advertisements in daily newspapers, including newspapers specifically targeting African students. The researcher also recommends that “open days” be organised where the Faculty would invite senior high school students to visit the Faculty, and get first-hand information on what is being offered, the facilities available and other relevant matters. It will also afford them the opportunity to meet current students and exchange ideas. Arrangements can also be made for industry representatives to be present and to talk to the students about employment opportunities and the job market. For those students who would like to be consulted on a one-to-one basis, arrangements should be made by the Faculty to accommodate such students on certain Saturdays, preferably in the Second Term. This would allow students, if they so desire, to make timeous application in the Third Term, for admission to the Faculty.

Current students too should be informed by the Faculty about matters of an academic and administrative nature such as the importance of performing well in all tests, assignments and projects throughout the year in order to earn a good course mark, sources of reference for assignments/projects, information on experiential training, psychological counselling and health services, channels of communication, and other relevant matters. Students should also be advised to take full advantage of services offered by the institution, such as sporting and recreation facilities, membership to students' organisations, conflict resolution, co-operative governance and accommodation facilities for out-of-town students. Each head of department in the Faculty should meet students on a regular basis, at least once per quarter, to disseminate information relevant to the department, obtain feedback on matters of concern to them and generally to motivate them. Heads should also be available to meet students individually or in small groups to discuss matters which might be sensitive or confidential. The Faculty should also create opportunities for students and staff to meet socially, at least once a year, to promote goodwill, to exchange views and get to know each other.

For many of the programmes offered in the Faculty final examinations are written at the end of the year. The marks earned by the students throughout the year in tests and assignments/projects make up the course mark and this accounts for 50 % of the examination mark. As in many cases where parents are paying the fees of the students, they have the right to be informed about their children's progress, important events and matters of interest. Consequently, the Faculty should ensure that on completion of each term-end examination, progress reports are sent to parents. The reports should also advise parents to feel free to contact the relevant head in the Faculty should they need to discuss any matter related to the student's progress.

The scope of co-operative education was explained in Chapter 3. At present, practical work experience is not compulsory for every programme in the Faculty. However, to give each student the opportunity of getting this exposure to industry, every effort should be made by the Faculty to place students in suitable employment. Such a programme should be properly structured: staff should be appointed to co-ordinate the entire exercise from finding placements, monitoring the students' progress, evaluating performance in conjunction with the industry supervisor and formulating the final report. The objective of this exercise should be to ensure that the students will be able to fit into jobs on completion of the course without the need for further training.

Co-operative education also incorporates visits by students to industry to observe and get an exposure of real-work situations. In class, as part of co-operative training, students should be addressed by leading figures from commerce and industry, and successful alumni who have completed the programme and are now occupying important positions. Prominent African entrepreneurs as role models should also be invited to share their experiences with the students.

Finally the Faculty, as an extension of its co-operative education programme, should establish a sub-unit that will maintain links with leading government and non-government

organisations with a view to finding employment for students who have completed their studies. Such a unit should be headed by a Faculty co-ordinator who will compile a data base of prospective employers (with information provided by staff doing industry visits to monitor students) names of suppliers to the Technikon (supplied by the Procurement Department) who may have vacancies in their organisations and names of donors and other interested parties (supplied by the Public Relations Department) who may have financed students' studies.

The Faculty has an obligation to inform the community about the programmes being offered and other related matters. This would enable prospective students, especially African students, to make the correct career choice. Having made the correct choice the students should use all available resources to ensure success. However, to ensure success they will need assistance, considering that they have not been adequately prepared to register for and successfully complete a course of study at tertiary level. Consequently, they need support, both academic and administrative, to transform them into successful graduates on completion of their studies.

## **5.6 ACCESS**

### **5.6.1 Preamble**

The credibility of a technikon is measured by the quality of its diplomates, graduates and research programmes, but this depends to a large extent on the calibre of students admitted to the institution. Given the vast disparity in the quality of secondary education, it is becoming increasingly difficult to determine potentially successful students. In his public address to the nation in July 1999, the Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal, stated that "the racially-defined qualification structure, linked to racially-defined opportunities for training, which ensured that African teachers, taken as a whole, are less well qualified than other teachers,..... teach predominantly in schools with poor facilities, inadequate learning resources, greater isolation from urban centres, and infrequent or no professional support services" are producing students who are inadequately prepared to

pursue a course at a tertiary institution (1999:8). This point was highlighted in Chapter 1. Against this backdrop, M.L. Sultan Technikon in general, and the Faculty in particular, need to explore other avenues to determine suitable criteria for admission of students. At present the Faculty applies the following selection criteria for admission of new students: the students must have met the statutory requirements for admission, i.e. passed matric; obtain the required number of points for admission to a programme; satisfy subject requirements for certain programmes and write a work-related psychometric test. Students who have passed matric but are unable to meet the other selection criteria have been accommodated into a bridging programme for one year and on successful completion thereof are admitted to one of the mainstream programmes.

In addition to the above requirements the following policy for access is recommended for the Faculty.

#### **5.6.2 Guideline Policy on Access**

Each department in the Faculty should consider additional criteria for admission of new students, based on the student's potential to succeed. The following criteria should be considered: interviewing the prospective student to determine his general knowledge and reason for selection of the desired field of study; whether members of his family are engaged in occupations related to that field; his work experience, and any other consideration, such as financial assistance available from a parent's employer, provided a particular course is chosen and access to certain resources such as computers. In addition, a rating scale, devised on the Swedish Scale, where points are allocated for each of the subjects passed, should be completed.

Students who do not meet the minimum requirements for admission but have relevant practical experience, should be considered. This is in keeping with the recognition of prior learning as enunciated in the Department of Education's White Paper 3 (1997:29)

as referred to in Chapter 1. For example, where a student has practical experience of work in the field of office administration, he should be admitted into the mainstream programme for the National Diploma: Commercial Administration or the National Diploma: Office Management. Credits should be granted if the student has covered more than 70 % of the syllabuses during the course of his work.

One of the key features of the new policy for higher education transformation is the need for “increased participation of a far higher proportion of those previously excluded from higher education” (National Commission on Higher Education 1996:2). It was noted in Chapter 1 that the education policy of the previous government had excluded the majority of Africans from access to higher education. Although the Faculty is committed to a policy of unrestricted student access, financial constraint has greatly reduced the number of students that may be accommodated in the various departments. One of the ways in which this problem can be partly addressed by the Faculty is to consider offering distance education, especially to those students who are unable to attend full-time classes as they cannot afford the fees. Lecturers should ensure, in compiling study guides for distance learning, that they contain all information pertinent to the subject, such as the course outline, text references, areas that need emphasis, calculation of year-mark, testing and examinations. Contact time for students and staff to meet for discussions must also be included.

“The development of extended curriculum programmes will play an important role in promoting student access and success (National Commission on Higher Education 1996: 11). In keeping with this policy, the Faculty is at present running a bridging programme for under-prepared students. However, greater effort is required to ensure that students who graduate from the bridging programme are well prepared to join a mainstream programme. The curriculum of such a programme should comprise sections from the major subjects in each department, coupled with sections from other subjects commonly taken up to the Second Year of study. Considerable emphasis should be placed on



language and communication skills. The curriculum should also offer a choice of subjects leading to the selection of a programme in each of the departments in the Faculty on completion of the bridging programme. Students must pass all subjects with a pass mark of 50 %. Such a programme should run parallel to the mainstream programmes during normal lecture hours and if the need be, additional classes may also be held on Saturdays.

Finally requests may be received from students who are not willing to register for a complete programme but wish to obtain a qualification in a selected area of study, such as computer programming. They should be permitted to register for one subject only for "non-diploma" purposes.

## 5.7 CONCLUSION

There is a need to re-examine areas recommended for transformation in the Faculty. These recommendations would not necessarily impose a financial burden or justify the utilisation of additional resources in the Faculty. What is required is a re-assessment of existing policies and practices in the Faculty that would allow for increased participation. "Increased participation, above all, means the participation of a far higher proportion of those previously excluded from higher education. Successful planning and implementation of increased participation will promote the values of equity, redress and development (National Commission on Higher Education 1996:2).

Transformation is necessary to empower the African students to realise their full potential, pursue careers of their choice, become responsible and productive citizens and contribute to the upliftment of their communities and the country. This point is emphasised by the Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal, who states that there is "a need to establish the diverse knowledge needs of South Africa, the nature and level of knowledge and cognitive skills that are relevant for different occupational or professional categories". He adds further that transformation is necessary to produce "sufficient numbers of high-level graduates with relevant cognitive and social

competencies and skills ..... required for South Africa to become globally competitive and address the reconstruction and development challenges” (Asmal 1999:v). South African businesses need graduates who are not only capable of doing the job, but who are pro-active and willing to go the extra mile; graduates who are progressive in their thinking and creative in the work they are doing. The brain drain of experienced and skilled people to foreign countries is causing a serious problem to the local industry and it is hoped that the newly-qualified African graduates will eventually make up for this shortfall in manpower.

The Technikon will also benefit by ensuring that its available resources are utilised to their optimum in getting African students who, on admission to a programme, are inadequately prepared, but who, through the transformation process, become graduates who can do the job just as well as any other graduate.

Finally the researcher recommends that the whole process of transformation should be actively pursued by the Dean of the Faculty. Heads of department should take control and drive the process forward. Staff should be encouraged to make a concerted effort to bring about change. Transformation requires that we preserve what is valuable and address what is defective.

## 5.8 SUMMARY

This Chapter was concerned with policy for transformation and offered guidelines for implementing transformation in five main areas, namely, language and communication skills; curriculum development and teaching; gender issues; student services and access.

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## ANNEXURES

## ANNEXURE 4A

c/o Department of Commercial Administration  
M L SULTAN TECHNIKON  
Durban

1998.11.10

Mr/Mrs

Dear Mr/Mrs

#### RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

I am currently conducting research on transformation in the Faculty of Commerce, M L Sultan Technikon. Your views on the subject would provide me much needed information.

It will be greatly appreciated if you would kindly complete the enclosed questionnaire which will take approximately ten minutes. I will call on you personally to clarify any problems you may encounter in making your response. I am willing to let you have a copy of the results of my study if you so desire.

Your response will be treated as strictly confidential and used for research purposes only.

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely

Dan Mohun  
(Phone 3085660)

## ANNEXURE 4B

PLEASE INDICATE, BY CIRCLING THE NUMBER IN THE RESPECTIVE COLUMN, THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU WOULD AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH EACH OF THE STATEMENTS GIVEN BELOW, RELATING TO :

1. LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS (ENGLISH AND ZULU)
2. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND TEACHING
3. GENDER ISSUES
4. STUDENT SERVICES
5. ACCESS

1. LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS

	STRONG- LY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	DIS- AGREEE	STRONG- LY DIS- AGREE
1. Language should be simplified.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Basic writing skills should be taught.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Oral communication in English should be encouraged.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Reading skills should be taught.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Critical thinking skills should be developed.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Peer group learning should be encouraged.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Students should be encouraged to assist others by explaining concepts in their mother tongue.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Faculty documents should be available in English and Zulu.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Where possible questions in examination papers should be both in English and Zulu.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Basic conversational Zulu should be acquired by all staff.	1	2	3	4	5

## 2. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND TEACHING

	STRONG- LY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	DIS- AGREE	STRONG- LY DIS- AGREE
1. The curriculum should focus on careers for which there are job opportunities.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Outcomes for each subject should be clearly identified and evident in the evaluation process.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Review and revision of each curriculum should ensure responsiveness to social, economic, and environmental needs.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Wherever possible, subjects should be modularised.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Subjects should be examined on completion of each module.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Meetings with industry representatives should be held on a regular basis.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Every curriculum should include a course in basic computer operating.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Every curriculum should include a course in multicultural issues, race relations and morality.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Entrepreneurship should be included in every curriculum.	1	2	3	4	5

	1	2	3	4	5
10. Every curriculum should include more optional subjects to enhance employment opportunities.					
11. The role of the lecturer should be that of the facilitator rather than the transmitter of knowledge.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Peer tutors should be appointed in each discipline to assist students.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Learners should become more self-directed.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Lecturers should use a variety of learning strategies.	1	2	3	4	5

### 3. GENDER ISSUES

	STRONG- LY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	DIS- AGREE	STRONG- LY DIS- AGREE
1. Preference should be given to women for employment and promotion.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Women selected in terms of 1 above should be provided with opportunities for growth and development.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Women should be promoted to positions of leadership.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Women should be encouraged to acquire managerial skills.	1	2	3	4	5



5. The anti-sexual harassment policy should be strictly enforced.	1	2	3	4	5
6. The anti-sexual harassment policy should provide support services for victims of harassment and abuse.	1	2	3	4	5
7. The anti-sexual harassment policy should be reviewed and updated periodically.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Awareness campaigns, specifically highlighting women's issues, should be held on a regular basis.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Included in the Students' Registration form should be a sentence dealing with courteous treatment of female students.	1	2	3	4	5
10. All staff should be given gender awareness training.	1	2	3	4	5
11. All departmental duties should be shared by both male and female staff.	1	2	3	4	5

#### 4. STUDENT SERVICES

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	DIS-AGREE	STRONGLY DIS-AGREE
1. Potential students should be provided full information on programmes offered.	1	2			3

2. The Faculty should provide students with information concerning academic and administrative matters.	1	2	3		3
3. Departmental heads should be easily accessible to students.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Opportunities should be created for students and staff to meet socially at least once a year.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Students should be given the opportunity to deal with issues concerning democracy, multiculturalism, leadership and morality.	1	2	3	4	5
6. The Faculty should regularly inform parents of students' progress.	1	2	3	4	5
7. The Faculty should encourage students to make use of the institution's sporting and recreation facilities.	1	2	3	4	5
8. The Faculty should encourage successful alumni to address students from time to time.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Students should be given the opportunity to meet local leading figures from commerce and industry.	1	2	3	4	5
10. The Faculty should encourage successful African entrepreneurs to share their experiences with the students.	1	2	3	4	5

11. Students in all programmes should be encouraged to obtain experiential training.	1	2	3	4	5
12. The Faculty should assist diplomates, wherever possible, to find employment.	1	2	3	4	5

## 5. ACCESS

	STRONG- LY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	DIS- AGREE	STRONG- LY DIS- AGREE
1. Criteria for admission of new students should include potentiality to succeed.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Students who do not meet the minimum requirements for admission but have relevant practical experience should be considered.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Part-time classes should be offered to students who fail to gain admission to full-time classes.	1	2	3	4	5
4. The Faculty should be encouraged to offer distant education.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Preparatory or bridging courses should be available to all under-prepared students.	1	2	3	4	5
6. The Faculty should inform high school pupils of admission requirements for different programmes.	1	2	3	4	5

7. Students should be permitted to register for single subjects if they do not intend to complete a programme.	1	2	3	4	5
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