Transition and Reform in Higher and Technical Education

Quality Higher Education

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Under the leadership of the O'Neill-Abel Government's signature education policy, the Higher Education Sector plays a critical role in Papua New Guinea's social and economic development. For our country to become sustainable we need to ensure that higher education is accessible to all and delivered to a quality and relevance that meets domestic needs as well as being relevant and responsive to global demands. We must do this for our Youth and the future of our country.

My Department is working closely with key Central Agencies in laying the foundations for the legal, policy and regulatory frameworks for the transition and reform of the Higher Education sector Papua New Guinea as directed by NEC Decision 25/2017 for Transforming, Reforming and Unifying Higher Education.


A reform plan without adequate financing is simply a piece of paper. To implement the reforms and meet the projected growth forecasts in enrollment and graduation as specified in The Medium Term Development Plan III, 2018 – 2022, DHERST is working hand-in-hand with the key Central Agencies, Planning, Treasury and Finance, to ensure appropriate financing options and budgeting processes are in place to achieve the stated reform outcomes.

The analysis of Higher Education financing provided in 2011-2019: Trends and Issues report, informs and deepens our discussion and planning on sector-specific financing, budgeting, policy, evidenced based data and other issues needed to successfully deliver on both the promise and directives of NEC 25/2017.

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I encourage all those interested in the economic and social development of Papua New Guinea to digest this report and to contribute to the ongoing discussion of how we finance the future of Higher Education, investing at the same time in the future of our children. I thank our donors, especially the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, through the Australian High Commission, for their continuing Technical Assistance to DHERST in supporting the compilation of *The Financing of Higher Education in Papua New Guinea 2011-2019: Trends and Issues Report*.

May God Bless Papua New Guinea.

Hon. Minister Pila Niningi, LLB, MP
Minister for Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology
To implement the reforms and meet the projected growth forecasts in enrollment and graduation as specified in The Medium Term Development Plan III, 2018 – 2022 DHERST is working closely with the key Central Agencies, Planning, Treasury and Finance, to ensure appropriate financing options and budgeting processes are in place to achieve the stated reform outcomes.

Recent discussions between DHERST and key Central agencies were catalyzed by the DHERST commissioned report on Financing of Higher Education in Papua New Guinea 2011-2019: Trends and Issues, February 2019. The report provides an excellent starting point for discussion and feedback for developing an appropriately financed medium term Higher Education Plan and Budget that supports the implementation of NEC Decision 25/2017 for Reforming, Transforming and Unifying Higher Education in Papua New Guinea. This will require detailed stakeholder planning processes for sector-specific financing, policy, budgeting, evidenced-based data to develop a separate Medium Term Higher Education Plan that successfully delivers on the decisions and directives of NEC 25/2017.

Throughout April, DHERST convened exploratory meetings with the respective executive teams from Finance, Treasury and Planning, to agree broadly on the way forward for developing a separate 5-year Higher Education Plan and Budget.

With guidance from the key Central Agency stakeholders, DHERST seeks to identify and influence the parameters for framing a 5-year Higher Education Plan and Budget aligned to the transition and reform; and including the projected enrolment and graduation growth.

The Trends and Issues report provides a range of excellent trend data and analysis on Higher Education and what we must do to reverse some of the more worrying trends such as real government expenditure per student, adversely impacting equality of access and quality of courses as per Figure 2.

Backed by NEC Decision 25/2017 and the Prime Minister’s directives of March 2018, DHERST and key Central Agencies are on track to implement the Inter-Departmental Committee Terms of Reference to Support Preparation and Implementation of the Higher Education Medium Term Sector Plan and Budget.

Projected Enrolment and Graduation Growth in Higher Education (Medium Term Development Plan III, 2018–2022)
A key component of improving the quality of PNG HEIs is to streamline the regulatory environment. Currently, up to nine different departments or agencies have some role in the administration of HEIs. This has led to inefficiencies and makes national policy difficult to implement.

The Higher and Technical Education Reform Bill, 2019 (Reform Bill) will resolve this by providing a mechanism to transfer all HEIs to the oversight of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Technology and DHERST, a core directive of NEC Decision 25/2017.

The Reform Bill will also deliver other quality and governance improvements including:

- Improved employment terms and conditions for
- Stronger recognition of agency institutions
- More effective Governing Councils with links to industry and professional recognition agencies
- Centralised development of national curriculum and training packages
- Targeted investments in HEIs delivering national skills priorities (both economic and social)

The Reform Bill is currently being considered by various Technical Working Groups and the Public Sector Organisational Reform Team (PSORT). It was also discussed in depth at the recent primary teachers’ colleges Principals’ Conference held in Port Moresby.

Wider consultation on the draft Bill will take place in the coming weeks. Further updates will be provided in subsequent newsletters. Copies of the draft Reform Bill will be available once wider consultation has occurred.

The following Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) provides a wide range of frequently asked questions that have been asked by stakeholders.

The answers to these FAQs help to provide a good overview of the draft Reform Bill provisions.

To view the frequently asked questions, please visit our website to find the document with answers. If you have other further questions, you can send them to info@dherst.ac.pg where we will respond to it.
**Improving the Quality of Pre-service Primary Teacher Education**

The pre-service Bachelor of Education (Primary)/Diploma in Teaching (the National Curriculum)

Although at the time of its publication in 2009 Vision 2050 envisaged an all graduate teaching profession as a priority for the country, the BEd/DipT program came about as a direct consequence of the 2013 Report of the Task Force for the Review of Outcomes Based Education in Papua New Guinea.

The Task Force’s principal recommendation was to replace OBE in schools with an SBE (standards based education) approach to curriculum planning and delivery. Amongst the many other recommendations however was the proposal to improve the quality of pre-service primary teacher education by moving from the then two-year Diploma in Teaching to a three-year Diploma, which, on completion, could be extended by one year and lead to the award of a pre-service Bachelor in Education (Primary) degree. Students wishing to proceed to the fourth year would be required to have a GPA of 3.2 or better.

**Roll-out of the National Curriculum for pre-service primary teacher education**

The roll out of the BEd/DipT program will commence in all primary teachers’ colleges at the beginning of the academic year 2020. Naturally it will take time for the colleges to upskill, where necessary, the lecturing staff so that they can deliver an undergraduate degree program. As of the beginning of 2020, all colleges will implement and deliver the DipT and, as and when they are ready, they will introduce the fourth year of the program that will thus enable students to graduate with a BEd degree. The rationale behind the upgrading of teacher qualifications, represents a major governmental priority, clearly expressed in the NEC Decision 25/2017: decision 7. DHERST is committed to bringing about quality in the higher education sector that will in turn enhance learning and teaching. Over the next five years, the primary teacher colleges will introduce the Bachelor of Education/Diploma in Teaching program - the pre-service primary teacher education National Curriculum. There will therefore be a process of ‘teaching out’ the current NDOE Diploma that began this academic year, 2019, with the admission to Y1 of the last group of students to whom it will be taught. All students in college will follow the NDOE Diploma program during 2019.

Towards an All Graduate Teaching Profession

As to when we shall have an all graduate teaching profession we are guided by government policy and the national Vision 2050. It will take time and resources to put the structures in place that will enable all primary teachers to become graduates. We seek to enhance not only the quality of pre-service teacher education but also to ensure that teaching once more becomes a noble profession of choice and respected alongside other professions in our country.
Piloting the National Curriculum

The National Curriculum has already been piloted in three colleges Kaindi, Kabaleo and Holy Trinity Teachers’ Colleges since 2015 and their first cohorts of BEd students graduated in December of 2018. The colleges have worked in close partnership and made good use of the resources at their disposal. Program leaders in the colleges have ensured that the first cohorts of their students have been well taught and mentored. Innovative approaches to the teaching, for example of English and Mathematics, together with an introduction to research methods, have established these graduates as future leaders in our primary schools and classrooms. Their efforts will surely make a vast difference for the better for current and future generations of children in our nation’s primary schools.

University Graduate Output - Over 4,000 in 2018

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<th>UPNG</th>
<th>UNITECH</th>
<th>PAU</th>
<th>UoG</th>
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There is an increase in aggregate Graduate Output from Papua New Guinea’s Universities based on recent 2019 Graduations. Increasing both the number and quality of our graduates is critical to the social and economic development of Papua New Guinea. Our Universities are instrumental in developing the human resource capacity of Papua New Guinea – producing qualified graduates, prepared to enter the workforce with 21st Century knowledge and skills in research, science and technology. Each annual graduate cohort addresses the needs of the labour market, contributes significantly to Papua New Guinea’s economic prospects and the achievement of national objectives.

Young graduates contribute new knowledge and skills for innovating new and existing industries, responsive to national needs and adaptive to global economic shifts and demands for PNG to become economically sustainable and globally competitive.

CONGRATULATIONS NEW VICE CHANCELLOR UNITECH

Congratulations to Dr. Ora Renagi, on his recent appointment as Vice Chancellor, University of Technology. Dr. Renagi is a Physicist with Masters and Doctoral degrees from James Cook University in Australia. He has an Undergraduate Degree from the UPNG. Dr. Renagi’s appointment caps a 34-year career in the service of the University. With Chancellor Jean Kekedo, the leadership of UoT is in very good hands.
DRIVING THE AGENDA: STRATEGIC HEALTH & EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

Prime Minister Peter O’Neill officiating at the ground-breaking ceremony for re-opening Boram School of Nursing after more than 3 decades

Divine Word University St Benedict’s Campus hosted the Ground Breaking ceremony lead by Prime Minister Mr. Peter O’Neill, for the 2019 re-opening of the Boram School of Nursing. DWU’s Vice-President, Dr. Lawrence Arockiaraj, welcomed the Prime Minister and his delegation and assured the Prime Minister that DWU’s St Benedict’s Campus has the qualified staff and the facilities it needs … dormitories, library, dining and 21st century IT facilities … to accept new School of Nursing intakes of men and women eager to learn, graduate and serve in the frontline delivery of the health services of Papua New Guinea.

The Prime Minister, in his speech, gave assurance that his government is committed to improving quality health and education services in the Province.

The Prime Minister’s health and education message is equally relevant across ALL PROVINCES in Papua New Guinea. Under the Higher Education (General Provisions) Act, 2014, all Medical and Allied Health training comes under the regulatory quality assurance oversight of DHERST. DHERST is the government agency responsible for higher and technical education, research, science and technology.

Differentiating Partnership Roles

Differentiating partnership roles between Health and Higher Education the Department of Health and the Provincial Health Authorities still maintain a vital interest in supporting the establishment of new health education and training facilities and strengthening existing ones.

National and Provincial Health Authorities will also play a major role contributing to health industry relevant curriculum and work-based standards required of graduating students, many of whom will join Provincial Health Authorities in delivering hospital and rural health services.

PNG COLLEGES OF NURSING TRANSITIONING TO DHERST

- Lae School of Nursing
- Mendi School of Nursing
- Highlands Regional School of Nursing
- Enga School of Nursing
- West New Britain School of Nursing
- Arawa School of Nursing
- Lutheran School of Nursing (Church Agency)
- Nazarene School of Nursing (Church Agency)
- St Barnabas School of Nursing (Church Agency)
- St. Benedict’s School of Nursing, Boram

The strategic partnership between the Health and Higher Education sectors allows the National Department of Health and the Provincial Health Authorities to do what they do best - taking care of core business in health planning, health financing, and delivering quality medical and health services to the people of Papua New Guinea in our national and provincial hospitals and in frontline rural health services.
Adequate Funding for Health Education

Over 5000 nurses serve in the hospitals, health centers and aid-posts across Papua New Guinea. The PNG Nursing Council and the PNG Nurses Association are therefore vital strategic partners in Nurse Education in the Health sector. With our colleagues in National and Provincial Health, DHERST is committed to working in a strategic partnership to ensure adequate funding for all medical and allied health education and training. This commitment will include increases in Scholarship placements, for medical and allied health education and training; funding support for medical and health teaching equipment; IT teaching and learning facilities and improved medical and allied health curriculum and teaching quality. A panel of medical and allied health education specialists will be chosen from national and international health professionals to serve as Assessors on DHERST Quality Assessment reviews.

Nursing Schools and Colleges across PNG will need to comply with the: (i) National Qualifications Framework (ii) National Standards for Higher Education Institutional Registration and (iii) National Standards for Higher Education Program Accreditation.

NOAS SCHOOL VISITS 2019

DHERST will be carrying out its annual visits to secondary schools throughout the country to assist students in applying using the National Online Application System or NOAS.

NOAS is the electronic version of the paper-based school leaver form (SLF) Gr.12 school leavers must complete for tertiary admission for next year.

Students will be advised of visits to their schools via their provincial education advisors, as well as through SMS blasts that will be sent out to students.

The visits to schools will commence at the end of August through to mid June.

For more information on the visits or on NOAS, visit our website www.dherst.ac.pg.
Secretary’s Press Club Address to Media and Public

DHERST Secretary, Professor Fr. Jan Czuba addressed the media and wider public at the recent Press Club address hosted by the National Broadcasting Cooperation and the media fraternity at Lamana Hotel.

In one of his first public addresses since his official appointment as DHERST Secretary, Professor Fr. Jan expanded upon the recently initiated National Online Application System (NOAS). He outlined the importance of NOAS and especially its convenience for Gr.12 students. NOAS is the first of many digital initiatives in DHERST’s wider plan for providing better quality and access to higher education opportunities in PNG.

Present at the Press Club were students and staff from various secondary schools within Port Moresby as well as donor partners and key higher education stakeholders.

DHERST Regional Workshop

TOPICS TO BE DISCUSSED

- National Online Application System (NOAS)
- National Online Selection System (NOSS)
- Scholarships – National & Overseas
- TESAS – Awarding of Scholarships
- iPNG Database System
- Higher and Technical Education Projects
- Sector Funding – Funding Model & K4K
- Centre of Excellence Projects
- PNG National Qualifications Framework
- Quality Assurance process & procedures

Who’s Invited: invitation letters have already gone out to representatives from:

I. Universities
II. Colleges
III. Private institutions offering higher education and TVET qualifications
IV. Provincial Education Advisers
V. Provincial Guidance Officers
VI. Provincial Guidance Officers
Department of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (DHERST) is required under the Higher Education (General Provisions) Act 2014 (HEGPA) to establish and maintain a register of all registered higher education institutions in Papua New Guinea (PNG). This interactive Higher Education Institution Register is the official record of all registered higher education institutions in PNG.

The interactive Register has been developed and will list the following for each institution:

- Name of the institution
- Programs and courses accredited or approved to be delivered by the institution
- Registration details
- Quality review dates (past and proposed)
- Category of Institution - University, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), Teaching, Nursing, Business, Agriculture or other specialized institutions
- Type of institution - public, private, state, church agency, provincial or overseas institution

In developing the Register, DHERST has commenced with existing information from Departmental records, together with relevant information it has received from institutions.

If your Institution ALREADY LISTED on the Higher Education Institution Register:

Your institution is required to review the information held on the Register. If details about your institution are inaccurate or incomplete, please contact DHERST with the updated information. An officer from DHERST will contact you if further information is required.

To view the Higher Education Institution Register, visit the Register Link here to access and view further information on and regarding the register.
ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NATIONAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Innovation, quality, good governance and better alignment with industry

The NSDA is an Advisory Group within the Department of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology operating under the authority of the Higher Education (General Provisions) Act 2014.

Driving national Skills sector reform in Papua New Guinea, the NSDA engages with Industry, the Education sector, Investors, Training Providers and Employers. The design of the NSDA brings together the best of Industry and the SKILLS sector to address mutual sector issues

This skills partnership will grow the quality and capacity of PNG’s skilled workforce, a key government priority and build industry’s ability to access those skills to improve productivity, competitiveness, and deliver economic and social impact. The NSDA will align skills projects and initiatives with industry, employers and training providers under a National Skills Education Plan. The Plan will identify challenges, address skills gaps and priorities. Read more about the NSDA as well as other documents related to NSDA on our website.

Link to NSDA Instrument of Establishment
NEW TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT FOR TRANSFERRING STAFF

TEACHER COLLEGES  TVET COLLEGES  NURSING COLLEGES

Fundamental to the process of reform in the higher education sector is the need to address the employment rights, benefits and entitlements of those involved in and affected by the change process.

Over the past eighteen months, for example, the Teacher Colleges' Technical Working Group has been deliberating these matters and taken into account the views of principals; ad hoc groups of colleges and, during the ongoing Capacity Needs Assessment of the primary teacher colleges, the individual and collective views of serving lecturers.

Recently, following on from the Teacher Colleges Principals Conference, five Highlands Primary Teacher Colleges held a combined meeting in April 2019. This meeting gave prominence to concerns regarding retirement benefits; allowances; levels of employment in any new structure; contracts; variation in salaries and what transition to public service terms and conditions for professional and specialist staff may mean in practice.

Inter-Agency Technical Working Group
In order to address shared and particular concerns across the higher education sector such as those outlined above, a new Inter-Agency Technical Working Group (TWG) has been tasked with determining terms and conditions of employment for Higher Education Institution College Staff from the Country’s 14 Teacher Colleges, 11 TVET Colleges and 10 Nursing Colleges. On the passing of the Higher and Technical Education Reform Bill and once all preparatory arrangements, these institutions will be first to transfer under DHERST’s regulatory framework.

TWG Scope of Work
Comprehensive details on the background, rationale and scope of work for the Technical Working Group is set out in the draft Terms of Reference. The TOR references upcoming legislative changes in the Higher and Technical Education Reform Bill that deal with transitional arrangements for staff of public higher education institutions (including church agencies); and the preparation of contracts of employment upon their transfer under DHERST’s regulatory framework.

When is the ‘No Disadvantage Principle’?
In developing new terms and conditions for employment, the Working Group will draw heavily on the experience of the National Department of Education (NDOE), the Teaching Services Commission (TSC) and the National Department of Health (NDOH) to ensure a ‘no disadvantage principle’ for transferring staff. This principle provides an assurance that no staff will be any worse off under new employment contracts; and in fact they may be better off in terms of newly developed professional remuneration packages and increased opportunities for professional development. The TWG will consult with peak body staffing representatives including The PNG Teachers’ Association and The PNG Council of Nursing.

What are the contract arrangements on transfer?
On the transfer date for TVET, Teachers and Nursing Colleges, all staff will transfer on their existing contracts, terms and conditions and for at least 12 months. After 12 months, the college must determine which staff will be offered ongoing Public Service contracts under specialist and professional categories of employment for Higher Education Institutions.

Staff who are not offered contracts, or who do not wish to take up contracts, must be redeployed, retrenched, retired or as otherwise determined the transferring Agency.
BUILDING A CADRE OF LEADERS ACROSS TVET INSTITUTIONS

TVET Leadership Development Program graduates 22 students

The workplace focused TVET Leadership Development Program is a response to the improvement recommendations identified in the TVET Needs Analysis and DHERST’s Strategic Implementation and Improvement Plan (2017-2038). The Program is aligned to the Australian Diploma of Leadership and Management.

The program has achieved a 100% success rate with all participants graduating and successfully receiving the Australian Diploma of Leadership and Management and [insert PNG Diploma]

The program is part of the joint initiative by the Australian and PNG Governments to strengthen the Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) sector in Papua New Guinea and enhance the sector’s contribution to sustainable economic growth.

The objective of the program is to build the current and potential leaders’ understanding and application of leadership and management skills in the workplace so that they have the skills and knowledge.

The Program consists of 12 units delivered on and off job over a 20-month period consisting of six one week workshops and on job practical workplace improvement applications of knowledge and skills.

Federation Training (Victoria) in partnership with the International Education Agency College of TAFE (IEA College of TAFE) successfully delivered the Australian Diploma program to 22 current and future leaders from 11 vocational institutions across PNG. These leaders are ready to lead and manage a new era of demand driven skills delivery to industry standards in the TVET Colleges and Polytechnics across the country.

Australian High Commission First Secretary Ms. Fuschia Hepsworth presenting a certificate to one of the graduants

One of the 22 graduants in all smiles with her certificate

Click here to view more photos on the TVET Leadership Program Graduation
Thanks
Prime Minister
Hon. Peter O’Neill, CMG, MP Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea

This edition of the Newsletter concludes with a ‘courtesy thank you’ to the Hon. Peter O’Neill, Prime Minister, for his leadership of the Government’s signature Education policy aimed at unifying, reforming and transforming Higher Education in Papua New Guinea. Early this decade, the Prime Minister’s personal and high-profile support for changes in the primary education sector led to significant and beneficial changes focused on the introduction of the Standards Based Education curriculum. These changes, personally championed by the Prime Minister at the time, later became central to the formulation of the Government’s landmark and far-reaching NEC Decision 25/2017 for unifying, reforming and transforming higher and technical education in Papua New Guinea.

The Prime Minister’s early vision for the unification of the Primary Teacher College Sector is now enshrined as Directive 6 of NEC 25/2017 and instructs all Colleges that have not already done so, to commence implementation of the pre-service primary 4-Year Bachelor of Education and 2-Year Diploma of Teaching. Many other far-reaching Directives are represented in NEC 25/2017. Implementation of NEC 25/2017 is now well-advanced under DHERST’s Strategic Implementation Plan.

The Prime Minister’s stamp on the reform process has also led directly to the establishment of the National Skills Development Agency facilitating stronger linkages between Government, Industry and registered and accredited Training Providers. The establishment of the NSDA will accelerate the development of the National Skills Packages. The NSDA led partnership between government industry and training providers will reduce Papua New Guinea’s dependence on overseas labour and create skills, training and employment pathways for young Papua New Guineans.

Sincere thanks PM for your ongoing support, your vision and national leadership in the transition and reform of Higher Education!
The PNG National Qualification Framework

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VISION

TO SERVE AND FACILITATE DEVELOPMENTS IN THE PAPUA NEW GUINEA HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION SECTOR FOR ECONOMIC, SOCIAL GROWTH AND NATION BUILDING

Current DHERST Innovations

NOAS National Online Application System

NOSS National Online Selection System

Aopi Center, Tower 2, Ground floor, Level 3 & 4 Islander Road.

www.dherst.gov.pg