

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO QUALITY PRACTICES AT PRIVATE  
HIGHER AND FURTHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN THE  
DURBAN CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT**

**RABINDUTT RAMLAGAN**

**2009**

**An investigation into Quality Practices at Private Higher and Further  
Education Institutions in the Durban Central Business District**

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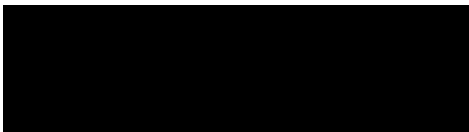
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**Masters Degree in Technology: Quality**

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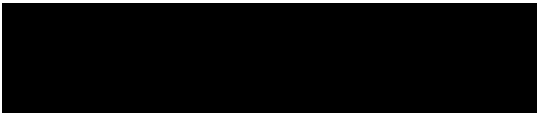
September 2009



SUPERVISOR  
PROF. K. REDDY

## **DECLARATION OF CANDIDATE**

I, Rabindutt Ramlagan, declare that unless otherwise indicated, this is my own work and that it has not been submitted for any degree at another Tertiary Institution.



R. RAMLAGAN

September 2009

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## **ABSTRACT**

Higher education institutions are faced with an increasing number of complex challenges including implementing and maintaining a quality management system. In addition, the transformation of higher education brought about further regulations, especially to private higher and further education institutions. Managing the change in private higher and further education became complex as institutions were required to meet the Department of Education's registration requirements and the HEQC and Umalusi Council's quality audit criteria requirements.

Hence, this study reviewed related literature which represented sources of information, to determine the nature of PHE and FET institutions. The literature further scanned business quality tools and the SAEM and their applicability to private higher and further education. It was established that the TQM philosophy and the ISO 9001: 2000 quality standard, applied in an integrated system, was suitable for higher education. The review identified the SAEM as a suitable model to use as a basis for an integrated quality management system.

From the literature review, the nature of PHE and FET institutions and the requirements of the HEQC and Umalusi Council were established. A significant finding was that PHE and FET institutions did not have an internal quality management system in place. This revelation led to the research investigation on finding the needs and deficiencies of FET and PHEIs. A questionnaire, using mainly open-ended questions, was designed and administered to FET and PHEIs for this purpose. The responses revealed that some quality practices were in place but, overall, the quality arrangements were inadequate. The results of the research investigation and the principles of the business quality tools were integrated into the SAEM's principles. This process led to the formation of an Integrated Quality Model. This Integrated Quality Model was recommended as an internal quality management system for FET and PHEIs

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ABET	:	Adult Basic Education and Training
CHE	:	Council on Higher Education
CIPO	:	Context, Input, Process and Output model
ETQA	:	Education and Training Quality Assurer
FET	:	Further Education and Training
GET	:	General Education and Training
GENFETQA	:	General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance
HEQC	:	Higher Education Quality Committee
ISO	:	International Organisation of Standardisation
NCHE	:	National Commission on Higher Education
PHE	:	Private Higher Education
PHEI	:	Private Higher Education Institution
QA	:	Quality Assurance
QMS	:	Quality Management System

RPL	:	Recognition of Prior Learning
SABS	:	South African Bureau of Standards
SAEM	:	South African Excellence Model
TQM	:	Total Quality Management

## **GLOSSARY**

### **Accreditation**

Recognition status granted to a programme for a stipulated period of time after an HEQC evaluation indicates that it meets minimum standards of quality.

### **Assessment**

Systematic evaluation of a student's ability to demonstrate the achievement of the learning goals intended in a curriculum.

### **Benchmarking**

Within a programme context, a process through which a programme is evaluated and compared against internal and external, national and international reference points, for the purpose of accountability and improvement.

### **Cooperative education**

An approach to learning that promotes the concept of enhanced learning based on cooperation between education institutions on the one hand, and industry, commerce and the public sector, on the other.

### **Education and Training Quality Assurer (ETQA)**

Body responsible for monitoring and auditing the level of achievement of national standards or qualifications offered by providers and to which specific functions have been assigned by SAQA.

### **Examination**

A written, oral or practical assessment of learning, including supplementary examination and re-examination, continuous evaluation, and evaluation of experiential learning.

**Experiential learning**

A term traditionally used within the former technikon sector for 'work-based learning'.

**Institutional audit**

An improvement-oriented evaluation of the effectiveness of institutional arrangements for quality and quality assurance in teaching and learning, research and community engagement, based on self-evaluation conducted by the institution. The external evaluation is conducted by a panel of peers and experts on the basis of the HEQC's criteria and other quality requirements set by the institution itself. The audit panel's findings form the basis of the HEQC's report to the audited institution, with commendations on good practice and recommendations for improvement.

**Moderator**

A person, apart from the examiner, who is appointed by the institution to be responsible for ensuring the standard of the examination and its accompanying marking framework and response exemplars, and for marking a representative sample of examination responses.

**Programme evaluation**

The external quality assurance processes which are undertaken in order to make an independent assessment of a programme's development, management and outcomes, through the validation of the findings of an internal programme's self-evaluation.

**Provisional accreditation**

Status granted by the HEQC to a new programme when it complies with the criteria set for the candidacy phase.

**Qualification**

Formal recognition and certification of learning achievement awarded by an accredited institution.

**Quality management**

Institutional arrangements for assuring, supporting, developing and enhancing, and monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, research and community engagement.

**Quality assurance**

Processes of ensuring that institutional arrangements for meeting specified quality standards or requirements of education provision are effective.

**Re-accreditation**

Accreditation of an existing programme after its previous accreditation by the Umalusi Council, SAQA or the HEQC.

**Self-evaluation**

Within a programme accreditation context, self-evaluation refers to the process by which an institution critically reviews and evaluates its programmes using the HEQC's programme accreditation criteria. The process leads to the development of the self-evaluation report.

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**CHAPTER ONE**

**INTRODUCTION**

## **Introduction**

### **1.1 Background to the study**

The South African higher education system went through changes during the transformation following on the democratic elections in 1994. This hoped to produce a single system that is co-ordinated, equitable and responsive to meet the needs of post-apartheid South Africa. The demands of the number of people requiring education and skills to support the country, led to the emergence of private higher education institutions. These institutions followed two categories: the first category serviced the local market and the second category formed partnerships with international private universities. This partnership produced trans-national providers with a mutually beneficial relationship as these international counterparts were sourcing emerging markets. The number of private higher education institutions increased in large numbers taking a share of the market thereby impacting on the sustainability of public higher education institutions.

Naidoo and Singh (2005:5) cited more than 100 private institutions in existence. The government could not ignore private higher education but had to regulate this education sector. The South African Constitution provides a framework for the regulation of private providers. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996 enshrines the right of individuals to establish and maintain (at their own expense) independent educational institutions that do not discriminate on the basis of race, are registered with the state, and maintain standards that are not inferior to the standards at comparable public educational institutions. The latter requirement of the constitution cited by Cosser (2002:112) is echoed in section 53(1)(b) of the Higher Education Act of 1997, which provides the legislative framework within which private higher education institutions in South Africa are regulated. The regulatory process entails a two-step procedure, private higher education institutions apply for registration with the Department of Education and then apply for accreditation to the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA). As part of the regulation process private educational institutions submitted their programmes for accreditation to the SAQA from 1998 to comply with the requirements of the Higher Education Act of 1997. SAQA provisionally accredited programmes of private

higher education institutions from 1998 to 2002, on condition that they apply for re-accreditation in-order to offer same programmes during 2003. (CHE, 2003:2).

The Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) was formed in May 2001 as the permanent quality committee of the Council on Higher Education (CHE) (Naidoo and Singh, 2005:9). The re-accreditation of programmes was undertaken by the HEQC through its Accreditation and Coordination Directorate. Research cited by the CHE reveals that although quality policies existed within an organisation, 67 percent of the total respondents did not implement or execute commitment as indicated in the policy, moreover, 53 percent of the cases revealed a lack of quality assurance arrangements and mechanisms to conduct external evaluations (CHE, 2003:38). These findings of the CHE indicate that there are inadequate internal quality assurance mechanisms to support external evaluations.

Government needed to place private higher education in the new higher education landscape. In the government's initiatives to create a new higher education landscape, the following documents were published:

- The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996;
- The National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) 1996;
- Education White Paper 3 A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education 1997;
- Council on Higher Education Policy Report: Towards a New Higher Education Landscape 2000; and
- The National Plan for Higher Education 2001.

A brief description on the quality aspect of each legislative document published is discussed below.

- The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996 enshrined the right of individuals to establish and maintain (at their own expense) independent educational institutions that do not discriminate on the basis of race, are registered with the state, and maintain standards that are not inferior to the standards at comparable public educational institutions.

- The National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) asserts the centrality of a quality assurance system to a single co-ordinated higher education system stating that this mechanism is essential to address differences in quality across institutional programmes, is an important element of the new form of governance proposed for higher education and should be one of the ways of drawing private higher education into the new system' (NCHE, 1996:108).
- The Higher Education Act, No.101 of 1997 and the Education White Paper 3: *A Programme for the Transformation of Higher education of 1997*, indicates that the responsibilities allocated to the CHE is to design and implement a system for quality assurance in higher education and to establish the HEQC. The purpose of the HEQC would be to promote quality assurance in higher education, audit the quality assurance mechanisms of higher education institutions and accredit their programmes.
- The Council on Higher Education Policy Report makes a connection between a clearly recognised role for private higher education with the need for regulation and quality assurance. Private institutions that contribute to the diversification of the higher education system could be sources of innovation. (CHE, 2000:2). However inadequate regulation of private higher and further education raised concerns around quality (CHE, 2000: 2).
- The National Plan for Higher Education, released by the ministry of education in 2001, provides a framework for the registration of private higher education institutions which linked to three factors (DOE, 2001: 64).  
:
  - a) The financial viability of institutions;
  - b) The quality of programme offerings; and
  - c) Whether the provision is in the public interest

The main areas highlighted in the documents above make it clear that private higher education institutions are subjected to a registration and accreditation

process as a quality assurance mechanism. The documents indicate that public and private institutions need to have internal quality assurance mechanisms in place for the accreditation process. Implementing internal quality assurance mechanisms at individual institutions would require the application of quality systems in the form of a hybrid model so that quality techniques from each system available are taken into consideration (DOE, 2001:65).

The education ministry recognised the role of private higher education accompanied by a concern about quality as a theme that is continued in all policy recommendations. It is evident that government had serious concerns about quality and needed to install mechanisms to regulate the private higher education sector. The reason for this concern was no form of quality audit or system existed for private providers while, during this period, public universities were audited by the Quality Promotion Unit (QPU) and technikons by the Certification Council for Technikon Education (SERTEC) (DOE, 2001: 66).

The implementation of these documents over a period of time had a direct impact on the rationalisation of private higher education, which included a distinction between institutions offering further education and those offering higher education.

## **1.2 Aim of the study**

The aim of this study is to investigate the needs and deficiencies of FET educational institutions and PHEI's with a view to develop a quality model for such institutions.

## **1.3 Objectives of the study**

- To investigate a framework of quality tools suitable to higher education.
- To determine the academic quality needs and deficiencies of private FET institutions and PHEI's using a research questionnaire.
- To develop a proposed quality model for private FET institutions and PHEI's derived from the South African Business Excellence Model (SAEM).

### **1.3 Problem statement**

Government's introduction of statutory bodies and publication of documents to regulate higher education concentrates extensively on quality issues. The HEQC is the government's statutory body and the permanent quality agent of the CHE. The HEQC has a mandate to audit, promote and enhance quality in higher education. Before an external audit is carried out quality tools have to be installed internally at the institution. The CHE investigations into private higher education show that the majority of private institutions lack mechanisms to conduct external evaluations.

Private higher education institutions operate as profit making businesses. Quality tools have been applied in businesses successfully and they have reaped benefits such as increased profits. It is noted that the application of the same tools in private higher education institutions would prove to be successful.

This research proposes to investigate academic quality at Durban's private higher and further education institutions with a view to developing a proposed quality model for such institutions.

### **1.5 Contributions of study**

Although research has been conducted on general aspects on quality in public higher education, it appears that no significant study has addressed academic quality assurance in private higher and further education. Private higher and further education institutions can learn from the private sector about improving their services by using quality tools used in business enterprises. It is not necessary to reinvent quality tools when solutions to quality problems confronted by educational institutions can be resolved by adapting the available tools applied in the private sector. It is hoped that this study will create new knowledge on the management of quality at PHEI's by the creation of a quality model.

The proposed internal quality assurance model will contribute by providing direct support to the accreditation process, which is the main link of quality assurance.

For example, in a situation where a PHEI is registered with the DOE, a programme is accredited by the HEQC and that qualification is registered with SAQA on the NQF. This qualification would enable a learner to articulate vertically with a completed qualification from that PHEI to any public university in South Africa.

## **1.6 RESEARCH METHOD**

### **1.6.1 Literature study**

A literature study was undertaken with a view to assembling and integrating material relating to South Africa's regulatory framework of higher education and the need for quality assurance. Two distinct surveys were undertaken: viz., a survey of literature on the regulatory framework and background of private higher education institutions, and a survey of relevant literature on business quality tools and the South African Excellence Model.

### **1.6.2 Empirical research**

A questionnaire was designed to gather information on current practices, needs and deficiencies of private higher education providers. The questionnaire will be used as an instrument for data collection, since it allows principals of these institutions to present their problems in writing. The information obtained reflects the nature of PHEI's operations.

### **1.6.3 Study population**

There were 31 private higher and further educational institutions at the Central Business District of Durban. This listing was obtained from the DOE's website. In this study, the survey population comprised private higher and further education institutions which excludes business organisations that offer in-house training and are recognised as FET providers. The target respondents are principals or

academic managers, who are overall in charge of academic matters of the institution.

### **1.7 Limitations of the study**

The study is confined to private higher and further education institutions at the Central Business District of Durban that received conditional registration by the DOE before 31 December 2005. The list of registered private higher and further education institutions was obtained from the DOE website.

### **1.8 Outline of the study**

#### **CHAPTER ONE Introduction**

This chapter explains the background to the study with reference to the changes in higher education. The aim, objectives, problem statement and the research method used are introduced. The outline of the study, with details of each chapter, is then described.

#### **CHAPTER TWO PHEI's, business quality tools and the SAEM**

This chapter introduces and examines the development of higher education in South Africa. The statutory bodies created and the documents published to regulate higher education by the government after 1994 is examined in some detail. The background of FET and PHEIs are discussed in detail. Thereafter, the need for quality at PHEI's is examined. Further in the chapter, the nature, scope and characteristics of Total Quality Management and ISO 9001: 2000 business quality tools are introduced. The study then examines the South African Excellence Model and its suitability to higher education.

### CHAPTER THREE **Methodology: research design**

This chapter explains the research method used. Details on the questionnaire design, the integration of the HEQC and Umalusi Council's audit criteria and business quality tools are presented.

### CHAPTER FOUR **Evaluation of results**

The findings of the empirical investigation are presented and discussed. Detailed analysis of the findings accompanied by numerical tabulations are also presented in this chapter.

### CHAPTER FIVE **Conclusions, recommendations and the Integrated Quality Model**

This chapter presents the conclusions from the literature review, followed by conclusions from the research investigation. The recommendations are presented on each area investigated. The design of the quality model entails integrating the deficiencies of PHEI's and FETI's, the HEQC and Umalusi Council's audit criteria and the philosophies of business quality tools, TQM and ISO9000. The development of the proposed Integrated Quality Model, derived from the South African Excellence Model, is presented as a recommended Quality Management System (QMS).

#### **1.9 Conclusion**

This chapter described the nature of information and the type of research activities to be carried out in the study. The next chapter reviews the related literature on PHEI's, business quality tools and the South African Excellence Model (SAEM).

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **PHEI's BUSINESS QUALITY TOOLS AND SAEM**

## **2. PHEIs, BUSINESS QUALITY TOOLS AND THE SAEM**

### **2.1 Introduction**

A selected review was undertaken which included a perusal of websites, text books, management journals, magazines and reports to profile government's policies to regulate and introduce quality mechanisms into higher education. This chapter serves to provide a background of FET and PHEI's and their contributions to higher education in South Africa. The literature review scans the higher education system in South Africa, the formation and functions of statutory bodies that play an important role in the quality of higher education. The following are examined in the literature review:

- The two bodies responsible for quality in private higher and further education i.e. HEQC and the Umalusi Council's quality audit criteria;
- Business quality tools i.e. the Total Quality Management philosophy and the ISO9001:2000 quality standard; and
- The South African Business Excellence Model.

### **2.2 Background of private higher and further education institutions**

Private higher education in South Africa can be traced back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The South African College, for example, which started of as a private initiative in 1829, gave rise to the establishment of the University of Cape Town in 1918 (Mabizela, cited in Naidoo and Singh 2005:24). Private higher education evolved to play different roles in South Africa's development. Kruss (2004) and Mabizela (2004), as cited in Naidoo and Singh (2005:24), distinguish the following stages:

- In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, private post secondary education responded to the demands of the colonial economy and society and provided access for the elite only;
- In the 1940–50s, private higher education institutions were established by South Africans to offer vocational programmes to blacks (mainly Africans), largely through correspondence, whereas public universities catered mainly

for whites. Private providers were seen as being of inferior quality, and were negligible in terms of size and number of students compared to public institutions; and

- Since the 1990s, there has been a resurgence of private higher education with the key goal of entrepreneurial profit making, but the number of students is still negligible. During this period, franchising of qualifications from developed countries emerged, particularly between UK institutions and local private providers.

According to Mabizela, (2004) cited in Naidoo and Singh (2005:6), the Bill of Rights in chapter two section 29 (3) of the Constitution specifies the following right in respect of private provision: “everyone has the right to establish and maintain, at their own expense, independent educational institutions that –

- (a) do not discriminate on the basis of race;
- (b) are registered with the state; and
- (c) maintain standards that are not inferior to standards at comparable public educational institutions”.

It is evident, from this provision, that not only is the existence of private providers constitutionally protected but it also forms the basis for regulation, quality assurance and the maintenance of standards. The constitution recognises the right of private education providers to co-exist (even to compete) with public institutions.

Private providers offer mainly vocational education in the fields of information technology, management studies, secretarial studies, public relations, marketing, communications, religion, beauty and skincare, and fashion design (Lange and Naidoo, cited in Naidoo and Singh, 2005:25).

According to Kruss (2004:2), the private higher education sector concentrated mainly on vocational education with a focus on profit generation. A report issued by Study South Africa (2006a:2) is in agreement with Kruss and adds that the public must be protected against unscrupulous and exploitative private institutions. Feheneel (2002:236) stated that private institutions are located in city centres and economic hubs of South Africa. According to a report issued by Study South Africa (2006b:1) mention that this imbalance in location and narrow range of courses offered by

private FET and PHEIs are not in line with national human resources needs. In view of these statements, it is evident that their location is a strategy to attract learners at busy city centres. Previously, the measurement of the standard of education or the level of quality did not form part of their business plan. With the transformation of higher education and the creation of accrediting bodies emerging, the role of private higher education providers became more prominent as they were in a position to compete with public higher education institutions. This created a concern to the education ministry because there was an industry created without formal regulations which caused a threat to public institutions (Feheneel 2002:236). According to a report issued by the South African Government Services (2006:1) which is in agreement with Feheneel and adds that the partnership between local private and international educational institutions, also added to governments concern. Kruss (2004:2) states that private providers focus on a limited range of programmes and offer poor quality, narrow-skilling programmes that do not produce graduates who are fully employable. The report issued by Study South Africa (2006:2) states that private institutions lacked quality assurance and degrees were at FET than higher education level. In view of this limitation, Kruss further states that, for private providers to be on par with public institutions, they have to be subjected to some form of quality assuring audit with the regulation, coordination and quality control treated differently. Consequently, the education ministry decided to transform private higher education. The sections below describe the formation of statutory bodies and their mandate in transforming private higher education.

### **2.3 The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act, 1995**

This section examines the formation and functioning of SAQA and its role in the regulation of private higher education. According to Du Pre' (2000:8), the South African Qualifications Authority is a body of 29 members appointed by the Ministers of Education and Labour. The members are nominated by identified national stakeholders in education and training. The functions of the Authority are essentially twofold:

- To oversee the development of the NQF by formulating and publishing policies and criteria for the registration of bodies responsible for establishing education and training standards or qualifications and for the accreditation of bodies responsible for monitoring and auditing achievements in terms of such standards and qualifications; and
- To oversee the implementation of the NQF by ensuring the registration, accreditation and assignment of functions to the bodies referred to above, as well as the registration of national standards and qualifications on the framework. It must also take steps to ensure that provisions for accreditation are complied with and, where appropriate, that registered standards and qualifications are internationally comparable (NQF 2000:8).

The aim of the SAQA Act (No. 58), which was promulgated on 4 October 1995, is to provide for the development and implementation of a NQF to establish the SAQA, and to provide for matters connected therewith. This act enables South Africa to develop its own integrated NQF accompanied by a supporting quality assurance system which will also govern PHEIS (du Pre', 2000:10).

In 1998, SAQA published the National Standards Bodies (NSB) regulations whereby provision was made for the registration of National Standards Bodies and Standards Generating Bodies. These bodies are responsible for the generation and recommendation of qualifications and standards or registration on the NQF (Huyssteen, 2002:7). According to du Pre` (2000:11), the Education and Training Quality Assurance (ETQA) regulations were also published in 1998 and provided for the accreditation of Education and Training Quality Assurance bodies. In view of these statements, SAQA has two divisions i.e. Standards Setting and Quality Assurance. The sub-structures in the standards setting division are the National Standards Bodies (NSBs) and the Standards Generating Bodies (SGBs), while the sub-structures in the quality assurance division are the Education and Training Quality Assurance (ETQA) bodies. These bodies are responsible for accrediting providers of education and training, standards and qualifications registered on the

NQF, monitoring provision, evaluating assessment and facilitating moderation across providers, and registering assessors.

The formation of SAQA started the transformation process in higher education. SAQA's quality assurance system of accrediting ETQA's started the quality cycle in higher education. ETQA's are accredited in two sectors i.e. the economic sector and the education and training sub-system sector. The nature of an ETQA depends on the educational sector concerned. ETQA's can be a professional body, such as the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) or a Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA). The ETQA for higher education is the HEQC of the CHE (Huyssteen, 2002: 7). The ETQA for the further education and training is the Umalusi Council which is legislated by the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance (GENFETQA) Act No. 58 of 2001. An ETQA applies for accreditation to SAQA. On receiving accreditation, the ETQA is then in a position to accredit providers. The ETQA is responsible for ensuring that the provider maintains and improves the quality of learning provision and learning achievements. The criteria and guidelines for providers, document (SAQA 1998:20), states that the SAQA's criteria followed by ETQAs and providers cannot guarantee quality improvements but have to be linked into a broader national quality assurance strategy that includes a measure of external quality control as well as the development of internal quality processes. In view of the above statements, SAQA's approach is one that has external quality assurance controls and mechanisms based on an internal quality management and evaluation system. It is also evident that providers of higher education need to have internal quality mechanisms in place. The theme of quality assurance is promoted in the transformation process of higher education, which affects private further and higher education providers.

According to the NQF (2000:8), it is evident that SAQA's concern is to ensure that learners, who are awarded with an NQF registered qualification, are able to demonstrate the outcomes of the qualification.

## 2.4 The National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

This section describes the NQF and its role in maintaining quality in the education sector. According to du Pre` (2000: 27), the learning achievements of a learner on completion of a qualification must be internationally comparable. The NQF, therefore, ensures the quality of a learner's ability to demonstrate the outcomes of a completed qualification, thus creating a mechanism to measure the quality of graduates. This function of the NQF is part of the quality cycle in higher education where a framework is provided for learner achievements. The following section describes the nature of the NQF, its formation and the role it plays in private higher education.

The White Papers on Education and Training (1995) and Reconstruction and Development (1994) underscored the need for the development and implementation of the NQF. An inter-Ministerial Working Group was established to draft the NQF Bill, which was passed into law as the South African Qualifications Authority Act (No. 58 of 1995) on 4 October 1995.

According to NQF (2000:1), the NQF is a set of principles and guidelines by which records of learner achievements are registered to enable national recognition of acquired skills and knowledge. Qualifications are registered at specific levels on the framework and have a credit value. SAQA has adopted an eight level framework; level 1 is the General Education and Training Certificate, levels 2, 3 and 4 are the Further Education and Training Certificate, and levels 5 to 8 are Higher Education and Training. Learners, in the course of study, may accumulate credits over time towards a qualification.

Du Pre` (2000:11) summarises the objectives of the NQF as follows:

- To create an integrated national framework for learning achievements;
- To facilitate access to, and mobility and progression within education, training and career paths;
- To enhance the quality of education and training;

- To accelerate the redress of past unfair discrimination in education, training and employment opportunities; and
- To contribute to the full personal development of each learner and the social and economic development of the nation at large.

It is evident that the objectives of the NQF underpin the notion of quality in the new system. The NQF supports a comprehensive quality cycle, which includes standards setting and quality assurance. All standards and qualifications, before being registered on the NQF, are measured against the principles enunciated in the objectives of the NQF to ensure that they meet the criteria of the framework that support life long learning (Du Pre` 2000: 33). The NQF ensures that a learner is given credit for all types of learning that has taken place. Private providers would submit their qualifications to SAQA for registration on the NQF before offering them to learners (NQF: An Overview, 2000: 6). On completion, the learner would receive a qualification registered at a NQF level.

## **2.5 Report of the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE)**

The objective of this section is to describe how the regulation of private higher education started and why quality assurance became an important issue in this sector. The focus on quality and the role of quality assurance in a transformed higher education system is flagged prominently in the recommendations of the NCHE. In the NCHE Report, it is clear that a “comprehensive development oriented quality assurance system is central to the creation of a single co-ordinated higher education system” (NCHE, 1996: 108). The commission also viewed quality assurance as “an important element of the new form of governance proposed for higher education” as well as “one of the ways of drawing private higher education into the new system” (Naidoo and Singh, 2005: 7).

The Higher Education Act of 1997, as amended in 2000 and 2001, provides a framework for the regulation of private higher education institutions. It provides for registration by the registrar of private higher education institutions (who is the Director General of the Department of Education). The Act also provides for the

application of quality assurance requirements to private higher education institutions. The Act stipulates that registration by the Ministry of Education depends on a demonstration that the applicant:

- (a) is financially capable of satisfying its obligations to prospective students;
- (b) Further, with regard to all of its higher education programmes :-
  - (1) That it will maintain acceptable standards that are not inferior to standards at a comparable public higher education institution;
  - (2) That it will comply with the requirements of the appropriate quality assurance body accredited by SAQA in terms of the South African Qualifications Authority Act, 1995 (Act 58 of 1995); and
- (c) That complies with any other reasonable requirement prescribed by the Minister (Higher Education Act as amended, 2001: 52).

From the review of the main stipulations of the act, it's clear that PHEI's must meet the above registration requirements of the Department of Education (DOE) for them to operate. The process, by registration status, is a form of assuring quality because it requires the provider to demonstrate competencies in all aspects of the institution's operations. The Higher Education Act allows the DOE to be informed of an institution's financial status by reviewing audited financial statements. In this way, the learner's interest is protected.

The Higher Education Act requires that programmes offered at PHEI's need to be at the same quality level as those of public institutions. Therefore, PHEIs need internal quality mechanisms in place. Further, PHEI's must go through an external audit by the appropriate ETQA to show evidence that their programme offered is of an equivalent quality level. External audits must be undertaken by an education and training quality assurance body formed and funded by the government. This control created a need for statutory bodies to be installed with the responsibility for quality assurance in higher education. The statutory bodies formed are the CHE, with the HEQC as the ETQA of higher education and the UMALUSI Council for the further education and training. PHEI's would need to prepare for such audits. This

preparation process would require a criterion to be followed and internal quality assurance mechanisms to be in place. The quality process begins with the South African Qualifications Authority accrediting the ETQAs, as stipulated by the Higher Education Act of 2001. These ETQAs will, in turn, accredit private higher and further education institutions. The following section describes the formation of the CHE and the HEQC.

## **2.6 The Council on Higher Education (CHE)**

The objective of this section is to illustrate the steps taken by government to regulate higher education. The formation of the Council on Higher Education and its mandate to promote quality assurance are described.

The CHE is an independent statutory body established in May 1998 in terms of the Higher education Act, No.101 of 1997 (CHE News, 1999: 1). The mission of the CHE is to contribute to the development of a higher education system characterised by quality, responsiveness, equity and efficient and effective provision and management of higher education.

It seeks to make this contribution:

- By providing informed, considered, independent and strategic advice to the Minister of Education;
- Through the quality assurance activities of its Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC); and
- Through the publication and dissemination of information on developments in higher education, including an annual report to parliament on the state of higher education.

According to the HEQC Report (2003:1), the HEQC is a permanent committee of the CHE and will undertake accreditation of learning programmes of public and private higher education institutions, institutional audits of all higher education providers and promote quality. It is clear, from the statements mentioned above, that the CHE is the governing authority of higher education with direct links to the Minister of

Education and Parliament. By the use of the annual reporting system, the Minister of Education is in a position to make informed decisions affecting higher education. Private and public higher education institutions are compelled to adhere to the requirements of the CHE through the HEQC as it is clearly defined in the Higher Education Act of 2001. The CHE's contribution brings about a newly transformed higher education system with promotion and development of quality as the main focus. With quality being the main focus, the CHE created the Higher Education Quality Committee to promote quality and conduct institutional audits. The following section describes the formation and the quality assurance system of the HEQC.

## **2.7 The quality assurance system of the HEQC**

The Education White Paper 3: A programme for the transformation of Higher Education, July 1997, proposes that the primary responsibility for quality assurance rests with higher education institutions. However, there is an important role for an umbrella national authority responsible for quality promotion and assurance throughout the system. Following the recommendations of the White Paper, the Higher Education (Act No.1011997) makes provision for the Council on Higher Education (CHE) to establish a permanent sub-committee, the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC), with the mandate to:

- a) promote quality assurance in higher education;
- b) audit the quality assurance mechanisms of higher education institutions; and
- c) accredit programmes of higher education.

The HEQC was established in May 2001 as a permanent sub-committee of the CHE, an independent statutory body that advises the Minister on all aspects of higher education (Naidoo and Singh, 2005:15). Where necessary, this includes advice on quality promotion and quality assurance. The HEQC is required to operate within the requirements of the SAQA. According to the HEQC document (2001: 14), its approach to quality would be to develop a quality assurance framework and criteria based on:

- a) Fitness for purpose in relation to a specified mission within a national framework that encompasses differentiation and diversity;
- b) Value for money judged in relation to the full range of higher education purposes set out by the White Paper. Judgements about the effectiveness and efficiency of provision of education will include but not be confined to labour market responsiveness and cost recovery; and
- c) Transformation in the sense of developing the capabilities of individual learners for personal enrichment, as well as the requirements of social development and economic and employment growth.

In relation to teaching, learning, research and community service, it is evident from above that the HEQC will determine quality on the basis of the ability of the provider to offer qualifications, programmes and learning experiences which are responsive to the broad development needs of learners, thereby also addressing the knowledge, skills and service needs of the country at large. According to Greenwood (2003:52), in the process of developing a quality assurance framework, the HEQC embarked on a serious campaign to get rid of unscrupulous operators who received payments and provided inferior and, sometimes, non-existent qualifications. Hence, it is evident that there are private providers that are not providing education of an acceptable standard. This practice has caused concerns for the HEQC in that, firstly, it created negative perceptions of private higher education, and, secondly, the HEQC had no information on the level of education that was offered at all private institutions.

### **2.7.1 The HEQC'S approach to quality in institutional audits**

The HEQC, in its efforts to meet the obligations of its mandate, published a comprehensive Criteria for Institutional Audits document in June 2004. The HEQC was engaged in institutional audits during the period of 2004 to 2009 (Westhuizen, 2005:147). The priorities set out for higher education institutions are to develop and establish a quality assurance system and the implementation of a programme self-evaluation system. The audit activities will be conducted in the context of ongoing reform and restructuring in order to produce a transformed higher education system of high quality. Audits will also address quality related issues pertaining to the

adaptability, responsiveness and innovativeness of institutions in the production of new knowledge and skills (HEQC, 2004b: 3).

The HEQC (2004b:5) describes the general objectives of the audits as follows:

- To encourage and support higher education providers to maintain a culture of continuous improvements;
- To establish the nature and extent of the quality management system in place in the institution;
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the quality management system by validating the self-evaluation reports;
- To enable the HEQC and providers to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses, as well as identifying areas that need improvement; and
- To provide for consistency in quality management across the higher education sector and generate a national picture of the role of quality management in the transformation of higher education.

The above general objectives apply to the first cycle of audits from 2004 to 2009, which the HEQC will use as indicators to the higher education sector for areas in need of attention in-order to ensure that there is an acceptable level of quality education maintained by all institutions. This level will be achieved by the audit criteria specifically designed for this purpose. The HEQC's audit criteria will form the key instrument for evaluating the effective alignment between institutional quality objectives and the quality mechanisms in place to achieve them. In view of these statements, the HEQC may amend the criteria in the second cycle, depending on the prevailing needs and priorities. The audits are conducted by a review panel of peers and experts, supported by senior HEQC personnel. The audit panels use sampling techniques to judge institutions on their quality systems. The panel requires indicators of success and evidence of effectiveness that takes the criteria beyond a checklist of policies and procedures (HEQC, 2004a: 2). It is evident that the achievement of quality requires not only quality mechanisms in place but the professional expertise, competence and commitment of those who are engaged in teaching and learning, research and community interaction.

## 2.7.2 The HEQC's audit criteria

This section describes the HEQC audit criteria and its role in maintaining quality standards in higher education. This criteria is applicable to private higher education institutions. According to Westhuizen (2004: 148), the HEQC's audit criteria covers two broad areas, which will form the focus of evaluation in the audit:

Area 1: Mission of the institution; links between planning, resource allocation and quality management; and

Area 2: Teaching and learning, research and community engagement. Benchmarking, user surveys and impact studies apply to both broad areas.

The audit criteria were developed after taking cognisance of national policies, the institutional quality landscape and international trends with respect to quality assurance in higher education (HEQC, 2004b: 7). The criteria serve as guidelines for institutions when doing their self-evaluation reports together with additional requirements which institutions might set for themselves in order to further strengthen their internal quality mechanisms.

Summary of criteria and areas for the HEQC's audit are as follows (HEQC, 2004a: 7):

### 2.7.2.1 Institutional mission, links between planning, resource allocation and quality management

#### **Criterion 1:** Mission and Vision of Institution

According to Zink and Vob (2000: 248), managers of educational institutions need to develop a clear vision of the organisations' future and set long-term objectives as part of the strategic planning process. The institution will be required to show evidence to the audit panel that it has a clearly stated mission and purpose with goals and priorities which are responsive to its local, national and international context and which provide for transformational issues.

**Criterion 2:** Planning, resource allocation and quality management

Evidence is also required as to what extent the mechanisms for quality management are integrated into institutional planning. Financial planning ensures adequate resource allocation for the development, improvement and monitoring of quality in the core activities of teaching and learning, research and community engagement.

**2.7.2.2 Teaching and learning, research and community engagement****Criterion 3:** Management of the quality of teaching and learning

Evidence would be required by the evaluation committee on how the arrangements for quality assurance of and support for teaching and learning, enhance quality and allow for its continuous monitoring.

**Criterion 4:** Academic support services

The institution will be required to show evidence on how academic support services (e.g. library and learning materials, computer support services, etc.) adequately support teaching and learning needs, and help to give effect to teaching and learning objectives.

**Criterion 5:** Short courses

The institution will need to have effective systems in place for the quality management of short courses, exported and partnership programmes, and programmes offered at tuition centres and satellite campuses.

**Criterion 6:** Certification

In order to meet this criterion, evidence of effective mechanisms should be in place to ensure that the integrity of learner records and efficient arrangements ensure the quality of processing and issuing of certificates.

### **2.7.2.3 Quality related arrangements for programme development, management and review; and for student assessments and success**

#### **Criterion 7: Programme management**

The administration of academic programmes must be conducted within the framework of an effective programme management system. Evidence would be required on a management information system being used to record and disseminate information about the programme, as well as to facilitate review and improvement. The relevant line managers are allocated responsibility for the quality of academic programmes.

#### **Criterion 8: Programme design and approval**

Clear and efficient systems and procedures must be in place for the design and approval of new programmes, courses and modules. The requirements must be consistently applied and regularly monitored. To meet this criterion, evidence must be presented to the review panel that programme teams have consulted external professional bodies, potential employers and government departments, to ensure that graduates meet employability requirements.

#### **Criterion 9: Staffing**

A profile on current staff needs to be developed by the institution as evidence showing how recruitment, selection, and development of staff have taken place. The effective application of support policies and procedures are used to facilitate the availability of suitably qualified and experienced academic and support staff to deliver the programme.

#### **Criterion 10: Programme review**

In order to meet this criterion, clear and effective systems should be in place (including internal and external peer review) to evaluate programmes on a regular basis. Evidence will be required by the audit panel of review findings being disseminated appropriately and utilised for staff development, curriculum improvement and learner access.

**Criterion 11: Management of assessment**

The institution has an assessment policy and clear and effective procedures for its implementation. The policy and its procedures ensure academic and professional standards in the design, approval, implementation and review of assessment strategies for programmes awarded by the institution. Evidence would be required on the extent to which professional rules and regulations governing assessment are communicated to learners. These include the following: assessment procedures, timeous feedback to learners, weighting of class marks and examinations, security procedures, disciplinary and appeal procedures, regulations for marking, aegrotats, and supplementary examinations.

**Criterion 12: Moderation System**

The institution must have effective procedures which facilitate the quality of the internal and external moderation of its assessment procedures and results, in order to ensure their reliability and to ensure the integrity of the qualifications it awards.

**Criterion 13: Consistency of assessment practices**

The principles, procedures and practices of assessment must be explicit, fair and consistently applied throughout the institution. Security arrangements for recording and documenting assessment data must be in place to ensure the credibility of outcomes.

**Criterion 14: Recognition of prior learning (RPL)**

The institution must have a RPL policy, and effective procedures for recognising prior learning and assessing current competence.

**2.7.2.4 Research****Criterion 15: Research policy**

The institution is required to show evidence that it has effective arrangements in place for the quality assurance, development and monitoring of research functions and postgraduate education.

**Criterion 16: Research support**

Research functions and processes must be supported and developed in a way that assures and enhances quality, and increases research participation, research productivity and research resources.

**Criterion 17: Postgraduate education support**

Efficient arrangements must be in place for the quality assurance, development and monitoring of postgraduate education.

**2.7.2.5 Community engagement****Criterion 18: Community engagement**

The extent to which the institution has quality-related arrangements for community engagement must be formalised and integrated with those for teaching and learning, where appropriate, and they must be adequately resourced and monitored.

**2.7.2.6 Benchmarking, user surveys and impact studies****Criterion 19: Benchmarking, user surveys and impact studies**

The institution engages in benchmarking, where appropriate, and draws on user surveys and impact studies in the process of planning and setting of priorities for quality development and enhancement.

The HEQC audit criteria are a comprehensive set of requirements that private higher education institutions need to comply with. Institutions complying with this criteria will have to keep track of academic activities and keep accurate records as sources of evidence for institutional audits. For private higher education institutions, preparation for these audits will be a great task as they were not subjected to external audits in the past.

**2.7.3 Higher Education Qualifications Framework (HEQF)**

The HEQF was published in 2007 by the Minister of Education (Government Gazette, Volume 508, No 30353). The HEQF policy provides the basis for integrating all higher education qualifications, public and private, into the NQF and its structures for standards generation and quality assurance. It improves the coherence of the

higher education system and facilitates the articulation of qualifications, thereby enabling learners to move efficiently over time from one programme to another as they pursue their academic career (<http://www.che.ac.za/documents> ).

For learners of PHEIs articulation to further their qualifications at public higher education institutions would be more efficient. The accreditation processes of programmes for PHEIs will be the same as public higher education institutions. According to the CHE website <http://www.che.ac.za/accreditation>, the HEQC has set up a web-based accreditation application system that allows private and public education institutions to submit applications for the accreditation of programmes online. The HEQC will continue to accredit programmes according to its criteria. The institution's application must conform to the requirements of the HEQF from the date of implementation, 1 January 2009.

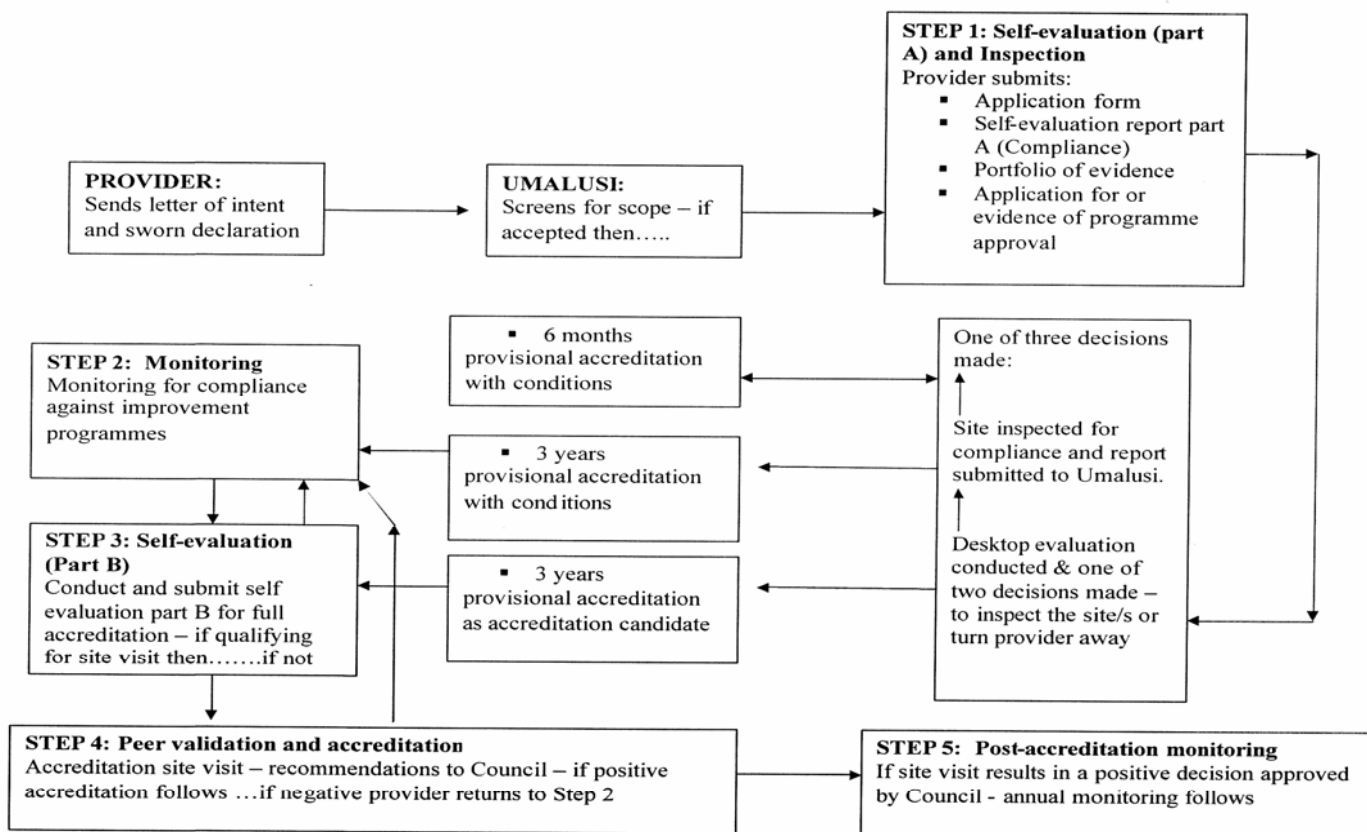
## **2.8 Umalusi Council**

This section describes the formation, role and its institutional audit criteria of the Umalusi Council. These criteria are used for the auditing of further education and training institutions. The General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act No. 58 of 2001 assigns the responsibility for quality assurance of the general and further education and training in South Africa to the Umalusi Council. According to Lolwana (2004), Umalusi Council follows a single coherent quality assurance system with a common set of demands for both private and public institutions. Lolwana (2004) cited that this system is in line with the vision of the Ministry of Education, articulated in the White Paper on Education and Training (1995), of a 'single, non-racial and democratic education and training system'. There are three institutional types in the general and further education and training bands, namely, school education; college/vocational education and adult education. A different approach to quality assurance is adopted for each type of institution. This research is confined to private college/vocational type of institutions as some private institutions offer only higher education programmes and others offer HET and FET programmes. Lolwana (2004) also maintains that Umalusi will audit private FET institutions that are similar to public FET colleges in terms of their range of programmes offered, size and nationally certified qualifications.

The following sections analyse Umalusi's accreditation process and its use of an audit criteria to award accreditation to FET providers. The examination of Umalusi's audit criteria will indicate the type of quality assurance mechanisms needed to be in place by private FET providers. These mechanisms would be incorporated in the design of the quality model proposed during this study.

### 2.8.1 Umalusi Councils accreditation procedure

Figure 1: Umalusi Council's Accreditation s Flow Chart



Source: Umalusi Council's Framework for Accreditation Document (2006: 23)

### 2.8.2 Stages in the Umalusi Council's accreditation process

The accreditation process plays a significant role in the regulation and maintenance of quality standards in the further education sector. The accreditation process

includes site visits, which serve as a monitoring tool for Umalusi. The Umalusi Council offers options to institutions for accreditation. By offering options, it allows for institutions to develop and improve over a period of time. This concept fits with the philosophy of continuous improvement, which is a major part of business quality tools discussed later in this chapter. The following steps, depicted in the flow chart, have to be followed by education and training providers:

### **2.8.2.1 Education and Training Providers**

In terms of the Umalusi Council's Framework for Accreditation Document (2006:15), the institution will prepare and forward a letter of intent as per the template available on the website with a sworn declaration to Umalusi Council.

### **2.8.2.2 Umalusi Council**

Umalusi receives the letter of intent, and screens the application in view of its scope to achieve accreditation. The application can be accepted or returned to the institution for more information. If accepted, the institution can move on to the next step.

### **2.8.3 STEP 1 Self Evaluation (part A) and Inspection**

In terms of the Umalusi Council's Framework for Accreditation Document (2006: 17), this stage involves the institution submitting the following documents for evaluation: the application form, a self-evaluation report part A (compliance), a portfolio of evidence and evidence that the institution has applied for programme approval or has programmes already approved.

#### **2.8.3.1 Desktop Evaluation**

A desktop evaluation is conducted on the portfolio of evidence and the self-evaluation report. After this evaluation, Umalusi would proceed with a site inspection or turn the provider away.

### **2.8.3.2 Site Inspection**

Institutions seeking accreditation are required to comply with minimum standards in the area of quality teaching and learning. Umalusi inspects institutions for compliance against these standards before they are invited to apply for full accreditation. The site visit is conducted and a report is submitted to Umalusi. At this stage, one of the three possible outcomes emerges:

- Six months provisional accreditation with conditions;
- Three years provisional accreditation with conditions; or
- Three years provisional accreditation as accreditation candidate.

### **2.8.4 Step 2: Monitoring**

Institutions in the first two categories mentioned above are monitored through the annual submission of a progress report against an improvement plan or conditions that are stipulated by Umalusi. An institution that receives accreditation, as accreditation candidate, will be in a position to move on to the next stage.

### **2.8.5 Step 3: Self Evaluation (Part B)**

According to the Umalusi Council's framework for Accreditation Document (2006: 18), after Umalusi is satisfied with the progress of institutions, they could progress to completing the self-evaluation report (Part B) for full accreditation. The resultant report and evidence are used to measure the effectiveness of the institution's quality arrangements for teaching and learning against the evaluation criteria. At this stage, Umalusi must be assured that the institution is able to manage its own quality improvement processes. Institutions that demonstrate this ability, qualify to go through to the next step. If this self evaluation report is rejected, the institution goes through the monitoring process in step 2.

### **2.8.6 Step 4: Peer Evaluation and Accreditation**

In terms of the Umalusi Council's Framework for Accreditation Document (2006: 18), the peer validation site visit focuses on validating the institution's overall capacity to offer and manage the qualifications and programmes it offers, the quality of the teaching and learning it provides and how it uses institutional performance to inform improvement. After the site visit is conducted, recommendations are sent to Umalusi. If the report is positive, accreditation follows, if it is negative the institution returns to the monitoring process in step 2.

### **2.8.7 Step 5: Post Accreditation monitoring**

A positive result in step four, and approval by Umalusi Council, is followed by an annual report. In terms of the Umalusi Council's Framework for Accreditation Document (2006: 19), institutions are required to submit three yearly reports that include improvements and achievement of institutional and national objectives. The annual reports should reflect institutional performance results related to learner success, user satisfaction and "best value for money". Performance results are used to statistically monitor the institution's quality levels. After an institution submits its report in the first year, a site visit is conducted as part of the monitoring process.

### **2.8.8 Umalusi Council's Mandate**

According to Umalusi's Framework for Accreditation Document (2006: 6), the Umalusi council's mandate includes:

- Monitoring and reporting on the adequacy and suitability of qualifications and standards;
- Quality assurance of all exit point assessments;
- Certification of learner achievements;
- Quality promotion amongst providers; and
- Accreditation of private providers.

In addressing its mandate, Umalusi developed an evaluation, accreditation and monitoring system that is seated in the Context Input Process and Output (CIPO) model. The model indicators are context, input, process and output. The indicators are employed in order to view institutional quality. Based on this model, Umalusi produced the Framework for the Quality Assurance of General and Further Education and Training document. This document describes the criteria which will be used in the evaluation, accreditation and monitoring of further education and training institutions. The criteria are common for both private and public FET institutions and serve as evaluation standards and instruments for Umalusi. Accreditation submissions are validated by a team of peers and experts who conduct an independent evaluation of the institution through a site visit. A decision is reached on the effectiveness of the institutional management and the quality of teaching and learning.

These criteria enable Umalusi to provide an independent account of the quality of education and training, the effectiveness of management and institutional results in FET institutions. The criteria cover three broad areas, namely, teaching and learning, management inputs for quality provision and the consequent results. Collectively, the information gathered during the evaluation process should answer the following questions: (Umalusi's Criteria for Accreditation Document, 2005: 10).

Is the education and training offered by the FET institution of sufficient quality? Is the institution managing and supervising the quality of its provision effectively? Are the institutional performance results sufficient?

## **2.9 Teaching, training and learning**

In terms of the Umalusi Criteria for Accreditation Document (2005: 10), institutions must comply with the following criteria under the evaluation area of teaching, training and learning.

### **Criterion 1: Qualifications, programmes and certification**

Under this criterion, the quality of learning programmes are measured taking into account the institution programme mix and its relevance to the needs of the learners,

the design and development of learning programmes, the monitoring of learning programmes in relation to quality assurance, the extent to which staff have the skills to design and evaluate learning programmes, the institution's success in gaining accreditation from the relevant quality assurers, the extent to which the learning programmes offered lead to credible certificates issued by an official quality assurance body and the extent to which an institution offers quality informal programmes that cater for skills development.

### **Criterion 2: Delivery, instruction and training**

The critical factors that the institution needs to demonstrate competence are:

- How effectively the delivery of learning programmes are planned, supported and managed;
- To what extent learning is supported by sufficient quality learning materials and facilities;
- How effectively delivery and instruction are monitored and managed its non-formal programmes; and
- How well the institution manages the quality of partnership programme provision or off-site training.

### **Criterion 3: Assessment of learning**

The institutions assessment practices must be evaluated according to the following parameters:

- The extent to which assessment policy and practices comply with the requirements of the qualifications or quality assurance bodies;
- What mechanisms are in place for the institution to maintain academic standards, appropriateness and consistency of site based assessments;
- The manner in which assessment activities are integrated into learning programmes; and
- Evidence on how the institution ensures that information about the achievements and competencies of learners are valid and reliable.

**Criterion 4: Staff expertise and development**

This criterion determines the extent to which academic staff is suitably qualified and has sufficient experience and technical skills to train learners in the programme offered. The institution will need to provide evidence to the evaluation committee that teaching and training skills are effectively monitored, reviewed and improved through reflection on practice to ensure that staff have the required expertise to support and raise learners' success rate.

**Criterion 5: Learner support**

The quality of learner support is determined by how well the institution offers support and services that promote learning and meet the needs of learners. The institution would need the appropriate policies, such as Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), to be in place and show evidence on how effectively learner support services are managed and improved through regular monitoring and review.

**2.10 Leadership and management**

The institution's leadership and management are evaluated in terms of its attainment of institutional and national objectives through effective leadership and governance. In addition, the institution will need to show evidence on how efficiently resources are allocated and used to ensure that the institution is viable, sustainable and gives value for money. In terms of the Umalusi Accreditation Document (2005: 14), institutions must comply with the following criteria under the section of leadership and management.

**Criterion 6: Governance**

The governance criterion is used by the evaluation committee to determine the extent to which governance structures meet the requirements of the relevant legislation and policies for FET institutions. Evidence would be required on the

qualifications, expertise and skills of members in governance structures relating to their abilities to carry out their responsibilities.

### **Criterion 7: Planning and management**

The evaluation committee will require evidence to determine the effectiveness of the institution's management. This would be verified during the site visit or in the self-evaluation report by:

- The extent to which the leadership sets a clear direction for the institution which leads to quality education and improved institutional performance;
- The extent to which the mission of the institution and national imperatives are achieved;
- How effectively the quality of academic programmes are managed through the implementation of policies and procedures, regular self-evaluation, monitoring, review and implementation of improvement steps; and
- The extent to which information regarding the institution's provision is accessible, and clearly imparted to learners and the public.

## **2.11 Results**

In terms of the Umalusi Criteria for Accreditation Document (2005: 16), institutions must comply with the following criterion under the section of results.

### **Criterion 8: Institutional performance**

Under the institutional performance criterion, the institution will need to provide evidence to the evaluation committee in their self-evaluation reports or site visit by means of statistical information. Institutional performance is determined by the measurement, analysis and interpretation of data collected in three areas, namely, learner success rates, value for money results and user satisfaction rates, taking into account the context of the institution. The context includes issues that affect an institution's input, process and output such as demography, resources, the types of learners and the community that the institution serves. This would imply that FET

institutions will have to design forms or reports that will enhance the recording of data over the academic year.

## **2.12 The HEQC and Umalusi Council's Criteria**

All areas are common to both criteria bodies besides the HEQC criteria on research, community engagement, benchmarking and impact studies. The research area covers the evaluation of PHEIs offering postgraduate programmes. Research is absent in the Umalusi's criteria as private FET institutions do not offer postgraduate programmes. The areas of benchmarking and impact studies are not areas for evaluation for FET institutions as Umalusi uses the "value for money" concept to bring out the effectiveness of value-added provision.

## **2.13 Business quality tools and education**

This section examines the concept of quality and its elements used in maintaining standards. Business quality tools are examined and the suitability of Total Quality Management and ISO 9001:2000 to education is explored. This section closes with the reporting of the extent to which each quality tool combined with each other will be able to form the basis of a model for PHEI's.

### **2.13.1 Quality as a tool in maintaining standards**

Private higher education institutions have been producing graduates who were absorbed in South African industry for many decades, without any statutory requirements for quality assurance. This indicates that private higher and further education institutions practiced teaching and learning with a certain level of quality that made their graduates employable and leads to the following question:

Why do we need quality assurance in private higher education?

Greenwood (2003: 51) uses the following example to highlight the need for quality assurance: he argues that quality checks on the brakes of a motor vehicle are essential. Why should higher education be different? His view is: "surely we want value for money in the education of our staff and learners. Surely we want them to attain at least a minimum standard of skills in a chosen field and we want the benefit of having those skills applied where they matter most – in our industries".

Smout and Stephenson (2002:201) emphasise that quality has to be seen as not only an institutional matter but also an essential ingredient in an emerging new relationship between the government and higher education institutions. Private higher and further education institutions needed this ingredient as it did not exist before. In terms of the Council on Higher Education Document (2007: 177), for the first time in their existence state statutory bodies, the HEQC and Umalusi Council, are to undertake institutional audits, accredit higher education programmes and promote quality. Willis and Taylor (1999: 998) maintain that higher education serves the needs of several constituencies including learners, staff, parents, alumni, faculty, taxpayers, supporters, governing boards, administrators, staff, research users and society as a whole. Customer satisfaction is the central goal of Total Quality Management (TQM). In adopting a TQM approach, higher education institutions can keep all constituencies satisfied (Willis and Taylor, 1999: 999).

### **2.13.2 Business quality tools used in education**

The private higher education sector was formed by entrepreneurs, which made this sector different to public higher education institutions. Profit making, which is common to private sector businesses, formed a major part of private educational institution's business plans. According to Lozier and Teeter (1996), cited in Kanji and Tambi (1999:129), profit making organisations in the USA, such as Texas Instruments, Xerox, IBM and Motorola, had successfully applied Total Quality Management Systems to improve their business positions and to overcome threats of global competition. These organisations were recipients of the Malcolm Baldrige Quality Award. This award was established by the US Department of Commerce, to give recognition to organisations that exhibited high standards of product and process quality. The success of these organisations in using TQM philosophy to bring them out of crises encouraged many US higher education institutions to adopt TQM. In view of the examples mentioned, there is a possibility that business tools would work for private higher education institutions. Narasimhan (1997), cited in Kanji and Tambi (1999: 130), states that the first institution that applied TQM approach has become more efficient in areas such as graduate placement, employer satisfaction with contracted training programmes, acceptance of college credits at

receiving institutions and in its learning environment. Marsh (2003: 55) explains that, sometimes, total quality comes from outside the education establishment. Leading employers that use TQM, such as Rank Xerox, ICL and Royal Mail, have been assisting local schools to start implementation of such a system (Marsh, 2003: 56). It is evident that quality management techniques used in business will work for profit making educational institutions.

Naidoo and Singh (2005:25) are of the view that private higher and further education sector concentrated mainly on business and computer studies and with smaller student numbers with a focus on profit generation. According to Fehnel (2001b: 238), the measurement of the standard of education or the level of quality did not form part of FET and PHEI's business plan. With the transformation of higher education and the creation of accrediting bodies emerging, the role of private higher education providers became more prominent as they were in a position to compete with public higher education institutions. This created a concern for the SAQA, the NQF and the HEQC, because there was an industry that was created without formal regulations and which was seen as a threat to public institutions (Fehnel, 2002a: 230).

### **2.13.3 Quality management systems**

Quality management is a term used in the business and educational sectors to describe the mechanisms used to control or manage the quality of their products or services. A distinction is made between quality management and a quality management system. According to Steyn (2000: 10), quality management can be defined as a set of guiding principles and a philosophy that intends to meet and exceed the needs of internal and external customers, through an integrated system of techniques, tools and training. Hence, quality management guides the whole concept of quality in the organization. On the other hand, a quality management system is defined by Oakland (2003: 208) as an assembly of components, such as the management structure, responsibilities, processes and resources for implementing a quality philosophy.

From this statement, it is evident that a quality management system is the actual coordination of the resources in the organization. The adoption of a quality management system is a strategic decision and its design should be influenced by the organisation's objectives, products or services offered. According to Tricker and Lucas (2001: 9), claiming that an organization is reliable and produces a reliable product or service does not create a high quality organisation. Stakeholders of the higher education sector need some sort of evidence that the institution they are dealing with is one that offers a high quality of education. The most recognised way to provide this proof is to work in conformance with the requirements of the ISO 9001:2000 standard which provides guidelines for an organisation wishing to establish its own quality management system and control the quality of its organization (Tricker and Lucas, 2001: 9).

#### **2.13.4 Articulation**

Universities and technikons were reluctant to recognise any qualification from any private provider to grant a learner credits for access purposes (Bitzer, 2002: 27). The question of articulation needs to be addressed as articulation for learners will fulfill the South African government's vision of social development (Kotecha, 2002: 129). Du Toit, Lolwana and Strydom (1995:142) describe articulation as the equivalency or value given to credits earned from one institution or delivery system to another. The authors describe articulation as vertical articulation which is the ability of learners to move horizontally and vertically through credit accumulation, for example, horizontally, when changing the field of study at a similar academic level from one bachelor's degree programme to another, or vertically, when changing academic levels from a bachelor's degree programme to the honours level programme or from matriculation to university level. According to Huyssteen (2002: 7), all existing qualifications would have to be registered with SAQA. New qualifications must be developed with the involvement of the relevant SGB before being forwarded to the NSB for recommendation to SAQA for registration on the NQF.

The NQF is a single framework that registers all qualifications offered at any type of institution. The HEQC will conduct institutional audits accrediting programmes

offered at a private or public institution against a common standard or criteria (HEQC 2004b:3). In terms of the CHE accreditation document, a learner will be awarded credits to satisfy the needs of either vertical or horizontal articulation. The critical issue is that when a learner has completed a qualification at a private higher education institution and wants to progress vertically at a public institution, it will only be possible if the programme studied at the private institution has been accredited by the HEQC, registered by SAQA and recorded on the NQF (Kotecha, 2002: 131). Hence it is evident that for articulation to work successfully, PHEI's must have quality assurance mechanisms in place in order to be accredited by the HEQC.

In the past, technikons and universities were audited by SERTEC and the Quality Promotional Unit (QPU), prior to the HEQC being established. For these private providers to be on the same level as public institutions, they have to be subjected to some form of quality assurance audit (Cosser, 2002: 115). However, these institutions were faced with a problem in that they have no form of internal quality assurance mechanism to use (CHE, 2003: 38). Business organizations, on the other hand, have the option of adopting quality management systems and philosophies to create a quality organization.

#### **2.14 ISO 9000 series of standards**

This section introduces the ISO 9001:2000 quality standard and its applicability to education. According to Tricker and Lucas (2001: 95), the ISO 9000 quality standard, which was first released in 1987, was regarded as incomplete and required auditors to fill in the gaps. However, Zhu and Scheuermann (1999: 294) maintain that an organisation could conform to the ISO 9000:1994 standard but, at the same time, produce substandard products and services that are consistently of poor quality. In view of this statement, it is evident that ISO registration did not guarantee a quality product, it only guarantees a set of documents attesting to the quality practices of an organisation.

According to the SABS Register (2000: 12), the SABS ISO 9000, operated by South African Bureau of Standards (SABS), is a third party quality system registration scheme. Its objective was to give recognition to companies that had properly

designed, planned, established, maintained and implemented quality systems that met the requirements of either SABS ISO 9001 or SABS ISO 9002. The implementation of such a system clearly demonstrated the organisation's capability to produce consistently to their buyers' requirements, which led to a better corporate and quality image. Organisations, that became certified, reaped benefits such as expanding their markets overseas. Tricker and Lucas (2001: 97) report that in the 1990s although business organisations were becoming ISO 9000 accredited, there were limitations identified with systems such as:

- The ISO 9000: 1994 standard was biased towards manufacturing industries and it was difficult for service industries to use them;
- Many organisations wanted to progress beyond the confines of ISO 9000 towards Total Quality management (TQM);
- The language used was not clear and could easily be misinterpreted;
- The standard was very inflexible and could not be tailored to specific industries; and
- The standard did not cater for continual improvement.

In view of these limitations a revision of the standard was needed.

### **2.14.1 The New Standard ISO 9001:2000**

The ISO Technical Committee No. 176 was responsible for the revision and publication of the ISO 9001:2000 standard during the last quarter of 2000 (Tricker and Lucas, 2001: 98). Two significant objectives were met with the revision:

- a) The standard was capable of being used by all types of industries (manufacturing and service providers) and professions; and
- b) The ISO 9001: 2000 standard is a means of continually improving quality.

Hence, the ISO 9001:2000 standard is suitable for implementation in the education sector as it is a service type of industry.

A significant change in the new standard was the replacement of the twenty elements contained in section 4 of ISO 9001:1994 by five requirements covering a

quality management system, management responsibility, resource management, products or service realisation, measurement, analysis and improvement (Goetsch and Davis, 2002: 53).

#### **2.14.2 Quality management system of ISO 9001: 2000**

The first step an organisation should take in its implementation of ISO 9001:2000 is setting up and fully documenting its position with regards to quality assurance. These documents are the quality management system (QMS) and a description of the organisation's capability of supplying products and providing services that will comply with laid down quality standards. Tricker and Lucas (2001:5) describe a QMS as the organisation's structure for responsibilities, activities, resources and events that provide procedures for ensuring the capability of an organisation to meet quality requirements. According to Goetsch and Davis (2002: 58), all aspects of the QMS must be continually improved by the organisation in order to improve its effectiveness. This implies that every element of the QMS is a potential subject for improvement on a continual basis. The authors are of the view that this continuous improvement initiative will place continued emphasis on developing improvements for all processes, procedures, policies, services and products. Gitlow, Oppenheim, Oppenheim and Levine (2005: 27) are of the view that adhering to the ISO 9001:2000 quality standard ensures less rework, increased productivity, lower unit cost per product or service and yields larger profits. These improvements in business operations also ensured job security for the existing workforce and more new employment was created. These types of improvements would perhaps be suitable for higher and further education as it is a changing environment. This would imply that higher and further education institutions implement a quality management system.

### **2.14.3 Management responsibility**

Gryna, Chua and Defeo (2007: 51) state that when an organisation attempts to implement the ISO 9001:2000 quality standard, it undergoes a major corporate cultural change. Goetsch and Davis (2006: 471) are of the view that an organisation implementing ISO 9001:2000 standard requires active, a visible leadership role and support by management to achieve the cultural change. This is reinforced by the authors Goetsch and Davis (2006: 472) statement that there is no record of any successful organisation that under-went this corporate cultural change without the total commitment of top management. In view of these statements, leadership, commitment and active involvement are essential for the implementation of ISO 9001:2000 quality standard in business organisations and educational institutions.

### **2.14.4 Management of resources**

Resources are essential ingredients in the effective production of goods and services. In the ISO 9001:2000 standard, managing resources is a requirement that an organisation must adhere to in its implementation of a quality management system (QMS). According to Goetsch and Davis (2002: 109), an organisation's management must determine what resources will be required in order to implement, operate and maintain a functional QMS, continually improve its effectiveness and enhance customer satisfaction. The authors maintain that its management's task is to provide those resources. They describe the following resources as necessary in an organisation that implements the ISO 9001:2000 standard:

- Infrastructure as buildings, workspace and utilities;
- Process equipment in hardware and software categories; and
- Supporting services.

This requirement in the ISO 9001: 2000 standard is significant for private higher and further education as resources are required to provide education. Providing, maintaining and improving these resources in education will support the core business of teaching and learning.

### **2.14.5 Product or service realization**

Under this requirement in the ISO 9001: 2000 standard, the organisation shall plan and develop the processes covering the entire production cycle. According to Tricker and Lucas (2001:122), planning product realisation, customer related processes, design and development, purchasing, production and service provision and control of measuring devices are sub-sections of this requirement. In view of this statement, it is evident that the sub-sections of this requirement relate to the production of goods. However, certain sub-sections like planning services, customer related processes and service provision can be adapted to higher and further education.

### **2.14.6 Measurement, analysis and improvement**

This requirement includes a wide range of activities as it is concerned with demonstrating conformity of the product or service, conformity of the quality management system and continuous improvement of the product and the QMS. Goetsch and Davis (2006: 475) regard the following as essential activities under this requirement:

- Planning: defining the requirements for measurement analysis and improvement;
- Customer satisfaction: monitoring customer satisfaction as measurement and improvement of the QMS;
- Internal Audits: conducting periodic internal audits that conform with ISO 9001: 2000;
- Improvement: planning for continual improvement of the QMS; and
- Corrective action: having available procedures to address corrective and preventative action.

The activities of this requirement can be practiced in private higher and further education as the above activities can be adapted to the core business of teaching

and learning. The activities of planning, measuring learner satisfaction, improving systems and reporting on corrective actions are areas on the HEQC and Umalusi Council audit criteria. This implies that private higher and further education institutions that have accreditation status will be performing these activities as a statutory requirement.

#### **2.14.7 The eight quality management principles of ISO 9001: 2000**

The year 2000 version of ISO 9000 is based on the following eight quality management techniques (SABS ISO 9001, 2000: 4):

- Customer focus: organisations exist because they have customers, and therefore should understand current and future customer needs and every effort should be made to exceed customer needs;
- Leadership: leaders should create and maintain an organisational environment that promotes the full involvement of employees in achieving the organisation's objectives;
- Involvement of people: employee involvement benefits the organisation by taking advantage of every employee;
- Process approach: to maximise efficiency of activities and related resources by managing them as processes;
- Systems approach to management: contributes to the organisation's effectiveness by identifying, understanding and managing interrelated processes as a system;
- Continual improvement: becomes a permanent objective for the organisation's overall performance, and is intended to help the organisation respond to the changing needs of its customers;
- Factual approach to decision making: requires that decisions be based on the analysis of data and information rather than impressions; and
- Mutually beneficial supplier relationships: to enhance the ability of both the organisation and its suppliers to benefit from working together.

Since the education process does not use raw materials to produce goods, not all of the above quality management principles will be applicable to private higher education. The customer focus, leadership, involvement of people, systems approach to management and continual improvement principles will be applicable to private higher and further education. The activities involved under these principles can be carried out in the core business of teaching and learning.

#### **2.14.8 The suitability of ISO9001:2000 quality standard to higher education**

Goetsch and Davis (2002: 317) are of the view that management will adopt ISO 9001: 2000 as a way to make real improvements in the organisation's operations, serve its customers in a more responsible way and, as a result, open new markets. They also conclude that this approach ensures commitment and participation by top management. This approach is required in private education as FET and PHE institutions do not receive state subsidies and are in constant pursuit of attracting potential new learners. In this type of education, serving customers in a responsible way is of great importance and the ISO 9001: 2000 elements provide for this service.

Reid and Sanders (2005: 161) reported that organisations accredited with ISO9001 use compliance to this management system as a marketing tool to show other organisations their adherence to specific international standards. In the same way this could be used as a marketing tool in private higher and further education institutions.

Goetsch and Davis (2002: 208) identify documentation as a foundation in the use of the ISO9001: 2000 standard. The authors are of the view that the organisation should prepare a quality management system manual, procedures, practices and proof as reference documents of the ISO 9000 system. Tricker and Lucas (2001: 133) indicate that the organisation should appoint a quality manager for the implementation and maintenance of the quality management system. The authors are of the view that, in very small organisations, quality management responsibilities might be part of the general manager's duties. This requirement is significant for FET institutions because some have very small administrative and academic structures

thus letting principals or academic managers taking on the quality management responsibility. They also maintain that the preparation and maintenance of these documents will add to the workload of staff. For academic and administration staff in private higher and further education, an increase in workload may not be welcomed. PHE and FET institutions may use an option to employ quality specialists to take on the added responsibilities.

Zhu and Scheuermann (1999: 291) are of the view that the ISO 9000 series are standards used for external quality assurance purposes and designed for internal use within the institution. The authors state that ISO 9000 certification focuses on consistency in the production of a service and does not address the nature of quality, which is customer driven. In view of this shortcoming, they propose that ISO 9000 registration should be implemented with a TQM programme. The ISO 9000 standard will suit private higher and further education institutions because the Council on Higher Education requires these institutions to develop and take ownership of their internal quality management system and will be audited externally by the HEQC or Umalusi Council. (Westhuizen, 2004: 147). The ISO 9000 principles could be used internally and create consistency in the core business of teaching and learning while the TQM elements could address issues relating to satisfying the customer. The suitability of TQM to higher education is discussed in the next section.

### **2.15 The Total Quality Management (TQM) approach**

This section describes the TQM philosophy and its suitability to education. The TQM philosophy involves everyone in an organisation in a continual effort to improve quality and achieve customer satisfaction. The three key philosophies of this approach include a never ending push to improve, which is referred to as *Continuous Improvement*; the second is the *Involvement of Everyone* in the organisation; and the third is a goal of *Customer Satisfaction*, which means meeting or exceeding customer expectations (Stevenson, 2009: 427). The following sections describe the three key philosophies and their applicability to private higher and further education institutions.

### **2.15.1 Continuous improvement**

According to Kanji and Asher (1993), cited in Kanji and Tambi (1999: 134), TQM is a process of continuously satisfying customer requirements at the lowest possible cost by harnessing the capabilities of everyone. The authors are of the view that the principles and core concepts of TQM can be used for quality improvements of organisations, including higher education. Alt (1998: 10) is of the view that in higher education the main areas to apply a quality assurance mechanism are student admission and selection criteria, internal assessment and examination, external examiners, student development and support, programme planning and staff appraisal. Willis and Taylor (1999: 997) state that higher education institutions implementing the continuous improvement principle on areas in teaching and learning enhance their ability to attract and retain learners. In view of these statements, it would be appropriate to apply the continuous improvement principle to these areas of teaching and learning.

### **2.15.2 Involvement of everyone**

Stevenson (2007: 417) explains that successful TQM programmes are built through the dedication and combined efforts of everyone in the organisation. The author maintains that top management must be committed and involved, if they are not, TQM efforts will fail. Finch (2003: 576) states that employees at all levels must be involved in the implementation and improvement processes associated with TQM. The author believes that to support employee involvement, training and development of staff are crucial. He also recommends a reward and recognition system be implemented to recognise staff for their efforts. In private higher and further education, providing training and the involvement of all staff is possible. In view of these statements, it would be appropriate to adopt this principle in private higher and further education institutions.

### **2.15.3 Customer satisfaction**

Kanji and Tambi (1999: 131) state that learners may perform one or all the roles of buyer, user and partners of education. The authors argue that higher education

institutions should identify their customers, focus on their needs, co-ordinate all the educational activities and achieve institutional excellence by creating a long-term customer relationship based on customer value and satisfaction. For private higher and further education institutions to obtain this type of information, they need to conduct a learner needs analysis, design learner satisfaction surveys and create long-term relations with alumni and industry. Harvey, Burows and Green (1992), cited in Kanji and Tambi (1999: 132), believe that stakeholders view quality as a total learner experience such that many different aspects of higher education need to be taken into account. The authors contend that these aspects include what the learners experienced before enrolling for a programme, the institutional ethos, institution based resources and institution based services, apart from classroom experiences. For private higher and further education institutions to establish their learner's experiences, surveys or feedback mechanisms at the various points would have to be implemented.

#### **2.15.4 Elements of TQM**

A total quality culture is built on the following elements (Warnock, 1996: 26):

- Continuous improvement is a philosophy that seeks to improve all factors related to the transformation process;
- Competitive benchmarking involves identifying other organisations that are best at something and emulate them to improve one's operations;
- Employee Empowerment is giving workers the responsibility to make improvements and the authority to implement changes that provides strong motivation for employees;
- Team Approach is the use of teams for problem solving and to achieve group synergy, getting people involved, and promoting a spirit of co-operation;
- Decisions based on facts rather than opinions. Management analyses data as a basis for decision making;
- Knowledge of tools. Employees and managers are trained in the use of quality tools;

- Supplier quality where suppliers must be included in quality assurance and quality improvements so that their processes are capable of delivering quality parts and materials;
- A TQM champion promotes the value and importance of TQM principles throughout the company; and
- Quality at the source refers to the philosophy of making each worker responsible for the quality of his or her work.

The elements provide management with tools to lead the organisation in its daily operations and to maintain it as a viable entity into the future. Cosser (2002:118) is of the view that a viable QMS for private higher and further education institutions has to include TQM elements because it gradually transforms the organisation into a total quality organisation. The author further states that, currently, the quality requirement by the HEQC and Umalusi Council is about an institution conforming to specifications. Bisseker (1999), cited in Cosser (2002: 118), is of the view that the DOE should avoid over-regulation on private higher and further educational institutions. In view of these statements, it would be appropriate to incorporate TQM elements in a QMS designed for PHE and FET institutions. Ramalthoto (1999: 405) states that TQM is about leadership, employee participation, a cultural change towards an organization which is strongly customer focused and strongly committed to continuous improvement in all its processes. The author is of the view that these principles applied in the education sector will improve the quality of its services.

## **2.16 The suitability of total quality management to higher education**

According to McCarthy and Keefe (1999:186), colleges and universities have generally had a superficial awareness of TQM, but actual practice of TQM principles has been rare. Yudof and Busch-Vishniac (1995), cited in McCarthy and Keefe (1999: 187), explain the reason for this is that many academics have argued against the need for involving business techniques on the basis of academic exceptionalism.

TQM'S principle of continuous improvement will be able to fit in higher education due to the number of process improvement opportunities available, such as recruitment

of learners, learner records, curriculum development, examinations and teaching practices. According to Cosser (2002: 118), a viable quality management system for private higher education institutions would be a combination of TQM and ISO9001:2000. The author also states that a model combining certain principles of ISO 9001:2000 and TQM elements can bring about effective results in the provision of education.

According to Stevenson (2002: 472), it would be incorrect to think of TQM as merely a collection of techniques. Rather, TQM reflects a new attitude toward quality. It is about the culture of an organisation. To truly reap the benefits of TQM, the culture of an organisation must change. This is also applicable for ISO 9001:2000 as pointed out earlier in this chapter.

Traditional TQM holds that everyone in an organization is an internal customer for some transactions, and a supplier for other transactions Stevenson (2009: 428). For professional services, such as higher education, an adjustment in terminology is required, and the concept must be transplanted into a multi-dimensional network Marsh (2003: 54). Shearer, (1996: 29) maintains that the term customer is not used in most professional services. Here customers are called clients. The word supplier denotes a vendor. So a more appropriate term to use is service provider, shortened to "provider". In this way, the customer-supplier becomes a client-provider relationship. Kanji and Tambi (1999: 131) state that the customers of higher education are divided into different groups of actors that affect the education process, namely: existing and potential learners; employees; employers; government and industry. Owing to their different characteristics, they exert certain demands that affect the behaviour of the education system. Customers are either internal or external, depending on whether they are located within or outside the organization. From the perspective of Kanji and Tambi (1999: 131), the customers of higher education can be classified into primary and secondary groups on the basis of their locations, i.e. either internal or external, and the frequency of interactions which the institution has with them. The authors are of the view that the dual level customer groups of higher education are the product and the learners are external customers as well as internal customers. Since teaching and learning is the core business of higher education, applying TQM in this area will improve its quality. Learners are

regarded as the customer of higher education. Implementing a quality system like TQM, which is customer focussed, will meet and exceed their expectations.

## **2.17 South African Excellence Model**

### **2.17.1 A background of quality models**

This section introduces the South African Excellence Model (SAEM), describes its features and identifies the areas suitable to private higher and further education institutions. Although they may differ slightly, quality models worldwide are based on fundamental concepts that underpin them. These values and concepts are embedded beliefs and behaviours found in high-performing organisations. They are the foundations for integrating key organizational requirements within a results-oriented framework that creates a basis for action and feedback.

In the higher education sector, these fundamental concepts like visionary leadership, customer driven excellence, people development and involvement, continuous learning, innovation and improvement form the basis of the vision and mission of many higher education institutions. Worldwide, these fundamental concepts are basic requirements that will ensure that not only organizations but also higher education institutions become and remain part of the global village.

### **2.17.2 The establishment of quality models**

Quality models are not a new concept. The first model was established in Japan in the 1950s and was soon followed by other countries. The list below shows the awards for implementing quality models: ([www.saef.co.za](http://www.saef.co.za) 02/06/06).

- 1951 – Deming prize – Japan;
- 1981 – Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award – USA;
- 1988 – Australian Quality Award;
- 1992 – European Foundation Quality Award;
- 1994 – United Kingdom Quality Award; and
- 1997 – South African Excellence Model

### **2.17.3 South African Excellence Model (SAEM)**

#### **2.17.4 Establishment**

The South African Excellence Foundation (SAEF) website ([www.saef.co.za](http://www.saef.co.za) 02/06/06) provides a comprehensive overview of the SAEM.

The SAEM is a framework for assessing the “excellence” of an organisation. The model is based on the concept that an organisation will: “Achieve better results by involving all the people in the organisation in continuous improvement of their processes”.

Self-assessment, using a model or framework, is not a new idea. Similar models have been in use in America, Europe, Japan and many leading organisations, such as Xerox, for a number of years.

The SAEM was developed by the South African Excellence Foundation (SAEF) in 1997, and builds on the experience of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality (MBNQA, USA) and the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM, EU). The SAEM has been adopted throughout the South African Development Community (SADC) countries and is duly recognized by both the MBNQA and EFQM.

#### **Objectives**

The SAEF aims to:

- Maintain and promote the SAEM in support of national economic competitiveness and good governance;
- Train assessors in the use of the model; and
- Manage a national awards process.

The foundation supports organizations throughout South Africa to participate in self-assessment and continuous improvement activities, by applying the SAEM as a diagnostic framework in order to achieve:

- overall competitiveness;

- good governance;
- satisfied customers, employees, suppliers and partners;
- credibility as trading partners;
- business and community approval;
- significant gains in business results and productivity.

### **Vision**

To establish a culture of excellence throughout South Africa thereby enhancing the country's overall economic performance and promoting the well being of all its people.

### **Mission**

- To stimulate and support organisations throughout South Africa to participate in continuous improvement activities leading to excellence in customer satisfaction, employee satisfaction, impact on society, supplier and partnership performance and business results.
- To support all stakeholders of South African organizations in accelerating the process of making excellence a decisive factor in achieving global competitiveness.

### **Rationale**

South Africa's low ranking in the global competitiveness report is a source of national concern (Naidoo and Singh 2005:5). The pursuit of excellence in all spheres of business has become a matter of urgency for any organisation hoping to survive in the increasingly competitive global market. A suitable tool had to be found whereby South African organizations, big and small, could upgrade their business practices and find a meaningful way of benchmarking their performance against world standards. This requires the use of internationally recognized benchmark measures, which focus on sustained improvement, rather than short-term gains.

The SAEM combines the best of the respective models and incorporates a local emphasis in accordance with national priorities. The model provides a non-prescriptive framework for management education, self-assessment and continuous

improvement for all organisations. It is a powerful diagnostic tool which allows organisations to assess their levels of efficiency and effectiveness, identify gaps in their processes and institute significant performance improvements to achieve higher levels of competitiveness.

### **Founders**

In pursuit of this ideal, and after considerable research and consultation throughout South Africa and abroad, a group of far sighted organizations decided to develop an indigenous South African approach. The South African Excellence Foundation (SAEF) was launched during 1997 as a Section 21 (not-for-gain) organisation with the support of local industrial and public sector leaders. The founding organizations are DaimlerChrysler South Africa, Honeywell SA, Ingersoll-Rand SA, CSIR, SABS, SAQI, Armscor, Eskom, Standard Bank, ABSA Bank, the Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council, Technikon SA, SA Society for Quality, Ideas Management and Groman Consulting.

### **Recognition of the SAEM**

The SAEM combines the best of the United States (US) and European Union (EU) Foundations' respective models (which differ in emphasis rather than in content) and incorporates a local emphasis in accordance with national priorities. The US and EU have both recognized the South African Excellence Model, and have committed to mutual co-operation and pledged their continued support for promoting the system in Southern and South Africa.

Locally the Department of Trade and Industry has recognized the South African Excellence Foundation (SAEF) as the custodian of the Model and the SADC Council of Ministers has approved in principle the use of the SAEM as a basis for a SADC Quality Award in the near future.

Good governance is a collective term, covering the achievement of world-class results through sound leadership, focusing on policy and strategy, customers and markets, the organisation's own people, available resources and on appropriate top

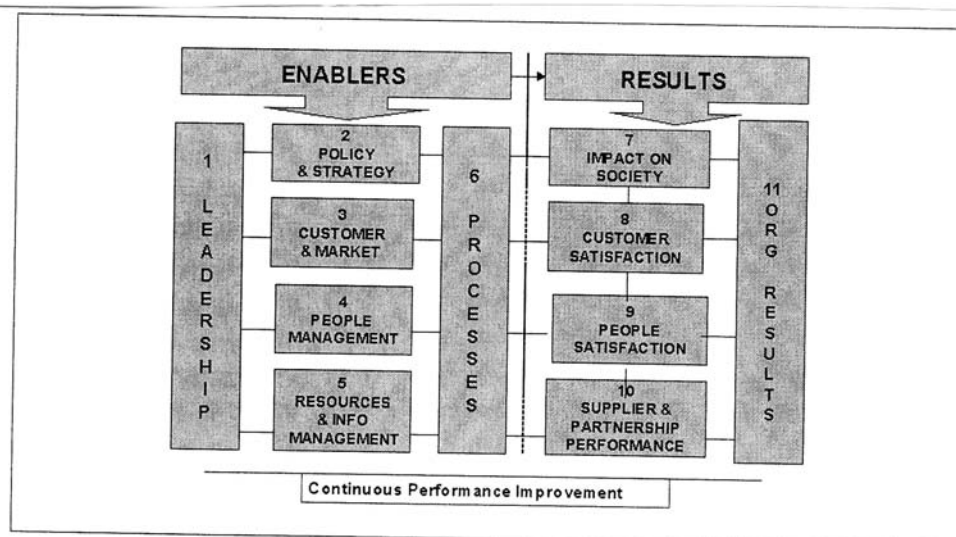
class processes, while taking due cognizance of supplier and partnership relationships and the organisation's impact on the community.

The model provides a non-prescriptive framework for management of education, self-assessment and continuous improvement for all organizations, large and small, public or private, service or manufacturing. It is a powerful diagnostic tool, which allows organisations to assess their levels of efficiency and effectiveness, identify gaps in their processes, and institute significant performance improvements to achieve higher levels of competitiveness.

### 2.17.5 The South African Excellence Model

The SAEM, as depicted in figure 3, is based on the concept that an organization will: "achieve better results by involving all the people in the organization in continuous improvement of their processes". The model comprises 6 enablers and 5 results criteria.

**Figure 2: The South African Excellence Model**



Source: (SAEF, 2002) Self-Assessment Questionnaire and Workbook for Public Service Performance Excellence Level 3

### 2.17.6 The fundamental concepts of the SAEM

The model is based on the following concepts (BESA 1998:7):

- **Results orientation**

Excellence is dependent upon balancing and satisfying the needs of all relevant stakeholders (this includes employees, customers, suppliers and society at large as well as those with a financial interest in the organization).

- **Customer focus**

The customer is the final judge of the product and service quality. Customer loyalty, retention and market share gain are best optimized through a clear focus on the needs of current and potential customers.

- **Leadership and constancy of purpose**

The behaviour of an organisation's leaders creates a clarity and unity of purpose within the organisation and an environment in which the organisation and its people excel.

- **Management by processes and facts**

Organisations perform more effectively when all interrelated activities are understood and systematically managed and decisions concerning current operations and planned improvements are made using reliable information that includes stakeholder perceptions.

- **People development and involvement**

The full potential of an organisation's people (employees) is best released through values and a culture of trust and empowerment, which encourages the involvement of everyone.

- **Continuous learning, innovation and improvement**

Organisational performance is maximized when it is based on the management and sharing of knowledge within a culture of continuous learning, innovation and improvement.

- **Partner development**

An organization works more effectively when it has mutually beneficial relationships, built on trust, sharing of knowledge and integration with its partners.

- **Social responsibility**

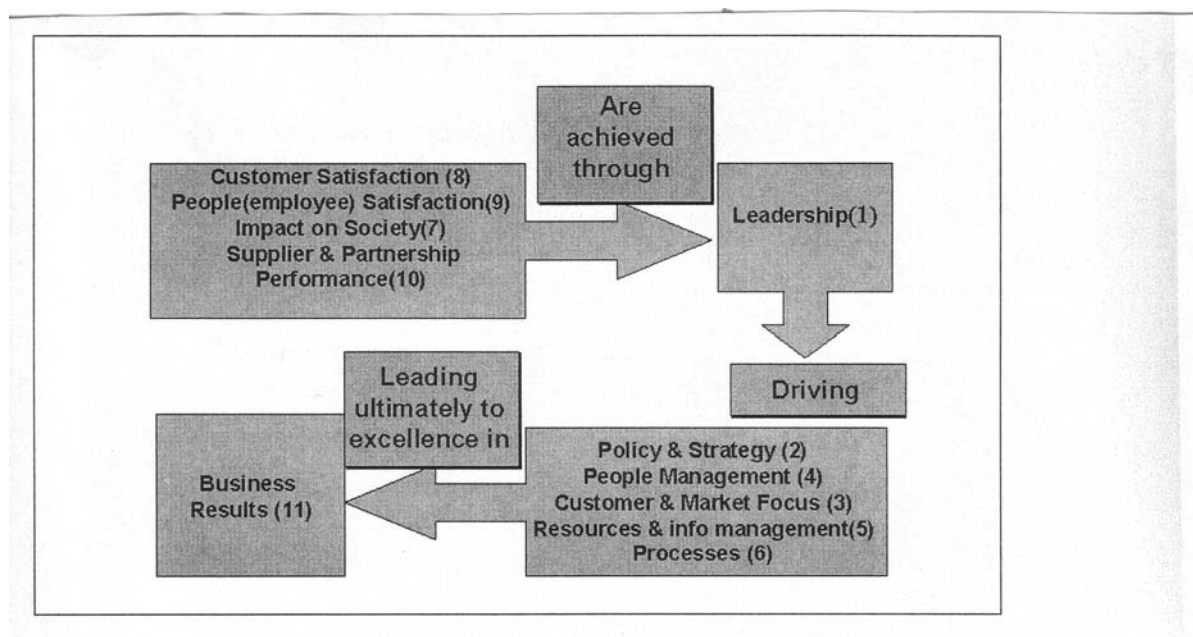
The long-term interest of the organization and its people are best served by adopting an ethical approach and exceeding the expectations and regulations of the community at large pertaining to its social responsibility.

### **2.17.7 SAEM criteria**

The criteria are developed from state-of-the art knowledge of private and public sector organizations that are working to achieve organizational quality and performance excellence. It represents validated, leading-edge practices for achieving performance excellence.

### **Criteria principles**

The SAEM maintains that: “customer satisfaction, people (employee) satisfaction, impact on society, supplier and partnership performance are achieved through leadership, driving policy and strategy, people management, customer and market focus, resources and information management and processes leading ultimately to excellence in business results” (BESA, 1998: 6). This process is depicted in figure 3.

**Figure 3: SAEM criteria principles**

Source: (SAEF, 2002) Self-Assessment Questionnaire and Workbook for Public Service Performance Excellence level 3.

## Principles of the SAEM

The BESA (1998: 8) describe the following eleven principles of the SAEM:

### 1 Leadership

Considers how leaders of all levels inspire a culture of continuous improvement through their behaviour and the example they set. A key element is visible involvement in the setting and supporting of customer-orientated goals, balanced with political targets. Leaders need to show a clear understanding of who their various clients and stakeholders are and their differing requirements. Leaders should demonstrate clear commitment to staff, clients and stakeholders.

### 2 Policy and strategy

The procedure followed by the institution to formulate policies, strategies, vision, values and its mission into plans and actions. Policy and strategy will address internal culture, structure and operations with regard to the priorities, direction and needs of clients, community and politicians.

### **3 Customer and market focus**

The procedure followed by the institution to determine the needs, requirements and expectations of clients and stakeholders. The organisation should collate information on how it enhances relationships and determines satisfaction of clients and stakeholders.

### **4 People management**

The people of the institution include all the staff and others who directly or indirectly serve customers. It is about what an institution does to release the full potential of its people. It considers the development of people, their empowerment to deliver improvements and considers dialogue up, down and across the institution.

### **5 Resources and information management**

The institution should collate information on how it manages and uses resources and information effectively and efficiently.

### **6 Processes**

How processes are identified, designed, managed, evaluated and improved. Critical processes relate to the delivery of key services and the support processes essential to the running of the organization. A key to the identification, evaluation and improvement of processes should be their contribution and effectiveness in relation to the mission of the institution.

### **7 Impact on society**

What an institution achieves in relation to local, national and international society at large. This includes the perception of the institution's approach to:

- quality of life;
- environment and the conservation of global resources;
- institution's own internal measures of effectiveness; and

- its relations with other authorities and bodies which affect and regulate its business.

## **8 Customer satisfaction**

The levels of satisfaction the institution is achieving in relation to the satisfaction of its external clients and stakeholders. What levels of client satisfaction does a higher education institution achieve? For example, what does measurable student feedback show? What image do learners have of the institution?

## **9 People satisfaction**

Demonstrated the performance of the institution in satisfying the needs, requirements and expectations of its people. This should be done by presenting results, trends, targets and comparisons with competitors or “best in class” institutions. Information on the relevance of the measurement to the institution’s people should also be presented.

## **10 Supplier and partnership performance**

The activities carried out by the institution to ensure that suppliers and partners are providing optimum service.

## **11 Organisational results**

Reports on the organization’s achievements in relation to its planned business objectives and in satisfying the needs and expectations of everyone with a financial interest or other stake in the organization.

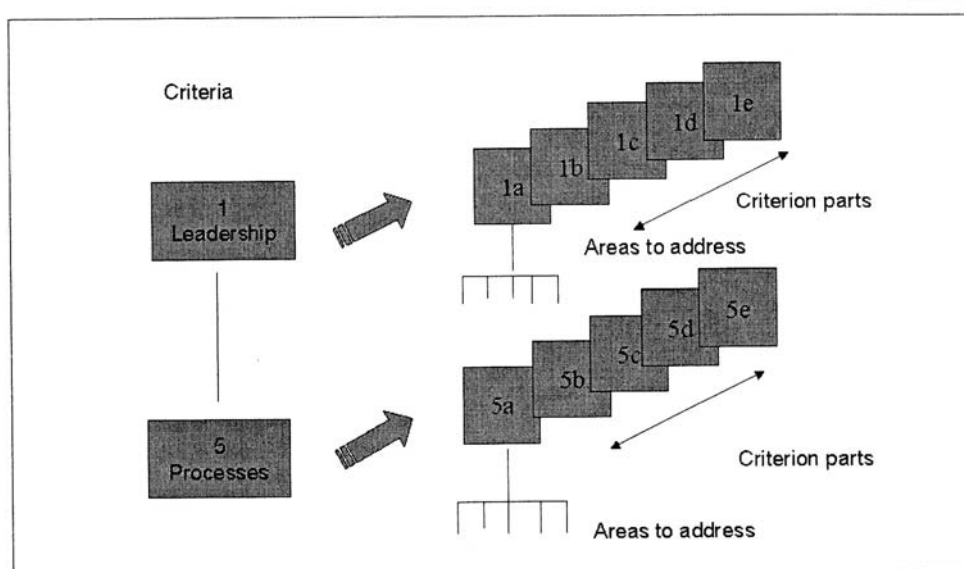
## **Enabler criteria**

The six enablers assess and question whether an organization has the appropriate approaches in place to achieve the targets it has set. The detail of the model provides a framework for rigorous analysis that questions whether, in each area, the organization can demonstrate that chosen approaches and strategies:

- are effective and efficient in delivering results;
- are deployed to their full potential; and
- demonstrate continuous improvement.

Each of the enablers is broken down into criterion parts, with guidance points within these criterion parts to help develop and support knowledge and learning in that particular area. The criterion parts are then broken down into areas to address: The HEFCE Applying Self-Assessment against the EFQM Excellence Model in Further and Higher Education (2003:5) are illustrated in figures 4 and 5, respectively.

**Figure: 4 The enabler criteria**



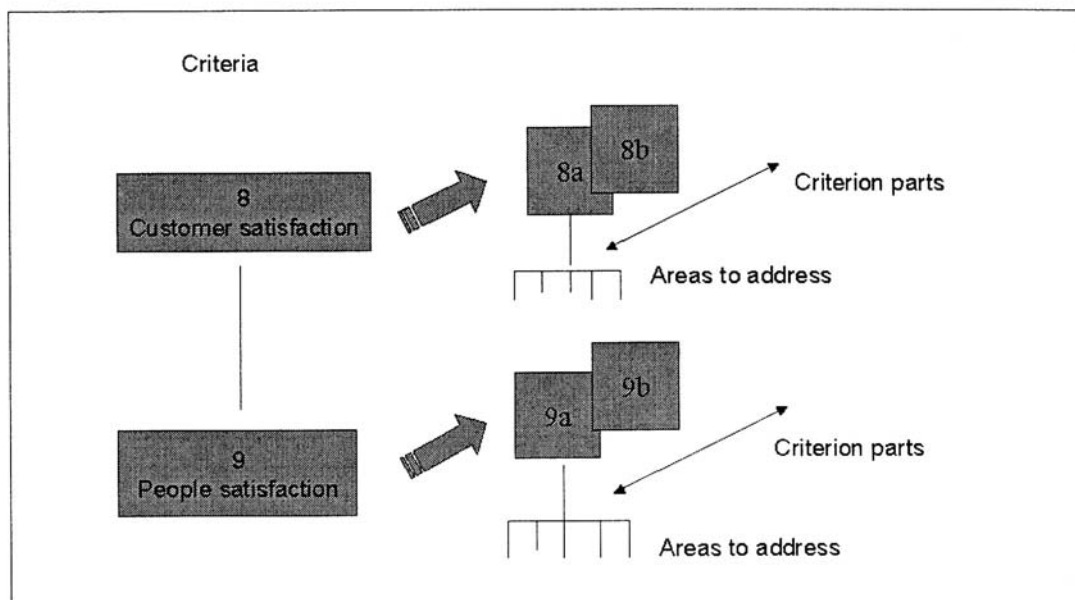
Source: EFQM Excellence Model in Further and Higher Education (2003:5)

### Results criteria

The five results criteria question whether there are comprehensive measures in place that can monitor and track performance and assess whether objectives have been met. The results criteria also question the extent to which benchmarking against the best in class is undertaken and used to enhance learning and improve performance. The criteria challenge to what extent an organization can show that the chosen indicators:

- comprehensively measure what is important to customers and others who receive a service from the organization; and
- demonstrate continuous improvement against target and results.

**Figure: 5 The results criteria**



Source: EFQM Excellence Model in Further and Higher Education (2003:5)

## 2.17.8 Scoring the SAEM

### 2.17.8.1 Enablers

Respondents have to rate the enablers of the organization on a 4 point scale within a context of approach and deployment.

Depending on the extent and clarity of evidence, each question is scored as follows:

**Table 1: How to score the questions of SAEM**

<b>Areas of improvement (1-2)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not started (1) Someone may have some good ideas, but nothing has happened yet.</li> <li>• Some progress (2) You have started doing something in a part of your organization. Evidence exists that some progress reviews are taking place. Improvements are being made in this area.</li> </ul>
<b>Strengths (3-4):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Good progress (3)</b> This is being done well in most, but not all areas of the organization. Progress reviews take place regularly. Organisational performance is much better in this area.</li> <li>• <b>Fully achieved (4)</b> An excellent approach that you are achieving in this area. Although improvement is possible, you are the “<b>role model</b>” for others.</li> </ul>

### Approach

With regard to “Approach”, respondents have to consider actions in relation to the following elements of approach:

- Do we use methods, tools and techniques that are appropriate for our organization?
- Do we do things in a systematic way and prevent things from going wrong?
- Do we regularly review and challenge what we do in each area?
- Do we implement “good ideas” to obtain continuous improvement in all areas of our organization?

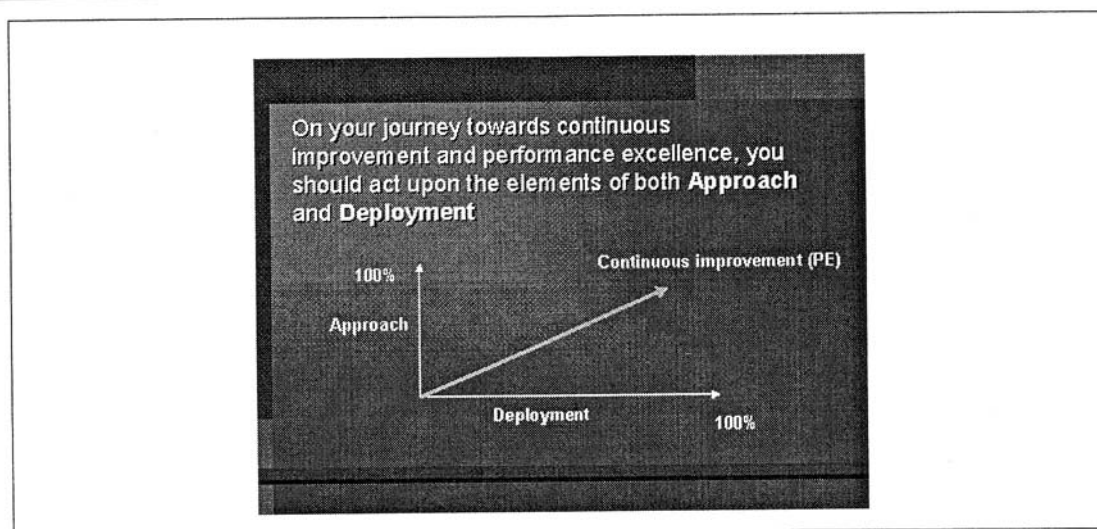
- Do we integrate our approach into the everyday operations of our organization?

## Deployment

With regard to “Deployment”, respondents have to consider how well the organization has implemented the approach element in the organization. Attention must be given to how it has been applied on the following levels:

- Vertically, throughout all the relevant levels in the organization;
- Horizontally, throughout all the relevant levels in the organization;
- To all the relevant processes that are used in the organization; and
- To all the relevant products and services.

**Figure: 6 Scoring enablers**



Source: (SAEF, 2000) Self-Assessment Questionnaire and Workbook for Public Service Performance Excellence level 3.

### 2.17.8.2 Results

Respondents have to rate the results of the organization on a four-point scale within a context of scope and excellence.

Depending on the extent and clarity of evidence on the organisation's "achievements", each question is scored as follows:

**Table 2: How to score-achievements of SAEM**

<p><b>Areas of improvement (1-2)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Not started (1)</b> Nothing is happening. You have no information about this at all.</li> <li>• <b>Some progress (2)</b> You have started collecting data, but do not have enough information to establish a trend. If you do have sufficient information, your results are negative at this stage.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strengths (3-4)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Good progress (3)</b> Your results are showing a positive trend or good continuous performance over a period of 12 to 24 months.</li> <li>• <b>Fully achieved (4)</b> Your results are showing an excellent, continuous positive trend over a 24 to 48 month period. Although improvement is possible in this area, you are the "role model" for others.</li> </ul>

### Scope

The scope (width and depth) of the results in each criteria, should include:

- All the relevant areas of your organization;
- A full range of results in each area; and
- An understanding why each result is important in your organization.

### Excellence

When determining the "excellence" of results, the following elements should be considered:

- Do our results show positive trends, or good continuous performance in each area?
- Do we meet our improvement targets?
- Do we compare our achievements with other organizations?
- If we have any negative trends, do we know why, and take corrective actions?
- Can we maintain and further improve good performance in all areas?
- Do we evaluate how our approach has caused the results?

When you look at how excellent your results are, remember:

- You must compare the institution's actual results with its own targets (and similar institutions if possible);
- You are looking for positive trends, or good, continuous performance improvement in each area;
- If there are any negative trends, you must know why, and take corrective action; and
- Your institution must be able to maintain good performance in any area.
- That you need to evaluate how your approach has caused the results.

### **2.17.9 SAEM awards**

Based on assumptions that initially South African organizations would score low (e.g. less than 300 points), it was decided to introduce three levels to which organizations could apply for the SAEM:

- Level 1: Awards;
- Level 2: Prizes; and
- Level 3: Certificates.

Each year, awards, prizes and certificates are awarded in the following categories:

- Business Sector (including Defence Industry): organizations or operational units thereof, run as independent business units such as

factories, assembly plants, sales and marketing organizations, research units, NGOs or not-for-gain organizations;

- Public Sector: Organisations that are operating at Central and Provincial levels;
- Local Government Sector: Units operating at Local Government level; and
- SME Sector: Companies that are whole or part organizations employing less than 250 people. Winners share their best practices and lessons learned, without giving away proprietary information, and serve as role models which help to create a culture of excellence to the ultimate benefit of the national economy and welfare.

All these sectors can apply for either a level 1 (1 000 points), level 2 (5 000) points or a level 3, entry level (250 points). The scoring points section of the SAEM will not suit PHE and FET institutions as they are not in competition with each other or with private businesses. The SAEM, without the scoring, serves as an internal management system for quality improvement of operations. The BESA (1998: 7) describes the model as not a prescription, it does not tell an organisation what to do. The BESA handbook further states that an organisation can use the eleven principles to reflect on its operations to consider what they do, how well they do it and how they are progressing towards improving what they do. Relating this to education, teaching and learning would be the area under consideration. This implies that the SAEM, with modifications, will suit PHE and FET institutions.

## **2.18 Conclusion**

Private higher and further education institutions played a significant role in South Africa's education arena for many years prior to 1997 by providing knowledge and skills for thousands of people. The restructuring of the entire higher education system gave rise to private higher and further education sectors being regulated. The CHE report (2003), cited by Naidoo and Singh (2005: 29), conclude that there is an absence of internal quality assurance mechanisms at PHE and FET institutions. The authors also conclude that private providers are not playing the role of providing

more, better and different education as claimed by Kruss (2004). The conclusions of this report by the CHE introduced the auditing of PHE by the HEQC and FET institutions by Umalusi Council. The audit criteria are external requirements with which institutions need to comply. These criteria indicated that there is a need for internal quality mechanisms. The review of the literature indicated a need for an investigation into the needs and deficiencies of PHE and FET institutions to construct an internal QMS. The applicability of the TQM philosophy and ISO 9001: 2000 standard to higher education also enhanced the suitability of the SAEM to private higher and further institutions. The next chapter describes the design of the research.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODODOLOGY: RESEARCH DESIGN**

### **3. METHODOLOGY: RESEARCH DESIGN**

This chapter will illustrate the design of this research. It will also demonstrate how related literature on business quality tools and the South African Excellence Model (SAEM) influenced the design of the proposed quality model.

#### **3.1 Methodology**

This section will discuss the research methods, terminology and techniques used in the study.

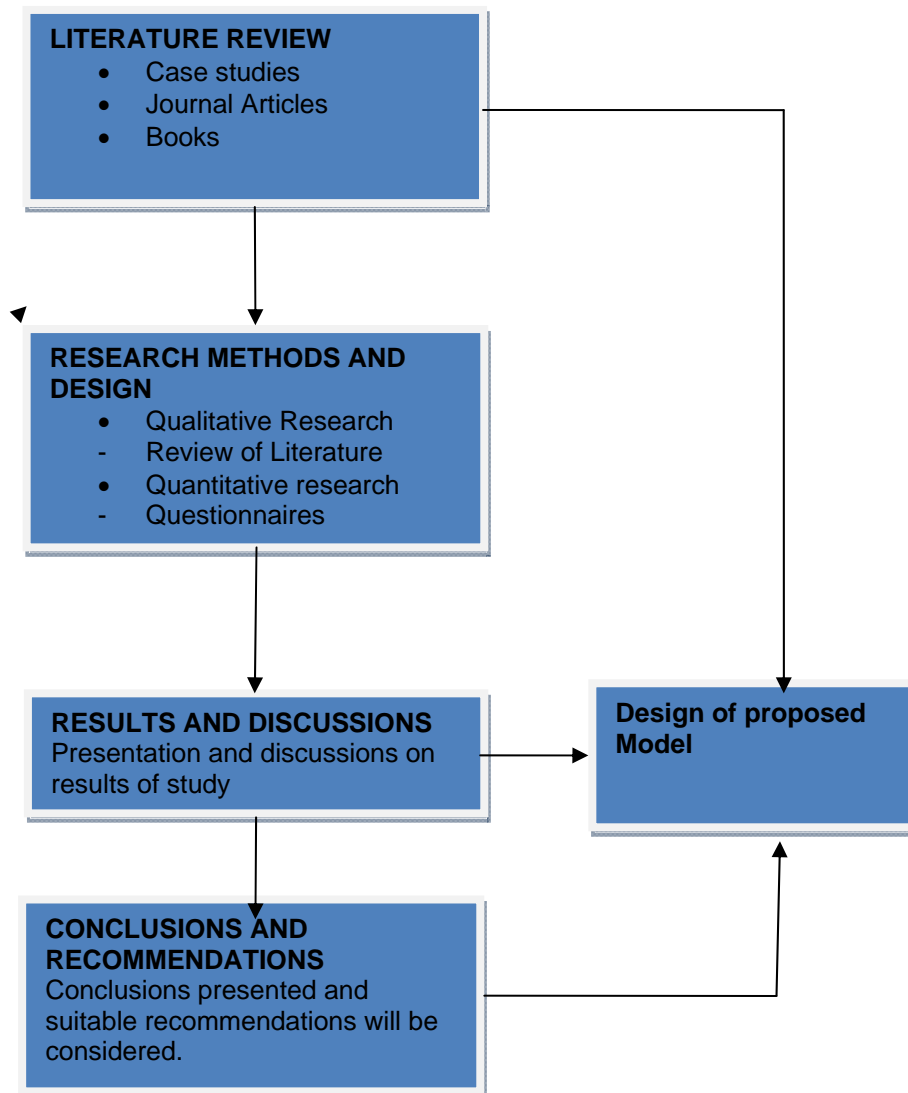
##### **3.1.1 Research design**

According to Welman and Kruger (1999:46), research design is made up of a logical flow of activities to obtain research participants, to collect information from them and to make conclusions about a research problem. Burgess (2001:2) describes research methodology as a process in which the researcher obtains participants and collects information from them. The author describes research design as what the researcher is going to do with the participants, with a view to reaching conclusions about the research problem. The participants identified in this research were the private higher and further education institutions at the Central Business District of Durban. Academic managers or principals of these institutions were the target respondents in the research. A research questionnaire was designed to collect information. The study is important as it aims to bridge the gaps identified in the literature study, to provide meaningful guidelines to identify problems and a more clear understanding of the current operations of private higher and further education institutions. Conclusions will be presented and suitable recommendations will be considered.

### 3.1.2 Flow diagram of the research design

The research design for the study is outlined in figure 7:

**Figure 7: Flow diagram for design of research**



### **3.1.3 Qualitative and quantitative methodologies**

There are two types of research methods mentioned by Silverman (2000:1), namely, qualitative and quantitative. The type of method selected depends on the nature of information the researcher wishes to seek for the project. According to Mertens (1998:3), the quantitative method of research measures and quantifies variables, and qualitative method of research captures an overall picture by the use of words.

Silverman (2000:1) describes qualitative research methods as investigating the history of the topic and the daily behaviour of the subjects related to the research project. Neuman (1997:7) describes quantitative methods of research as data expressed in numbers and qualitative research as data expressed in words. He regards data as empirical information gathered from a systematic research study. Mouton (1996:38) mentions that both qualitative and quantitative methods are combined when probability sampling techniques are used during the analysis of qualitative data. Trochim (2006: 30) is of the view that combining qualitative and quantitative research will be more efficient for collecting data. The questionnaire used in this research contains both quantitative and qualitative type questions. The questionnaire contains open ended, filter and contingency type questions which would result in qualitative and quantitative responses. Thus, a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods will be used in the analysis of data.

### **3.1.4 Data collection**

#### **3.1.4.1 Population and sampling**

Bless (2006: 87) mentions that a population, also referred to as a target population, is the set of elements that the research study focuses on. It is essential to identify the target population. For the purpose of this study, the target population identified was the private higher and further education institutions at the Central Business District of Durban. This sector of education comprised of colleges or institutions offering either, FET, HET or both qualifications. A total of thirty one registered private higher and further education institutions existed at the Central Business District of Durban as per the list compiled by the DOE. According to Goddard and Melville (1996:29) a

sample is studied if it is not practical or possible to study the entire population. Since, the population in this study was a practical number of institutions, a sample was not drawn. This list made up the population of the study. All institutions in the population were investigated.

### **3.1.5 Review of literature**

It is important for a researcher to be aware of the background of the field being researched so that the research project is carefully planned. The literature review acknowledges the work of other researchers and helps to justify the need to research a certain topic. It also prevents the duplication of research projects, thus saving time and resources. In view of the above statements, a review of the related literature was useful:

- To identify gaps in the operations of private higher and further education institutions and justified the use of a research questionnaire in the study;
- In identifying significant areas in the Umalusi Councils and HEQC's audit criteria that need to be addressed in the design of the model; and
- In integrating the principles of the two quality tools i.e. TQM and ISO9001:2000 and the SAEM into the proposed model.

### **3.1.6 The need for the questionnaire based on literature reviewed**

The initial stage of the study comprised an investigation into the role of quality in higher education, more especially private and further higher education institutions. The information was acquired by analyzing the relevant policy documents on quality management in higher education issued by the various statutory bodies. A detailed literature search was carried out on the statutory bodies guiding private higher education and business improvement tools that have improved quality in business. From the literature review, it is evident that statutory bodies created new policies to regulate private higher education in South Africa.

These policies impacted on private higher and further education as they needed to comply with these requirements to stay in business. Fehnel, Perold and Yeomans

(2000), cited by Kotecha (2002: 132), state that parts of the public system is deficient in terms of quality and it would not be fair for the same problems to proliferate in the private sector. In view of this statement, it is evident that quality systems needed to be in place to avoid problems and boost public confidence in the private sector. Quality became a priority in the regulation of private higher education. For institutions to comply with the quality requirements of the HEQC and Umalusi Council they needed internal quality assurance mechanisms. These mechanisms would ensure good quality practices as well as increase public confidence. The problem faced by FET and PHEI's, as expressed by Naidoo and Singh (2005: 29) is that these institutions had no form of internal quality mechanisms in place. A self-administered questionnaire was designed for the purpose of filling the gap discovered during the literature review.

Academic managers or principals, familiar with the details of their institutions' programme offerings and activities, were required to provide feedback. However, in the absence of the academic manager or principal, the questionnaire was administered by the institution. The entire population was selected, (at the time the study was conducted) the study focused only on private higher and further education institutions in the Central Business District of Durban. According to Fehnel (2002: 238), the policy changes made in 2000 led to major changes in private higher education. He reports that the, number of private providers were drastically reduced. He describes this reduction as a positive since it assisted the education ministry to regulate and control a smaller number of private institutions.

### **3.1.7 The integration of HEQC and Umalusi Council's audit criteria and business quality tools into the design of the model**

The following contributed to the design of the model:

- The literature reviewed on the HEQC and Umalusi Council's audit criteria.
- The literature reviewed on business quality tools.
- The responses received from the research questionnaire.

This section describes how the criteria of the HEQC and Umalusi Council contributed to the design of the model. Both the HEQC's and the Umalusi Council's audit criteria were examined in detail in Chapter Two. From the literature review, it is evident that both statutory bodies based their audit criteria of institutions on the underlying principles of business quality tools. The HEQC (2004b:9) report clearly indicates that institutions should seek to establish and sustain effective mechanisms that facilitate programme quality and provide adequate information for self evaluation, external evaluations and public reporting. The Umalusi Council's discussion document indicates that it supports the CHE of institutions establishing effective mechanisms that will facilitate programme quality (CHE, 2007:15). In view of these statements, it is evident that private providers need mechanisms in place to offer quality programmes and to prepare them for external audits. The literature review indicates that business quality tools such as TQM and ISO 9001:2000 can be used in higher education. TQM and ISO9001:2000 business quality tools are integrated in the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Model used by higher education institutions in Europe (Pupius and Brusoni, 2000: 7).

The authors also state that this model will enable an educational institution to achieve excellence in the core teaching, learning, assessment process and associated support processes (Pupius and Brusoni, 2000: 10). In view of these statements, it is evident that business quality tools integrated in a model will improve quality in an educational institution. The literature review on the HEQC and Umalusi Council's audit criteria indicates that the core areas for evaluation are teaching and learning, assessment and support processes. Business quality tools are the mechanisms required to manage and maintain a quality system and meet the audit criteria. Therefore, it would be appropriate to integrate business quality tools in the model. According to Ferreira (2003: 87), the SAEM was developed by the South African Excellence Foundation in 1997 and builds on the experience of the Malcolm Baldrige Quality of the United States (MBNQA, USA of America and the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM,EU). Consequently, it would be appropriate to derive a quality model for private higher and further education from the SAEM because it was developed from the EFQM and the MBNQA which incorporate TQM and ISO9001:2000 business quality tools in their design.

### **3.1.8 Primary and secondary sources of information**

The investigations conducted in the study represented primary and secondary sources of information. According to Welman and Kruger (1999: 36), primary sources of information are more reliable because the responses reflect the views of the respondents directly. They are of the view that, since events are not directly observed in secondary sources of information, the risk of the researcher's personal bias is possible (Welman and Kruger, 1999: 36). The both types of information were used in the study. The primary source of information consisted of surveys using a questionnaire. The secondary sources of information used were in the form of books, newspapers, journal articles, periodicals, internet data-bases, reports and legislation. Both sources were used to provide a background of PHEIs in South Africa, examine the audit criteria of the HEQC and Umalusi Council, examine the nature of business quality tools and the examination of the South African Excellence Model (SAEM).

### **3.1.9 Developing the questionnaire**

White (2000:55) is of the view that design begins with an understanding of the capabilities of the questionnaire and how it can help the researcher. In this study the purpose of the questionnaire is to find the needs and deficiencies of FET and PHEIs. The questionnaire was developed by reviewing relevant literature, appraisals by academic researchers, and by pre-testing the questionnaire. The structure of the questionnaire comprised twenty-seven questions (Annexure 2), divided into the following three sections:

Section A: Teaching and learning (11 questions);

Section B: Programme design, review and assessment (13 questions); and

Section C: Research and community engagement (3 questions).

Neuman (1997:240) mentions that questionnaires can be designed using open-ended or closed-ended types of questions and the choice of a technique depends on the researcher and the information required for the project. A questionnaire was

designed using closed-ended and open-ended questions. The closed-ended questioning type was used because it presented questions which were quick and easy to answer. The open-ended questions were used so that respondents had an opportunity to provide answers in their own words. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2001:31) well defined goals are the best way to assure a good questionnaire design. The authors further state that when the objectives of a study can be expressed in a few, clear and concise sentences, the design of the questionnaire becomes considerably easier. The structured questionnaire in this study was designed with the research objectives in mind, to appear simple, unambiguous and to facilitate ease of completion. The survey of literature in chapter two was used as a basis to design the questions. The questionnaire was hand delivered to academic managers or principals to isolate problems with regard to accuracy of information. Certain useful comments, obtained during the pilot study on the open-ended questions, enhanced the content of the questionnaire. In the main study the respondents completed the questionnaire on their own. However, in most cases the researcher called personally on respondents to clarify problems that they have encountered in the completion of the questionnaire.

#### **3.1.9.1 Determine the questions needed for the study**

Maree (2007:163) states that in addition to open ended and closed-ended questions, filter and contingency questions, ranking questions and scales may be used to explore how respondents rank certain issues in term of their importance. Neuman (1997:240) compiled the following advantages of using open ended questions:

- they permit an unlimited number of possible answers, respondents can answer in detail and clarify responses;
- they reveal a respondent's logic and frame of reference; and
- they offer information in areas that may not have been anticipated, they permit creativity and self expression.

Filter questions require "Yes " or "No" type responses and contingency questions require the respondent to substantiate their choice in the filter question. In

considering Maree's and Neuman's views, the questionnaire in this study was designed to include open ended, filter and contingency type questions, to clarify attributes pertaining to quality practices at FET and PHEIs.

### **3.1.9.2 Questionnaire Distribution and Collection**

The covering letter (Annexure 1) served to inform the respondents on the nature and purpose of the research and to encourage them to respond. Responses were encouraged through the following means:

- By assuring respondents of absolute confidentiality;
- By the use of institution's letterhead to evoke a sense of identity with the study;
- By informing respondents that the researcher will call on them personally to clarify any problems that they may encounter;
- By informing respondents that they are free to discuss the project telephonically with the researcher; and

Questionnaires were distributed to all institutions in the population. Twenty one respondents returned the questionnaire, which constituted a response rate of sixty eight per cent. This response rate could be attributed to the following:

- The private higher education sector is an industry where very little research has been conducted in the past; and
- Academic managers or principals are wary when it comes to divulging information on their business practices which they feel may cause competitive threats.

The analysis of closed type questions lends itself to statistical analysis. Since the majority of questions were open-ended, the data obtained from the questionnaire was analysed by the researcher.

### 3.2 Development of the model

Stevenson (2007: 14) describes models as an abstraction of reality. Thus, models can be classified as physical, schematic or mathematical. He further explains the three types of models:

- Physical: these models look like the real item. An example of a physical model is a miniature aeroplane, miniature ship to name a few;
- Schematic: these models have less resemblance to the real item, but have some visual resemblance to the real item. Examples of such models are pictures, charts and graphs; and
- Mathematical: these models do not resemble the real item. Numbers, formulas and symbols are examples of mathematical models.

Models provide knowledge of a specific sector to highlight important features of a system. Models are developed to establish an answer in a field of study where the answer is unknown. Stevenson (2007: 15) states that models provide a systematic approach to problem solving because it increases the understanding of a problem and serves as a consistent tool for evaluation. Therefore, it would be appropriate to use a model in private higher and further education as an evaluation tool and assist in solving quality issues. The model will also serve as a tool for continual improvement as there is constant change in education.

Cosser (2003:116) mentions that although the private higher and further education sector is regulated and institutions may be compliant to statutory requirements, this does not assure meaningful quality education. He, therefore, states that institutions need to show proof that a quality management system (QMS) is in place (Cosser, 2003:114). According to Kanji (1998), cited in Kanji, Malek, Tambi and Wallace (1999: 359), ISO9000 could be integrated with TQM for the development of a quality management system (QMS). Kanji et al. (1999:359) are of the view that TQM models can be applied uniformly to all organisations to achieve continuous improvement in educational institutions. Higher and further education is constantly changing from regulation to customer needs. It is, therefore, appropriate to include continuous

improvement in quality management systems. Continuous improvement is a significant element of both quality tools i.e., TQM and ISO9000. The need for continuous improvement justifies the use of these two quality tools in developing a quality model for private higher and further education institutions derived from the SAEM.

Oakland and Rooney (1996) cited in Kanji et al. (1999:359), are in favour of the use of ISO9000 models in education and express that they have not seen it fail in higher education. From the literature review in chapter two of the HEQC and Umalusi Council's audit criterion, it is evident that the aim of both criteria is to achieve a continuous improvement in the quality of education provided by higher and further education institutions. Therefore it would be appropriate to integrate TQM, a quality philosophy and ISO9001:2000, a quality standard, in the design of a model. The quality model developed in the study will be founded on the SAEM and will integrate three areas covered in the study:

- the two business quality tools, TQM and ISO9000;
- the audit criterion of the statutory bodies; and
- the needs of private higher and further education institutions obtained by the research questionnaire.

The result would be an all encompassing model that could adequately serve the needs of private higher and further education institutions.

### **3.3 Conclusion**

The methodology for the design and use of the questionnaire followed in the study took into consideration the areas covered in the audit criteria of the HEQC and Umalusi Council. The areas in the audit criteria are the common areas on which respondents were questioned. The questionnaire highlighted the needs and deficiencies of private higher and further education institutions.

The literature reviewed in chapter two on quality tools revealed that TQM and ISO9000 are the cornerstones of quality management systems applied in education.

Thus, the audit criterion used as an evaluation tool by the HEQC and Umalusi Council includes TQM and ISO9000 principles. It was therefore necessary to develop a quality model derived from a model (SAEM) that incorporates these quality tools.

The methodology for the design of the model followed in the study took into consideration the areas of statutory requirements, business quality tools and the needs or deficiencies of PHEI's and FETI's from the results of the empirical study. According to literature in chapter two, the SAEM combines the best practices of the MBNQA from the United States, European Union Foundations and incorporates a local emphasis, in accordance with national priorities, which makes it appropriate to derive a quality model from it for South African private higher and further education institutions. This would result in a comprehensive quality model being designed. The analysis of results is presented in the next chapter. The detail design of the model is presented in chapter five.

**CHAPTER FOUR**  
**EVALUATION OF RESULTS**

## 4. EVALUATION OF RESULTS

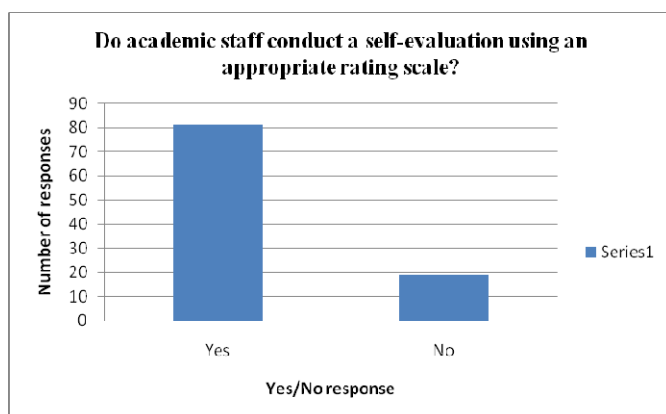
In this chapter, the research results are presented and discussed. A detailed analysis of each section of the questionnaire is accompanied by numerical tabulations. The questionnaire was distributed to thirty one FET and PHE institutions located in the Durban area. These institutions made up the population of the study. Twenty one institutions responded to the questionnaire which equated to a 68% response rate. Academic managers or principals of FET and PHE institutions were the target respondents.

### Section A: Teaching and Learning

#### 4.1 Question one: Academic staff conducting self evaluations

The questions in Section A: Teaching and Learning were included to determine the practices and problems encountered in the area of teaching and learning. Since teaching and learning is the core business of educational institutions, the quality practices within this sector will determine customer satisfaction levels and the success of the entire organization. To determine customer satisfaction levels in education, evaluation of the service needs to be carried out. Question one was designed to determine the respondents' observation on the presence of such practices. The responses to question one are represented in figure 8.

**Figure 8: Academic staff conducting self evaluations**

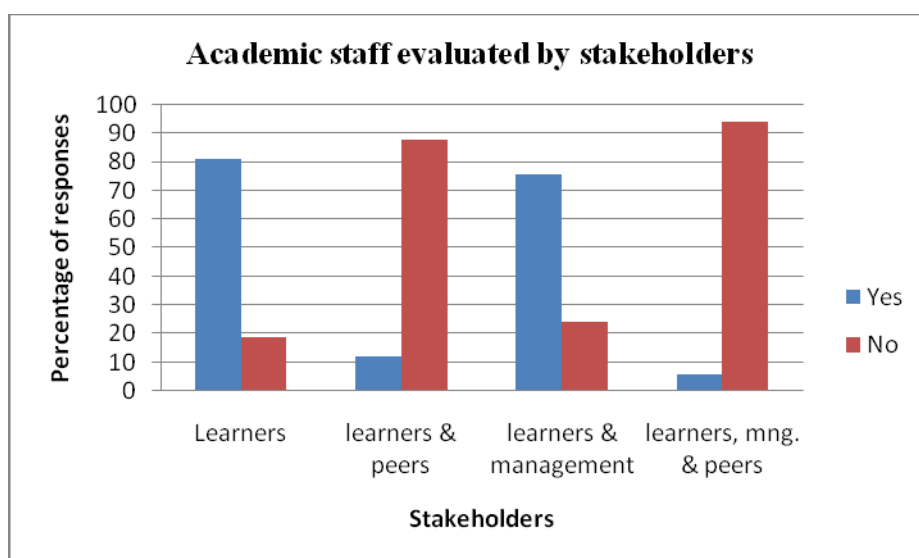


It is evident from the figure 8 that 81% of the institutions in the study conduct some form of self evaluations, while 19% indicated that they do not conduct self evaluations. Although the majority of the institutions conduct self evaluations, the HEQC's and Umalusi Council's audit criteria reviewed in the literature in chapter two, reveal that all institutions should conduct self evaluations as a quality practice.

#### 4.2 Question two: Academic staff evaluated by stakeholders

This question was included to determine the type of evaluations that are carried out. The responses to question two are represented in figure 9.

**Figure 9: Academic staff evaluated by stakeholders**



It is apparent from the figure above that the percentage of institutions conducting evaluations by learners is 81%, 12% by learners and peers, 76% by learners and management and 6% by learners, management and peers. None of the institutions use any other stakeholder to evaluate academic staff. The responses indicate that self evaluation practices are fragmented with a majority of evaluations carried out by learners and management. Although learners and management are major stakeholders in higher and further education, other stakeholders' evaluations will contribute to the improvement of the quality of education.

### **4.3 Question three: Intervals at which evaluations were carried out**

Question three was designed to determine the time intervals at which evaluations were carried out. Eighty one percent of the respondents answered question three. One hundred percent of these respondents indicated that their evaluations are conducted only once a year. According to HEQC (a) (2004:13), internal and external reviews should be carried out on a regular basis and the review findings must be disseminated appropriately.

### **4.4 Question four: Nature of follow-up to evaluations**

Question four was an open-ended question to determine what institutions do after evaluations are conducted. This is an important part of the continuous improvement cycle, which the HEQC, Umalusi Council and the literature review have presented as a cornerstone of TQM and ISO9001: 2000 quality systems. Eighty one percent of the respondents answered question four and 19% did not comment. This finding may suggest that the respondents who did not comment were unaware of such practices or did not find the need for self evaluation practices.

The responses in respect of corrective actions taken are as follows:

- Six respondents reported that individual academic staff are addressed if the results of the evaluation requires actions in the delivery of lectures;
- Two institutions reported that a programme for corrective action is set by the principal;
- One respondent reported that meetings are held by management to discuss the improvement of facilities for learners;
- Ten institutions reported that corrective actions are taken immediately after the results of an evaluation are published; and
- Six institutions responded with a common view that, in some instances, corrective actions take time for actual implementation due to financial constraints.

Improvements and corrective actions are carried out as a follow-up to evaluations. However, the respondents did not mention any structured programme that was followed to create any form of quality improvement cycle.

#### **4.5 Question five: Problems experienced during evaluations**

Question five was designed to gather information on the problems experienced in the process of self evaluation. 81% of the respondents answered question five. The common problems encountered at the institutions surveyed were as follows:

- Twelve respondents reported that if the follow-up in response to the results of an evaluation require the outlay of capital expenditure, and finding solutions take time due to financial constraints;
- Five institutions indicated that the entire self evaluation process is time consuming;
- Five respondents mentioned that all learners are not present to respond to the evaluation questionnaire;
- Ten respondents stated that academic staff experience difficulties in conducting evaluations during the academic programme;
- Two institutions indicated that evaluations create excessive administrative work; and
- Two respondents stated that evaluations utilises too much of the institution's resources.

From the responses received, it may be noted that time and cost factors are the two major challenges facing institutions.

#### **4.6 Question six: The existence of a library resource centre**

A library resource centre is the most significant support facility to any academic programme and more especially research based studies. Question six was designed to determine the existence of a library facility. One hundred percent of the respondents answered question six. The responses show that 100% of institutions have resource centres on campus.

#### **4.7 Question seven: Integrating library resources into academic programmes**

Integrating the library resource centre into the academic programme enhances classroom teaching and provides an opportunity for learners to broaden their knowledge independently. Question seven sought the methods used by private higher and further education institutions in integrating the use of the library resource centre into the academic programme. One hundred percent of the respondents answered question seven.

The observations made by respondents are as follows:

- Thirteen respondents mentioned that learners use the library for information to complete/answer assignments, projects and research;
- Three respondents reported that the library is used by learners to prepare in advance for a lecture;
- Five institutions indicated that the library is used for extra reading in preparation for examinations; and
- Four respondents stated that learners consult books and periodicals that are quoted at lectures and recommended in learner guides.

The responses above indicate that there are limited methods of integrating the library into the academic programme. This could point to inadequate utilisation of the library resource centre, which, in turn, may affect the updating of existing materials with the latest editions.

#### **4.8 Question eight: Type of support materials used**

Classroom delivery of lectures only is insufficient for learners to gain a thorough knowledge of a subject. Other support material is required to enhance learning (Council on Higher Education, 2004: 13). Question eight was designed to determine the type of support materials used at private higher and further education institutions. Seventy one percent of the respondents answered question eight.

The following responses were received:

- Nine respondents indicated that their libraries contain software-user manuals;
- Fourteen respondents stated that their libraries contain magazines, journals and video tapes; and
- Five institutions mentioned that their library have compact discs (CD's) and digital video displays (DVD's) on loan to learners.

The above results mean that 71% of the respondents are equipped adequately and 29% of the respondents do not have audio visual materials to support the academic programme. Learners at the latter institutions could be deprived of the use of audio visual materials during their studies.

#### **4.9 Question nine: Problems encountered in connection with the library resource centre**

The library resource centre plays a significant role in teaching and learning. Question nine was designed to establish the respondents' observation of problems encountered in the process of offering an efficient service. 100% of the respondents answered question nine. The following problems were encountered:

- Eight respondents stated that extensive use of CD's, DVD's and videos, resulted in damage to such items/facilities and the replacement costs are high;
- Seven institutions mentioned that learners borrowed books and kept them well past the due dates;
- Nine institutions reported that they do not have a computer-based control on the circulation of library materials. All types of loans are recorded manually; and
- Five respondents indicated that the prices of books are high and consume a major part of the budget.

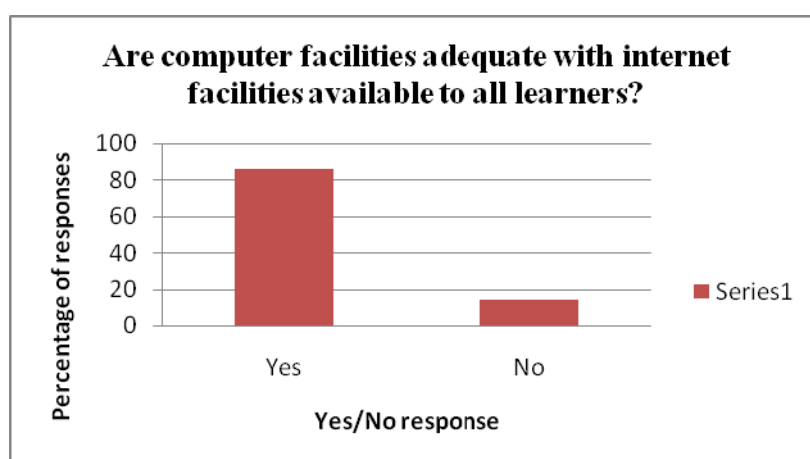
Thirty eight percent of the respondents mentioned that the extensive use of library materials by learners caused damage to items. This would impact negatively on

future learners as private education institutions are not subsidised by the state and will find replacement costs unaffordable.

#### 4.10 Question ten: Whether adequate internet facilities are available

Internet facilities are becoming increasingly important as a source of information. Question ten was designed to determine the respondents' observations on the availability of internet facilities for learners. The responses to question ten are represented in figure 10 below:

**Figure 10: Availability of internet facilities for learners**



The results above reveal that 86% of respondents do have adequate internet facilities available to all learners, while 14% of the respondents responded negatively to the question. The responses reveal that learners registered in 14% of the institutions may be disadvantaged as far as the use of internet facilities is concerned.

#### 4.11 Question eleven: Problems experienced in gaining accreditation

According to Di Nauta, Omar, Schade and Scheele (2004: 5), an academic programme or an institution can gain accreditation, and the authors sums up the term accreditation by stating that it provides a licence to operate. The HEQC and Umalusi Council use the accreditation process of academic programmes in place as a quality assurance mechanism. Both private higher and further education

institutions need to comply with this requirement. Question eleven was designed to obtain the respondents' observations on the problems experienced in the process of gaining accreditation.

The responses received were as follows:

- Twelve respondents reported that the accreditation application process is time consuming;
- Eight institutions indicated that there are two processes to be followed, viz; registration from Department of Education and accreditation from Umalusi Council/HEQC, both requiring the submission of detailed documentation;
- Four respondents stated that high costs are incurred by the institution during site visits;
- Nine respondents mentioned that audited financial statements required by the HEQC, are time consuming and expensive; and
- Four institutions indicated that, due to the delays in the accreditation process, learners are reluctant to register at the institution.

The responses reveal that private higher and further education institutions meet statutory requirements with time and cost factors as significant challenges.

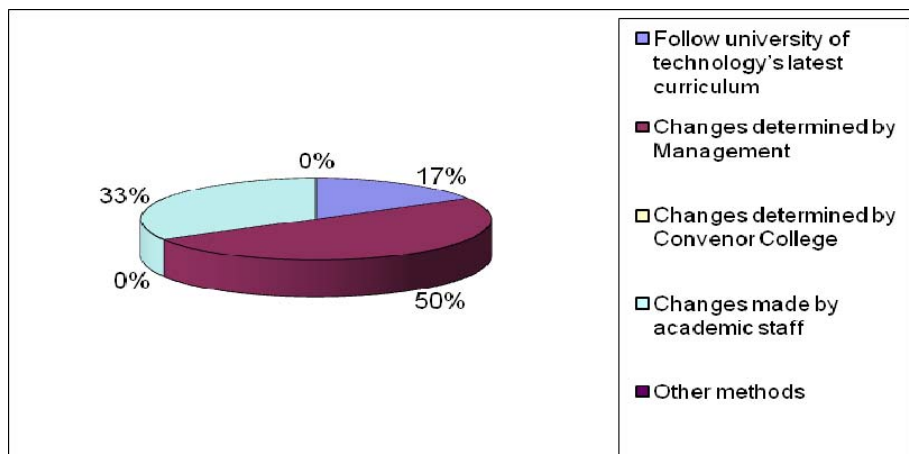
## **Section B: Programme Design, Review and Assessment**

### **4.12 Question twelve: Methods used to review and update curriculum**

A central component of academic quality is having mechanisms in place to assure learners of a high quality of education. For this to take place, the academic programme has to be subjected to three important stages, i.e programme design, review and assessment (Zink and Vob, 2000: 251). For quality purposes, these three stages should take place at regular intervals and serve as a continuous improvement initiative. Question twelve was designed to determine the respondents' observations on the techniques used in programme

design in relation to curriculum updates. 100% of the respondents answered question twelve. The responses are represented in figure 11.

**Figure 11: Methods used to review and update curriculum**



It is evident from the figure above that the majority of the respondents, viz., 50.0%, have indicated that they amend their curriculum according to changes made by management, 33.3% of the respondents amend their curriculum as per decisions taken by academic staff and 16.7% of the respondents make changes to the curriculum in line with the current curriculum of a university of technology. The responses reveal that management and staff of private higher and further education institutions use their discretion in making curriculum decisions.

#### 4.13 Question thirteen: Assessment training for academic staff

Assessment in higher and further education is a significant component on the quality of learning that has taken place (Soliman, 1999: 2). Academic staff play an active role in this area. Therefore, adequately trained staff are required to perform this function. Question thirteen was designed to determine the respondents' observations on assessment training for academic staff. 85% of the respondents answered question thirteen. The observations made by the respondents were:

- Nine respondents mentioned that internal training is provided by the institution;

- Five respondents indicated that academic staff attend assessor training at an external company and the cost is incurred by the institution; and
- Four respondents stated that academic staff attend assessor training at their own cost.

The responses received give a positive indication that staff of private higher and further education institutions are involved in personal development.

#### **4.14 Question fourteen: Practices in respect of programme review**

Programme review by institutions serves as a quality improvement technique of the academic programme. The method and duration would differ at each institution. Question fourteen determined the practices in place at private higher and further education institutions. 76% of the respondents answered question fourteen. The observations made by respondents in respect to programme review are as follows:

- Eleven respondents stated that academic programmes are reviewed annually by academic staff and management;
- Two respondents reported that meetings are held once a year by management with academics to review throughput rates and implement changes to curriculum; and
- Three respondents mentioned that learner feedback is studied and the curriculum is examined to implement proposals.

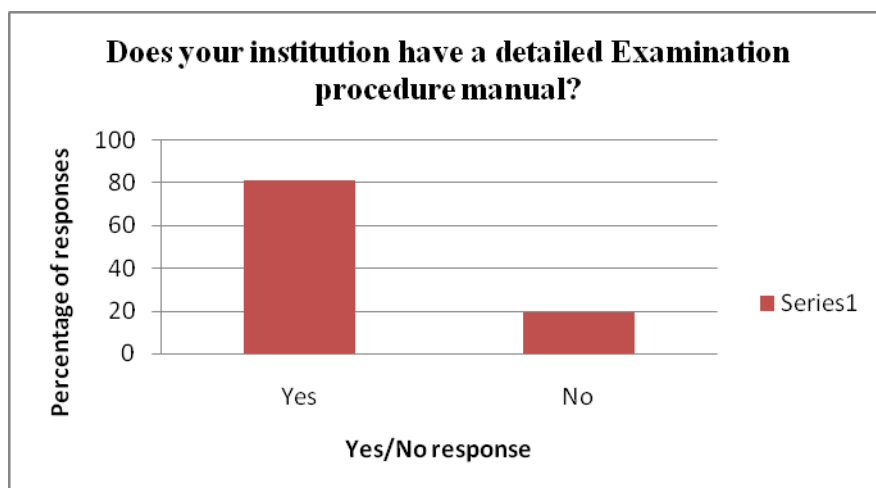
The responses reveal that the majority (76%) of the institutions do have mechanisms in place for programme review and 24% do not have any programme review arrangements in place. It is worthy to note that 12% of the respondents review throughput rates and use it as a mechanism to make changes to the curriculum, and 19% of the respondents use learner feedback effectively in curriculum development. It should be noted that the majority of the institutions conduct curriculum development without input from feedback sources such as learner feedback and learner success rates while, in question two, 81% of the institutions indicated that

evaluations are carried out by learners. Other issues such as learner retention and support for at-risk learners are not reviewed as inputs for programme review.

#### 4.15 Question fifteen: Examination procedure manual

Examinations serve as an important criterion for learner promotion. Examinations are a form of assessment that requires control and proper management when carried out (Umalusi 2005: 12). The examination procedure manual is the document that serves as a guide to staff on managing and controlling examinations. Question fifteen was designed to determine the existence of an examination procedure manual.

**Figure 12: Examination procedure manual**



The results reflect that 81% of institutions have an examination procedure manual and 19% of the respondents do not have a procedure manual for examinations. This response is significant because it reveals that examination processes are documented by the majority of the institutions.

#### 4.16 Question sixteen: Moderation practices

Moderation of examination papers and scripts is a form of quality assurance, since the task of the moderator is to verify that the marking is fair, consistent and the marking memorandum has been followed (Alt, 1998: 9). Question sixteen determines the respondents' observations on moderation practices on

examination question papers and learners' examination answer scripts. 81% of the respondents answered question sixteen. The following responses were received:

### **Examination Question Papers**

- Eight respondents reported that the moderator checks the mark scheme, standard of paper, and ambiguity of questions; and
- Nine respondents stated that all pages of the question paper are signed by the moderator as proof of the moderation process.

### **Examination Scripts**

- Four respondents mentioned that 20% of all written examination scripts are moderated. If there are less than thirty scripts in a batch, all scripts in the batch are moderated;
- Three respondents reported that all written examination scripts are moderated because of small class sizes;
- Six respondents stated that 20% of all written examination scripts are moderated. If there are less than twenty scripts in a batch, all scripts in the batch are moderated. The moderator signs all examination scripts; and
- Four respondents indicated that the moderator has the option to increase marks by a percentage if performance is poor for the entire group.

This response rate reveals a common trend in moderation practices within PHEI's and FETI's. Examinations have been a major assessment practice in higher and further education for the determination of student success. It should be noted that, although the majority of institutions do have structured practices in place, 19% of the respondents either do not conduct moderation or use informal methods of checking examination papers and learners' answer scripts. This practice is inconsistent with the requirements of the HEQC's and Umalusi Council's audit criteria reviewed in chapter two.

**4.17 Question seventeen: Feedback to learners**

Feedback to learners on various assessment methods is a form of improvement mechanism and it is essential for learners to be aware of the shortcomings in their work (Soliman, 1999:11). Question seventeen was designed to determine the respondent's observation on feedback to learners. 81% of the respondents answered question sixteen.

The observations were as follows:

- Eleven respondents reported that revision is undertaken at lectures by the lecturer after tests;
- Four respondents mentioned that the shortcomings of the learners are discussed in the lecture room; and
- Thirteen respondents stated that written feedback is given on assignments and projects.

The responses reveal that 19% of the respondents either do not offer feedback to learners on assessments. It should be noted that the type of feedback varies according to the type of assessment. Since this practice allows for learner development and academic staff to improve teaching approaches, it contributes to the quality of the academic programme and is a significant component of a quality management system.

**4.18 Question eighteen: Problems encountered in the area of assessment**

Since assessment plays an important role in an academic programme, it is essential that it features in a model to assure quality. Question eighteen endeavors to determine the problems encountered by the institution in the area of assessment. 100% of the respondents answered question eighteen. The observations were as follows:

- Five respondents stated that marking test and examination scripts adds to the workload of academic staff;

- Eight respondents mentioned that, apart from examinations, other forms of assessments have not been explored;
- Six respondents reported that it is an expensive process to train all academics as qualified assessors; and
- Two respondents indicated that multiple choice questions on computerized answer sheets have not been implemented due to the process and resources being costly.

The responses indicate that forms of assessments used in private higher and further education institutions are limited. 23.8% of the respondents have reported that marking of tests and examination scripts increases the workload of academic staff but no other forms of assessments were attempted that could reduce the workload. It should be noted that 28.5% of institutions have reported that assessor training for all academic staff is costly because of it being provided by independent consultants.

#### **4.19 Question nineteen: Recognition of prior learning**

In order to broaden access for learners to academic programmes, it is necessary for institutions to allow access to learners with skills and work experience into such programmes (Du Pre`, 2000: 44). Private higher and further education institutions play an important role in skills development initiatives. To be actively involved in this initiative, recognition of prior learning should become part of their access policy. Question nineteen was designed to determine the respondent's observation on the mechanisms in place to recognize prior learning. 81% of the respondents answered question nineteen. The responses were as follows:

- Nine respondents reported that the institution has a recognition of prior learning (RPL) policy;
- Three respondents mentioned that RPL is fairly new and that policies are still being developed in this respect;
- Two respondents stated that learners need to provide evidence of previous qualifications and work experience and that the application is handled in an informal manner; and

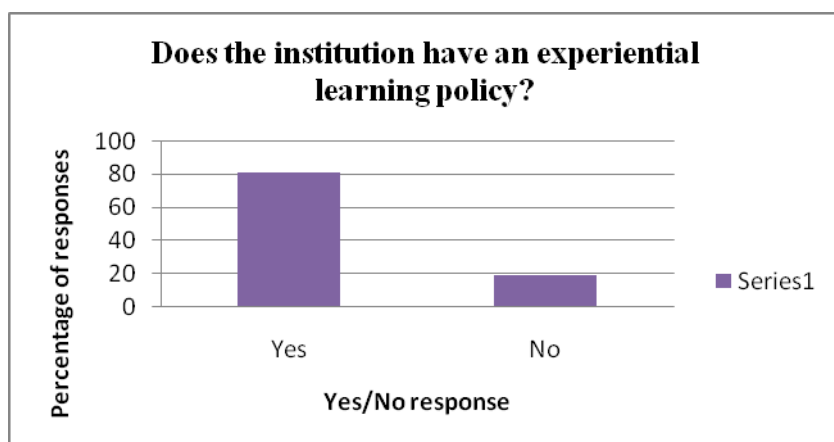
- Two respondents indicated that an internal panel of management members and academics will peruse the documentation and interview the candidate in order to award the status.

The responses mean that 47.6% of the institutions do have RPL policies in place and 14.2% institutions are still developing policies. Nineteen percent of the respondents carry out RPL applications in an informal manner. For this process to be effective, a clearly defined policy, with streamlined procedures, needs to be in place. There are 19% of PHE and FET institutions that do not have any mechanisms in place. Access for students with prior learning would be limited in these institutions.

#### 4.20 Question twenty: Experiential learning policy

Experiential learning serves as a quality assurance mechanism of an academic programme because industry has an opportunity to judge whether the knowledge gained by the student is relevant for the job which the learner is being trained for. It is an activity that requires planning, coordination and control (Council on Higher Education, 2004: 21). A policy document to guide such an activity will be an indication as to whether such a requirement is met. Question twenty was designed to determine the respondents' observations on the presence of an experiential learning policy. 100% of the respondents answered question twenty.

**Figure 13: The existence of an experiential learning policy**



The responses above reveal that 81% of the respondents have structured arrangements in place for experiential learning. Students registered at 19% of the institutions that do not have any mechanisms in place for experiential learning would be in a disadvantaged position as exposure to industrial experience would be limited.

#### **4.21 Question twenty-one: Duration of experiential learning**

Question twenty-one was designed to obtain the respondents' observations on the duration of experiential learning for an academic year. 81% of the respondents answered question twenty one. The duration indicated by the respondents was as follows:

- Eleven respondents reported that experiential learning takes place for a period of one month;
- Three respondents stated that learners go to industry for experiential training between four to six weeks;
- One respondent mentioned that experiential takes place at their institution for a period of six weeks; and
- Three respondents indicated that learners are placed in industry for a period of three weeks.

The responses indicate that experiential learning in private higher and further education institutions is between three to six weeks with a majority (64.7%) conducting experiential learning for a period of four weeks. This initiative does give a learner some exposure to industry and is consistent with the requirements of the HEQC and Umalusi Council's audit criteria reviewed in chapter two. Compared to FET and PHEIs, the trend with public higher education is to include work integrated learning as a compulsory component of the curriculum for a minimum period of three months.

#### **4.22 Question twenty-two: Methods used to monitor experiential learning**

After learners are placed in industry, the monitoring of learners progress is carried out in various ways. Question twenty-two was used to determine the methods used

to monitor students in industry. 81% of the respondents answered question twenty two. The responses were as follows:

- Eleven respondents reported that lecturers hold discussions with supervisors on learner's progress, punctuality and behaviour in the workplace;
- Two respondents indicated that lecturers hold discussions with managers on the extent to which learners are applying their theoretical knowledge in the workplace;
- Two respondents mentioned that telephonic discussions take place between the principal and the organisation's management on learner progress; and
- Two respondents stated that lecturers visit the company and monitor students in their working environment.

The responses reveal that monitoring of learners does take place. 64.7% of the respondents indicated that monitoring is based on verbal communication and 11.7% indicated that physical visits to industry take place. This practice is a positive initiative and is consistent with the quality requirements of the HEQC and Umalusi Council. For quality purposes, evidence of experiential learning would be required. The use of a learner log book that keeps a written record of experiential learning and progress would serve as a source of evidence at external audits.

#### **4.23 Question twenty-three: Feedback instruments used to monitor experiential learning**

For experiential learning to be meaningful, feedback from industry is vital as it serves as a check to determine the relevance of the curriculum and also serves as a benchmarking tool on the quality of graduates being produced. Question twenty-three was designed to obtain the respondents' observation on the type of feedback that the institution obtains from industry after a learner has completed experiential learning. Eighty one percent of the respondents answered question twenty three and the responses were as follows:

- Two respondents reported that feedback is carried out by means of telephonic discussions between the principal and the manager or supervisor on student progress relating to the tasks allocated to learners;
- Seven respondents indicated that a written report relating to the quality of work carried out by learners is obtained from the supervisors or managers; and
- Three respondents mentioned that a written report is required by the institution which the supervisor or manager completes and faxes to the institution.

33.3% of the respondents indicated that experiential learning is not compulsory. Therefore, no feedback from industry is required. This would imply that learners would receive industrial experience but the institution will not know how the learner performed in the workplace.

#### **4.24 Question twenty-four: Problems experienced by institutions in respect of experiential learning**

Experiential learning is an academic quality improvement tool that forms part of the HEQC's and Umalusi Council's quality audit criteria. It should be a process that allows all learners to gain exposure to industry in an organised manner. Question twenty-four was designed to determine the respondents' observation on the problems experienced by the institutions in respect of experiential learning. Eighty one percent of the respondents answered question twenty four. The responses were as follows:

- Eleven respondents indicated that institutions are finding it difficult to place a large number of learners in industry during a specific vacation period;
- Two respondents mentioned that learners are sometimes reluctant to travel long distances to business organisations;
- Nine respondents reported that some organisations are reluctant to take learners because of confidentiality and safety aspects of the business;

- Two respondents stated that supervisors and managers are sometimes reluctant to complete detailed feedback forms; and
- Three respondents indicated that trade unions object to learners being employed in production departments because they are not qualified.

The responses reveal that PHEI's and FETI's experience a range of problems regarding experiential learning. 52.9% of the respondents reported that companies are reluctant to take learners. 64.7% reported having difficulty in placing a large number of learners during a specific period. The continuation of these two problems mentioned may lead to experiential learning being terminated.

### **Section C: Research and Community Engagement**

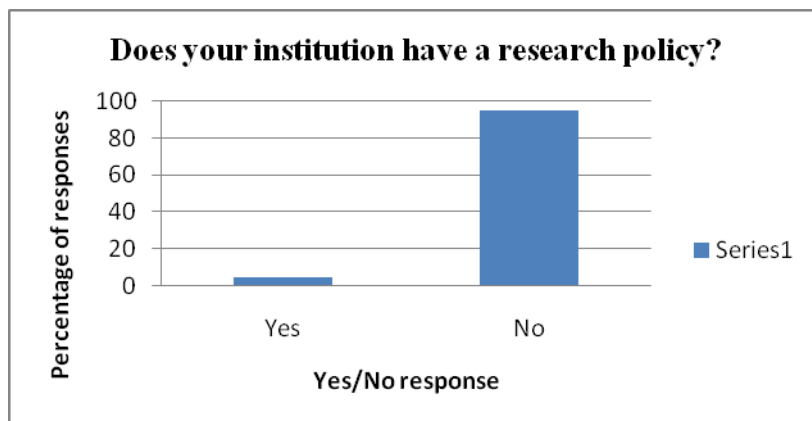
Research and community engagement forms an integral part of higher education. Research in post-graduate studies is the core of the academic programme (Council on Higher Education, 2004: 22). However, since private and further education institutions specialize in undergraduate vocational training, a very small number of institutions offer research based programmes. Regulation of private higher education is fairly new and the HEQC's and Umalusi Council's audit criteria are the first documents to evaluate an institution's community engagement practices. These practices in private higher and further education institutions are currently developmental. Section C of the research questionnaire, relating to research and community engagement, was designed to gain information on the extent to which these activities are being carried out in private higher and further education institutions.

#### **4.25 Question twenty-five: Research policy**

Post-graduate studies involving research have to be managed and controlled in an organised manner. The institution should coordinate all activities in close cooperation with learners. This creates a need for a policy document to guide these processes. Therefore, question twenty-five was designed to determine whether the institution

has a research policy. One hundred percent of the respondents answered question twenty five.

**Figure 14: Existence of a research policy**



The results displayed in figure 14 above suggest that majority (95.2%) of the respondents do not have a research policy. This finding could imply that they do not offer research based programmes. Only 4.8% of the respondents have a research policy.

#### **4.26 Question twenty-six: Research support structures**

Research support structures are required as learners need guidance, support and direction in their studies from the research supervisor and the institution. Question twenty-six was designed to determine the type of support structures that are in place to develop and promote research. 4.8% of the respondents answered question twenty six. The following responses were received:

- One respondent reported that workshops regarding the writing of research proposals, questionnaire design, collection of data and analysis of data, are held for post-graduate learners;
- One respondent stated that suitably qualified supervisors are employed to supervise learners engaged in research projects;
- One respondent revealed that on-line database and internet access is provided for learners on campus; and

- One respondent indicated that software for research analyses is provided for learners.

It is evident from the responses that, although only 4.8% of the institutions have a research policy, such institutions offering research programmes do appear to have adequate mechanisms in place to develop and promote research.

#### **4.27 Question twenty-seven: Community outreach programmes**

Question twenty-seven was designed to determine the respondents' observations on community involvement activities and their integration into an academic programme. 42.8% of the respondents answered question twenty seven. The observations were as follows:

- Two respondents mentioned that their institutions are involved in community projects at a very small scale but the activities are not integrated into an academic programme;
- Four respondents stated that the institution offers study bursaries to learners of particular communities;
- Two respondents reported that the institution, in partnership with large organisations, offer short computer courses at a very low rate to unemployed people; and
- One respondent indicated that research based projects lend themselves to integrating the academic programme with a community project.

In view of the findings mentioned above, it is evident that community engagement efforts are carried out at a very low level at private higher and further education institutions. The few activities that are carried out do not integrate an academic programme into them. An important observation is that 57.2% of the responding institutions are not involved in community involvement activities, although this is a requirement on the HEQC's and Umalusi council's audit criterion.

#### 4.28 Common deficiencies

**Figure 15: Common negative responses**

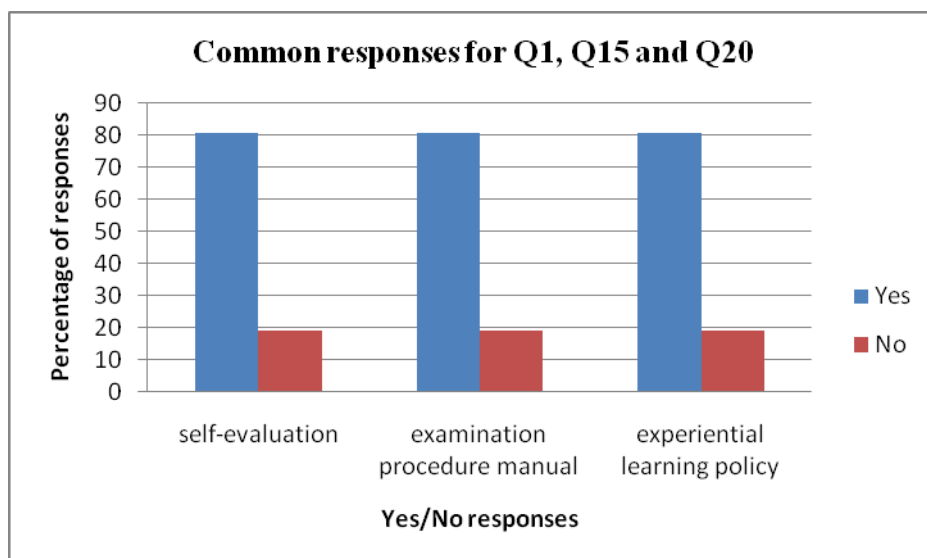


Figure fifteen above displays the deficiencies common to the same respondents obtained from question numbers 1, 15 and 20. 19% of the respondents that indicated they do not have any self evaluation practices, also do not have an examination procedure manual and an experiential learning policy. These practices are not consistent with the HEQC and Umalusi Council's audit criteria reviewed in chapter two.

#### 4.29 Conclusion

The extent of quality arrangements at PHEI's and FETI's is fragmented. Certain practices are consistent with the literature reviewed while other practices lack a strategic approach and implementation. A quality driven culture can only evolve in institutions when top management is committed and they implement policies toward attaining and sustaining a strong learner and industry focus. Nevertheless, without fully understanding quality assurance, institutions have applied some principles which involved the use of business quality tools. Although these principles are essential to quality, they have not been effectively applied. Traditionally, quality assurance has been equated as checking for "what is wrong" and finding who is responsible for the error. This concept has changed as far as the elements of TQM

and the management principles of ISO9001:2000 are concerned. This shift has been identified by the HEQC and Umalusi Council and they have incorporated this principle in their audit criteria. In chapter two, the literature review points out that quality assurance mechanisms should be implemented in all functional areas of the institution. The results of the study indicate that mechanisms for assuring quality were implemented in certain areas and as minimum requirements only, to meet the audit criteria, thus creating a fragmented implementation of internal quality assurance mechanisms. This situation creates a need for the proposed quality model, which recommends that private higher and further education institutions should install internal mechanisms to ensure quality in the delivery of their services. The next chapter focuses on the conclusions, recommendations and the design of the proposed model.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND DESIGN OF MODEL**

## **CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND DESIGN OF MODEL**

### **5. In closing the study**

This chapter will discuss the conclusions, recommendations and the design of an integrated model. The objectives of the study were:

- To investigate a framework of quality tools suitable to higher education;
- To determine the academic quality needs and deficiencies of FET and PHEI's; and
- To develop a proposed quality model for PHEI's derived from the South African Business Excellence Model.

The study was conducted with a view to achieving these objectives and the conclusions are discussed under the three broad sections represented in the objectives, viz., review of related literature, the needs and deficiencies of PHE and FET institutions derived from the research investigation and the development of a proposed model derived from the SAEM. The recommendations will highlight the way forward for PHE and FET institutions in terms of internal quality, showing the need for a quality model. Possible future research will also be presented.

#### **5.1 Conclusions: Review of related literature**

A review of the related literature was conducted to determine the nature of PHE and FET institutions, the statutory bodies that govern FET and PHE, and the suitability of business quality tools to education. The first objective of the study was to review related literature on business quality tools and their suitability to private higher and further education institutions. In order to achieve this objective, two other areas had to be studied: firstly, the literature on the nature of PHE and FET institutions was reviewed and, secondly, the audit criteria of the HEQC and

Umalusi Council were reviewed. The following conclusions can be drawn from the review of related literature:

- From this review it was found that PHE and FET institutions did not have any formal internal quality assurance mechanisms in place to assure learners on the quality of education offered. This finding was reinforced by the authors Fehene (2002: 236), Kruss (2004: 2) and S.A. Government Services (2006:1). The CHE Report (2000: 38) and the report by Study South Africa (2006:2) confirms that their study on private providers indicate that there were no quality plans and strategies in place. The report also states that during their inspection of documents submitted by private providers there were no manuals or regulations reflecting quality assurance arrangements.
- It was for the very first time that the recommendations of the NCHE report brought PHE and FET institutions into a single coordinated higher education system. In chapter two, it is reported that, on the recommendations of the NCHE, the Higher Education Act of 1997 was amended in 2001 to stipulate the need for a quality management system for PHE and FET institutions. The Act also required PHE and FET institutions to be externally audited by an ETQA. This requirement led to the formation of the HEQC to audit private higher education and the Umalusi Council to audit further education and training providers.

The audit criteria of the HEQC and Umalusi Council were reviewed and the following conclusions can be made:

- The criteria mainly required institutions to prepare self- evaluation reports and submit to the HEQC and Umalusi Council for evaluation;

- On meeting the criteria, the institution received accreditation status but was not required to strive for excellence in its core business of teaching and learning; and
- The annual reports submitted by institutions and the site visits conducted by the HEQC and Umalusi Council are the only sources of information on the progress and infrastructure of PHE and FET institutions.

The following conclusions were made from the review of related literature on business quality tools:

- There is a need for a quality management system for private higher and further education institutions. This is supported by the authors Greenwood (2003: 51) and Smout et al. (2002: 201).
- The TQM philosophy will be suitable for private higher and further education. This was supported by the authors Willis and Taylor (1999: 999), Lozier and Teeter (1996) cited in Kanji and Tambi (1999:129), Narasimhan (1997), cited in Kanji et al. (1999: 130) and Marsh (2003: 56-57).
- From the review of literature on the ISO 9001: 2001 quality standard, certain requirements will be suitable for PHE and FET institutions while others will be difficult for PHE and FET institutions to comply with. In view of this finding, the authors Zhu and Scheuermann (1999: 294) and Westhuizen (2004: 147) suggested a combination of the TQM philosophy and the ISO9001: 2000 standard to be used in a quality management system for education.

## **5.2 Conclusions: Needs and deficiencies of private higher and further education sector**

The second objective of the study was to determine the academic quality needs and deficiencies of FET and PHEI's. To achieve this objective the research questionnaire was used as an instrument to determine the needs and deficiencies of these institutions. The research questionnaire was administered to all institutions in the population of the study. The target respondents were academic managers or principals of these institutions. This section draws conclusions on each of the research areas investigated in the empirical study. The responses received in respect of the various areas pertaining to quality at FET and PHEIs are reviewed in order to confirm their applicability in the design of the model.

### **5.2.1 Self assessment mechanisms**

It can be concluded, from the responses reported in chapter four, that a majority of PHE and FET institutions use evaluations by learners and management. These evaluations are only conducted once a year and a minority of the respondents do not conduct any form of evaluation. PHE and FET institutions need a structured period on the timetable for evaluations to be carried out. Since this is a requirement of the HEQC and Umalusi Council audit criteria, it would be appropriate for all institutions to conduct evaluations on other stakeholders at least more than once a year.

### **5.2.2 Library resource centre**

From the results of the research investigation, it can be concluded that all PHE and FET institutions do have a library resource centre on campus. The responses in chapter four reveal that there are limited methods of integrating the library into the academic programme. It can be concluded that there is a need for

a computerized library management system for PHE and FET institutions for accurate recordings of all materials borrowed.

### **5.2.3 Teaching facilities**

It can be concluded that internet facilities and audio visual materials are adequate at majority of the institutions to support the academic programme.

### **5.2.4 Accreditation**

It can be concluded that the accreditation process is time consuming and is complicated by the fact that institutions have to comply with the DOE for registration and the HEQC and Umalusi Council for accreditation.

### **5.2.5 Curriculum development**

It can be concluded that PHE and FET institutions do not use other methods to update their curriculum besides decisions taken by management and academic staff.

### **5.2.6 Assessor training**

It can be concluded from the responses received that the majority of FET and PHEIs are proactively involved in the development of academic staff.

### **5.2.7 Programme review**

In view of the responses obtained, it can be concluded that the majority of the respondents used learner feedback as an evaluation mechanism. The results also reveal that institutions do have some programme review arrangements in

place. However, significant practices such as learner retention mechanisms and support for at-risk learners are not reviewed.

### **5.2.8 Assessment**

Significant conclusions can be drawn from the responses received that although majority of FET and PHEIs do have adequate mechanisms to manage assessment practices, their forms of assessments are limited. Apart from the use of written examinations, other forms of assessments have not been used. If other forms of assessments were adopted, the workload of academic staff could be reduced. An example of another form of assessment is the answering of multiple choice type of questions on forms designed to be marked through a scanning process on a computer. Another significant deficiency is that there are institutions that do not have an examination procedure manual, which could question whether examinations, moderation and learner results are carried out in an organized manner.

### **5.2.9 Experiential learning**

The responses indicate that PHEI's and FETI's do have some arrangements in place for experiential learning. Two significant conclusions can be made:

- The majority of the experiential learning monitoring in industry is based on verbal communication; and
- Institutions conduct experiential learning but do not find it necessary for any formal feedback on learner's progress from industry.

### **5.2.10 Research**

The responses reveal that a very small percentage of private higher education institutions offer research based qualifications. It can be concluded that although a small percentage of PHEIs have a research policy, there are adequate

mechanisms in place at these institutions to support and develop research. The Umalusi Council's criteria exclude reference to research, as FET institutions do not generally offer such programmes.

### **5.2.11 Community engagement**

From the study investigation, it is evident that community engagement is a fairly new concept to private higher and further education institutions. It can be concluded that institutions have been involved in community engagement at a low level and have not integrated their practices into a learning programme.

### **5.2.12 General conclusions**

The two processes, i.e. registration and accreditation, which permit FET and PHEIs to operate and offer qualifications, are the most important activities in their operations. The audit criteria of the HEQC and Umalusi Council serve as a guide to institutions to prepare themselves for an audit to gain accreditation. The two statutory bodies will audit the institutions quality arrangements as per the criteria, evaluate the extent to which the institution has met the criteria and offer accreditation in accordance. The audit has regulated the private higher and further education sector and has made an impact on institutions to change from traditional practices to quality assuring practices stipulated in the audit criteria. The audit does not ensure or guarantee that the institution has good quality practices in place at all times because institutions are audited between a three to five year cycle. The audit is carried out externally and does not serve as an internal quality assurance mechanism.

To improve and maintain quality standards at FET and PHEIs consistently, an internal quality management system or a quality model is proposed.

It can be concluded from the results of the empirical study that institutions installed quality mechanisms to meet the requirements of the audit criteria only and did not implement them as an improvement tool. An example of this discrepancy is the responses to question two of the questionnaire, which showed that majority of institutions use learner feedback as an evaluation tool. However, in question fourteen only three institutions indicated that they use learner feedback in curriculum development.

There are institutions that have common deficiencies or poor quality practices, although they have registration status and provisional accreditation. Figure 15, in chapter four, depicts the common institutions that do not have any self-evaluation practices, no examination procedure manual and no experiential learning. These deficiencies could impact negatively on the academic programme and it may not be possible for these institutions to implement other quality practices such as programme review and curriculum development.

A significant conclusion can be drawn regarding the two business quality tools: TQM and ISO 9001:2000 quality standard, combined in a quality management system, will be suitable for higher education.

### **5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

From the conclusions above, the following general recommendations of the study are discussed under the research areas investigated.

#### **5.3.1 Self assessment mechanisms**

Self assessment practices are requirements of the HEQC and Umalusi Council's audit criteria and also serve as inputs to other quality practices, such as programme review and curriculum development. It must be noted, from the empirical study, that not all institutions are conducting self evaluations. It is

recommended that the proposed model include self assessment as a quality practice for all institutions under the quality of the academic programme section. The presence of self assessment in the model will be consistent with the HEQC and Umalusi Council's criteria as well as with the continuous improvement philosophy of TQM. The proposed model should incorporate the area on self evaluation with learner evaluations being kept simple and easy to complete.

### **5.3.2 Library resource centre**

It is recommended that PHE and FET institutions investigate other methods of integrating the library into the academic programme. Some examples of other methods are organizing library open days on a particular theme, the release of new materials on certain subjects to be communicated to learners, and library orientation to be organised for each discipline taught at the institution.

A further recommendation would be to implement a computerised system to manage library loans. This type of system will also assist in the generation of utilisation reports. For quality assurance purposes, utilisation levels of resources and learner or user satisfaction surveys need to be implemented for the improvement of services. This recommendation will be integrated in the design of the proposed model as it fits with the continuous improvement philosophy of TQM.

### **5.3.3 Teaching facilities**

It is recommended that user satisfaction surveys, upgrading plans and the integration of the use of internet facilities into the academic programme should be installed. This could be achieved by incorporating this recommendation in the model as teaching facilities.

#### **5.3.4 Accreditation**

A recommendation would be to use a mechanism that is an ongoing process and generates reports at regular intervals so that the institution is not burdened with a time consuming task at a given time. Perhaps with an internal quality assurance mechanism, like the quality model being proposed in the study, the time for preparation and audit by the relevant ETQA's would be shorter and less problematic. With this in mind, the design of the model could possibly incorporate the criteria of the HEQC and Umalusi Council.

#### **5.3.5 Curriculum development**

A recommendation would be for institutions to form an advisory board comprising of representatives from industry, government departments and non-governmental organisations to advise on curriculum issues. This area will be integrated into the model with proposed time frames for development. This also fits in with the continuous improvement philosophy of TQM. This area will be incorporated under the programme quality principle in the proposed model.

#### **5.3.6 Programme review**

A recommendation would be to add on support for at-risk learners and learner retention activities under programme review. A second recommendation would be to conduct these reviews in a structured manner, perhaps following the proposed model. This will require a subject or module file being maintained for each subject or module offered. These files will serve as a central place where all documents required and used in the programme review will be filed. Programme review will serve as a quality assurance measure and will allow academic staff to reflect on their current practices and improve on the weak areas. Such an area will be integrated in the model under the programme quality principle with proposals on review intervals and content of subject evidence files. This area

would serve as the hub of the continuous improvement philosophy in the academic programme.

### **5.3.7 Assessment**

A recommendation would be to use other forms of assessment such as projects, presentations, portfolios, crossword puzzles and poster presentations. The model will include the area on assessment with proposals on examination procedure manuals, assessor training, moderation practices, learner records and the use of different forms of assessment. These practices may be included in the proposed model to serve as a generic tool for PHEI's and FETI's for assessment practices.

### **5.3.8 Experiential learning**

A recommendation would be for a monitoring form to be designed for use by supervisors in industry and an attached document for the academic staff to record monitoring activities and progress. Experiential learning will be included in the model with proposals on traceable monitoring and a feedback template from industry. These proposed mechanisms fit in with the continuous improvement philosophy of TQM.

### **5.3.9 Research and community engagement**

A recommendation is that these areas be included in the design of the proposed model, the research component as optional and community engagement as an area that is developmental. This inclusion makes the model relevant in the future as well, particularly if more institutions decide to offer research-based programmes.

#### **5.4. Justification of the specific quality tools and SAEM**

This section illustrates the suitability of using the SAEM as a basis for deriving an integrated quality model suitable for FET and PHE institutions. Justification is also provided for the inclusion of the business quality tools i.e. TQM and ISO 9001:2000. Based on the conclusions described earlier in this chapter, internal quality practices at FET and PHEIs were weak in its management and implementation. An internal quality management system (QMS), with a strategic approach and one that sustains a strong learner and industry focus, is required. This system will address all the needs and deficiencies in the core business of teaching and learning. The HEQC and Umalusi Council's criteria are comprehensive and serve as a good external monitoring tool.

The audit criteria of both statutory bodies serve as a guide for institutions to prepare themselves for an audit. It would be beneficial for institutions to have a QMS that incorporates the relevant criteria. The challenge for private higher education institutions is to be competitive globally and to meet the needs of industry. For PHE and FET institutions to be competitive, they need internal quality assurance mechanisms in place to continually improve their core business of teaching and learning.

The authors Pupius and Brusoni (2000: 8) state that the European Foundation Quality Management (EFQM) Excellence Model principles are the basis for quality improvement in business and it incorporates all features of TQM and ISO 9001:2000 quality tools. Since the SAEM has been derived from the EFQM, these quality improving mechanisms have been included since they have proven to be successful in business. With modifications, it would suit private higher and further education institutions. The SAEM principles link areas for quality improvement derived from the research investigation. The criteria for institutional audits set out by the HEQC and Umalusi Council are directly related to the areas under investigation in the research. Therefore, it would be appropriate to use a

quality model that was derived from international quality assurance models, which incorporates philosophies of two widely used quality tools and which are associated with areas set out by South African higher and further education statutory bodies. In view of these assertions, it is recommended that PHE and FET institutions should adopt an integrated model as an internal quality management system.

### **5.5 Design of an Integrated Quality Model**

The third objective in the study was to develop a proposed quality model for PHEI's derived from the South African Excellence Model. In achieving this objective the principles of the SAEM needed to integrate with the areas investigated through the research questionnaire. This section illustrates how the principles of the South African Excellence Model (SAEM) integrate with the various areas identified through the research investigation, with a view to developing an integrated quality model. The eleven principles of the SAEM have been discussed in chapter two. The research results are displayed in chapter four and the proposed areas for improvement were discussed earlier in this chapter. These three areas of discussion are used in the development of the table in the next section.

The table below illustrates the integration of the areas in the research investigation with the principles of the South African Excellence Model and the derivation of the proposed model principles.

**Table 3: Integration of the research findings with SAEM principles**

<b>The SAEM Enabler Principles</b>	<b>Research Areas Investigated</b>	<b>Integrated quality model principles</b>
1. Leadership	Teaching and learning	Leadership
2. Policy and strategy	Accreditation	Policy and Strategy
3. Customer and market focus	Teaching and learning	Learner focus
4. People management	Teaching and learning	Personal development
5. Resources and information management	Resources and facilities	Resources
6. Processes	Programme design and review, Accreditation, Teaching and Learning	Programme quality
<b>The SAEM Result Principles</b>		
7. Impact on society	Community engagement, Research	Contribution to the community, Research and development
8. Customer satisfaction	Teaching and learning	Industry, learners
9. People satisfaction	Teaching and learning	Department
10. Supplier and partnership performance	Experiential learning	Connection with industry and schools
11. Organisational results	All research areas	Institutional reports

## 5.6 Discussion on the Integrated Quality Model

The integrated quality model contains eleven principles for quality assurance which link with the adjacent research area investigated and displayed in table 3. The research areas investigated and the principles are inter-related. The integrated quality model principles listed in table 3 will be described below. Thereafter, a diagrammatic representation of the model is presented in figure 16.

### **5.6.1 Leadership, policy and strategy**

The leadership, policy and strategy principles in the SAEM are the first and second principles that organizations need to follow. These principles are applicable to private higher and further education institutions and they are requirements for accreditation by the HEQC and Umalusi Council. Business Excellence South Africa (BESA) (1998: 8) notes that these principles allow leaders to develop and facilitate the achievement of the mission and vision. They develop organizational values and systems required for success and implement these via their actions and behaviours. Since they play an integral role and set out the purpose of the organization, it is appropriate to position them as central principles in the proposed model. The purpose of this principle in the integrated quality model is to situate the institution's vision, mission and strategic objectives within the national context in which it operates. This section requires the institution to prepare its mission, vision and strategic plan. The preparation of these documents will serve as requirements for the integrated quality model and as sources of evidence for audits conducted by the HEQC or Umalusi Council.

### **5.6.2 Learners**

BESA (1998: 8) states that the customer and market principles in the SAEM concentrate on customer loyalty, retention and the increase of market share of businesses. In higher education, the customers are learners, as pointed out by Kanji and Tambi (1999: 131). In view of these statements, this principle is linked to learners in the integrated quality model. This section in the integrated quality model requires the institution to describe the type of learners it is seeking to attract, the type of selection processes used, career support and planning, in order to maximize the institution's contribution towards life-long learning and individual development, with special attention to national skills needs. For an institution that adopts the proposed model, the documents required to support this principle would be targeted learner profile's, course preparation and

progression and career placement and support. These records will serve as sources of evidence in the institutions annual reporting to the HEQC or Umalusi Council.

### **5.6.3 Personal development**

The BESA (1998: 8) describes the people management principle in the SAEM as one that relates to creating a culture of mutual trust, empowerment and maintaining good work ethics. For staff to achieve these standards, they require training and acquire skills through formal qualifications. Academic and administrative staff play a significant role in teaching and learning, and are required to have these values to ensure excellence in education. Since the Council on Higher Education (CHE) promotes personal development of staff in higher and further education institutions, it would be appropriate to name this principle “personal development” in the integrated quality model (Council on Higher Education, 2004: 18). The purpose of this principle in the proposed model is to describe the role of the institution in developing the skills in staff and learners consistent with the institution’s mission and personal development objectives stated in the strategic plan. The activities that are involved to support this principle should include a description and evaluation of learner progress over a period of three years, accurate records of graduates placed in industry, staff skills profile and improvement plans for the next three years. A three year period is recommended as this is the minimum duration of qualifications offered at FET and PHEIs.

### **5.6.4 Resources**

According to BESA (1998: 8), the resource and information management principle in the SAEM concentrates on managing the utilization of resources and managing information. In higher education, resources and information are used in the process of teaching and learning. These principles are, therefore, linked.

The purpose of this principle in the integrated quality model is to evaluate the adequacy of physical resources in meeting the institution's mission and objectives. This principle will include a description of all facilities, records of utilisation rates, and policies ensuring proper management and maintenance, including support and access for learners. Such resources would include lecture venues, library, internet facilities and computer laboratories.

### **5.6.5 Programme quality**

The BESA (1998: 8) describes the improvement of the processes principle as improvements in the core areas of business organisations. Since the core business in higher education is teaching and learning, it is appropriate to link this principle to the activities under teaching and learning. This principle will permit the institution to provide evidence for high standards in the quality of programmes and their contribution towards the institution's mission. The activities carried out under this principle include programme design, programme review, programme accreditation, modes of programme delivery and learner assessment practices. The institution will develop a policy on this principle to manage the timing and processes followed in respect of the various activities. These activities will be carried out, as a continuous improvement initiative. As each activity is carried out an evaluation will be performed and areas for improvement will be recorded. Evidence of corrective actions or improvements resulting from each evaluation report will enhance the quality of that area in an academic programme.

### **5.6.6 Contribution to the community**

The SAEM's impact on society principle under the results section links directly to community engagement. The purpose of this section in the integrated quality model is to describe the institution's role within the wider community in which it operates. It should evaluate its contribution to the local and national community

in the past three years and describe the plans in this area for the next three years. The reports on this principle could be published internally and in external media. It could also serve as a marketing tool to prospective learners for the institution because it publicises how the institution is contributing to the community. This principle is also a requirement for the HEQC and Umalusi Council's audit criteria for accreditation purposes. With this principle included in the quality model, it would serve as an internal quality mechanism and also serve as a source of evidence during institutional audits carried out by the HEQC and Umalusi Council.

### **5.6.7 Research and development**

According to BESA (1998: 8), the impact on society principle under the results plane of SAEM concentrates on what the business organisation achieves in the areas of quality of life, the environment and the conservation of global resources. It is the development of new knowledge through research that brings about change and improvements to the environment and society. Therefore, this principle in the SAEM is linked to the area of research and development. The purpose of this principle in the proposed model is to describe the contribution of the institution's research and development activities towards its mission and individual programme objectives. The institution will prepare a policy to manage and evaluate research activities. A description and evaluation of progress in research activities and programmes offered should be maintained over a period of four years. This time frame is appropriate as postgraduate qualifications are offered for a period of four years. Since, a very small percentage of private higher education institutions offer research based programmes, this principle will be optional in the integrated quality model.

### **5.6.8 Industry and learners**

According to BESA (1998: 8), the customer satisfaction principle in the SAEM concentrates on what the organization is achieving in relation to the satisfaction of its external customers and stakeholders. This principle is required for higher and further education institutions as their clients and stakeholders are learners, sponsors and industry. As a tool to measure the satisfaction levels, it would be appropriate to use this type of survey in the integrated quality model. The institution's initiatives, under this principle, should be student feedback surveys and industry feedback on learners placed in industry. These feedback questionnaires could be designed to suit the institution's needs and a method for its analysis could be developed internally.

### **5.6.9 Departmental staff**

According to BESA (1998: 8), the people satisfaction principle in the SAEM allows for the business organisation to demonstrate its performance in satisfying the needs, requirements and expectations of its people. In higher education, staff play a vital role in the core business of teaching and learning. From the literature review, one of the elements of TQM is "workers are assets". Since the SAEM is based on the TQM philosophy, it is appropriate to include this principle in the proposed model which, in turn, incorporates TQM. To support this principle, the institution will generate reports on trends in private higher education, targets and comparisons with other PHEIs or "best in class" institutions. Staff satisfaction surveys would be a tool used to determine satisfaction levels. The institution can design the survey questionnaire to suit the size and needs of its staff. The reports generated under this principle will also serve as sources of evidence for institutional audits carried out by the HEQC and Umalusi Council.

### **5.6.10 Connection with corporate world**

The supplier and partnership principle in the SAEM concentrates on tracking service levels of suppliers and partners (BESA, 1998: 8). In higher and further education, the materials supplied by outside suppliers are consumable items, which are not adequate to assure quality. However, the other part of this principle is developing and maintaining partnerships. In higher education, partners are industry, sponsors and donors. According to the HEQC (2004b: 7), an important component of the academic programme development process is experiential learning as it is a requirement for accreditation purposes by the HEQC. For experiential learning to be successful, a cooperative working relationship needs to be developed with industry. Experiential learning will need to be coordinated effectively in all components of the programme. This coordination includes effective communication, recording of progress made, monitoring and mentoring. The institution could develop one document that keeps records of communication with industry, progress of learners, monitoring reports and evidence that mentoring has taken place by lecturers. By streamlining the number of documents, it would save time in completion and serve as a source of evidence at quality audits carried out by the HEQC or Umalusi Council.

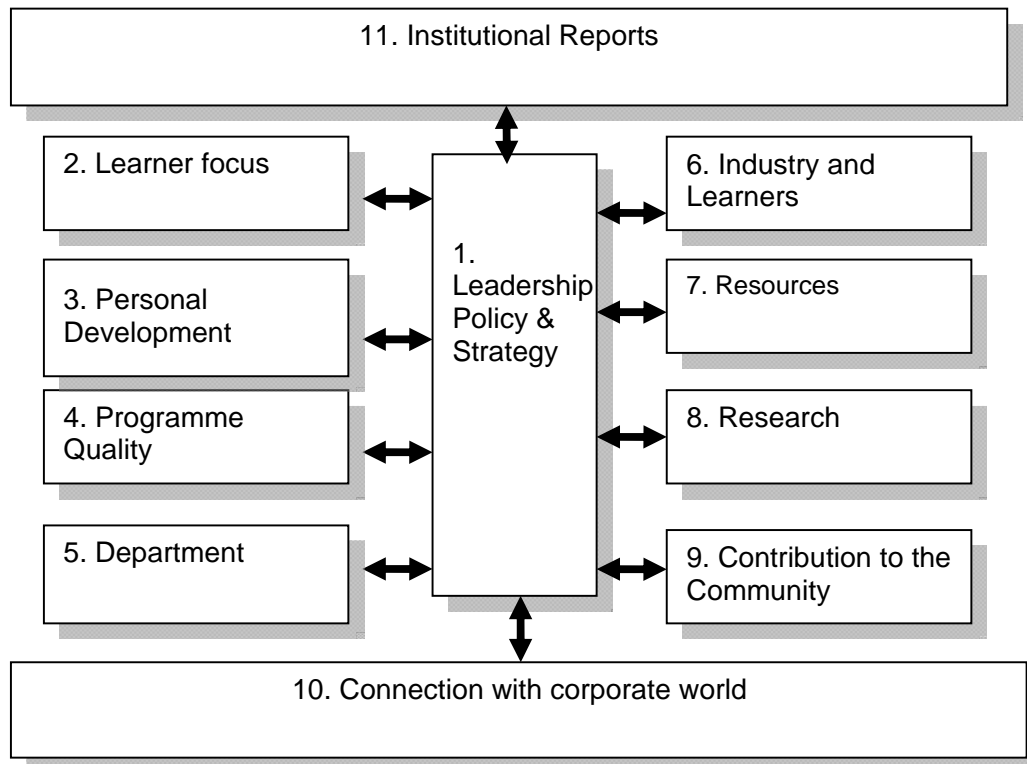
### **5.6.11 Institutional reports**

According to BESA (1998: 8), the organisational results principle in the SAEM concentrates on the organisation publishing what it is achieving in relation to planned business objectives. These results are linked to financial performance. In higher and further education, results will be linked to the core business which is teaching and learning. According to the Umalusi criteria for Accreditation Document (2005: 16), the results criteria include use of quantitative information such as user satisfaction rates, learner attainments, access rates, learner retention rates, learner progression, learner placement rates and “value for money” in reviewing and improving the quality of education. If the institution

implements the proposed model, this information will be generated as part of meeting the requirements for the model but will serve as a source of evidence when reporting to the HEQC and Umalusi Council on institutional performance and quality during the monitoring process, after accreditation has been granted.

### **5.7 Formation of the integrated quality model**

The link of the SAEM principles to the research areas, displayed in Table 3 earlier in this chapter, and the justification on the use of each principle lead to the development of an integrated quality management system. The ISO 9001:2000 standard and the TQM philosophy have been maintained in the integrated quality model. The proposed model does not ignore the audit criteria of the HEQC and Umalusi Council as they determine the accreditation of the institution to offer qualifications. The diagram below illustrates the integrated quality model.

**Figure 16: Integrated quality model**

### 5.8 Future Research

The education discipline changes periodically in response to external factors such as globalisation and the introduction of new technology. This change has an impact on the quality of graduates that are being produced from educational institutions. Providing higher education that strives for excellence with learner and industry focus as a primary objective will ensure that institutions meet these challenges. The integrated model does offer these features. The integrated quality model is versatile so that the various types and sizes of institutions will be able to adopt it in their operations. It is hoped that the integrated model be implemented and tested within a FET or PHE institution.

### **5.9 Closing statements of study**

From the research investigation, it is evident that some quality practices at PHE and FET institutions were in place but were not well managed and implemented. Further, the PHE and FET sector needed to be regulated by compliance with the audit criteria set out by the HEQC and Umalusi Council as, prior to these regulations there were very little quality arrangements in place. This major initiative regulated an important sector of education which contributed significantly to the skills development initiative in the country and also brings private higher education qualifications on par with public higher education qualifications. The research also showed that TQM and ISO 9001:2000, combined and integrated in a quality management system, will be suitable for higher education. Since the quality model recommended in this research integrates these two business quality tools, it could be regarded as the second initiative in addressing quality issues in FET and PHE sectors. The successful implementation of the integrated quality model could bring about improvements in FET and PHEI's operations to an extent where the audit requirements of the statutory bodies will need modifications as these institutions will have a standardized internal quality management system in place.

The implementation of TQM and ISO 9001:2000 quality tools have proven to be very successful in business organizations for many years. Product and service quality improvements, with increase in profit margins, were some of the success areas. PHE and FET institutions in South Africa are managed similar to business organisations as they do not receive government subsidies. These institutions rely on learners' fees as the main source of income. It would be feasible for such institutions to possibly implement the integrated quality model to improve their quality of services and use it as a marketing tool to attract prospective learners.

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## LIST OF REFERENCES

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