

Speech by Executive Dean of the Faculty of Education, Dr Muki Moeng at the launch of the Advanced Diploma TVT (Adv Dip TVT), Nelson Mandela University, 3 October 2018

(All protocol was observed and dignitaries were welcomed)

Good morning ladies and gentlemen. Goeie more dames en here. Molweni manene nani manenekazi. It gives me great pleasure to be making this address today. It is indeed a historic moment for our Faculty, our University and our partners and collaborators. It has been quite a journey for us to get to this point.

Our **Advanced Diploma in Technical and Vocational Teaching** is a direct response to and addresses the vision expressed in three national policy statements. The

- **White Paper for Post-School Education and Training,**
- **National Development Plan** and
- **Policy on Professional qualifications for Lecturers in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET).**

These policies emphasise the centrality of the TVET sector in addressing some of the huge social and economic challenges that face our country. These policies, importantly, also provide a framework within which universities, TVET Colleges and the private sector may respond to these challenges.

Ladies and gentlemen, we all know that the government wants to have 2.5 million students in TVET by 2030. This means that they would need to create capacity in TVET to grow the student population by about 1.7 million in the next eleven years to achieve this goal. The current almost 800 000 students require approximately 10 000 lecturers operating in the 50 colleges countrywide. These numbers imply an influx of an additional 20 000 lecturers over the next eleven years. And that, ladies and gentlemen, is the scope of the challenge that faces South Africa.

In order to put these numbers into context, one needs to scan the literature available on the **profile of current TVET lecturers**. At a cursory glance, four elements emerge:

Firstly, Approximately 50% are professionally un- or under-qualified. Secondly, of the 50% that are qualified, 35% are *school qualified* and only 15% are TVET qualified. Thirdly, approximately 55% of all TVET lecturers lack workplace-based experience, which means that they have never been in the workplace towards which they are teaching. Fourthly, approximately 45% have been teaching for fewer than 5 years; thus a relatively young and inexperienced teaching corps.

It is into this world that the Adv Dip TVT can make a difference in a number of areas, and we are very proud of the fact that Nelson Mandela University can make a difference by offering the Adv Dip TVT.

Starting in 2019, this qualification creates the opportunity (on a part-time basis on our Missionvale Campus) for those currently teaching in the sector who are deemed **academically qualified, but professionally unqualified** to become professionally qualified lecturers.

Furthermore, this qualification places huge emphasis on the relationship between the classroom and the workplace and creates the opportunity for those who lack **workplace-based experience**, to gain such experience.

Once we launch a **full-time cohort** in the very near future, we will annually add to the pool of lecturers needed to grow the sector. Mandela University will contribute between 40 – 50 new lecturers annually. We can confirm at this point that there are 60 lecturers from our two TVET colleges who qualify and are in the process of being enrolled for 2019.

The Adv Dip TVT, ladies & gentlemen, thus adds value on two levels: first, it serves the Continuous Professional Development needs of current lecturers AND it serves the growth needs of the DHET, by growing the sector as we move towards 2030.

But we cannot do it alone!

This qualification is not feasible if the colleges, the SETA's, local government and the private sector are not intricately involved in the programme delivery.

In the preface of the **White Paper for Post-school Education and Training** (DHET, 2013, vii), the Honourable ex-Minister Blade Nzimande wrote the following:

This White Paper is an important document in the development of our higher education and training system. It is a definitive statement of the government's vision for the post-school system, outlining our main priorities and our strategies for achieving them. It is a vision for an integrated system of post-school education and training, with all institutions playing their role as parts of a coherent but differentiated whole. These institutions include the colleges and universities whose main purpose is the direct provision of education and training and, in the case of universities, the conduct of research.

Ladies & gentlemen, it is within this context that we, as a faculty, have explored close ties with Port Elizabeth TVET College and the East Cape Midlands TVET College. We have in fact entered into a comprehensive Memorandum of Agreement with each of them. These agreements will guide our collaboration for the next five years as we develop the programme. We need to ensure that the TVET voices as well as TVET expertise are both visible and tangible in the work we do. More about that a bit later.

The Honourable ex-Minister continues:

(Our vision) also includes (government) institutions that support the education and training process, such as the Sector Education and Training Authorities, the National Skills Fund and the advisory, regulatory and quality assurance bodies ...

With this statement, he places government at the centre of growth and development for the post-school sector. Policy and research initiatives must lead to proper and equitable funding strategies, and that is why we have the DHET and SETA representatives here today. Finally, the Honourable ex-Minister shifts focus to the private sector:

The White Paper also recognises the importance of partnerships between educational institutions and employers. Most students are preparing for careers in the labour market, and practical experience in the world of work is an invaluable part of their training. Even those students who do not find jobs in the formal labour market will benefit from practical workplace experience as they seek alternative ways of earning sustainable livelihoods. Employers must be drawn closer to the education and training process; they are among its major beneficiaries and must contribute to its success.

And so, ladies and gentlemen, we have gathered in this venue today representatives from all those groups envisioned by ex-Minister Nzimande in the white paper for PSET in 2013: university and TVET, national and local government, SETA's, business, commerce and industry.

Today I wish to use this opportunity to launch not only the Adv Dip TVT as a new qualification to be offered at Nelson Mandela University, but to also launch a new era of collaboration between the university, the various arms of government, the colleges and all prospective

employers from the private and public sector who employ those who qualify from the TVET sector. In her inaugural lecture, our Vice Chancellor, Prof Sibongile Muthwa spoke about hubs of convergence, where the university and the community intersect and work together to share expertise, experience and different knowledges for the common public good. That community, ladies and gentlemen is all of us here today as we converge in this historic moment to collaborate in order for us to contribute towards the fulfilment of the white paper of 2013.

When this policy was gazetted the faculty was already involved in TVET, as we offered a short learning programme, called the Vocational Education Orientation Programme (VEOP) to 42 un- and under-qualified lecturers from PE TVET College and EMC TVET College. We began engaging in earnest to respond to the new policy, and took the decision to develop the Adv Dip TVT around 2015. We worked – as part of the WITS REAL group – with about 10 universities from across the country to develop a national framework for the Adv Dip TVT. However, we soon understood that our Adv Dip TVT would be unique.

In 2016, I asked Mr Rudman to put together a plan that would put us on a pathway that connects us with international best practice. He chose three destinations that he and Mr Lucky Maluleke would explore ...

- Carl von Ossietzky University in Oldenburg, Germany
- University of Winchester in Britain, and
- University of Aberdeen in Scotland.

In Oldenburg, Germany they found a seamless link between the vocational sector (or as they call it, *berufsbildungsschule*), the university and the (private sector) workplace. The levels of interaction between these three stakeholders ensures that the curricula offered at the vocational colleges in Germany are mostly fit for purpose, because those in the workplace have opportunities to engage with the curriculum. Students graduate from the vocational sector, using modern, up-to date equipment, and do not need to be re-trained when they enter the workplace, because the employer sector is intricately involved in the vocational sector. In Germany the university is active inside the vocational college **and** inside the workplace. In that way, they make it their business to prepare lecturers who can prepare their students for the challenges of the world of work.

We understand that South Africa is not Germany, and Port Elizabeth is not Oldenburg. We know that we have to take their truth, and turn it into our truth - a truth for the African reality that our students face on a daily basis. We also know, however, that together we can find an African solution for our contextual challenges.

Ladies & gentlemen, together with our TVET partners and all the business, commerce and industry representatives gathered in this room today, we too can achieve that. This metro, this region, will benefit immensely if we can take hands on this journey.

The second destination was to meet with Professor Bill Lucas at the University of Winchester. Many regard Bill Lucas as one of the foremost writers in vocational pedagogy. In referring to vocational teaching, he states the following:

The effectiveness of all education systems depends critically on the quality of teaching and learning in the classrooms, workshops, laboratories and other spaces in which the education takes place. While outstanding teachers (including lecturers, trainers, tutors, and coaches), engaged students, well-designed courses, facilities which are fit for purpose, and a good level of resources are necessary if any kind of educational provision is to be excellent, they alone are not sufficient. The real answers to improving outcomes from vocational education lie in the 'classroom', in understanding the many

decisions 'teachers' take as they interact with students. (Lucas, Spencer and Claxton, 2012)

Much of the pedagogical work that he and his colleagues have done, has permeated the modules we are in the process of conceiving. In fact, the triadic model of methodology they propose makes it possible for us to have any number of lecturers, representing any number of teaching disciplines in the same classroom, and be able to guide them in the process of identifying their specific signature pedagogy. At the end of the programme, when these lecturers graduate, they will understand the pedagogical requirements of their subject and we believe they will be able to lecture at an advanced level. Of that, we are certain.

Their final destination was the University of Aberdeen in Scotland. They chose this destination, because the UoA offers – as part of their Teacher Qualification in Further Education (TQFE) – a qualification very similar to the one we were contemplating. We saw an opportunity for international comparability. However, Mr Rudman and Mr Maluleke found a lot more. Not only were there curriculum features from which we could learn, but they were offering the programme *online at a distance*. Adding this element into the Adv Dip TVT that we are offering, makes it possible for us to also cater for un- and under-qualified lecturers at remote campuses, as is the case with EMC TVET College, with campuses in Graaff-Reinet and Makhanda. As we speak, infrastructure arrangements are being made to include these lecturers.

Earlier this year our TVET team participated as TVET experts from South Africa in an online discussion with lecturers from Finland, Britain and Scotland in a comparative module offered at the University of Aberdeen ... a further demonstration of the power that technology brings to this kind of offering.

During 2017, Dr Kathija Yassim undertook a journey to Kenya to explore what other African countries have to offer in terms of TVET education. She discovered that there is much we may learn from other African countries, because of similarities in terms of context. We have been impressed with the kind of innovation and sustainable education orientations in Kenya and other African countries where the emphasis is not just on competency, but on student capabilities in relation to the solutions, that TVET may have for community issues. It was an insight into African solutions for African problems in a real way. We intend to continue strengthening and developing African networks so that we stitch TVET South Africa into the fabric of Africa as a basis for economy creation and social entrepreneurship.

While we were writing these modules we visited TVET colleges in the Nelson Mandela Bay to observe the culture, the vibe and how things were done. Furthermore, we asked our TVET colleagues to critique our work and give input into the development of the learning materials. It was along these journeys that the team decided to infuse a number of what they refer to as '**golden threads**' into the programme. The first of these golden threads is the **humanising pedagogy** that the faculty has been working on for a number of years now. We believe that lecturers who qualify with the Adv Dip TVT must be able to create safe generative spaces where students are valued for who they are and for what they bring to classroom. Relationship is central! Paulo Freire drives much of our work as we try to understand TVET lecturer identity: in his words; ***"The teacher is of course an artist, but being an artist does not mean that he or she can make the profile, can shape the students. What the educator does in teaching is to make it possible for the students to become themselves."***

It is therefore not about filling empty vessels with knowledge; it is about enabling young minds to move seamlessly into the complex world of work around them. Central to our Humanizing Pedagogy, lies the concepts of Ubuntu (I am, because you are) and Community. This means that we have immersed this diploma in African philosophical thought – we are, after all, an African university, serving an African TVET sector to provide people who can function effectively in an African context.

Secondly, we are offering the programme in a **blended learning model**, meaning that technology is central. The team believes that no TVET lecturer should stand before their students as a technology-challenged person. The programme forces TVET lecturers to embrace technology, so that they may take their classroom into the world, and so that they may bring the world into their classroom. And, colleagues, it is this very same technology that makes it possible to export this qualification to rural areas, to include campuses on Graaff-Reinet and Makhanda. With talks later today, who knows how widely we may offer this qualification?

Thirdly, we also believe that over and above preparing TVET students for the world of work, they must have critical thinking skills, be innovative, maximise their communication skills, and understand the socio-economic and political challenges of our country.

Fourthly, lecturers who will complete the Adv Dip TVT will understand the important role they have to play in the sustainability of the world and the people who live in it. TVET lecturers have the opportunity to influence a whole generation of young people who will engage with human and natural resources. So, the **17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals** lie central to our work.

Finally, **research underpins our work**. From the outset, we have endeavoured to ensure that we based the Adv Dip TVT on a solid research foundation. We spent a great deal of time exploring the basic tenets of a humanising teaching practice, we read widely about vocational practices and the world of TVET. We have created a research community of practice, with three PhD's and four Master's students creating new knowledge around TVET.

We believe these golden threads add a lot to the coherence of our programme, and will add much value in the lives of the lecturers who complete the Adv Dip TVT, and – by extension – to the quality of the students who exit their classrooms.

The Adv Dip TVT developed at Nelson Mandela University is not just a theory about teaching in TVET Colleges – it is about theory becoming practice. Almost one third of the qualification (32 out of 120 credits) is practice-based. Lecturers have to complete two work-integrated learning (WIL) modules; one in which they learn to transfer disciplinary content knowledge into pedagogical content knowledge through their teaching practice opportunities. The other WIL component is where they have to enter the workplace to ensure that they understand the world of work towards which they are teaching.

And that, colleagues, brings me to the reason why you have been invited to our breakfast launch today. The Adv Dip TVT makes a number of conversations possible:

1. It means that as a faculty of education, we must engage much more closely with our colleagues in other faculties at Mandela University. Colleagues, you hold the disciplinary knowledge – you teach engineering, tourism, marketing, business management, maritime and a host of other disciplines usually offered at comprehensive universities. We need your expertise so that we can create a new pathway for your graduates. And we need your expertise to help us ensure we put TVET lecturers in the sector who are at the cutting edge of their knowledge disciplines.
2. The Adv Dip TVT makes it imperative that the TVET Colleges and employers in both the private and the public sectors have a serious conversation about those who will qualify from the various subject disciplines at the colleges. If we do not allow current, future or potential employers to make input into the curricula and the values or work ethic we teach, how do we then make TVET fit for purpose? If future employers do not open the doors to their offices, workshops, laboratories and other workspaces, how will TVET lecturers know towards what they should be teaching? Imagine a world where the private sector embraces the TVET sector in a seamless collaboration to the benefit of all concerned!

3. The university also needs to have a conversation with these employers, because we need to understand what a TVET lecturer needs to know so that we may adequately prepare them for their task. And we need you to help us in this task, by becoming a central part of our work-integrated learning modules.
4. The university also needs to work very closely with the colleges, because they understand their sector. Our MoA with the two colleges, gives them access to and oversight of programme delivery. The MoA covers wide-ranging functions to the mutual benefit of the colleges and the university. Together we will create a pathway the excellence in teaching practice in the TVET sector.
5. And, of course, we all need to talk to government and the SETA's when it comes to funding. Growing our TVET footprint will place immense pressure on our human and financial resources. We need to find ways to make this growth possible. I know that the DHET is keen to explore ways in which our Adv Dip TVT can impact other regions in South Africa. These talks commence today.

Colleagues, these conversations imply a complex network of interactions by a very diverse group of stakeholders. We will not easily sustain these intricate networks, unless we put mechanisms in place to sustain them. That is the challenge that confronts us. We want to engage with you on this.

In conclusion, ladies & gentlemen, the Adv Dip TVT makes it possible, that a Matric learner can decide, as a career choice, to become a TVET lecturer. True to the Nelson Mandela University mantra, **CHANGE THE WORLD**, we believe we are indeed doing this. We believe that if we, collectively in this room, can inspire TVET lecturers to teach effectively, at an advanced level, this Advanced Diploma in Technical and Vocational Teaching can indeed change the world for the TVET sector for this region and ultimately for South Africa..

But, colleagues, we need you to take our hands and join us in this journey ...

Thank you