

## Executive Summary

In March 2008, the Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor, announced the establishment of a Ministerial *Committee on Progress Towards Transformation and Social Cohesion and the Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education Institutions* to “investigate discrimination in public higher education institutions, with a particular focus on racism and to make appropriate recommendations to combat discrimination and to promote social cohesion”. The Committee’s Terms of Reference state that it “must report on the following:

- The nature and extent of racism and racial discrimination in public higher education, and in particular university residences. While the emphasis should be on racial discrimination, other forms of discrimination based, on, for example, gender, ethnicity and disability should also be considered.
- The steps that have been taken by institutions to combat discrimination, including an assessment of good practice as well as shortcomings of the existing interventions.

And

- Advise the Minister of Education and the key constituencies in higher education on the policies, strategies and interventions needed to combat discrimination and to promote inclusive institutional cultures for staff and students, which are based on the values and principles enshrined in the Constitution.
- Identify implications for other sectors of the education system.”

### The Brief

The Committee located its investigation within the context of the transformation agenda of *Education White Paper 3: A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education*. White Paper 3 explains that transformation “requires that all existing practices, institutions and values are viewed anew and rethought in terms of their fitness for the new era”. At the centre of the transformation agenda, in terms of ‘fitness’, is the White Paper’s vision for the establishment of a single national coordinated higher education system that is “democratic, non-racial and non-sexist.”

This is also in line with the South African Constitution, which defines discrimination to include “race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth.”

While racism, like other forms of discrimination, is based on prejudice and fear, what distinguishes it is the ideology of white supremacy, which serves as a rationale for the unequal relations of power that exist between people in South Africa. This is a critical, analytical distinction, as racism is often intertwined with other forms of discrimination, such as social class, gender, ethnicity, religion, language and xenophobia, and uses the latter set of prejudices to justify and reproduce itself.

Furthermore, the Committee agreed that gender discrimination or sexism should also receive special attention. Like racism, it is an ideological phenomenon, based on unequal relations of power between men and women and underpinned by the ideology of patriarchy. Indeed, the importance of both is underscored by the fact that non-racism and non-sexism constitute foundation values in the Constitution and are central to the transformation agenda in higher education.

### **The Process**

The Committee's investigation was based on a combination of documentary analyses and interaction with higher education stakeholders and constituent groupings. It included the following:

- An overview of current trends in the higher education system, based on quantitative data contained in the Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS).
- A survey of the relevant literature pertinent to the key themes of the investigation.
- Analyses of institutional submissions, as well as of policy and strategic documents, including the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) Institutional Audit Reports.
- An analysis of a questionnaire on the development and implementation of policies relating to transformation, discrimination and social cohesion within higher education institutions.
- Analyses of submissions received from both national organisations and individuals, resulting from a public call for submissions via the media.
- Visits to all institutions to solicit the views of institutional stakeholders and constituencies, including councils, executive managements, student leaders, staff representatives from both academic and support staff, as well as staff associations and trade unions.
- Consultation with national student and trade union organisations.

### **An Overview of Institutional Submissions**

The institutional submissions varied in terms of the issues and concerns raised, as well as the quality of the input. The differences and variations are best illustrated by the way in which institutions provided evidence to support their claims, which included the following:

- Broad claims regarding transformation supported by mission and other public statements.
- Descriptions of policies and intended interventions without any accompanying discussions of implementation procedures, time frames, measurements of success and monitoring processes.
- Descriptions of policies and intended interventions, including implementation processes and monitoring measures, but without any discussion of the outcomes.
- Descriptions of policies and interventions implemented, including monitoring processes and outcomes, supported by evidence.

Institutional submissions tended to reflect the history that the divided higher education system inherited. Given the emphasis on race as the primary transformation issue, historically black institutions' submissions tended to be different from those of their historically white counterparts. The latter, in the light of their history, and predictably so, were more comprehensive in explaining their transformation agendas.

The point needs to be made, however, that if one understands that the transformation agenda includes the necessity to examine the underlying assumptions and practices that underpin the academic and intellectual projects pertaining to learning, teaching and research, then transformation is clearly a challenge facing *all* South African higher education institutions, irrespective of their historical origins. In this regard, it may, therefore be suggested that all institutions, including the historically black institutions, ought to be making this the focus of their attention.

The fact that the submissions were so inconsistent in their degree of attention to these issues, is a matter of concern. A further point of note is that although all institutions raised issues of gender in relation to access, few institutions raised the impact of gender in the context of patriarchy and unequal relations of power. The challenges of ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation and disability were also, by and large, given less attention. In making these points, the Committee was very much aware of the fact that the variations in the institutional submissions were also influenced by capacity and resources – human, time and technical – available to the institutions in terms of collecting, collating and analysing the relevant information.

It should also be noted that, with the exception of two institutions, the submissions were prepared by the executive management structures of the various institutions. The fact that other institutional constituencies were not involved or consulted may have been the result of the tight time frames imposed by the Committee.

The more comprehensive submissions are important for mainly two reasons. Firstly, they are an indication that the exercise had been taken seriously and that it provided an opportunity for many institutions, some of them for the first time, to engage seriously with their academic, cultural and social identities. It became clear during institutional visits that the process of preparing the submissions had been challenging but powerfully productive. Secondly, they constitute an important and invaluable resource in understanding the higher education landscape, as well as the progress made and the challenges that remain in giving effect to the transformation agenda outlined in White Paper 3.

Furthermore, aside from the institutional submissions, there were a small number of submissions by individuals from within institutions or national organisations representing particular interest groups. These submissions were useful in providing a counter balance to and, in some cases, challenging, the “official” institutional view, as well as in raising issues that cut across all institutions, such as, for example, disability.

Finally, the institutional policy documents submitted, including the checklist, suggest that all institutions have a comprehensive range of policies in place to deal with issues of transformation and discrimination. However, it was evident that there is a disjunction between policy development and implementation.

### **An Overview of Institutional Visits**

Although institutions were informed well in advance of the Committee’s visits via the offices of their vice-chancellors, levels of preparedness for the Committee’s visits varied considerably. In a number of institutions, across the historical divide, students and staff representatives had only been informed of the Committee’s visit a day or two before the actual event. In some cases, representatives only received their institution’s submission on the actual day of the visit.

The Committee’s approach to institutional visits was to listen and to clarify issues, to gain an understanding of how the council, management, staff and students understood transformation, as well as an understanding of their assessment of the impact of the policies and programmes initiated to give effect to the institutional transformation agenda. The Committee did not debate or question the merits or demerits of particular policies or programmes, nor did it attempt to address inconsistencies and apparent contradictions in the institutional submissions. It did not also, it needs to be stressed, seek empirical verification of the issues raised and views expressed. The Committee’s approach was, in part, based on the premise that an attempt to do more than merely listening and clarifying would be inappropriate, if not impossible, during a one-day visit to each institution. However, the Committee was also guided by the fact that it was interested in obtaining a sense of the real-life experiences of those concerned, namely students and staff, with regard to their institution’s policies on transformation.

The Committee was struck by the fact that, by and large, there seemed to be little or no internal dialogue between institutional constituencies on issues of transformation. Of particular concern is the fact that institutional forums (IFs), which should be facilitating such dialogue, appear to have largely become inactive. However, in a sense, the Committee's visits provided constituencies with a forum, not only for voicing their concerns but, more importantly, for talking to each other outside the restrictions that normally characterise formal consultative and negotiating processes.

### **Process Constraints**

The Committee was profoundly aware of the challenges confronting it in undertaking an investigation and preparing a report which would do justice to the complexity and scale of the issues at hand within a six-month time frame. It was clear to the Committee from the outset that, given the time constraints, it would not be able to compile a comprehensive overview of the state of transformation in the higher education system. It understood that it would not be able to look deeply into the nature of particular issues, and also that it could not do justice to the volume of information that it would have collected.

With regard to the first issue, that of the overview, it is clear that much more comprehensive and painstaking work needs to be done. With regard to the second, it also became clear that the reports, submissions and hearings constitute a formidable body of data that would require much more time to synthesise, distil and analyse. As a consequence, the Committee was aware that it would only be able to provide an overview of the issues and challenges facing the sector. It therefore proposes that the Department of Education (DoE) develops a future strategy for analysing the large body of data that is now available. This report is therefore a first attempt at defining the issues and developing an agenda for future work on transformation.

The Committee was also acutely aware of the fact that it could not give everybody a hearing or provide an opportunity to the great many people who wished to be heard. This limitation, it needs to be emphasised, was not intentional. The Committee did not have the person-power, the time or the resources to be fair to everybody. As a result, the Committee decided to limit its meetings to the statutorily recognised institutional stakeholders and constituencies.

Given these caveats, it is important to flag a crucial caution with regard to the nature of the investigation undertaken and the outcomes reported. This exercise was not an academic exercise and the report should therefore not be judged in terms of the strictures of academic research. Although the Committee had access to primary and secondary data, including academic studies and institutional surveys, the report is largely based on information that has been provided by institutional stakeholders and constituencies – students and staff in

particular. In other words, it is based on these people's view of their experience of transformation or the lack thereof.

The interplay between the primary and secondary data, the institutional submissions and policy documents, as well as the views that emerged during the institutional visits, provided the Committee with sufficient evidence to do an assessment and to provide recommendations for addressing the obstacles and ongoing challenges that continue to bedevil the transformation agenda in higher education.

It is against this background, and mindful of the difficulties involved in undertaking the investigation, that the Committee agreed that, taken at a minimum, its investigation should provide the Minister of Education with the following:

- An overview of the state of discrimination in higher education.
- An indication of the most egregious forms of discrimination that are taking place within the system.
- An insight into models of good anti-discriminatory practices that are emerging within the system.
- An agenda for the areas in higher education most urgently in need of anti-discriminatory measures.
- An identification of the most critical areas requiring further investigation and research.

### **Overall Assessment of Progress**

It is clear from the preceding discussion that the institutional understanding and interpretation of transformation, discrimination and social cohesion, are broadly consistent with the White Paper's vision and framework. In addition, an analysis of the policy documents submitted by institutions, including the checklist questionnaire, which was completed by just under 50% of the institutions, indicates that the sector has formally responded to government's transformation programme. A perusal of these documents indicates gaps and inconsistent approaches to the issues at hand, but the fact of the matter is that all the institutions have complied with the broad transformation requirements placed before them. This is especially so with regard to employment equity. Significantly, where policy gaps do arise, these often related to issues of race and gender. It seems, for example, that racial and gender harassment policies were not always in place and were not receiving sufficient attention.

In the final stages of this overview, the point needs to be made that the Committee's awareness of the complexity of the transformation process has been significantly enhanced. While there are good practices that were developed at some of the institutions, which might serve as models for change in the country, no one must underestimate the difficulties that still exist. There is virtually no institution that is *not* in need of serious change or transformation.

## **Conclusion**

It is clear from this overall assessment of the state of transformation in higher education, that discrimination, in particular with regard to racism and sexism, is pervasive in our institutions. The disjunction that is apparent between institutional policies and the real-life experiences of staff and students is discussed in more detail in the remainder of the report, which focuses on the real-life experiences of staff and students in relation to specific areas of institutional activity, namely learning, teaching, curriculum, language, residence-life and governance. However, it is necessary to understand why this disjunction exists in the first place, especially as there was consensus amongst both staff and students across institutions that the necessary policies were in place.

It seems that there are mainly two reasons for the disjunction between policy and practice. The first appears to be the result of poor dissemination of information pertaining to policy, limited awareness of policies, a lack of awareness of the roles and responsibilities pertaining to implementation that flow from the policies, and a lack of institutional will.

The second, as the HEQC Institutional Audits indicated, is that, in many institutions, there exists a disjunction between institutional culture and transformation policies. In fact, the lack of consensus and/or of a common understanding of what these policies actually involve, was also raised by various stakeholders and constituencies at a number of institutions during the Committee's visits.

This suggests that a key starting point for the development and implementation of an institutional transformation agenda must be the active involvement of all institutional stakeholders and constituencies. The fact that the institutional submissions, as discussed above, were not subject to institutional consultation processes, is indicative of the problem.

On the basis of the overall assessment of the evidence collected during institutional visits, as well as via documentary reviews, interviews and general reflection on the state of the nation, it is clear that discrimination of any kind is dangerous and extremely costly. The costs are psychological, as well as physical. The human dignity of both the perpetrator and the victim is abused in the process. Psychologically, discrimination does grievous mental harm to those who believe that they are superior to other human beings. And it obviously has a devastating effect on the victims of such discrimination.

These costs are, however, also physical in nature. This is evident in the dehumanising acts of humiliation perpetrated and experienced daily in contemporary South Africa. Perpetrators never fully come to experience what it means to be a dignified human being. They live and operate in a world that

reinforces the misconception that the best of what it means to be a human being is represented by their lifestyles, desires and aspirations. Victims are denied the opportunity – either through a lack of access to opportunities or due to outright discrimination – to realise their full potential. In the process, the country is robbed of valuable but untapped human resources. Higher education institutions cause incalculable damage to South African society by failing to deal boldly with these issues. Where institutions have indeed taken action, the benefits to individuals, to the different social groups in the country, as well as to the institutions themselves, have been major.

Having made our point about the challenges and benefits surrounding transformation, in closing we wish to make it clear that the task of effectively overhauling and changing our society does not rest exclusively with higher education institutions. Society at large also has a vital role to play in this regard. But for now our interest is focused on the education system, and we are of the opinion that serious initiatives to address transformation in the schooling sector must be strengthened and sustained.

## **Key Recommendations**

### **Recommendations to the Minister of Education**

#### **1. General**

- 1.1 In view of the serious discrimination on the basis of race and gender noted in this investigation, it is recommended that consideration be given to the development of a transformation compact between higher education institutions and the DoE. This compact should, in the first instance, be based on the general commitments to the development of a culture of human rights that are made in the Constitution and, in the second instance, on clear targets, as well as on problem areas identified in the institution. It is important that, when institutions develop this compact, they do so with the involvement, as well as an awareness of the needs of all their critically important stakeholder groupings. The transformation compact should be included as an integral component of the institutional plans that are submitted by institutions to the DoE.
- 1.2. In view of the observation that institutions have transformation policies that are often only partially or seldom implemented, the Minister should consider establishing a permanent oversight committee to monitor the transformation of higher education. This committee should submit an annual report to the Minister, who should make the report available for public discussion.

#### **2. Staff Development**



- 2.1 The Ministerial Committee was repeatedly told by institutions that funding for staff development and, more in particular, for nurturing and mentoring black staff members to take up senior level positions, was inadequate. For this reason, the Committee recommends that earmarked funds for staff development posts be made available. These earmarked funds could be provided as part of the state subsidy to higher education institutions and matched by institutional funding. The provision of earmarked funds should be based on the submission of institutional plans that address the question of staff development.
- 2.2 The Committee was told by several aspiring academics in development posts that the emolument they received made it difficult for them to remain in academia. They could earn much higher salaries elsewhere. It is recommended that the available funding for staff development posts should take into account the social context of the students – i.e. it should be competitive with the remuneration levels for entry-level professional posts in the public service at least. In this regard, the recently announced UJ scholarship programme, which makes available R150 000 per annum for a three-year period for doctoral programmes, is an example of such a programme.

### **3. Student Learning Needs**

- 3.1 The Committee welcomes and supports the review of the current undergraduate degree structure, which the Minister has requested the Council on Higher Education (CHE) to undertake. The purpose of this review is to assess the appropriateness and efficacy of the three-year initial degree in dealing with the learning needs of students, given the context of schooling in South Africa and the acknowledged gap between school and higher education institutions. The review should, in particular, consider the 'desirability and feasibility' of the introduction of a four-year undergraduate degree, which was mooted by the CHE in its *Size and Shape Report* in 2000 (CHE, 2000), and which came to the fore again in the National Plan for Higher Education (NPHE, 2001: 32), as a subject for possible investigation. This would include reviewing the role of academic development programmes and their integration into a new four-year formative degree.
- 3.2 The Minister should consider allocating a portion of the earmarked funds for academic development to support curriculum development initiatives, both at an institutional and a system-wide level.

### **4. Student Accommodation Needs**

- 4.1 Socio-economic factors, particularly those pertaining to social class, were repeatedly raised by students as an inhibiting factor concerning their ability

to not only access higher education opportunities but to take full advantage of the range of opportunities provided. The Committee recognises the progress that has been made in providing financial assistance to needy students via the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS). However, this is clearly insufficient and it is imperative that the Ministry leverages additional resources to facilitate access to, and the success of, financially disadvantaged students at higher education facilities.

- 4.2. In light of the shortage of residence accommodation in the historically black institutions, as well as the fact that it seems that many of the residences at these institutions are in a poor state of repair, the Minister should give consideration to leveraging resources to enable the construction of additional residences.

## **5. Knowledge**

- 5.1 The Committee found that students who are not first language-speakers of English continue to face challenges in many of the institutions. It also found that the implementation approach to the parallel-medium language policies that are in place in a number of historically Afrikaans-medium institutions discriminated against black students. The Minister is therefore urged to initiate a broad review of the obstacles facing the implementation of effective language policies and practices, including a study of the application of equitable language policies and practices found in countries with similar social differences to those of South Africa.
- 5.2 In light of the difficulties many institutions are facing in implementing their intention to give effect to their commitment to multilingualism and, in particular, the development of African languages as academic languages and languages of communication, it is recommended that the Minister should request institutions to indicate, as part of their institutional planning processes, how they will be addressing these difficulties.

## **6. Governance**

The major conclusion to which the Committee came upon reviewing the efficacy of councils in providing leadership in higher education institutions is that several of them had failed to realise the full scope of their responsibilities in respect of transformation. The Committee frequently encountered passivity and dependence on management on the one hand, and a deference to alumni on the other. Both of these impeded the urgency of the institution's transformation agenda. In light of this, the Committee:

- 6.1. recommends that the Minister initiates a review of the size and composition of councils in particular, in order to assess the appropriate balance between external and internal members, given the dominance of

- management, as well as the role of particular categories of members, such as donors, the convocation and alumni on councils;
- 6.2 welcomes and supports the review of the role and functions of the Institutional Forums (IFs) that the Minister has initiated, as it is of critical importance that the role of the IFs be strengthened; and
  - 6.3 recommends that the DoE should facilitate the training of council members, including holding an annual conference during which the role, functions and performance of councils are reviewed.

## **Recommendations to Higher Education Institutions**

### **Staff Development**

- 7.1 The Committee found that there were inadequate networks and structures in place in institutions to identify and retain black and female members of staff. Institutional staff development programmes, aimed at black and female postgraduate students, such as the *Grow your own Timber Programme* (GOOT), should be linked to the creation of posts, which would ensure that there is job security for the participants in such programmes upon completion of their doctoral studies. The posts and the allocation of resources for the posts should be clearly identified in the institutional planning process. This should be continued until a critical mass of black and female staff members has been absorbed into institutions.
- 7.2 As was indicated in 2.1. above, levels of financial support for new and aspiring members of staff were found to be insufficient. While it is recommended that the state ring-fences funds for this purpose, it is also recommended that the institutions themselves take up the challenge of finding additional sources of funding to support and mentor staff members upon their entry into academia.
- 7.3 Given the financial difficulties faced by young black and female academics, as reported in 2.2. above, the Committee recommends that institutions give consideration to structuring support packages for these staff members, which are competitive with the salaries for entry-level professional posts in the public service, at least.
- 7.4 A disturbing phenomenon in some institutions, as reflected in reports given to the Committee, related to the harassment by white students of black members of staff. The Committee recommends that institutions take steps to both educate and discipline students who are found to behave in a racist way to members of staff.

- 7.5 The Committee found that, in a number of institutions, there was inadequate and insufficient clarity with regard to the guidelines and procedures pertaining to promotion. It therefore recommends that institutions should all be required to put in place steps for clear, transparent and transformation-supporting guidelines pertaining to promotion, including teaching and research performance indicators. They should furthermore be required to report on these in their institutional planning frameworks.
- 7.6 In view of the difficulty of appointing female and black academics in permanent positions, it is recommended that institutions develop clear and transparent policies for the appointment of retired staff members in supernumerary and contract posts. This should only be allowed if these are linked to staff development posts, and/or alternately if the ability of the institution to fulfil its core academic mission and deliver its programmes appears to be compromised.
- 7.7 The Committee has come to understand that the principle of devolution of authority placed a great deal of responsibility on the shoulders of middle-level line managers in the system. This meant that important decisions, relating to transformation, were often being taken inappropriately and sometimes incorrectly by the staff members concerned. It is recommended that the vice-chancellor of the institution should be held directly accountable for the achievement of employment equity targets. This should be done as part of his or her performance management contract. Council should take direct responsibility for monitoring employment equity by establishing an employment equity sub-committee, chaired by an external member of Council.
- 7.8 A common problem encountered by the Committee was a lack of understanding on the part of academic and professional staff members of the importance of employment equity. It is recommended that institutions develop monitoring mechanisms to ensure that all interview processes routinely include review protocols to guarantee that the principles of fairness and objectivity are observed. Similarly, the Committee recommends that interview panels for staff appointments should reflect, as well as be sensitive to the issues of race and gender equity. These panels should be demographically representative, which may require the use of external panel members.

## **8. Student Achievement**

- 8.1 Despite the ongoing efforts to provide academic development and support programmes, the throughput and graduation rates of black students remain low. In addition, completion rates for white students are also low. Universities should devise approaches that will improve throughput rates of students, while government, as part of its human capital development

initiatives, provides financial support to students who are studying in fields where skills are scarce. It is apparent that some students are failing to succeed because they are also doing other jobs in order to support their families. This applies largely to black students who cannot afford to study on a full-time basis.

- 8.2 The Committee heard mixed reports about the success of academic development programmes. While these were often labelled as being indispensable, they also, however, appeared to be vehicles of racialisation. To avoid racial stigmatisation of students, there should be clear and transparent criteria and guidelines developed by all institutions for admission of students to academic development programmes. These should be communicated to all students as part of the admissions process.
- 8.3 In light of the continuing discrimination that students are facing across the spectrum of institutions in the country, it is recommended that institutions should introduce compulsory staff development programmes to familiarise staff members with and sensitise them to the learning needs of students from diverse backgrounds.
- 8.4 Given both the subtle and insidious forms of gender discrimination and harassment being experienced by female students on several campuses, it is recommended that institutions take serious steps to both protect and promote the interests of women. These could include gender sensitisation campaigns, aimed at everybody, and confidence-building training programmes, aimed at women in particular.
- 8.5 Orientation continues to be a breeding ground for inappropriate forms of induction into institutions. The Committee heard about humiliating experiences, suffered by male students in particular, in several institutions. It is recommended that institutions review their student orientation programmes to ensure their appropriateness in terms of addressing issues of inclusivity and diversity, while preserving the dignity of students. These programmes should, furthermore, clearly state the academic rules and regulations that govern academic study.
- 8.6 The needs of and measures taken to address the concerns of disabled students were not brought to the attention of the Committee. Institutions should complement their disability policies with an institutional plan to support the learning needs of students with disabilities. Where appropriate, especially given the resource-intensive nature of some aspects of catering for disabled students, a regional plan should also be drawn up.

## **9 Student Accommodation**

- 9.1 De facto racial segregation and discrimination appear to have developed in the admission practices of several institutions. The Committee strongly recommends the immediate abolition of such practices, including those that result in racially defined room allocations. It recommends the development of placement policies that will create the opportunity for students from different backgrounds to live together. The implementation of such policies will require a shift from the current decentralised system, in which room placements are decided upon by the residence committee, to a centralised system in which placements are determined by the residence office. Placements could be done either by random allocation, such as the University of Cape Town (UCT) and Rhodes University (RU) have introduced, or through the practice of 'constituting the residence' (based on the American notion of constituting the class), which is based on an agreed set of criteria.
- 9.2 Following the recommendation immediately above, it is further recommended that the placement system be centralised and accompanied by the establishment of stringent monitoring systems to ensure that the policy is not subverted by residence committees and managers.
- 9.3 The Committee learnt that election processes for residence committees were often not sufficiently sensitive to the needs of black students. The structure of and election procedures for residence committees should be reviewed with a view to putting in place processes which would ensure that residence committees are demographically representative.
- 9.4 The Committee also learnt that induction, orientation and 'citizenship' practices in residences continued to be practised on the basis of seniority in a large number of institutions. In many of these institutions senior students continue to expect 'blind obedience' from junior students. The Committee recommends that the organisational and governance structure of residences be reviewed to ensure that the power and authority that senior students have over junior students are removed entirely.
- 9.5 In similar vein, and because of similar problems, the Committee recommends that all initiation ceremonies and activities be banned, irrespective of whether an activity causes bodily harm or not. A toll-free (and anonymous) complaints line should be established to allow students to register infringements of this policy. The punishment for contravening the policy should be expulsion from the institution.
- 9.6 In some institutions it appeared that residence managers were chosen on ethnic grounds. It is recommended that institutional employment equity plans be applied to residence employees, so as to ensure that the composition of residence managers is demographically representative.

- 9.7 Given the pervasive difficulties residence managers appeared to experience in dealing with students of different backgrounds, it is recommended that the training programmes that are run for residence staff and residence committees should be reviewed so as to ensure their appropriateness for and relevance to sensitising trainees to diversity in the context of institutional policies and national goals.

## **10. Knowledge**

- 10.1 The Committee found that the transformation of what is taught and learnt in institutions constitutes one of the most difficult challenges this sector is facing. In light of this, it is recommended that institutions initiate an overall macro review of their undergraduate and postgraduate curricula, so as to assess their appropriateness and relevance in terms of the social, ethical, political and technical skills and competencies embedded in them. This should be done in the context of post-apartheid South Africa and its location in Africa and the world. In short, does the curriculum prepare young people for their role in South Africa and the world in the context of the challenges peculiar to the 21<sup>st</sup> century?
- 10.2 Given the decontextualised approaches to teaching and learning that are evident in virtually every institution, it is recommended that institutions give consideration to the development of curriculum approaches that sensitise students to the place of, and the issues surrounding South Africa on the African continent and in the world at large. These could comprise either a common and compulsory first-year course for all students in South Africa, Africa and the world, along the lines of the University of Fort Hare's (UFH) Grounding Programme, or an infusion approach, which places South Africa in the foreground in a range of different disciplines, courses and programmes.

## **11. Governance**

- 11.1 In light of the discussion in Recommendation 6 above, it is recommended that institutional councils should develop a clear transformation framework, including transformation indicators, accompanied by targets. This should form the basis of the vice-chancellor's performance contract.
- 11.2 In view of the absence of a general transformation plan in the majority of institutions in the country, it is recommended that institutions develop a transformation charter for themselves, which could serve as a guideline and an accounting instrument for change applicable to everybody who forms part of an institution.

- 11.3 The Committee found that the freedom and right of students to organise along political lines had been taken away at some institutions. It is recommended that this right be reinstated.
- 11.4 The Committee recommends that every institution, via its council, establishes an Office of the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman would need to be independent of the institution and would receive and deal with all complaints relating to discrimination within that particular institution.