

# Employers called to open work placement for Tvet college students

Higher Education and Training Minister, Dr Blade Nzimande, has called on all employers to open their workplaces for the placement of Technical Vocational Education and Training (Tvet) college students.



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“The National Development Plan (NDP) emphasises the importance of workplace-based training in job creation and the need for Tvet colleges to become preferred institutions for vocational education and training. It also stresses the role of Sector Education and Training Authorities (Setas) in supporting the development of relationships between educational institutions and employers,” Nzimande said.

The Minister was speaking at a Ministerial Summit on Strategic Industry Partnerships with Tvet Colleges, currently underway at the Cape Town International Convention Centre.

The two-day summit, which started on Wednesday, brings together the Post School Education and Training (Pset) sector, government departments, non-governmental organisations, labour and business to discuss how to strengthen Tvet colleges partnerships, particularly work-based learning.

Nzimande noted that the expansion of workplace-based learning opportunities for students has proven to be a challenge in the Tvet college sector.

He said that in response to President Cyril Ramaphosa's State of the Nation Address, the department has made a commitment to ensure that 10,000 Tvet college graduates are offered workplace experience so that they can complete their qualifications, thus improving their prospects for employability or starting their own small businesses.

"The primary aim of placements is to assist the transition of our young people from learning to working," the Minister said.

He added that he had previously stated on numerous platforms that Tvet college management, especially principals, must know that they are not running Tvet colleges unless they prioritise building partnerships with industry.

The Minister has given a directive that all Tvet college principals should sign new performance agreements that include industry partnerships as one of their key performance indicators.

"This decision was informed by the White Paper for Post-School Education and Training which requires Work-Integrated Learning (WiL) to be a central component of the college programmes and that the extent to which students are able to get placements in the workplace must be used as an important indicator for assessing the performance of the management of institutions.

"As Tvet college principals, you owe it to the youth and the country to manage student admissions with the end in mind and this call for the establishment of strategic partnerships with industry. It will indeed be a travesty of justice and a serious indictment on us, as leaders, if we were to allow our inaction to cause Tvet colleges to become a dead-end for students," Nzimande said.

One of the leaders' core responsibilities is to break down barriers to opportunities by creating pathways for young people to access skills training programmes and workplace-based training, articulate into higher education, and pursue self-employment without any hindrance.

## **Supporting Tvet colleges innovation programmes**

Meanwhile, Nzimande has asked the Department of Science and Innovation to assist by supporting innovation programmes and initiatives in Tvet colleges, and the Higher Education and Training to help in introducing entrepreneurship programmes in the country's colleges.

"Our vision remains that of providing an integrated, coordinated and highly articulated Post-School Education and Training System for improved economic participation and social development of our youth and adults.

"Our Tvet colleges cater for many South Africans who need to improve their educational levels and/or acquire a skill. To this end, the ability of Tvet college principals to lead the forging of partnerships with industry and/or workplaces is of critical importance," the Minister said.

He added that by 2030, Tvet colleges must be strong differentiated institutions, offering a range of high-quality programmes preparing students for the world of work and entrepreneurship.

"They must offer qualifications that are responsive to the needs of students, as well as regional and national skills demand."

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